

A large herd of elk is gathered in a clearing within a forest. The elk are of various ages and sizes, with some males showing small antlers. They are standing on a patch of dry, yellowish-brown grass. In the background, there is a dense forest of tall, thin trees, likely birches, and several large, dark green evergreen trees. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

THE NATURE TRUST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

wild about nature

2013 ANNUAL REPORT



Board tour of the Okanagan Falls Biodiversity Ranch

honourary patron

The Honourable Judith Guichon, OBC
Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia

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directors emeriti

Carmen Purdy
Geoff Scudder, D Phil



At The Nature Trust of British Columbia we are Wild About Nature. For this reason, we have been conserving critical habitat for wildlife, fish and plants in BC since 1971.

2013 was a building year for The Nature Trust of BC. We completed a five-year strategic plan. This process provided an excellent opportunity for Board and staff to work together on reviewing and refining our vision and mission.

From there our goals and objectives were developed. These provided the framework for our annual operational plan going forward. Clearly, our strength as a non-profit comes from being a well-managed business.

Our organization places a high priority on operating in a fiscally responsible manner. We carry no debt and no mortgages and undertake yearly audits. We have an investment and finance committee to establish policies and review quarterly performances.

In 2013, we were pleased to participate in three Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

announcements. WMAs are conservation areas which include Crown land and private land leased to the Province. One of the priorities of The Nature Trust is to build conservation complexes at the landscape scale. The Nature Trust added land to the existing Parksville-Qualicum Beach WMA on Vancouver Island and contributed land to the establishment of two new WMAs: McTaggart-Cowan/nsək'łniw't WMA on the east side of Skaha Lake (named in honour of past director Ian McTaggart-Cowan) and Cranberry Marsh/Starratt WMA near Valemount. Developing collaborative partnerships has been at the core of our success.

We worked with three families to move conservation projects on Vancouver Island, the Okanagan and the Kootenays closer to completion. Each of these projects is in memory of a loved one. It's an honour to be creating these land conservation legacies.

Land acquisition is only half the story, we also need to manage and care for the

letter from the chair *a year in review*

vision

British Columbia's rich and diverse natural habitats are conserved for future generations

mission

The Nature Trust of British Columbia conserves the province's biological diversity through the securement and management of ecologically significant lands for plants, wildlife and people.



Snow Geese over Fraser River



John West at Twin Lakes Ranch Conservation Area

land. Our science team made a significant investment this year in the development of our White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch Management Plan which is anticipated to be completed in late 2014. This is a comprehensive prescription for an extensive conservation complex near Penticton.

Our Conservation Land Management team is the face of The Nature Trust in our communities. They handle the day to day issues related to our properties including restoration, access and education. Each summer our land managers oversee our Conservation Youth Crews. This program provides young people with employment while providing on-the-ground experience. What can be more important than building a conservation ethic in the next generation?

Your financial support makes our work possible. The backbone of our fundraising program is our Annual Campaign to raise undesignated dollars. These are the hardest dollars to raise and critical to our ongoing efforts. We hope that you will continue including The Nature Trust in your annual philanthropic plans.

Our fundraising events took place in Kelowna for the fifth annual Earth Wind Fire and Vancouver for several events including Dine for Nature, Wild About Nature Gala and Taste of Nature. Thank you to the many people who joined us. And for those who went the extra step to hold an event which benefited The Nature Trust, such as

the Garage Sale Luxury Auction House in Kelowna, we greatly appreciate it.

Our team enjoyed presenting at various festivals and community organizations across the province. If you have an opportunity where we can showcase the work of The Nature Trust, please contact our office.

I would like to express my gratitude to those who are planning to leave a gift in their will to The Nature Trust. You are our visionaries and I hope that you will let us know so we can express our gratitude. We are extremely honoured to receive bequests and to create a lasting legacy in memory through our land conservation work.

Under the new leadership of our CEO Dr. Jasper Lament, I wish to thank the staff for delivering on our mission so effectively. We are truly a place where people make a difference.

I am privileged to work with an outstanding Board who volunteer their expertise in conservation science and business to guide this outstanding organization. Everyone of us is Wild About Nature!

Whether it is watching a black bear meandering through the bush or a fish leaping out of a river, we are reminded of how important it is to protect their habitat. I hope you will join me in supporting the land conservation work of The Nature Trust in 2014 and for years to come.

—John West, Chair of the Board



"I make a monthly unrestricted contribution to The Nature Trust of BC because it is an easy way to support the preservation of nature and it allows the staff to allocate the funds to the greatest need."

