



ANNUAL REPORT  2017

THE NATURE TRUST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA





*The Nature Trust of BC CEO Jasper Lament and his son*

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“The Nature Trust protects and preserves so many species that need our help. And as we help other species, we help ourselves and our children and their children and so on—forever. What greater legacy can anyone strive for and be part of?”

—Ross Beaty, Advisory Board



## 2017 A Year to Celebrate

- 1 We launched a new logo
- 1 We launched a new website with a searchable map of conservation properties
- 2 Massive multi-year estuary & wetland restoration projects started to benefit fish & wildlife
- 6 New conservation properties will protect wildlife & plants
- 14 Conservation Youth Crew members hired
- 47 Years of conservation success
- 76 Properties enhanced
- 400 Volunteers helped on conservation lands & at events

### Results

- 70,000 Hectares (175,000 acres) conserved & protected
- 96,000,000 Dollars invested since 1971 with the support of our partners



*Nature Trust conservation lands at Scout Island in Williams Lake*

## BC's Land Conservation Solution

BY RON ANDERSON, CHAIR OF THE BOARD

It is my pleasure as Chair to report on the successes of The Nature Trust of BC, a leader in land conservation in this province. Our outstanding conservation achievements in 2017 will benefit British Columbians for years to come.

### Protecting our land

This year we built on our 47 years of vision and focus to protect lands by adding six new properties to our conservation portfolio—a success story that brings our investment in conserving land in British Columbia to more than \$96 million and protects more than 70,000 hectares (175,000 acres).

We added the Bull River Grassland Corridor and the Lardeau-Duncan property in the Kootenays and Skaha Lake Eastside in the Okanagan to existing conservation complexes as part of our acquisition strategy to protect critical habitat for wildlife.

We also received two donations of land in recognition of the work we do: one at Northey Lake on Vancouver Island and the other at Turtle Pond in the Okanagan.

## Caring for our land

Protecting our land also means caring for it and we have made significant investments in restoring our properties and keeping them in good condition. An excellent example of our commitment to land management is the work we are doing at the Englishman River estuary on Vancouver Island where The Nature Trust along with our conservation partners have begun a 5-year project to restore the estuary. Estuaries provide many benefits including storing carbon to mitigate climate change, purifying water, and providing habitat for fish and wildlife. But they are vulnerable. During the past 30 years dikes, roads, residential development, ditching and industrial use have seriously impacted the Englishman River estuary's ability to function.

The levels of stewardship and care are becoming increasingly complex which in turn demands resources in Nature Trust staffing, our Board of Directors and expert advisors.

