



The Nature Trust of BC is working to acquire the Skaha Lake Eastside property

Skaha Lake Property—Home for Species at Risk

The Nature Trust of British Columbia is working to secure 35.4 hectares (87.5 acres) of critical habitat for Bighorn Sheep on the eastside of Skaha Lake in the Okanagan. This property is adjacent to our existing Skaha Lake Property complex which is included in the McTaggart-Cowan/Nsək'łniw't Wildlife Management Area.

This property is ideal for Bighorn Sheep because it is generally steep with some flat benchlands interspersed throughout. The lower portions are grasslands, transitioning through mixed forest at the mid-level to rocky terrain at higher elevations.

The Skaha Lake parcel is located in two of the most endangered biogeoclimatic zones: Bunchgrass and Ponderosa Pine. It is important for supporting Bighorn Sheep as well as other species at risk such as the White-throated Swift and Western Rattlesnake. It has the potential to support the endangered American Badger.

"This property is one of the last remaining undeveloped benchlands on the eastside of Skaha Lake," said 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 that rely on this landscape; it really is a special place in the South Okanagan."

This property is an infill piece, surrounded by our conservation lands to the north and east with the Eastside Road to the west and the south adjacent to a housing development. Skaha Lake Eastside protects habitat for species at risk and expands an existing conservation holding—two key objectives of The Nature Trust.



Priority Project

Help us save this important property for Bighorn Sheep and other wildlife. We are working to raise the final \$175,000 to complete this project. Every dollar helps. You can donate via credit card by calling our office (604-924-9771 in the Vancouver area or 1-866-288-7878 toll free), online at www.naturetrust.bc.ca or by mailing a cheque payable to The Nature Trust of BC #260-1000 Roosevelt Crescent, North Vancouver, BC V7P 3R4.



The Nature Trust of BC's new Bull River-Grassland Corridor property

Bull River–Grassland Corridor

It takes a community of people to make good things happen like the recent acquisition of the Bull River-Grassland Corridor property by The Nature Trust of BC. This 67.7 hectare (167 acre) property is located in the East Kootenay near the community of Bull River—approximately 1.5 km north of the confluence of the Bull and Kootenay Rivers—which is 20 kilometres southeast of Fort Steele. This is one of the largest private inholdings in the Bull River Conservation Lands Complex. It will be added to 727 hectares (1,796 acres) of Nature Trust land interests (fee simple and woodlot) and 83 hectares (205 acres) of provincial conservation lands.

The securement of this property removes threats of disease transmission from domestic livestock to wild sheep, protects winter range for elk and deer,

and protects habitat for Red-listed American Badger. This property provides an important grassland and open forest corridor that establishes a relatively uninterrupted linkage between the Crown acquisition on the south side of the property to the notation of interest and Crown land north of the property. It is within the core area for the “Bull River” herd of 120 Bighorn Sheep and provides winter range habitat.

The Nature Trust would like to thank the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, BC Conservation Foundation and Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program as well as Environment and Climate Change Canada through the Natural Areas Conservation Program facilitated by the Nature Conservancy of Canada for making this acquisition possible. We would also like

to acknowledge support from Elkford Rod & Gun Club, Kootenay Wildlife Heritage Fund, Sparwood & District Fish and Wildlife Association, Teck Coal Ltd., and the Wild Sheep Society of BC.



Please consider a donation to help with the \$25,000 start-up costs so that habitat values can be restored and maintained. You can donate via credit card by calling our office 1-866-288-7878 toll free, online at www.naturetrust.bc.ca or by mailing a cheque payable to: The Nature Trust of BC #260-1000 Roosevelt Crescent North Vancouver, BC V7P 3R4



Lardeau-Duncan-Meadow Creek South property

Meadow Creek South

With the support of the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP), The Nature Trust of BC has secured the 31 hectare (76 acre) Lardeau-Duncan-Meadow Creek South property. This new acquisition expands the Lower Duncan Conservation Lands Complex. This property is located near the community of Meadow Creek in the West Kootenay, and is adjacent to The Nature Trust's existing Lardeau-Duncan property.