—Rob Butler, PhD, Director,
The Nature Trust of BC

nature trust properties

The Nature Trust of BC's mandate is to:

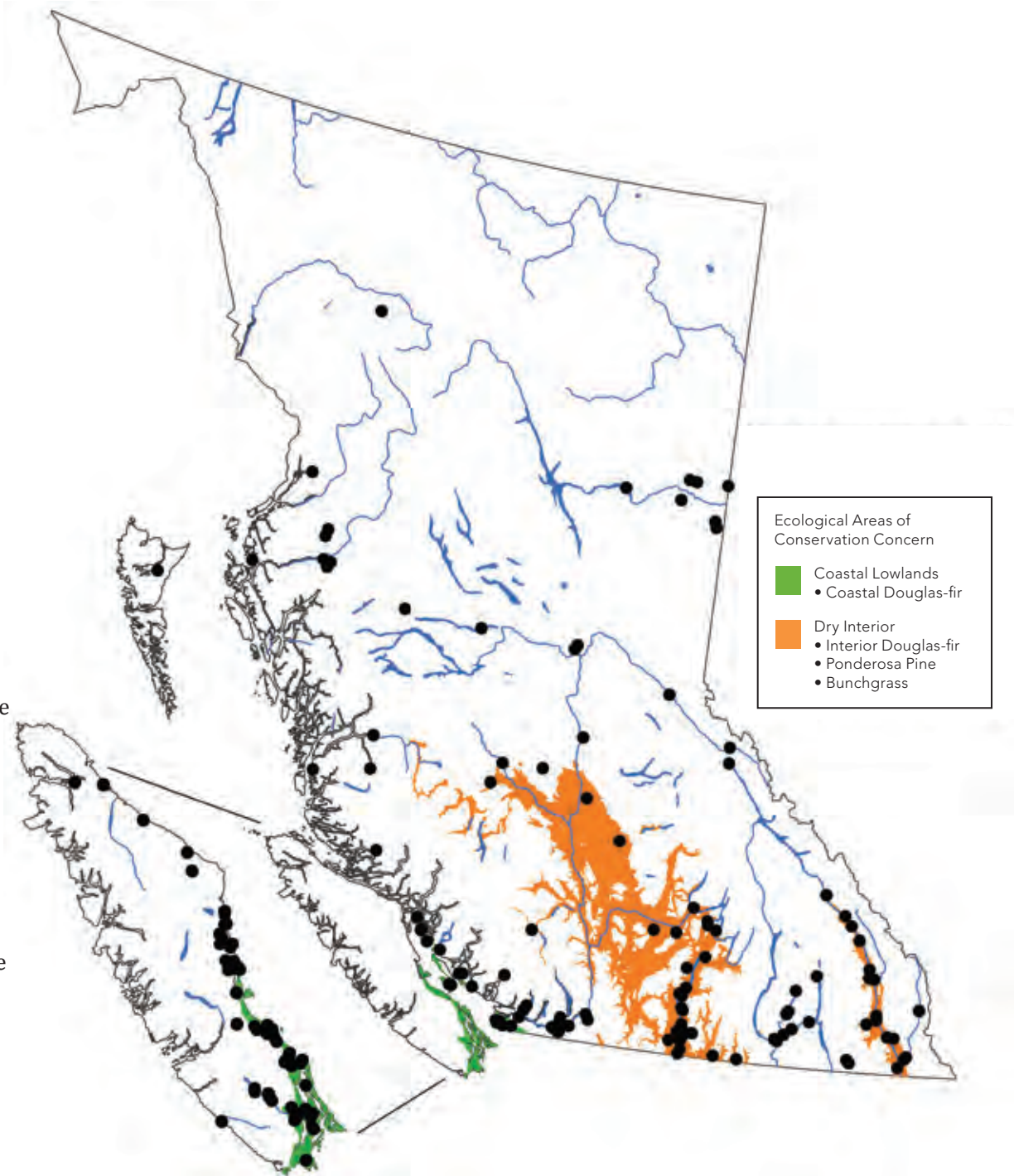
- secure habitats of high biodiversity values and at greatest risk of being lost; and
- manage conservation lands as part of landscapes to ensure ecosystem resilience and connectivity

Approximately 6% of the land base in BC is privately owned. This may seem like a small amount of land but there is a disproportionate number of species and ecosystems at risk in the low elevation areas such as valley bottoms and coastal lowlands where most of the private land is located. Perhaps not surprising because this is where most of the people live.

This is where The Nature Trust plays a significant role to acquire and manage private land for conservation. We work in partnership with other conservation organizations and various levels of government to put together land assemblages that will conserve functioning ecosystems and ecological processes.