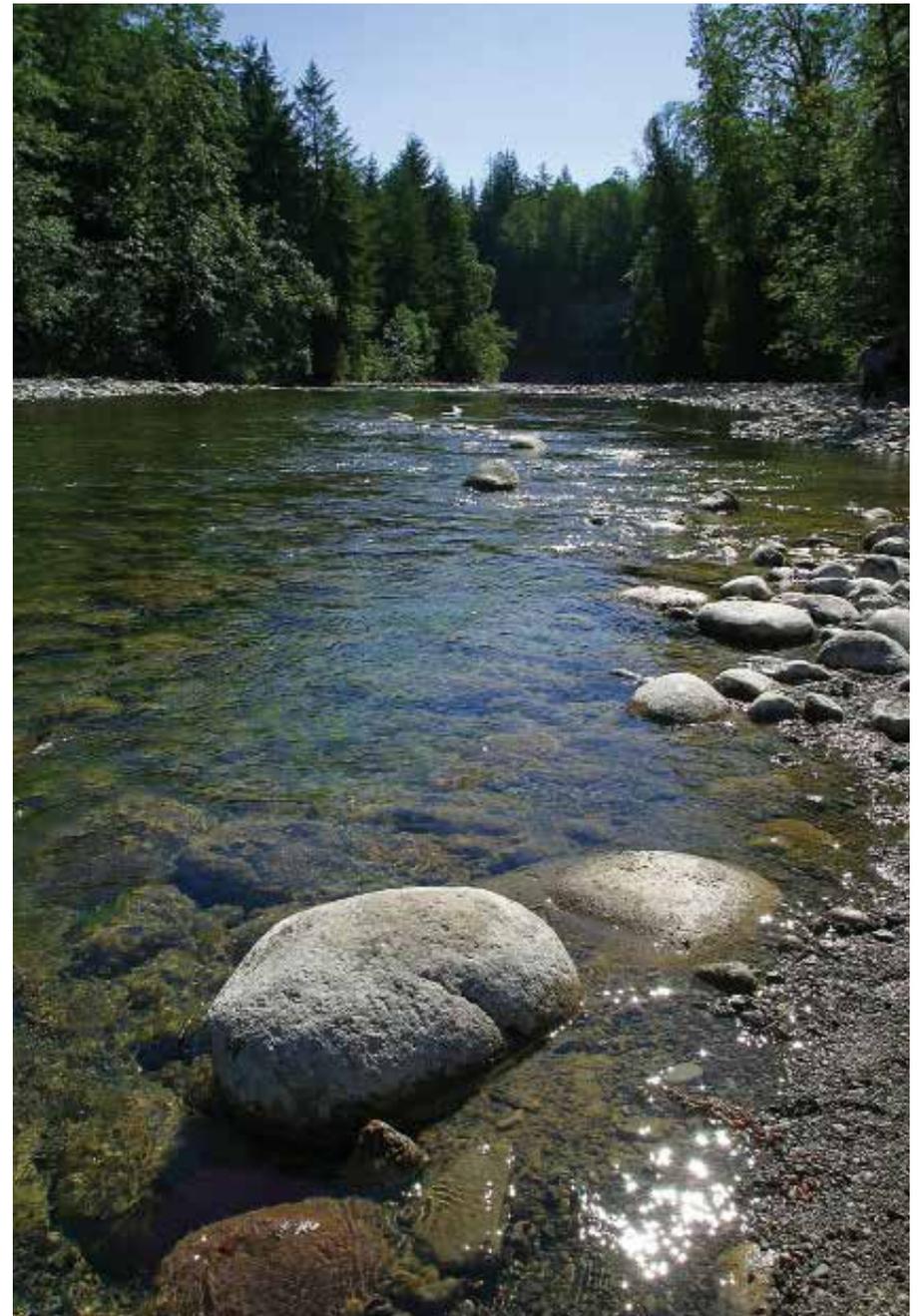
I am very proud of our Conservation Youth Crew program. For the past 19 years, college and university students have stepped up to help The Nature Trust protect and care for our land. In turn, they have had the opportunity to learn first-hand about land conservation work, while earning summer employment. Many of these crew members have gone on to complete their degrees and find careers in conservation. Speaking to the value of this program, five members of our Conservation Youth Crew team have joined the staff at The Nature Trust of BC.

## The Nature Trust's new look

In this Annual Report I'm also proud to introduce you to the fresh new look of The Nature Trust.

Our marketing team enthusiastically tackled the project of a brand refresh with the launch of a new logo that is modern and distinctive and which embodies: Nature (what we do) Trust (how we do it) and British Columbia (where we do it).

Our new website was launched and all our communication materials are rolling out with the new design. These initiatives are part of a wider effort to keep our donors, supporters and prospective donors informed and engaged as we build a sustainable future for The Nature Trust of BC.



*Nature Trust conservation lands on the Englishman River on Vancouver Island*



Nature Trust's Wycliffe Wildlife Corridor in the Kootenays

## Community engagement

Canada's 150th celebrations were an opportunity to share our founding story—how The Nature Trust of BC came to be in 1971 thanks to funding from the Federal Government.

Our Nature Trust staff told our story at speaking engagements across the province. They also invited communities to experience the hands-on work of maintaining our lands and they held two successful fundraisers: Earth Wind Fire in Kelowna and our annual Vancouver Fall Gala.

Vision, dedication to our mandate, our collaborative partnerships, and the support of our donors are at the heart of our conservation success. But there's more work to do.