The Meadow Creek South property is on the floodplain of the Duncan River which

supports regionally significant fisheries. The terrain is relatively flat, comprised of a diverse cottonwood and conifer riparian forest, shrub thickets, sedge wetlands, cattail marshes, tall grass meadows, and small open water sloughs. It has the capability to support the Blue-listed Great Blue Heron, Grizzly Bear, and Western Toad.

FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of BC, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations and public stakeholders to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife impacted by BC Hydro dams.



Western Meadowlark



Conservation Youth Crew at Nanaimo River Estuary



Grand Forks, The Nature Trust's first property

The Roots of The Nature Trust of BC

We are proud at The Nature Trust to be celebrating Canada's 150th anniversary by conserving our country's natural treasures in our beautiful province of British Columbia. While our focus is provincial, our roots are federal.

In 1971 the Government of Canada provided a gift in honour of BC's centennial. A portion of the funds were used to build the Anthropology Museum at UBC and the remaining funds were used to create The Nature Trust of British Columbia.

The idea for the organization came from a meeting of four people: Jack Davis (the first Minister of the newly formed Federal Ministry of Environment), Len Marchand (Member of Parliament for Kamloops), Dr. Alastair McLean (research scientist) and Ralph Shaw (elementary school principal and avid outdoorsman). They met for breakfast and discussed the merits of

setting aside natural wild places.

One key factor in selecting sites was that they should be based on solid scientific information and need. There was also a sense of urgency in getting the projects underway because BC was experiencing a period of rapid growth and industrial development. That is how The

**It was founded to help set
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National Second Century Fund of British Columbia, later to be called The Nature Trust of British Columbia, was born. It was founded to help set aside ecologically suitable natural places for the benefit of future generations.

For 20 years, the organization was

led by Bert Hoffmeister, a retired Major General and former forestry executive. Over the years, the Board of Directors included grassland expert Dr. Bert Brink and zoologist Dr. Ian McTaggart Cowan, environmentalist and author Roderick Haig-Brown, amongst others.

Since 1971 The Nature Trust of British Columbia has acquired over 175,000 acres (71,000 hectares) of ecologically significant land. The Board of Directors includes both renowned scientists such as Chair Dr. Peter Arcese as well as business leaders such as Vice-Chair Ron Anderson.

As Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2017, The Nature Trust is appreciative of the funds originally given to found the organization and the assistance of donors and conservation partners over the decades. We look forward to working with all of our supporters to meet the challenges of the coming decades.



The Nature Trust's Bummers Flats property in the East Kootenay

Leaving a Legacy for Nature

Most people aren't that comfortable contemplating their departure from this earth. Others realize it is something that is inevitable. So even though difficult, it is wise to make decisions about what happens to your estate. It is all part of prudent planning and it can be rewarding to determine, while you are alive, who gets what.

Family is often the number one priority in estate planning. But after looking after family in your will, who else do you want to benefit from your estate?

This is a request for you to consider looking after the environment—call it **Leaving a Legacy for Nature**.

It would be wrong to consider nature helpless. Just watch the havoc a severe winter storm can cause. But even if it is not helpless, nature can sure use some help. It is often bashed and battered not necessarily by mal-intent, but just by the almost ceaseless pressures of development. This doesn't have to be the only option.

Land and the ecosystems it contains can be conserved. A gift from your estate can help protect important habitat for all species, including humans.

There's a double benefit—a gift to nature through a registered charitable organization can mean tax savings for your estate. Your help can save a special piece of natural habitat at the same time as saving on a tax bill.

For security and peace of mind that a gift from your estate to protect nature is itself well protected, you should consider a well-

established, well-run charitable organization that specializes in conservation. At the top of the list is The Nature Trust of BC. It is the oldest and largest land trust operating exclusively in BC. The Nature Trust has no mortgages and no debt. Its Board of Directors is made up of proven business people and top notch scientists.

An estate gift to The Nature Trust of BC will be well managed and through your generosity, natural habitat will be protected and well cared for.

Please discuss with your family, your legal and/or financial advisor how you can with confidence Leave a Legacy for Nature through a gift from your estate to The Nature Trust of BC.



