

Acquisition Protects Englishman River's Main Stem

For the past 20 years, The Nature Trust has spearheaded a drive to conserve the sensitive ecological values of the Englishman River. It is the most important salmon-producing stream on the mid-east coast of Vancouver Island, near Parksville, and supports threatened runs of Steelhead and Coho Salmon. The Englishman River has also been selected by the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) as a top priority for habitat restoration and enhancement efforts.

In the fall of 2003, The Nature Trust announced another major milestone on its conservation drive – the purchase of a 178 ha (439 acres) property from TimberWest on the main stem of the Englishman River.

“Collaborating with The Nature Trust and its partners to conserve the area made perfect sense to us,” said TimberWest CEO, Paul J. McElligott.



A display of fall colours along the Englishman River

“While we may have been able to sell the property to a private company, TimberWest agrees with The Nature Trust that it was in the best interest of the community to look after and

enhance the special environmental, fisheries, wildlife, water and recreational values here.”

The property will be managed under a

Continued on next page...

Lieutenant Governor Honourary Patron

British Columbia's Lieutenant Governor, The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, PC, CM, OBC, was recently named Honourary Patron of The Nature Trust of British Columbia. Among Ms. Campagnolo's many distinguished achievements, she has contributed greatly to the sustainability of our province's natural resources and wildlife habitat. Ms. Campagnolo was among the founding Members of British Columbia's unique Sustainability Governance Model and served for six years as Founding Chair of the Fraser Basin Council. “We are proud to have Ms. Campagnolo's endorsement,” said Nature Trust Chair, Don Krogseth. “It is symbolic of the importance of provincial and nation-wide support for conservation.” ❖



The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, PC, CM, OBC



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Disappearing Steelhead
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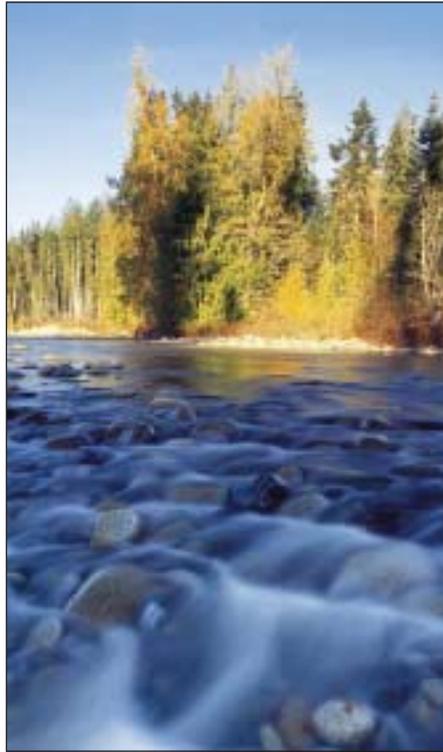
TimberWest: continued from page 1

long-term lease agreement with the Regional District of Nanaimo. A detailed Management Plan will be prepared that provides for use of the land as a regional park with continued protection of the site's recreation, conservation and watershed values. Future plans also provide for a series of salmon habitat enhancement projects with funding from the Pacific Salmon Foundation and Department of Fisheries (DFO). The Pacific Salmon Foundation has committed over \$1 million to salmon recovery in the Englishman River watershed. In future years, this portion of the Englishman River will also provide for an upgrade of the public water supply infrastructure maintained by the Arrowsmith Water Service. This project is the first land acquisition supported by the Province's \$2 million Living Rivers Trust Fund.

To date The Nature Trust, with the help of its partners, has raised \$1.4 million towards the project's total cost of \$1.8 million. These fundraising efforts continue by The Nature Trust.

The Nature Trust experienced a banner year for the Englishman River project in 2003, obtaining over 288 ha (710 acres) in three separate transactions. The Nature Trust now owns a total of 364 ha (898 acres) in the river's watershed. The combination of land purchase and resource gifting from Weyerhaeuser Corp., TimberWest and the Englishman River Land Corp., demonstrates what can be accomplished through collaborative effort. (See map on page 12)

"What we have achieved on the Englishman River embodies all the positive energy created when industry,

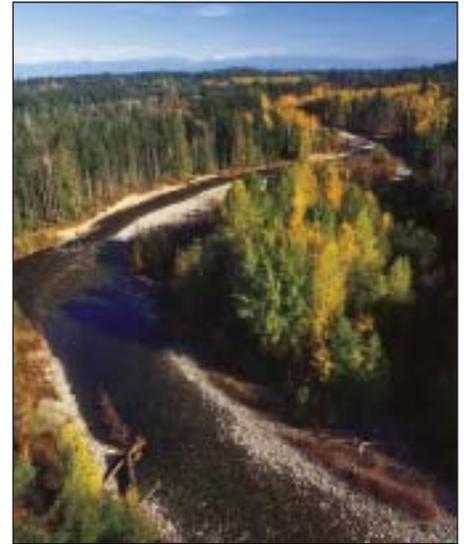


River mist

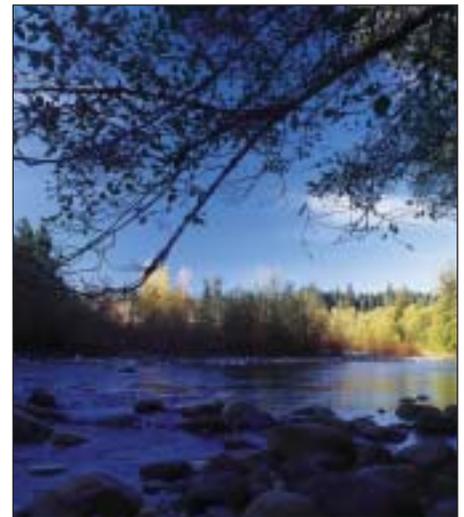
government and the conservation community work together toward a common goal," says Don Krogseth, Chair of The Nature Trust. "We're reaching out to the private sector with the message that we can help facilitate those goals." *