Here's what Dr. Susan Hannon, one of the scientists on our Board of Directors, had to say about what she hopes The Nature Trust will look like in the next 50 years:

"I'd like The Nature Trust to quadruple their land holdings to form large connected reserves of critical habitat for BC's iconic and rare plants and animals. I'd like my grandchildren to be able to walk kilometers among the flowers in Garry oak meadows, to see Lewis's Woodpeckers in old Ponderosa pine and cottonwood forests, and elk and Bighorn Sheep foraging in the shrub and grasslands in interior Douglas-fir. I want them to be able to watch millions of salmon fighting their way up streams and rivers to spawn. This will be the legacy of The Nature Trust of BC."

I have the privilege of working with an amazing team including our

dedicated staff under the leadership of CEO Jasper Lament and our volunteer Board of scientists and business leaders who have helped me chart a path for the future. One of those individuals is Rob Neil who after 14 years retired from his position as The Nature Trust's Kootenay Conservation Land Manager. We extend our appreciation to Rob for his hard work and dedication. I am also grateful to John West for extending his term on the Board of Directors and continuing to share his valuable knowledge and support with The Nature Trust.

I want to thank all those who have generously recognized and supported The Nature Trust through donations in your wills, by attending events, by volunteering and by making designated gifts for major projects. We're grateful that you've also donated to support the work we do every day—often "unsung" but vital undesignated funds which help pay for our daily operations and which are always the hardest to raise. And every single dollar you have contributed stays right here in British Columbia.

One of the reasons that I joined The Nature Trust is because this not-for-profit organization places a high priority on sound fiscal management. In addition to our annual audit, our Investment Committee meets quarterly to review financial results in comparison to established benchmarks. We are well positioned for the future, but to create our conservation vision for the next 50 years we will need your continued support.

We are focused on our mission to continue to make The Nature Trust a driving force in protecting, caring and conserving land for all British Columbians. We hope you will join us by including The Nature Trust in your philanthropic plans.

# Conservation Lands

The black dots on this map are The Nature Trust of BC's conservation land complexes.

The Nature Trust of BC's mandate is to:

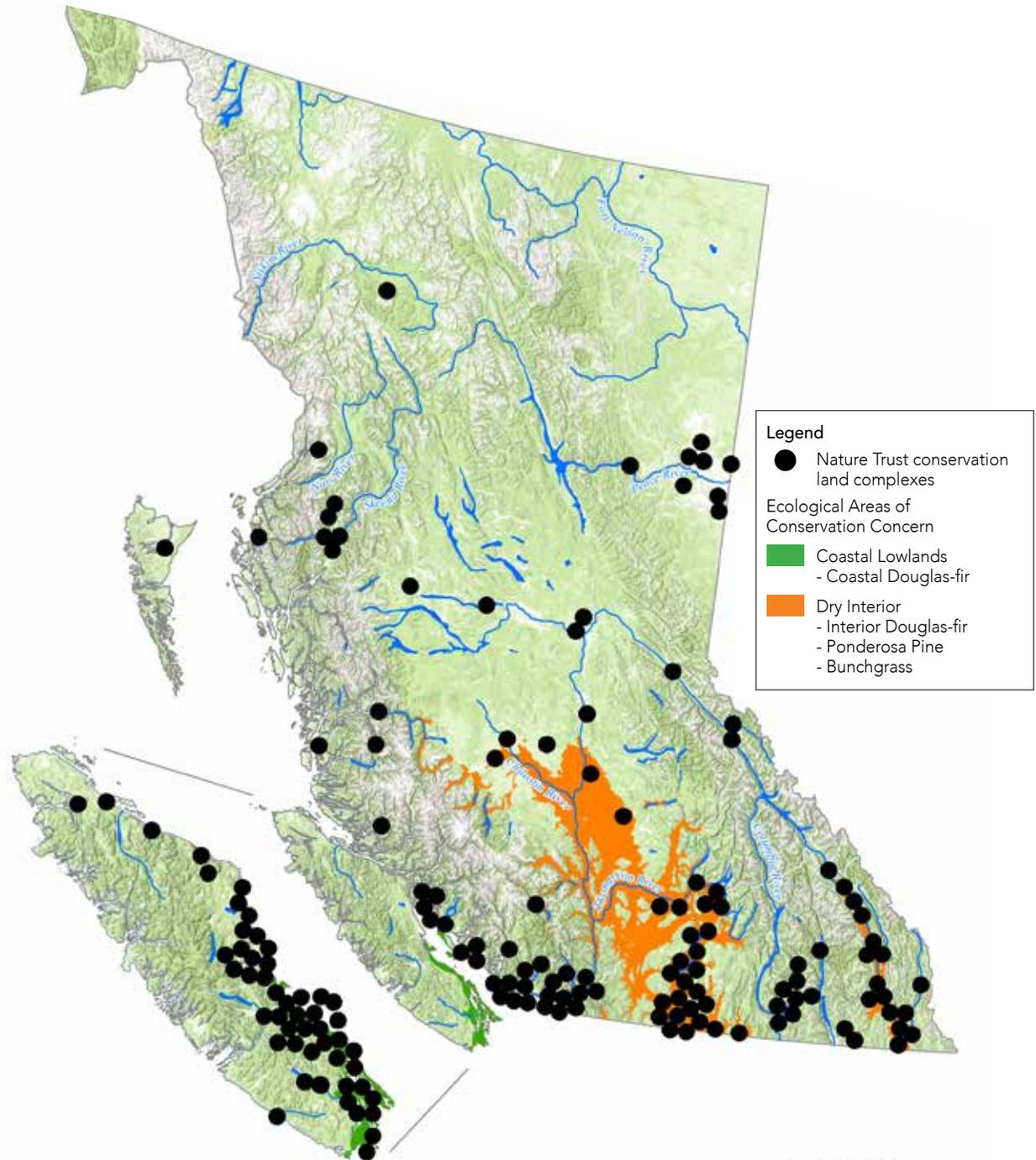
- secure habitats of high biodiversity values and at greatest risk of being lost; and
- manage conservation lands as part of landscapes to ensure ecosystem resilience and connectivity