The priority regions (or biogeoclimatic ecosystem classification zones) for The Nature Trust and where we proactively identify candidate properties to secure are:

- Coastal Douglas-fir—ranked exceptional/high
- Bunchgrass – ranked high
- Ponderosa Pine – ranked high
- Interior Douglas-fir—ranked high/medium





Lakelse Lake, North Coast

"We like helping The Nature Trust of BC because we feel a responsibility to look after our land and all the plants and animals on it. We are surrounded by the beauty and gifts of Mother Nature and we want to keep all of this the way it is for our families and the next generation."

—John Harvey



Smith Bog, North Coast



Susan Hannon

If you save it they will stay

By Susan Hannon, PhD, Director,
The Nature Trust of British Columbia

What is biodiversity?

Most people think that biodiversity means species diversity, but it is more than that. Biodiversity is the number, variety and variability of living organisms, the ecosystems where they occur and the processes that link them.

Did you know that British Columbia has more species than any other province or territory in Canada?

We have 50,000 species, give or take a few. BC has 66% of Canada's butterfly species, 70% of its freshwater fish, 76% of birds and 41% of its orchids. We also have many endemic species, those found only in BC, such as the Vancouver Island marmot and Taylor's saxifrage, a delicate plant found in rock crevices in northwestern BC.

Why do we have so many species?

Because we have so many ecosystems: from forested valley bottoms to alpine tundra, from grasslands to old growth forests, from tiny ponds to extensive wetlands and mighty rivers ending in the sea, from tide pools to sandy beaches. We have it all.

How are these species doing in BC?

Unfortunately little is known about most of the species in BC—only about 4,000 species have been assessed for conservation status and of these 43% are of provincial concern. This means that the populations of many species are declining. By looking at a map of where species are located we can immediately see the root cause of many of these declines. The highest numbers of species are located in the south of the province and on Vancouver

Island, which are also areas of highest human population density. Habitat for wild things has been lost because of forestry, overgrazing, agriculture, industrial development, invasion of non-native plants and animals, and development of urban and rural housing.

What is the best way to conserve species?

The answer is simple: conserve their habitats. By protecting their home places—where they den, nest, feed, and migrate—we can protect the species. And this is what The Nature Trust does. We focus our efforts on four main geographical areas in the province that have the highest number of species and the highest number of species at risk.

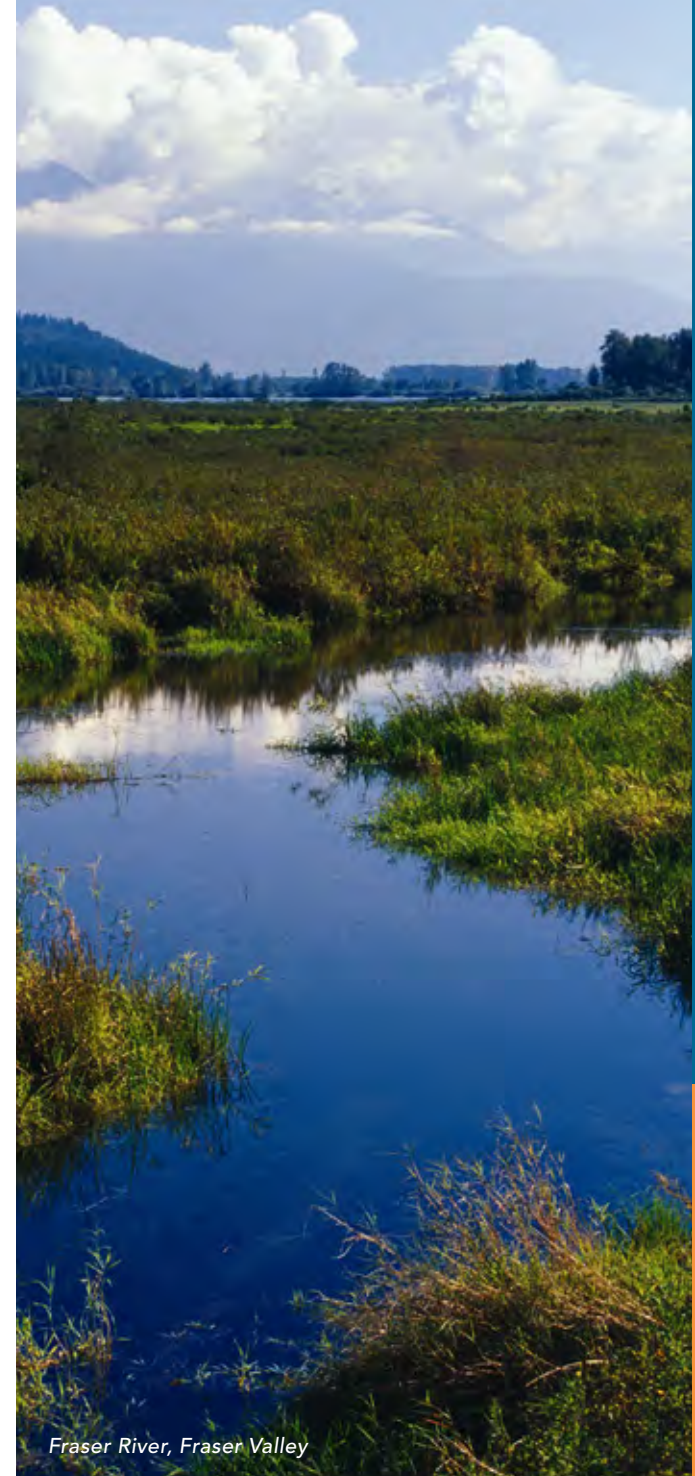
On the coast, The Nature Trust focuses on Coastal Douglas-fir, a zone found at low elevations on southeast Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and a small area on the mainland. This is the zone that contains the rare Garry Oak ecosystem. In the interior we focus on