Contributing Partners:

- BC Ministry of Sustainable Resources
- BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
- Canadian Wildlife Service
- City of Parksville
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Local hunting & fishing clubs
- Pacific Estuary Conservation Program
- Private donors
- Regional District of Nanaimo
- The Land Conservancy
- The Nature Conservancy of Canada
- The Vancouver Foundation
- TimberWest



Winding Englishman River



Shadows falling

Our grateful thanks to Graham Osborne for his photographs.

"It is my hope that we will have the good judgment to protect these fragile ecosystems entrusted to our stewardship."

Graham Osborne (from his book *Wildflowers Seasonal Splendors of the North American West*)



Encana Pledges \$750,000 to The Nature Trust



On April 7, 2004, Gwyn Morgan, President and CEO of EnCana—one of the world's largest independent oil and gas production companies headquartered in Canada—announced an endowment of \$750,000 to The Nature Trust of British Columbia.

"To receive this recognition and financial support from one of Canada's most successful resource companies is highly significant," said Don Krogseth, Chairman of the Board for The Nature Trust, "We are extremely proud to have EnCana as a Partner in Conservation. Their valued commitment is an affirmation of our accomplishments and the importance of maintaining our leadership role in conserving British Columbia for future generations."

Cherry Creek: Ecosystem Restoration

Through two conservation transactions in 1985-86, The Nature Trust acquired 969 ha (2,394 acres) of land along the Kootenay River, approximately 20km north-east of Cranbrook. It is mostly alluvial floodplain and is part of the larger Cherry Creek-Bummer's Flats complex of wetland, benchland and riparian habitats along the river. As one of the few protected lowland sites in the Rocky Mountain Trench, The Cherry Creek portion of the property 290 ha (717 acres) supports an impressive diversity of flora and fauna, providing valuable habitat for badgers, elk, white-tailed deer and a variety of other bird and mammal species. However, forest ingrowth and encroachment is reducing the habitat capability of the property.

A 2003 baseline biodiversity inventory conducted by The Nature Trust was used to develop an Ecosystem Restoration Prescription for the property. The management objectives of the treatments are to maintain

and enhance all ecosystem components, including: rare and endangered species, non-game wildlife, wildlife trees, coarse woody debris habitat, riparian areas and soil fertility. This will be achieved by creating openings in the forest canopy, hand brushing, post-harvest prescribed burning and minimizing soil distur-



Pre-restoration



Post-restoration

bance in order to control noxious weeds and avoid erosion. By thinning the trees through harvesting, there will be a release of forage and browse for wildlife, preservation and recruitment of wildlife trees, and maintenance of cover and corridors which are critical for wildlife movement. The site's resource values for local species such as winter range for ungulates and wildlife trees for cavity nestors will be enhanced from this habitat restoration project.

"The Nature Trust should be pleased at the innovative forest techniques being used to improve the habitat features for the many wildlife and bird species that rely on this outstanding conservation property," said Bill Bennet, MLA East Kootenay. "This is an example of how to manage private resource lands, maintain habitat and reduce wildfire risks in the forest interface lands that surround Cranbrook."

In addition to encouraging an increase in native forage species, Cherry Creek harvest-

ing provides an opportunity to demonstrate the economics of prescribed, sustainable forest management practices. Ongoing monitoring of results, evaluation and testing innovative strategies will play a significant role in defining The Nature Trust's conservation efforts at Cherry Creek. ❄

Englishman River Land Corporation donates 30 acres at Craig Creek headwaters



Craig Creek old growth forest

This January, the Englishman River Land Corporation and President Rob McDonald donated to The Nature Trust 12 ha (30 acres) of mature forest and salmon habitat on the headwaters of the Craig Creek drainage at Parksville (Lot 2). Bounded by the Esquimalt Nanaimo rail line and the Pacific Island Highway, this gift adds to the complex of riparian property owned by The Nature Trust where Craig Creek drains into Craig Bay.