If you have questions about leaving a legacy to The Nature Trust of BC or would like to receive our free bequest brochure, contact Deb Kennedy at debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca or call 604-924-9771 (or toll free 1-866-288-7878) or visit www.naturetrust.bc.ca

Visionary Al Pelter

At The Nature Trust of BC, we are honoured to call donors who support our conservation work with a bequest in their wills Visionaries. We often celebrate our Visionaries in our newsletter. This is to both thank those who include The Nature Trust in their estate planning and also to hopefully inspire others to consider leaving a legacy to nature.

Creating a succession plan for your assets is an important step in financial planning. The transfer of wealth can be complex or simple. In either case we recommend that you speak to your family about your wishes and that you seek professional advice.

In this article the Visionary is John Alvin “Al” Pelter. Now a widower in his 89th year Al has decided who and what causes he wants to help when he is gone. First is family. Al has three children and they are his primary beneficiaries. But Al also wants to make sure his interest in the environment is supported by a bequest when he dies.

Al’s interest in nature comes from growing up on a small, mixed farm near Ladysmith on Vancouver Island. His first fascination was soil and he learned the importance of nutrients, cultivation and looking after the land. This led to

a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from UBC and working for 17 years as a District Agriculturalist for the Province of BC. Then Al took a Masters of Education but never taught. He became an assistant to the Livestock Commissioner before finishing his 36-year career as the Director of Livestock.

Although not a rich man, Al is comfortable and he’s determined to share some of his estate with groups such as The Nature Trust of BC that works to protect fish, animals, land and the environment. Al has decided to do this by leaving a portion of his estate as a permanent endowment to the Victoria Foundation. He has given specific instruction that it parcel out an annual gift—forever—to the charitable groups he favours.

The Nature Trust is very grateful to be included in Al’s list. Thank you, Al, for leaving a legacy for the environment. You are a Nature Trust of BC Visionary.

For more information on how you can become a Nature Trust of BC Visionary, please call Deb Kennedy at 604-924-9771 (in the Vancouver area) or toll free 1-866-288-7878 or e-mail debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca.



Al Pelter (photo by Steve Housser)

Research in the Fraser Valley

Sammy Penner, The Nature Trust’s Lower Mainland Field Operations Technician, has been working with BCIT students on a research project in Chilliwack. The purpose of this project is to provide a baseline inventory of the plant and wildlife species on The Nature Trust’s Camp Slough and Wells Sanctuary properties. Sammy supervised six students from the Fish, Wildlife and Recreation program to conduct species presence surveys on fish.

They set out Gee Minnow Traps one afternoon and pulled them up the following morning. On both sites the traps were filled with Three-spined Sticklebacks, Red Shiners, Pike Minnows and suckers. There were also juvenile

coho salmon and juvenile salamander at Wells Sanctuary. In Camp Slough they discovered one Pumpkinseed sunfish which is an invasive fish species to British Columbia. The most exciting discovery was a Salish Sucker which is a federally endangered species and found in only a handful of places in the Fraser Valley and Puget Sound area.

This research will help with future management and conservation goals for the properties.

If you have a photo of wildlife on one of our properties that you would like to share with us, please e-mail Robin Rivers at rrivers@naturetrust.bc.ca



Juvenile salamander



Salish Sucker



Bighorn Sheep photo by Audrey MacNaughton



White-crowned Sparrow photo by Audrey MacNaughton

Capturing the Beauty of Nature

Audrey MacNaughton lives at Vaseux Lake in the Okanagan next to a Nature Trust property. Audrey is the mother of Carl MacNaughton, The Nature Trust of BC Interior & Coastal Mainland Conservation Land Manager. She has been sharing her outstanding wildlife photographs with us. We asked her to tell us about her passion for nature and how she captures great images.

Where do you live and why is it so special to you?

My home is actually behind the wildlife fence that protects the Bighorn Sheep and deer from the highway at Vaseux Lake south of Okanagan Falls. I'm fortunate to share my backyard with Bighorn Sheep, deer and many different species of birds. I especially like to see the Bald Eagle and Osprey perched on a power pole or dead pine tree first thing in the morning. This is like a small oasis in the desert for them. The rams sound like a herd of horses running around and then butting heads during the mating season in November. It is also special that the Trumpeter Swans winter on Vaseux Lake.