three zones in the south of the province: Interior Douglas-fir, Ponderosa Pine, and Bunchgrass.

As well as these geographical zones, The Nature Trust conserves aquatic habitats. We have acquired wetlands along two of BC's mighty rivers, the Fraser and Columbia, thereby protecting the homes for waterfowl, songbirds, amphibians, elk, moose and a host of other organisms. Estuaries, where rivers meet the sea, are very productive because of nutrients mixing from sea and land and serve as nurseries for fish and aquatic invertebrates, and feeding areas for waterfowl and shorebirds. Protecting estuaries such as the Englishman River are important elements of The Nature Trust's efforts to create conservation complexes.

What can I do?

Help to save a home place for BC's species—donate today!



Fraser River, Fraser Valley

conservation land management in action

In 2013, a variety of important land management activities were conducted in all regions of the province by Conservation Land Management staff. These activities ranged from habitat monitoring and restoration, to sign installation, to facility maintenance and safety inspections. In several regions, Conservation Youth Crews were employed to assist with land management activities.



HSBC Bank Canada was the title sponsor of the Conservation Youth Crew program for the eighth year.

Other sponsors include BC Hydro, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Canada Summer Jobs (Service Canada), Ducks Unlimited Canada, Environment Canada through the Habitat Stewardship Program, Fish & Wildlife Conservation Program, the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Great-West Life, Shell Canada, and The Tony Cartledge Fund.



VANCOUVER ISLAND

- 3-person crew based in Nanaimo
- Worked on 15 conservation properties, controlling invasive plants, maintaining public use facilities, and restoration projects for species at risk.

Dawson Clermont, Vancouver Island

"Having the chance to work outdoors and make a positive impact on the environment is very rewarding."



LOWER MAINLAND

- 3-person crew based in Vancouver
- Worked on 13 conservation properties, removing rubbish, controlling invasive plants, and monitoring for species at risk.

Fiona Beaty, Lower Mainland

"I have learned tremendous amounts about plant identification, habitat biodiversity, conservation tactics, and processes and systems to do with the conservation industry."



KOOTENAY

- 4-person crew based in Cranbrook
- Worked on 16 conservation properties, restoring wildlife habitat, installing fencing, controlling invasive plants, and monitoring for species at risk.

Angus DeCosse, Kootenay

"Some things that I've learned are wildlife and land management techniques, fire suppression, how to use a chainsaw, and identification of local shrubs and trees."

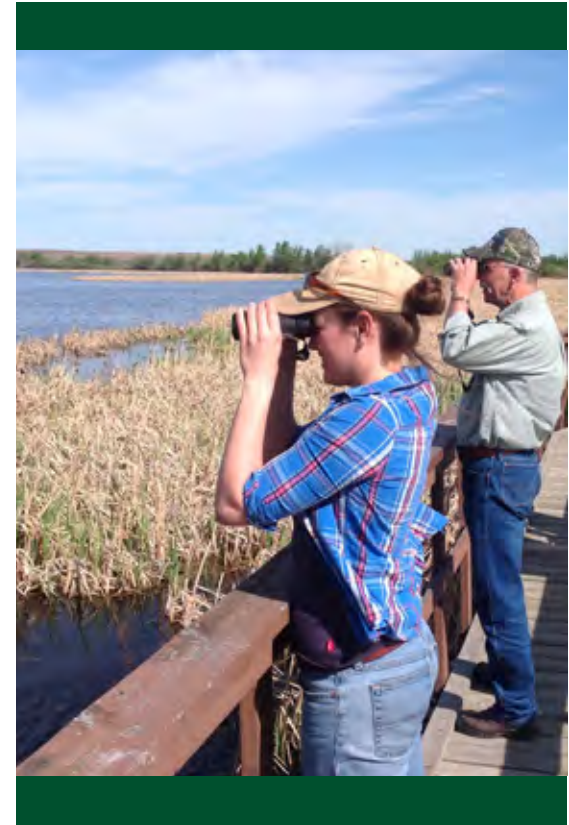


OKANAGAN

- 3-person crew based in Penticton
- Worked on 22 conservation properties, maintaining fencing, controlling invasive plants, and monitoring habitat restoration.