The Englishman River Land Corporation

was a partner with The Nature Trust in the acquisition of 97 ha (240 acres) on the Englishman River's south bank in May 2003. (Announced in Fall 2003 The Nature Trust newsletter). This new parcel was part of the Corporation's 323 ha (800-acre) development east of Parksville. It will be integrated into Parksville's open space system while permanently protecting Craig Creek's outstanding salmon spawning habitat and biodiversity values. ❄

After the Fire

Original story by: Lisa Scott, MSc, RPBio, Eco-Matters Consulting and Carl McNaughton, The Nature Trust South Okanagan Land Manager

British Columbia's Southern Interior experienced serious environmental challenges in 2003, notably the hot, dry conditions during the summer months that culminated in the now infamous wildfires. The South Okanagan fire that started on the east side of Vaseux Lake rapidly spread through private, federal and provincial Crown lands, including the Vaseux Bighorn Wildlife Management Area, the Vaseux Protected Area, The Nature Trust's crown range holdings (part of the Okanagan/Vaseux biodiversity ranch) and Weyerhaeuser's Tree Farm License. The fire covered an estimated 3,300 ha (8,154 acres). Before the fire was contained approximately two weeks later, The Nature Trust was working to determine the extent of damage with a view to rehabilitate the landscape and to repair fencing. Effective communication with partners and neighboring property owners promoted immediate remedial efforts.



Carl McNaughton assessing new growth

Habitat assessment of the lower elevation lands was carried out immediately after the wildfire to recommend rehabilitation activities. Foot and helicopter surveys revealed a moderate severity fire throughout much of the antelope-brush, grassland and Ponderosa pine habitat. The flat or gently-sloping shrub grass-



Post fire on Emery property

lands tended to burn lightly, while draws burned at much higher intensity and suffered the greatest damage. In the high severity burn areas, all litter, twigs, small branches, most or the entire duff layer and some large diameter dead, down woody fuels were consumed.

Seeding was recommended in one gully to reduce the inevitable wind and soil erosion, as well as inhibit weed invasion, thereby assisting recovery of the native plant community. The gully site was aerial seeded in October, while bluebunch wheatgrass seedlings were planted by hand along the crest of the draw by The Nature Trust's South Okanagan Youth Crew.

An eight-person work crew hired by The Nature Trust and co-funded by Human Resources Development Canada worked full-time through the winter cold to repair fence lines and minimize erosion in the East Vaseux area. Native bunchgrasses and shrubs were also transplanted into heavily burned conservation holdings from a local property slated for future development.

Carl McNaughton, The Nature Trust's land manager, worked closely this fall with Forest Protection, the provincial agency who assumes responsibility for areas disturbed during fire suppression activities. Hand guards and mechanically-created (cat) guards were rehabilitated as required; further treatment will continue in the spring and summer.

Aquila Networks Canada transmission line structures also suffered serious damage. Several poles and anchors were replaced in the lower east Vaseux area, resulting in soil compaction and burial of a portion of the native shrub-steppe plant community. Area land managers from The Nature Trust, Canadian Wildlife Service and Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection are working cooperatively with Aquila to re-establish vegetation on these disturbed soils. ❄



Preparing to aerial seed

Duff: the matted, partly decomposed, organic surface layer of forested soils

Draw: a small natural depression that water drains into; a shallow gully

The Silver Lining: Long-term Benefits of the Fire

Although there have been a significant number of short-term negative consequences, there are also long-term benefits of the fire, particularly with respect to natural ecological processes on this world class shrub-steppe habitat.

Food for the local wildlife is enhanced.

The burn will increase production, availability and palatability of the perennial bunchgrasses now devoid of coarse leaves and dead stems. Ultimately, this improves forage quality for wildlife such as California Bighorn Sheep. Many of the fire-adapted plants - forbs, grasses and shrubs - were re-sprouting within ten days of the fire, despite the hot, parched conditions following the summer's wildfire.

Opportunity for control of non-native plant vegetation

This spring will be the true test of the fire's damage to the natural landscape. Land managers will be quick to assess new vegetation growth as it emerges from the ash in order to minimize the introduction of the non-native varieties and noxious weeds. The nutrient-rich ash layer that covers most of the east Vaseux



Post-fire green-up

landscape will provide a seedbed for invasive plants such as Dalmatian toadflax, sulphur cinquefoil and diffuse knapweed. Much of the area that burned has been a priority weed treatment area for the past several years with significant headway being made. Acting quickly will help to ensure that efforts of previous years are not wasted.

To date, The Nature Trust has spent over \$60,000 on the post fire restoration and we thank all our partners for their support. ❄

Partnership efforts associated with the fire control and rehab include: Forest Protection, Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection's Ecological Stewardship Branch, Canadian Wildlife Service, Thomas Ranch, Casorso Ranch, Ministry of Transportation and Aquila.

Noxious weeds are weeds that have become serious pests and threaten the local plant community and the ecosystem biodiversity as a whole. These plants come from other areas of the world with similar climate and are ideally suited to rapid growth. Without normal inhibition, they can spread unchecked.

The Steelhead Story: Is it a trout or a salmon?

Steelhead trout and rainbow trout share the same genus and species name: *Oncorhynchus mykiss*. The biggest difference between the two is that rainbow trout use only freshwater habitats (and therefore are more widespread in BC's interior); young steelheads migrate to sea for part of their adult lives, returning to freshwater to spawn. Steelheads also tend to grow bigger than rainbow trout, and can reach a maximum



Spawning phase

length of 120 cm. Most weigh between 1.4 – 6.8 kg, but some have been found over 20 kg! Steelheads look a lot like a big rainbow trout, with a more streamlined shape. They change to a silvery colour while at sea. As they get ready to spawn, their colour darkens and a wide reddish-pink stripe develops on their sides. Mature males have a long jaw with a knob or 'kype', like Pacific salmon. The other wild Pacific salmon species that we enjoy in BC are also in the genus *Oncorhynchus* and steelhead are frequently referred to as salmon. Unlike all the other Pacific

salmon which die after spawning, steelheads can spawn more than once and return to the sea after they spawn.