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 are:

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



## New Land Acquisitions

### Northey Lake Phase III

4.7 Acres

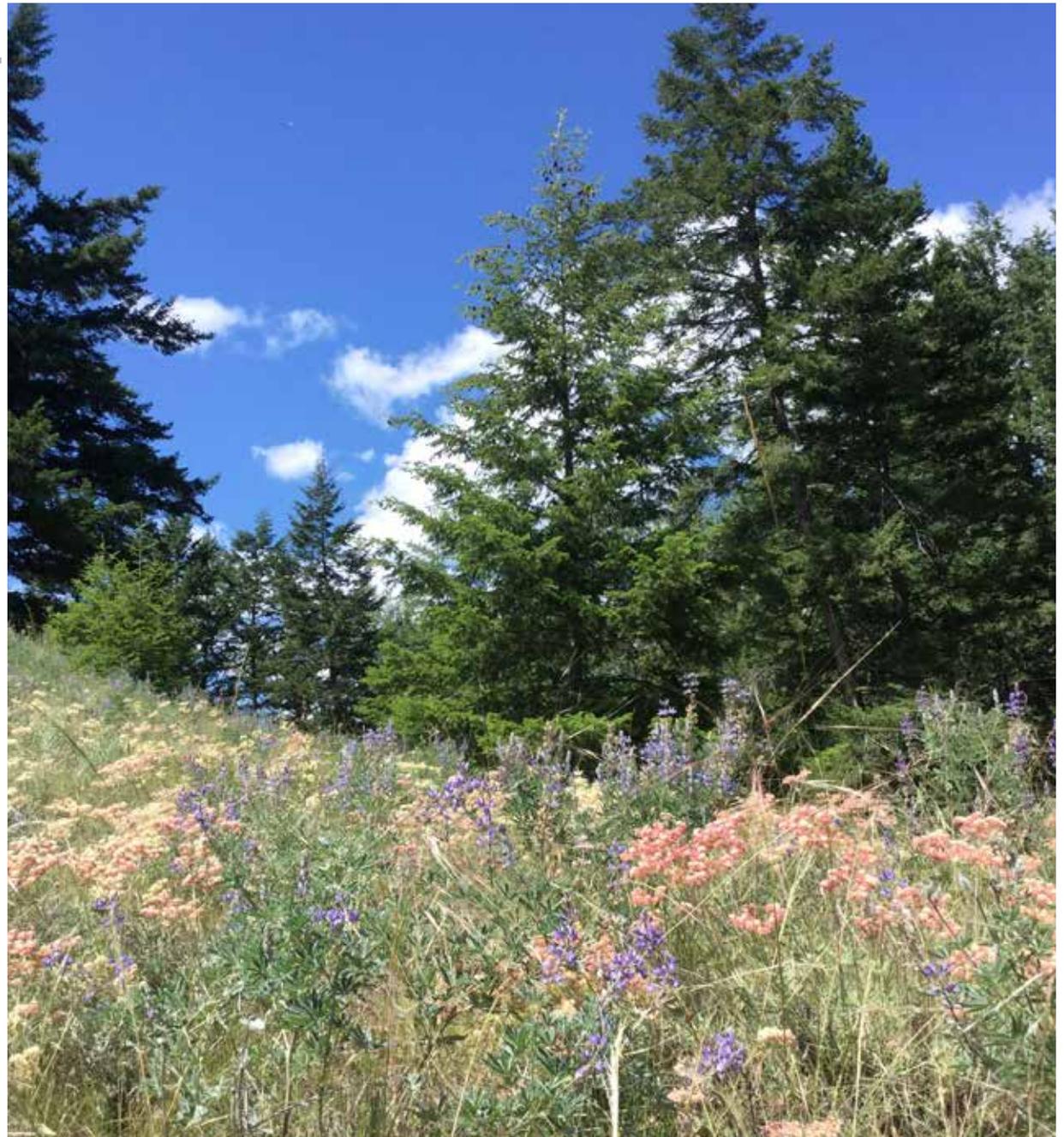
This property on Vancouver Island was very kindly donated by someone who loves this land and wants to make sure it will be a healthy place for Roosevelt Elk, Black Bear, Wolf and Cougar as well as a variety of birds and frogs.



## White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch Turtle Pond

0.3 Acre

This property in the Okanagan was donated through a very generous gift in a will so that it could continue to provide a safe place for Painted Turtles and Great Blue Herons to live.





## New Land Acquisitions

### Skaha Lake Eastside Lot C

87.5 Acres

"This property is one of the last remaining undeveloped benchlands on the eastside of Skaha Lake," says Nicholas Burdock, The Nature Trust of BC's Okanagan Conservation Land Coordinator. "It takes you only a few steps to recognize how beautiful this location is and why it is so important that it remain in a natural state. There are many rare plants and animals including Bighorn Sheep and White-throated Swifts that rely on this landscape; it really is a special place to conserve in the South Okanagan."



## Lardeau-Duncan Meadow Creek South

77.7 Acres

This property on the floodplain of the Duncan River in the West Kootenay supports a variety of fish while the forest and marshy areas are ideal for Great Blue Herons, Grizzly Bears, and Western Toads.





# New Land Acquisitions

## Bull River Grassland Corridor

167.4 Acres

It takes a community to make good things happen like the acquisition of this property in the East Kootenay to protect winter range for elk and deer, and a core area for the “Bull River” herd of 120 Bighorn Sheep. It is also home to American Badgers and Grizzly Bears.



# Our Conservation Youth Crews

Each summer The Nature Trust of BC hires students and other young people to join our Conservation Youth Crews. The crews are based on Vancouver Island, Lower Mainland, Okanagan and Kootenays, and supervised by regional Conservation Land Managers. They have the chance to learn about land conservation while undertaking critical projects on 76 Nature Trust properties. They restore habitat, install signs, remove invasive plants, and monitor wildlife and plants. They gain skills such as how to use power tools, GIS technology, learn about the challenges of working outdoors in all kinds of weather, and how to work as a team. After they finish their education, many of them go on to careers in conservation and five have joined our staff.