Anika Engel, Okanagan

"It is fascinating to be able to remove a noxious weed and see the effect this removal has on enhancing the natural ecosystem."



PEACE RIVER

- 3-person crew based in Dawson Creek
- Worked in partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada on 7 conservation properties, controlling invasive plants, restoring elk habitat, and maintaining wetland water levels.

Tristan Tyler, Peace River

"I was able to further my understanding on the conservation and management of waterfowl habitat and its associated flora and fauna as well as that of other ecosystems."

protecting our western painted turtles

The Western Painted Turtle is the only native pond turtle left in BC. It is named after the bright yellow stripes on its head, neck, tail and legs, and the red markings on the shell covering its belly and under the edge of the shell covering its back. The red and yellow patterns contrast with the olive green of the skin and dark colouring of the back shell. Its shell can grow as large as a dinner plate—25 cm long.

A cold-blooded reptile, the turtle regulates its temperature by basking on a variety of objects, often logs. Sometimes more than 50 can be seen on one log together. The turtle starts its day at sunrise, emerging from the water to bask for hours. Warmed for activity, it returns to the water to forage. After becoming chilled, the turtle re-emerges for more basking and feeding. At night, the turtle drops to the bottom of its water body or perches on an underwater object and sleeps.

The Western Painted Turtle is on the provincial blue list. This means they are considered vulnerable to habitat loss and disturbances. In 2013 surveys of the Western Painted Turtle *Chrysemys picta bellii* (Pacific Coast Population) were completed at identified wetland sites owned by The Nature Trust of BC on the eastern side of Vancouver Island: Dudley Marsh, Englishman River wetlands, Somenos Marsh, Orel Lake, Lazo Marsh and Northey Lake.

A total of 14 surveys were undertaken. This inventory also included an assessment of the habitat and made recommendations for future restoration activities.



PLANNING AND TURTLE MANAGEMENT

- Prevent the inadvertent loss of local unidentified turtle populations
- Solicit information for turtle sightings from local naturalist groups, stewardship groups, and general public
- Initiate a long-term monitoring program at identified sites and sites where restoration activities are undertaken

Results

- 14 surveys and habitat assessment completed at several wetland sites
- 18 nest attempt surveys completed at Buttertubs Marsh in Nanaimo
- 2 project signs and 2 interpretive signs installed soliciting public participation in monitoring

PROTECTION

- Identify and protect existing critical habitat features at occupied sites
- Enhance/create safe nesting and basking areas away from roads and other areas of high turtle mortality

Results

- 4 basking logs installed in West Marsh (Buttertubs) complimenting 12 logs installed in Buttertubs
- 2 nesting areas constructed



Chilanko Marsh, Interior



Worth Marsh, Peace River



Smith Island, North Coast



Addington Point Marsh, Fraser Valley

signs of conservation across bc



Vaseux Lake, Okanagan



Kitsumkalum Lake, North Coast



Travelling by boat to install a sign



Chilliwack River, Fraser Valley

the importance of conservation complexes



Englishman River Block 564 (on left side) with Block 602 (on right side)

The Nature Trust of BC played a key role in the groundbreaking report *Taking Nature's Pulse: The Status of Biodiversity in British Columbia*. One of the key findings is the need to retain large contiguous or connected areas.

As stated in the report: "Unlike many jurisdictions in the world, BC still has relatively large areas of 'wild' ecosystems where natural or near-natural ecological processes such as predator-prey dynamics remain largely intact. The large contiguous and connected areas that support these natural ecosystems provide critical habitat for a wide variety of species. These areas are valued locally, provincially, nationally and globally, and efforts have been made to map and characterize them by various

organizations and agencies. Protected areas and the natural and semi-natural matrix, where they exist, can be combined to retain large contiguous or connected areas."

"As you drive along BC's highways you often see wildlife such as deer and bears. These roads create barriers for wildlife to roam as well as significant hazards," says Marian Adair, Habitat Ecologist for The Nature Trust of BC. "Roads are only one of many ways wildlife habitat gets fragmented."

Recognizing the importance of creating conservation complexes for the health of fish and wildlife, The Nature Trust of BC has been working to acquire adjoining properties and also to acquire land adjacent to other conservation



Englishman River Estuary

lands for many years.