Although steelhead are not listed in BC, nearly every steelhead stock in the Greater Georgia Basin has experienced severe declines from a combination of freshwater habitat damage and over-fishing. In freshwater habitats, agriculture



Marine phase

and forestry can alter stream flow, and create too much silt that covers eggs. Removal of streamside vegetation can cause water temperatures to become warmer than steelhead would like. The good news is that stream restoration efforts hold promise for reversing these declines. Anyone with streamside property can help the steelhead by protecting streamside vegetation, to provide shade and prevent erosion. And we can all do fish a favour by using minimal detergents and by keeping harsh chemicals (like bleach, paint thinner, and antifreeze) away from septic tanks and storm drains. ❄

Supporting Research for Conservation

Supporting researchers in their quest to seek a better understanding of our natural environment is an integral part of our role as a leading land conservation organization. In honour of several distinguished scientists and past members of our board, The Nature Trust has established three award programs: The Bert Hoffmeister Scholarship, The Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan Scholarship, and the Brink/McLean Grassland Conservation Fund.

If you would like to help us by making a tax-deductible donation, please specify the program of your choice. Call us at 604.924.9771 or 1.866.288.7878 (1.866.28TRUST)

Bert Hoffmeister Scholarship

The Bert Hoffmeister Scholarship is awarded annually to a graduate student in the Faculty of Forestry at the University of British Columbia. The Award is a joint effort by The Nature Trust, Wildlife Habitat Canada, BC's Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection and the Province of BC. We are very proud to introduce these talented winners and their research:

Alana Hilton 2003/2004 Recipient

Alana's thesis focuses on how salamanders respond to forest harvesting activities. Although there are several hypotheses about why amphibian population size and species richness may decline in harvested sites, very few studies have set out to test them. Alana is using two large-scale field enclosures at UBC's Malcolm Knapp Research Forest to assess the survival and growth of a common amphibian species in the Pacific Northwest, the



Alana with an endangered spotted owl – one of many species she studied as a consultant in BC, prior to beginning graduate studies in the Faculty of Forestry at UBC.

northwestern salamander (*Ambystoma gracile*). Her study also involves an experimental manipulation of food in half of each enclosure to test the hypothesis that prey causes reductions in salamander growth and survival.

The northwestern salamander is very secretive and spends much time underground. Common, yet seldom seen, the shy mole salamander surfaces to migrate to permanent sources of slow-moving waters. If you want to find one, search under rocks and logs along lake shores and stream banks, or wait by the side of a road on a rainy night. But don't touch! The glandular areas are rough and contain poison glands.



Northwestern Salamander

Simone Runyan 2002/2003 Recipient

Simone's work is on the genetics and population dynamics of small populations; modeling the effect of stress and inbreeding depression on the probability of population extinction in a small, isolated population. Her work is based on the Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) of the 6 ha (15 acres) Mandarte Island, just east of Sidney, Vancouver Island. Simone's models suggest that a population may be much more sensitive to reduction in immigration rate, and more likely to go extinct, if inbred birds survive proportionally worse than out bred birds during stressful events such as cold winters.



While Song Sparrows are not an endangered species, work on the genetics of small populations is very important to the science of conservation. Simone's work will help to determine how concerned we should be about the impacts of inbreeding on population dynamics.



Simone studying song sparrows

Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan Scholarship in Environmental Studies

For over 65 years, Dr. McTaggart-Cowan has distinguished himself as a biologist, educator, conservationist and scholar. The former chancellor of the University of Victoria, his amazing career includes a 32-year service as a Director of The Nature Trust. In honour of his dedication and outstanding achievements in science and conservation, The Nature Trust of British Columbia established the Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan Scholarship in Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria in 2003.

Lisa Levesque 2003/2004 Recipient

The second winner of this award is Lisa Levesque, a Masters student who is studying ecological restoration, protected areas management, forest ecology, and first peoples' history. She is a participant in the Rocky Mountain Repeat Photography Project which will be re-photographing hundreds of historical landscape photographs in Waterton Lakes National Park. She says, "I am interested in using these photographs to guide my investigations into landscape change in Waterton. This information will be useful for future management decisions within the Park in light of the recent Parks Canada focus on restoring ecological integrity throughout the park system."

Brink/McLean Grassland Conservation Fund

In 2001, The Nature Trust established The Brink/McLean Grassland Conservation Fund to honour two of our founding board members. Two of Canada's most celebrated conservationists, Dr. Bert Brink and Dr. Alastair McLean, devoted much of their lives to the conservation of British Columbia's native Grasslands. As the recipients of our 2004 program denote, the Fund promotes applied research, habitat restoration and other stewardship activities that will assist in the management of the land, plants and animals of BC's native Grasslands.