“I love working outdoors and working with my hands. I am also studying conservation and I love to be able to have a job where I can help out the environment.”

—Brittany Bonapace, Lower Mainland Crew

“The Nature Trust of BC is an organization that looks out for everyone and everything from small habitats of rodents and badgers to ungulates, bears and humans.”

—Kaylin Salanski, Kootenay Crew

In 2017 The Nature Trust was pleased to have the support of BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Canada Summer Jobs (Service Canada), Caritate Foundation, Chris Cornborough, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program, Great-West Life, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, and The Tony Cartledge Fund to help fund the crews.





*Wetland basins created at The Nature Trust's Bummers Flats property*

## Restoring Kootenay Wetlands

BY CHRIS BOSMAN, KOOTENAY CONSERVATION LAND MANAGER

From wetlands to agricultural fields, back to wetlands—it's an unlikely story but one for which nature thanks us!

It is not unusual for conservation lands to have served different purposes than they currently serve in safeguarding BC's biodiversity and wildlife habitat. In the Kootenay region, several of The Nature Trust's conservation lands had former lives as ranches, or Christmas tree and potato farms. At one time, the Bummers Flats property at Cherry Creek near Cranbrook was a cattle ranch, where much of the land was used as pasture and hayfields within the Kootenay River floodplain.

Parts of the property were converted from wetlands to agricultural fields, dating back to the 1940s. Earthcrawlers, an early version of bulldozers, were used to clear the land, drain it, and raise and smooth the fields so that tractors could easily seed the fields and cut hay. In the process, many invaluable wetlands were lost.

In 1985, The Nature Trust purchased the property from the Madison family. In 2015, The Nature Trust and our partners hired Tom Biebighauser, a wetland restoration expert. A plan and budget were drawn up and several key partners committed to funding a three-year wetland restoration project.

The goal was to restore the fields to a complex of wetlands that would have existed prior to their conversion. Wetlands support an incredible diversity of plant and animal species, and serve many natural functions such as filtration, flood control and re-charging of ground water. The project was primarily designed to improve biodiversity and wildlife habitat values, including those for endangered species such as the Northern Leopard Frog.

In October 2016, heavy equipment once again returned to the Bummers Flats property. But this time bulldozers, loaders and excavators were used to rebuild wetlands. Under the direction of project manager, Robin Annschild, 25 important wetlands were restored. In 2017, a similar number of wetlands were restored in different areas of the property.

By excavating depressions in the fields, lining them with clay found on-site and compacting the material, wetland basins returned to the Bummers Flats property. The wetlands have varying depths, shapes and features such as loafing logs for turtles and small islands. Filled by snowmelt, rainwater and the slow percolation of ground water, the wetlands became a functioning ecosystem almost immediately.

“It has been incredible to see how quickly nature re-establishes itself following restoration work. We are looking forward to implementing the final year of the work plan in the fall of 2018.”

—Chris Bosman

After just two years, the restored wetlands are full of life. Vegetation is growing in the disturbed soils. The tracks of deer, elk and Grizzly Bear are commonly seen along the edges of the wetlands. Meanwhile, in the spring and fall, dozens of waterfowl and shorebirds congregate in the wetlands.

The Nature Trust wishes to recognize all partners, stakeholders and individuals who have made this project possible. Multi-year funders include the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, and Environment and Climate Change Canada’s National Wetland Conservation Fund. BC Wildlife Federation has also been an extremely important partner, providing technical assistance and additional funding.



*Working to build one of the largest wetland basins in the project*



*Restored wetlands a year after they were created*

# Community Events



Earth Wind Fire 2017 in Kelowna



Young Leaders Event



Boundary Bay clean up with Teekay



Fall Gala in Vancouver



Planting trees with the Christopher family in the Okanagan



Brant Wildlife Festival



Nature Trust's Mount Maxwell property on Salt Spring Island

## Financial Highlights

2017 was a year of conservation success due to the generous support of donors and partners, with returns for our investment portfolio surpassing our benchmark. We secured \$2,988,000 in property holdings and spent a further \$1,276,000 on land management.