An example of such a conservation complex is the Englishman River in Parksville on Vancouver Island. This project has taken place over 30 years and encompassed a wide range of partners from individual donors and stewardship groups to companies and land owners as well as a variety of tools, including fee simple acquisitions and conservation covenants.

In 2013 approximately 93 hectares (230 acres) were added to the Parksville-Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area, increasing its overall size to 1,245 hectares (3,075 acres). These new additions, comprised of land owned by The Nature Trust of BC and leased to the Ministry of Forests, Lands and

Natural Resource Operations, include a five-kilometre stretch of riparian habitat along the Englishman River which will help sustain a sensitive steelhead trout fishery and protect community water supplies.

“The Nature Trust was proud to work with the Province and all local governments in making this addition to the Parksville-Qualicum Beach WMA possible,” Dr. Jasper Lament, CEO of The Nature Trust of BC.

“The addition of 93 hectares of Nature Trust lands to the WMA is another milestone in over 30 years of partnership-driven conservation in the Englishman River watershed and estuary. Together we are working to protect the fish and wildlife habitat at the landscape scale.”

englishman river summary

- 1978 first property acquired—5 hectare (1.2 acres) at Top Bridge
- 1981 to 1992 estuary properties acquired—67.6 hectares (167 acres)
- 2003 property known as Block 564 acquired—93.1 hectares (230 acres)
- 2003 to 2005 property known as Block 602 acquired—132.8 hectares (328 acres)
- 2004 Englishman River/Craig Creek acquired 12.4 hectares (31 acres)
- 2009 conservation covenant—9.6 hectares (24 acres) donated by TimberWest



Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan



Bighorn sheep



Ian McTaggart-Cowan with Bighorn sheep skull

The McTaggart-Cowan/nsək'łniw't Wildlife Management Area honours renowned conservationist, the late Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan who was a director of The Nature Trust of BC for 33 years. This Wildlife Management Area conserves 6,491 hectares (16,033 acres) of habitat, including Crown land and property owned by The Nature Trust of BC. The area is important for protecting species at risk and their habitats in the South Okanagan, most notably California bighorn sheep.

The site is important to the Penticton Indian

honouring a conservation legend

Band who provided a Syilx language name for the site. The word, nsək'łniw't, is roughly translated as “a gash on the side.” The name refers to the portion of the trail used by First Nations winding up and alongside a steep walled canyon south of the Skaha Bluffs for travel, trade, and to access medicine gathering areas.

Special thanks to the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resource Operations, Penticton Indian Band and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation for supporting this Wildlife Management Area.



Board at Wildlife Management Area plaque



Wildlife Management Area plaque



Alice Arm, North

"I have always enjoyed spending time outdoors in pristine areas doing a myriad of activities and have enjoyed many of the properties that The Nature Trust of BC has been involved in protecting. I appreciate all the hard work that goes into protecting these special places."

—David Tilley, Creative Vessel



Board, staff and friends on field trip in the Okanagan



Brant Wildlife Festival



Kootenay field trip

nature trust community events



Earth Wind Fire 2013



Herring Spawn Tour



Wild About Nature Gala



Parksville-Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area announcement



Earth Wind Fire 2013



Victoria lunch and learn

*nature trust
community events*



Wild About Nature Gala



East Kootenay appreciation lunch



Brant Wildlife Festival

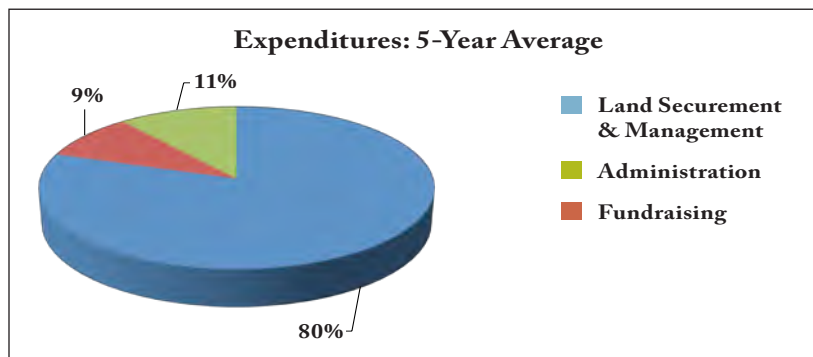


Alice Arm, North

our business

In 2013 we focused our attention on securing funds for property acquisitions which will complete in 2014, while spending \$1,278,000 on conservation land management. This would not have been possible without the generous financial support of our donors and partners who contributed \$2,854,000 to The Nature Trust of British Columbia during the year.

We were also able to increase our net assets by \$4,166,000, while contributing \$1,141,000 to our endowment fund.