South Okanagan grasslands

2004 Recipient

Ms. Daniela Rambaldini
(MSc candidate specializing in bat research)

Dr. George W. Douglas
Douglas Ecological Consultants

Ms. Donna Thornton Ecosystem Biologist, Omineca
Region. Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection

Ms. Brenda Baptiste, Manager
Nk'mip Desert and Heritage Centre, BC

Title/Subject

1. Protecting threatened Pallid bats (*Antrozous pallidus*)
in the Okanagan Valley, BC

2. Rare plant inventory in the South Okanagan
Grasslands Protected Area

3. "Naturalness Rating System"
as tested in the Euchiniko Sidehills

4. Western rattlesnake (*Crotalus oreganos*) conservation
and habitat use in the south Okanagan valley

Funding Support



Black Brant goose

Vancouver Foundation Grants \$75,000 for Brant Geese Habitat and Mapping Initiatives

A recent award of \$75,000 from Vancouver Foundation will benefit two important initiatives of The Nature Trust of British Columbia: outreach for the annual migration of Black Brant geese (*Branta bernicla*), and critical digital mapping to enhance the monitoring and management of habitat conservation efforts.

Each Spring, up to 27% of the Pacific Flyway population of Black Brant stop to rest and feed along the East Vancouver Island shores of the Parksville-Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on their 10,000 km migration to their northern nesting grounds. These areas are well used by people and their dogs. Recent monitoring indicates a decline in

migratory numbers that has raised concern that the geese are under undue stress from human related disturbances when they are most in need of rest and nourishment during their migration.

"The generous support of \$15,000 from the Vancouver Foundation will enable us to take important steps in building awareness for the plight of the Black Brant," said Tim Clermont, Vancouver Island Land Manager for The Nature Trust. "Our project will address animal welfare, promote respect for wildlife and a greater appreciation for intertidal ecosystems."

For more information, contact Tim Clermont at 250.751.3218.

Digital mapping project receives \$60k over three years

An additional \$60,000 Vancouver Foundation commitment is designated for a digital mapping project over three years. This project involves mapping 21,000ha (51,900 acres) of conservation land throughout the province owned by The Nature Trust. "This level of support from the Vancouver Foundation has allowed us to proceed with this very beneficial initiative for both The Nature Trust and its partners," said Marian

Adair, Habitat Ecologist for The Nature Trust. "It will bring our mapping to a standard that matches the provincial base mapping layers and linking key attributes about our properties in a GIS (Geographic Information System). This information will enhance our ability to work with our partners through improved delineation of property boundaries and to improve monitoring of our habitat conservation efforts." *



Dog chasing Black Brant geese

Vancouver Foundation is a philanthropic non-governmental community foundation which operates primarily as a permanent collection of endowed funds. Income derived from the investment of the pooled capital of Vancouver Foundation's endowments is distributed to support the activities of charitable organizations across British Columbia.

A Look Back at the Past

Remarkable founding Chairman and long-time Director of The Nature Trust

Bertram Meryl Hoffmeister was born in Vancouver May 15, 1907 and died December 5, 1999 at the age of 92. Young Bertram attended Kitsilano High School, played rugby and rowed for the Vancouver Rowing Club.

A born leader, Bert Hoffmeister was the youngest Canadian at the time to become Major General. He led Canadian troops on numerous successful campaigns in Italy during WWII, and was distinguished three times with DSO (Distinguished Service Order). "Hoffy", as he was affectionately known by his troops, was extremely well-respected by his men and superiors alike.

At the conclusion of the war, Bert resumed his business activities in the British Columbia forest industry. He was CEO of MacMillan Bloedel from 1949 to 1957, British Columbia's Agent General in London from 1958 to 1961, and Chairman of the Council of Forest Industries of British Columbia from 1961 to 1968.

In 1971, the Government of Canada asked Bert Hoffmeister to help set up and administer The Nature Trust to celebrate BC's 100th anniversary in joining Confederation. He served as chairman for 20 years.

"I knew him as a charismatic leader who was a driving force behind The Nature Trust since its founding in 1971," said Past Executive Director Ron Erickson. "He loved British Columbia's raw nature, as he loved Canada."

Bert Hoffmeister's vision lives on through the many land acquisitions by The Nature Trust under his stewardship. Writer Geoff Gilliard, in an article for the web site of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, explains that "in 1986, Bert Hoffmeister, then chair of The Nature Trust of BC, had the foresight to



Bert Hoffmeister M., C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D., OC 1907-1999

try a new, cooperative approach to acquiring land for conservation purposes. A five-agency partnership of conservation agencies and several levels of government were created and they pooled their financial resources to buy wetlands in BC."

This was the start of the Pacific Estuary Conservation Program (PECP) which has excelled over the past 15 years in its goal to conserve and ensure the long-term sustainable use of estuarine habitat along the coast of British Columbia. By coordinating its members' efforts, focusing their energies and pooling financial and technical resources, the PCEP Program has acquired some 1,600 ha (3,953 acres) and initiated the conservation designation of over 50,000 ha (123,552 acres) of estuarine and adjacent intertidal habitat. Securing habitat and ensuring its biological integrity has been achieved through community-based approaches and innovative strategies which stand as models to others engaged in similar work. *

Who is The Nature Trust?

We are scientists, we are business leaders and first and foremost we are British Columbian's, who since 1971 have dedicated our efforts to conserve some of British Columbia's most spectacular and endangered regions.

Our work and our organization are driven by the core values of respect, trust and integrity. They are values that not only guide who we are, they shape what we do each and every day.