Over the past 47 years, we have built our business based on prudent fiscal management. We are proud to report our net assets increased by \$4,968,000 while contributing \$259,000 to our endowment fund and \$732,000 to our land management fund.

Every dollar raised by The Nature Trust stays in BC!

### Summarized Statements of Financial Position

December 31, 2017 and 2016	2017	2016
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and receivables	911,000	3,781,000
Investments	25,598,000	20,451,000
Capital assets	548,000	553,000
Properties	96,963,000	93,976,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	124,020,000	118,761,000
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current	61,000	64,000
Deferred revenue	2,767,000	2,473,000
Net Assets	121,192,000	116,224,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	124,020,000	118,761,000
<b>INCREASE IN NET ASSETS</b>	4,968,000	11,297,000

This statement has been derived from the complete audited financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016.



Nature Trust's Wycliffe Wildlife Corridor

## Journey with Us

BY DEB KENNEDY, DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

Walking up the grassy hill, the wind was blowing hard and the clouds were dark and foreboding. Despite the ominous weather, I was excited to climb to the top. Nature greeted me along the way. Wildflowers were scattered over the grass covered terrain. An eagle soared in the sky. I took a moment to soak up the incredible vista before me.

The Wycliffe Prairies rolled out to the north, with the St. Mary River Valley and impressive Purcell Mountain Range to the west, the hills of the City of Cranbrook to the south and the majestic Steeples Range of the Rocky Mountains to the east.

I was standing in the middle of the Rocky Mountain Trench, exploring one of our new conservation lands: the Wycliffe Wildlife Corridor.

### Species Survival

Protecting these vast landscapes is essential for the survival of large mammals such as elk, Bighorn Sheep and Grizzly Bear. They need large tracts of land to roam, feed and have their young, especially in light of climate change.

BC is the most biologically diverse province in Canada. In fact, there are estimated to be more than 50,000 species in this province. Some of the world's largest populations of species are found right here—25% of Grizzly Bears, 30% of Bald Eagles and 60% of Mountain Goats. A fraction of the species in BC has been studied and of these, many are at risk.

## Stepping Up

The single biggest threat to species survival is habitat loss. This is where The Nature Trust steps up.

Our work takes us from the forests and rivers on the east coast of Vancouver Island and Lower Mainland to the grasslands and wildlife migration corridors of the Okanagan and Kootenays. I am proud to work every day with a dedicated team who bring their professional expertise, wealth of knowledge and passion for acquiring land for conservation and caring for it.

“The success of our organization is due to the support of many people, organizations and all levels of government who share our passion for British Columbia, and I hope you do too. We have accomplished a great deal on our journey but there remains much more to do. And we need your help to do this,” —Dr. Rob Butler, Director

I hope that you will continue to put your trust in us and support our work with a gift of support. Please consider a monthly donation, a gift of publicly listed shares or attend a fundraising event. We are always honoured to receive a future gift in a will.

If you would like to learn more about The Nature Trust of BC, I would be delighted to receive your call at 604-924-9771 or email at [debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca](mailto:debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca)



*Deb Kennedy at Young Leaders event with guest Alexa Salter*



*Retired Kootenay Conservation Land Manager Rob Neil with Deb Kennedy and new Kootenay Conservation Land Manager Chris Bosman*



## Estates and In Memory Donations

Leaving a gift in your will to The Nature Trust of British Columbia is a special way to leave a legacy to nature and reflect your dedication to land conservation. The Nature Trust was very honoured to receive estates and donations in memory from kind donors in 2017.