Over the past 5 years we have spent 20% of donated funds on administration and fundraising. This means 80 cents of every dollar donated goes to the protection of nature in BC.

| December 31, 2013 and 2012 | 2013 | 2012 |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| ASSETS | | |
| Cash and receivables | 882,000 | 596,000 |
| Investments | 17,640,000 | 13,748,000 |
| Capital assets | 583,000 | 599,000 |
| Properties | 80,153,000 | 80,149,000 |
| | 99,258,000 | 95,092,000 |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Current | 57,000 | 106,000 |
| Deferred revenue | 1,429,000 | 423,000 |
| Net assets | 97,772,000 | 94,563,000 |
| | 99,258,000 | 95,092,000 |
| INCREASE IN NET ASSETS | 4,166,000 | 6,594,000 |

This statement has been derived from the complete audited financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012.

Leaving a gift in your Will to The Nature Trust of British Columbia is a very special way to leave a lasting legacy to nature and reflect your commitment to land conservation. The Nature Trust was very honoured to receive estates and donations in memory from kind donors in 2013.

Estates

Martin Holloway
Erika Lockwood
Charles Evered Poole
Barbara Sedgwick
Janet Wright

"It has been a pleasure to begin working for The Nature Trust of BC in Leadership Giving. I came from a fundraising background in the field of education. As it turns out, my job with The Nature Trust is still about education. I have had the privilege of learning about the important work of The Nature Trust and sharing this with others. The more people know about what we do to protect our province's natural diversity of plants and animals, the more inspired they are to help us acquire and look after magnificent properties to save species at risk. It is great work and an incredible cause. I hope you will join me in spreading the word and supporting The Nature Trust of BC."

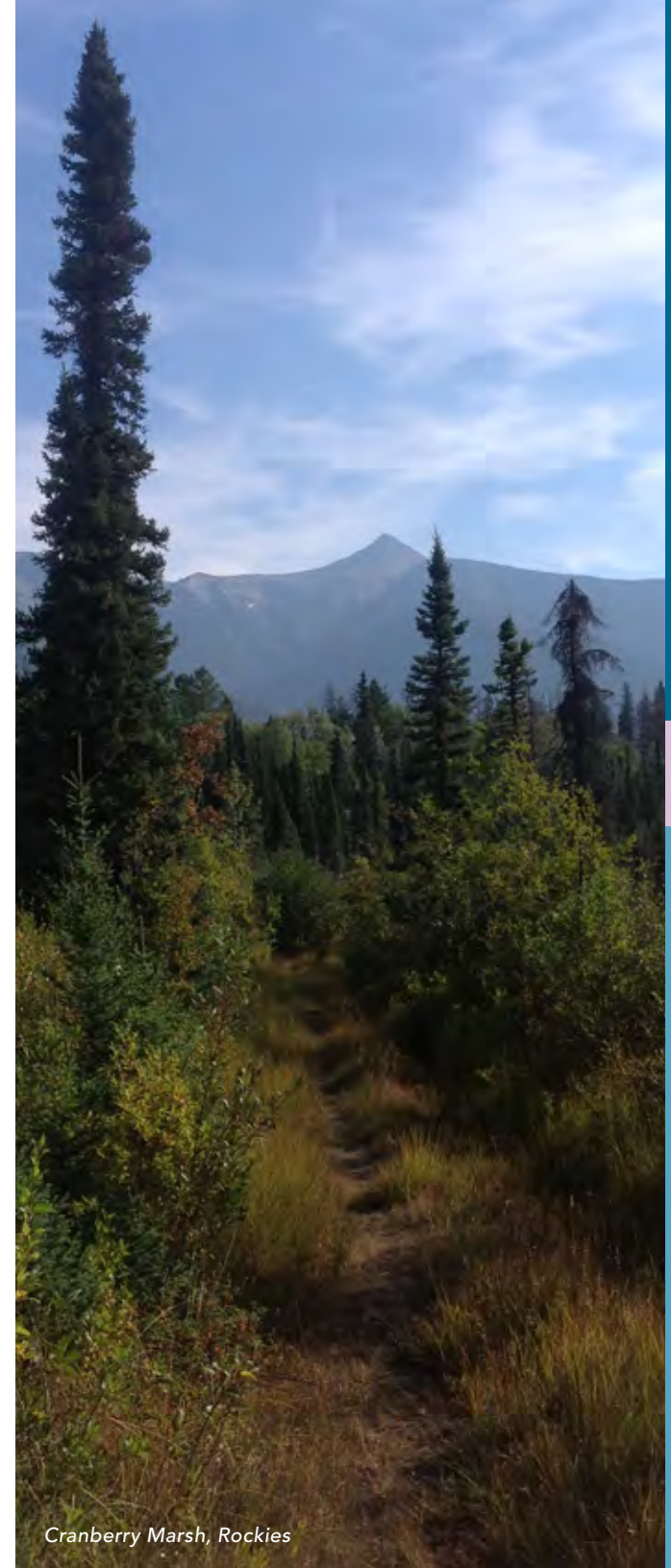
Steve Housser
Leadership Giving

In Memory

Dr. Bert Brink
Gordon Christopher
Judy Davis
James Heighton Dwyer
Angela Evans
David Graham