Estuaries

Although they comprise less than 3% of the entire British Columbia shoreline, estuaries are used by 80% of all coastal wildlife. They include areas of national and international significance and are important resting and feeding sites along the Pacific Flyway. Their conservation and sustainable use is challenged by the fact that they are located in the fastest growing socio-economic regions of Canada.



Cluwxestuary salt marsh

Testimonial



Englishman River estuary

"I have just returned from a bird watching walk at the Englishman River estuary with my 12-year-old son. It is an extraordinary place, full of life. We saw well over a dozen eagles, a hawk and a Merlin, along with hundreds of sea birds, ducks, mergansers and others.

Thank you for your efforts to preserve the estuary, and your recent work further upstream to help protect sensitive sites there. You are doing wonderful work that will be hailed by future generations as invaluable. Your lead role in preserving and rehabilitating the rivers and estuaries of our communities is greatly appreciated. THANK YOU!"

Richard, Bridge, President
Parksville-Qualicum Community Foundation

Volunteer Wardens Manage Important Wetlands on Vancouver Island

When Annemarie Koch was invited to become volunteer warden with The Nature Trust (then known as the Second Century Fund) some 20 years ago, she quickly accepted. As a writer for a local newspaper at the time, Annemarie had learned much about the organization when she covered the story of one of The Nature Trust's original acquisitions, the Cluxewe Estuary property. "I remember their saying at the time – For all of us forever. Here was an organization that was, in effect, putting its money where its mouth is," says Koch. She, like all of our wardens, has made an incredible commitment and contribution to studying, monitoring, and conserving Vancouver Island's wetlands. Now, as Manager of Development Services with the Regional District of Mt. Waddington, Annemarie's ongoing volunteer experience complements her profession; she is in a valuable position to communicate important issues with key players in both development and resource conservation.

The Vancouver Island Wetlands Program (VIWMP) is one of the many innovative efforts established by The



Beach Acres Volunteer Wardens. Tim Clermont, Vancouver Island Land Manager – bottom right.

Nature Trust in its leadership of conservation in BC. The VIWMP now helps to manage over 50 conservation areas on the island – mostly coastal wetlands and estuaries owned by The Nature Trust and Provincial Crownland Wildlife Management Areas. We couldn't do it without the valuable assistance of 11 volunteer wardens. In the last few years VIWMP has completed several habitat restoration (streams and wetlands) projects and has coordinated site specific

activities involving volunteers, youth work teams, streamkeepers and other community based stewardship groups. ❄

A warm Thank You to our volunteer wardens! Volunteer Wardens help manage over 50 conservation areas on Vancouver Island – mostly coastal wetlands and estuaries owned by The Nature Trust. For some 20 years, we have benefited from their commitment and contributions.

Youth Crew Project Job skills and conservation assistance

Youth Crew member Rita Quaw plants native grasses in the South Okanagan. In addition to learning more about bighorn sheep and other wildlife, Rita says the physical activity such as fence construction was wonderfully satisfying – "An exhilarating experience!" The valuable work has given Rita the inspiration to pursue further training.

The Nature Trust's Conservation Youth Crew Project provides employment and skill development while acquiring much-needed human resources for the important groundwork for habitat conservation and restoration.

Skills workshops and first-aid training are key components of the program, along with daily mentor-

ing/coaching from project coordinators/supervisors and The Nature Trust staff. Transferable skills gained during the project include weed control, fence construction and repair, and habitat restoration techniques.

"It's a winning program for everyone involved," says Jim Hope, The Nature Trust BC Conservation Land Manager. "With funding support from Human Resources Development Canada, we are able to provide local support to youth, enhancing their employment skills and providing career mentoring. At the same time we are able to encourage respect for the environment and teach conservation to the youth of our community."

The Nature Trust has youth crews operating during the field season in the South Okanagan, East Kootenays and the Peace River Regions. ❄



Rita Quaw enjoying her youth crew experience

Clifton and Thomas Families Receive Double Honours for Biodiversity Ranching and Grassland Conservation

The Nature Trust of British Columbia extends its warm congratulations to two longtime South Okanagan ranching families, the Cliftons of White Lake and the Thomas Brothers of Vaseux Lake. The families were recently honoured with the national Countryside Canada Stewardship Award in Calgary and the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (HCTF) Stewardship Recognition Award in the fall of 2003 for their valuable contribution to biodiversity ranching and grassland conservation in British Columbia.

Morris Clifton and Lloyd Thomas are well known for their involvement in BC's beef industry and as conservation-



Countryside Canada Stewardship Honours. Doug Walker (L), Executive Director of The Nature Trust presents gift to Morrie Thomas (second from L) and June and Wilson Clifton (R) in recognition of conservation efforts in the South Okanagan.



June and Wilson Clifton receive HCTF honours

ists in the South Okanagan, most recently as partners with The Nature Trust in establishing the Okanagan Falls-Vaseux Lake Biodiversity Ranch Program. These ranchers have devoted their knowledge, experience, time and effort to making this project work; implementing new grazing schedules, fencing-out riparian corridors, developing alternate cattle watering facilities and sharing their experiences with other ranching operations and conservation audiences alike.