### Estates

Gerard Petrus Bloem  
Margaret A. Cartledge  
Guy Chance  
David Williams Stephen Davies  
Wendel Inman  
Murray LaBrash  
John W. Rebbeck  
Howard Andrew Telosky

### In Memory

Baba  
Leslie Bates  
Jennifer Anne Bowden  
Dr. Bert Brink  
Lynette Burnett  
James Crauford  
Donna Crosby  
James Heighton Dwyer  
Barrie Alexander Forbes  
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Anne Humphries  
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Thomas Dare Jones  
Tom & Peggy Jones  
Pat Klaholz  
Murray LaBrash  
Hume McLennan  
Ernest Neale  
Adolfo (Addi) Nerpio  
Dorothy Revesz  
Fred Ritchie  
Ralph Shaw  
Murray Shill  
Simon  
Harold Smith  
Howard Andrew Telosky  
Jim Walker  
John Wiskel

# 10 Year Donors: Our Douglas Fir Circle

Donors who give regularly offer us the encouragement and financial support to continue our leadership in conserving our extraordinary natural habitat. We would like to acknowledge donors who have supported us for 10 years or more and made a donation in 2017—the year being reported.

## Individual Donors

Cathryn Abbott & Scott Gilmore  
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Hisako Arai  
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Habitat Conservation  
Trust Foundation  
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Fish & Wildlife Compensation  
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The Kootenay Wildlife Heritage  
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Pacific Salmon Foundation

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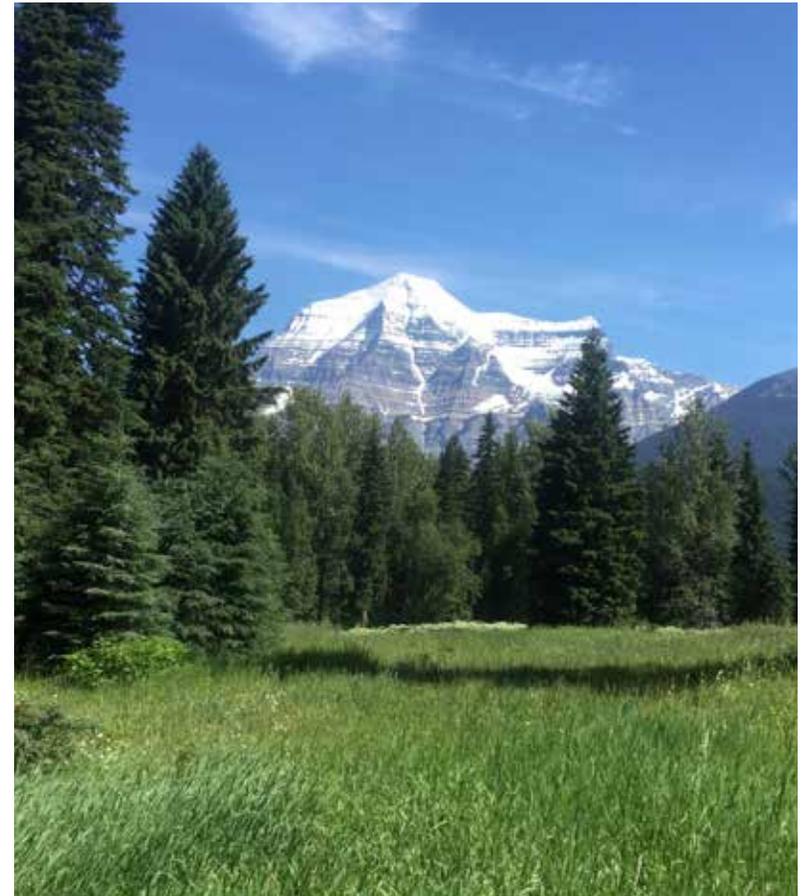
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**Main Office**

**The Nature Trust of British Columbia**

500-888 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 3K4

Phone: 604.924.9771 Toll free: 1.866.288.7878 Fax: 604.924.9772

info@naturetrust.bc.ca www.naturetrust.bc.ca

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**Regional Offices**

**Kootenay**

**The Nature Trust of British Columbia**

205 Industrial Road G, Cranbrook, BC V1C 7G5

Phone: 250.489.8549 Fax: 250.489.8506

**Okanagan**

**The Nature Trust of British Columbia**

102 Industrial Place, Penticton, BC V2A 7C8

Phone: 250.490.8218

**Vancouver Island**

**The Nature Trust of British Columbia**

2080A Labieux Road, Nanaimo, BC V9T 6J9

Phone: 250.751.3218 Fax: 250.751.3103