John Graham
Fred Hochachka
Halvor Lunden
Carey Douglas McAllister
Hume McLennan
Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan

Doug Milligan
Barbara Sedgwick
Edward Gerard Shea
Ann Williams
John Woodworth
Laurie



Cranberry Marsh, Rockies

individual donors

Our achievements are shared with many individuals who care about conservation as much as we do. We want to thank individual donors in 2013.

Amir Adani
 Judith Albert
 David & Diana Aldcroft
 David Allard
 Lindsay Allen
 Tod & Teresa Alstad
 Gary Anaka
 Ron & Diane Anderson
 Mark & Kathie Angelo
 Olin & Suzanne Anton
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Erling Grenager
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 Eileen Husted
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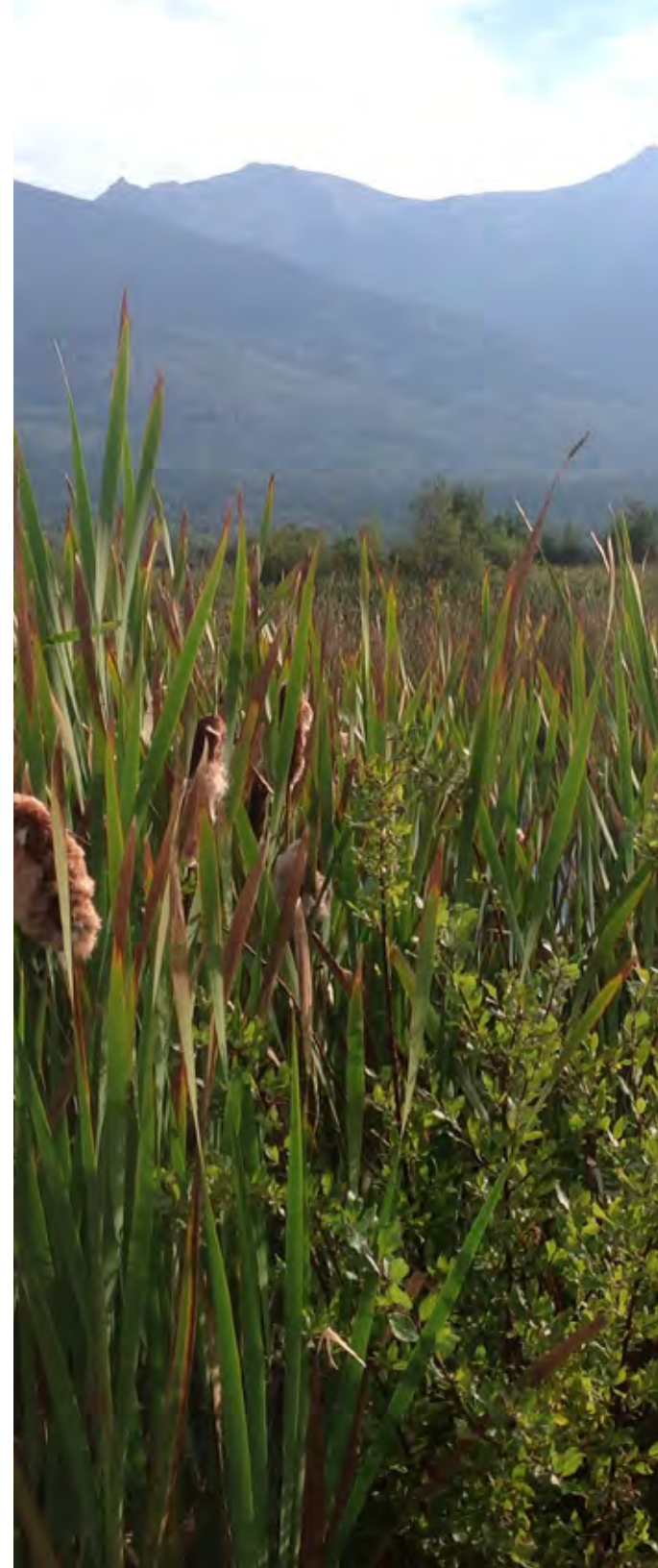
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