"This shared knowledge and collaborative approach is why partnerships in conservation are successful," said Jim Hope, BC Land Manager for The Nature Trust. "Preserving our natural legacy can



Thomas family (Lloyd far left, Denise second from left, Morrie far right) receiving award from Heather Lemieux HCTF Chairman.

be achieved through careful stewardship, and the Clifton and Thomas contributions serve as an excellent example. This recognition reflects well on all 32 partners involved in the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program." *



Doug Walker, Executive Director of The Nature Trust, with Marian Adair, The Nature Trust Habitat Ecologist at Species at Risk Conference, Victoria, BC, March 2 to 6, 2004.

A special thank you to Straight family...

British Columbia has lost one of its best-known and most-respected outdoorsmen. Lee Straight, the first and only full-time outdoor writer for 33 years at The Vancouver Sun, passed away on Dec. 31, 2003 at the age of 88 following a brief battle with cancer. On his passing, Lee's family kindly requested that donations in lieu of flowers be given in Lee's memory to The Nature Trust of British Columbia.

"Lee loved nature and understood the need for better environmental stewardship. Knowing that he is honoured in this way means a great deal to our family," says wife Joan. "We



have the tremendous satisfaction of knowing that Lee's memory will live on through the work of The Nature Trust to protect critical habitat in British Columbia."



James Kanegae 2003 Royal Vancouver Yacht Club Commodore's Cup Sportsmanship Award Winner

RVYC Commodore's Cup Junior Race Week Supported by The Nature Trust

Sailing teaches youth to appreciate and respect the environment. The Nature Trust is proud to support the 19th annual Commodore's Cup held in English Bay at the end of August. Originating from the Canadian Navy's 75th anniversary celebrations in 1985, it has become the largest youth training Regatta in Canada.

Executive Director's Message



As the new Executive Director of the Nature Trust I have made a personal commitment to ensure our organization maintains its leadership role in BC land conservation, while bringing a renewed focus to our marketing and fundraising efforts.

Since we last communicated with you in the Fall, our conservation team has been busy concluding the Englishman River Block 602 purchase and conducting restoration work in the East Kootenays and in the South Okanagan. Several conservation covenants are in progress and property on the Sunshine Coast and South Okanagan is being evaluated for donation purposes.

Our communication efforts are stepping up with a fresh look for our newsletter and other communication documents. We are seeking support from local media in a more concerted effort to build awareness of our accomplishments. BC Business featured us in their January article Conservation Matters. You can expect to see our presence at festivals and events around the province during the coming months.

Partners and donors are the lifeline for our organization. By sharing our vision and making a commitment of support, you have helped The Nature Trust achieve several important con-

servation milestones in 2003. British Columbia is our home, and one of the most spectacular places on earth. We are driven by immense respect and pride for our province and desire to conserve all that makes BC such a remarkable place. We want to say thank you. A new donor recognition program has been launched, which includes our "Ambassadors for Conservation" program and planned giving "Visionaries for Conservation" program. You may learn about these and other giving opportunities by calling Patrick Oswald at 604.924.9771 or 1.866.288.7878, or poswald@naturetrust.bc.ca

With the enactment of the Privacy and Protection Act, we are currently examining and implementing new policies with regard to collection use and disclosure of information. We fully respect the need for all personal information to be managed in your best interest. Our aim is to serve you well. If you have suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

As we move ahead into 2004, I am very privileged to work with a dedicated staff, inspiring Board and most of all, you our Friends in Conservation. Together we will ensure that we keep BC beautiful for future generations.

Yours in conservation,
Doug Walker
Executive Director

Staff News



Heather Kerr – Reception (and Lucky)

If you have called us lately, you have likely spoken to Heather Kerr. A life-long British Columbian, Heather has lived in the Cariboo-Chilcotin, the Bulkley Valley, North Okanagan and currently calls North Vancouver home. Employed in forestry for 8 years, Heather was attracted to The Nature Trust for its "balanced approach to conservation." She loves writing and reading, beading, hiking in the local parks and spending time at the family property in the North Okanagan back country with new family member Lucky.

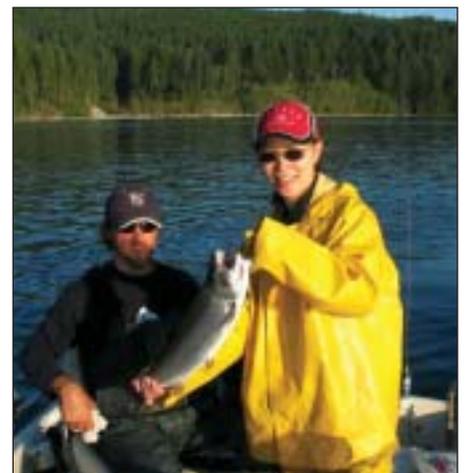


Robert Neil, R.P. – Land Manager, East Kootenays.

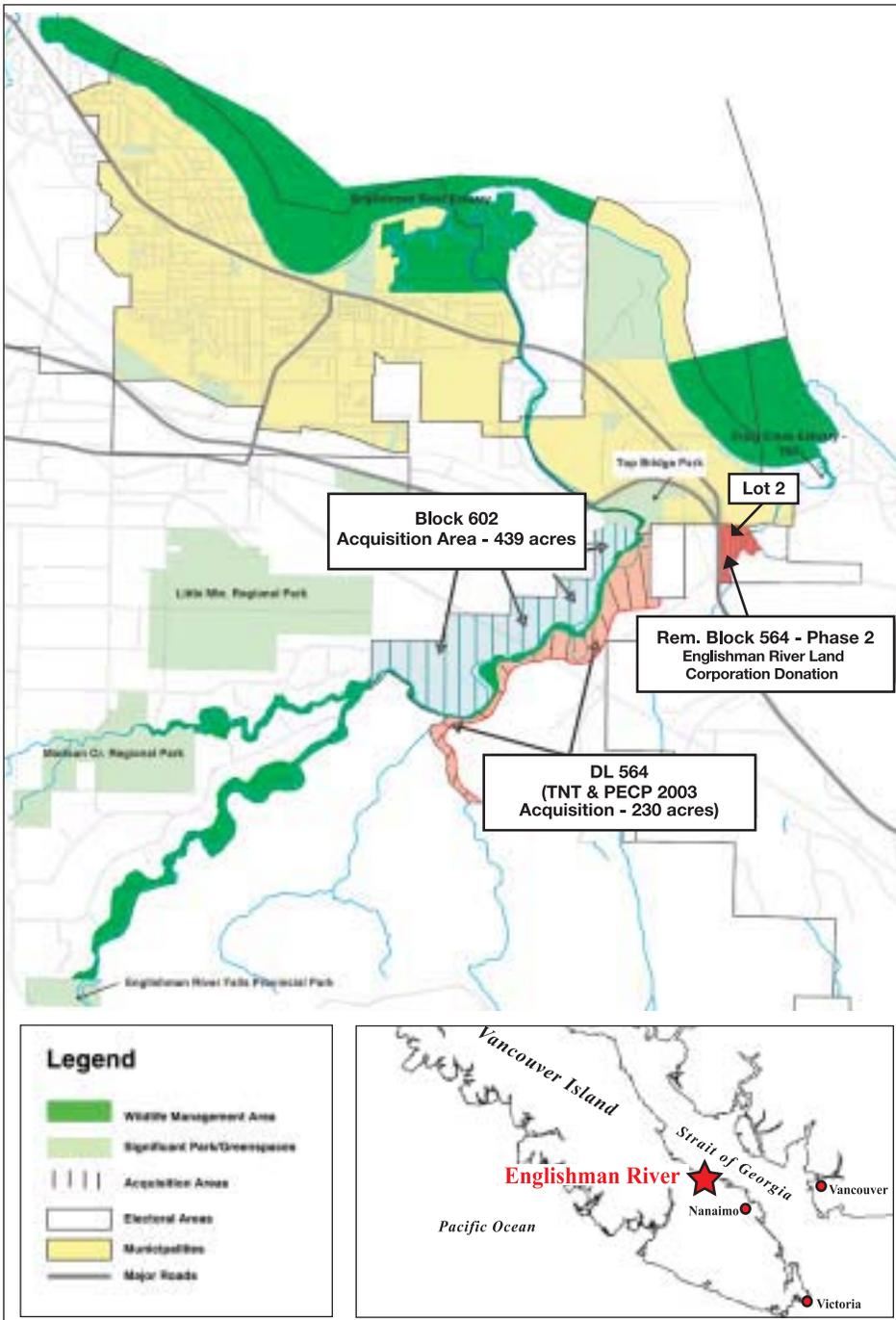
We are very pleased to welcome Rob Neil to The Nature Trust staff. Rob is a habitat conservation biologist with 28 years of operational experience in fish, wildlife, wildlife habitat, forestry and range management. Rob brings extensive experience in the areas of Forest Ecosystem, Regional Habitat, Fisheries, Planning and Habitat Conservation. Rob's duties as Land Manager, East Kootenays encompass being our local representative in the Kootenays, coordinating all aspects of site management including preparation and execution of

ecologically-based Management Plans, and supporting local community and outreach activities, including working with our valued volunteers and organizing donor field trips.

Sunipa "Nipa" Rassameeuthai was thrilled to catch her first fish ever in the coastal waters off Vancouver Island in 2003. Nipa began volunteering for The Nature Trust some three years ago, and now holds the position of Office/Finance Assistant.



2003 Englishman River Acquisition



A Great Show of Support

Patrick Oswald, our Leadership Giving Manager, was given a show of support for The Nature Trust's Ambassador for Conservation Program with a donation from his son Michael (and granddaughters Jessica, Kelly and Carly).



The Honourable
IONA V. CAMPAGNOLO, PC, CM, OBC
 Lieutenant Governor of BC
Honourary Patron

DONALD KROGSETH
Chairman of the Board & Chief Executive Officer

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How You Can Help The Nature Trust:

The Nature Trust of British Columbia is continuously seeking new ways to conserve British Columbia's most beautiful assets. We do this by purchasing and managing land from around BC, that our experienced and dedicated scientists, deem to be ecologically significant and most at risk.

In order to achieve this goal, we rely on the support of many individuals-people like you who also see the importance of our work.

For further information on how to help The Nature Trust keep BC beautiful, please contact us.

Testimonial

"Thank you for the excellent work you continue to do to protect such vulnerable areas in our province.

Mrs. Mary B. Pass Nanaimo, BC
 Long-time volunteer with Nanaimo's Morrell
 Nature Sanctuary (owned by The Nature Trust)