For the biggest part of my life, I lived about five miles south of White Lake where The Nature Trust has its White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch. This is where I have done a lot of hiking over the years and I now monitor about a dozen Bluebird boxes. This area is so peaceful, 360 degrees of low rolling land with no homes in view. In the spring this is where a great number of Meadowlarks nest and what a beautiful song they have. People

think that I get amazing animal pictures, but how can I help but get them when this wildlife is right in my backyard?

What got you interested in nature photography?

I love animals, and my parents, Margaret and Henry Anderson, taught me to admire and respect them. Living in a rural community for 60 years, nine miles north of Oliver, there were many opportunities to observe nature close by. I started taking wildlife and scenic pictures about 20 years ago on holidays to the ocean, another favourite place of mine.

The cameras I have used do make a lot of difference in the picture quality. I keep going for more zoom on my camera and right now I'm using a Nikon with a 60x optical zoom lens. It is probably the most zoom I can use without a tripod. I have taken the most pictures in the last 8 years when I moved to my home at Vaseux Lake. There is so much wildlife action happening close by that not a day goes past where I'm not getting my camera out.

Why do you like the work of the Nature Trust of BC?

The Nature Trust of BC is very important. It is securing ecologically sensitive land that could otherwise be bought by developers who may cover the property with homes. The wildlife in the area would be displaced or become a nuisance to the new homeowners. When The Nature Trust buys property they ensure that the land will be protected and managed for wildlife in perpetuity.



Event co-chairs Tod Alstad, Dr. Brent Corlazzoli and Tom Kennedy with Delta Grand Executive Chef Iain Rennie (photo by Chris Stanford)

Join us for the ninth annual Earth Wind Fire event on Saturday, June 24 at the Delta Grand Okanagan Resort in Kelowna. You will enjoy an amazing night featuring food prepared by sizzling chefs, outstanding local wine and beer, and a fantastic selection of live and silent auction items.

We will start with a sparkling reception and jazz singer Anna Jacyszyn. Then you can savour chef and wine stations and later bid on a variety of items. This fundraiser benefits the land conservation work of The Nature Trust of BC in the Okanagan.

Tickets are \$175 per person and reserved tables for 8 are \$1,400. Sponsor tables are also available: Earth table \$10,000; Wind table \$5,000; Fire table \$2,500. Tables of 10 are available upon request. For more information on how you can be a sponsor or to purchase tickets, e-mail rrivers@naturetrust.bc.ca, call toll free 1-866-288-7878 or visit our website www.naturetrust.bc.ca.



Renee Wasylyk
CEO Troika Developments, Event Honourary Chair

"Troika strives to build communities in harmony with the natural environment. That's why I am so appreciative of the work that The Nature Trust of BC does to this end. Come and help me support this worthy cause."



Brant Wildlife Festival 2017

The Nature Trust of BC is delighted to be working with community organizations and volunteers to present the Brant Wildlife Festival in March and April. The festival celebrates nature on mid-Vancouver Island, especially Brant geese as they stop to rest and feed during their migration to their northern nesting grounds. There are activities for all ages and including wildlife viewing, bioblitz, guest speakers and spring break nature camp for kids.

Head out with Karen Barry for a tour of the Englishman River Estuary on April 7. Join us for the Celebrate Nature event hosted by The Nature Trust on April 8 at the Quality Resort in Parksville for dinner, live music and engaging presentations. Tickets are \$35 and available by calling 1-866-288-7878 or e-mailing rrivers@naturetrust.bc.ca. Visit the website for details and more events: brantfestival.bc.ca

Thanks to True Grain Bread

We were delighted to receive an unexpected donation from True Grain Bread. With locations in Cowichan Bay and Summerland, the bakery and coffee shop takes sustainability very seriously and has donated 25 cents from each take away cup to The Nature Trust of BC. Here's what Bruce Stewart has to say about the philosophy of True Grain Bread.

True Grain Bread opened its doors in Cowichan Bay in 2004. Our philosophy is to provide an unparalleled bread experience in the most sustainable manner possible. Since day one we have been very mindful of our footprint. Twelve years ago it was not that common for a business to use primarily organic ingredients, be GMO free, have organic cotton bags, compostable coffee cups, lids and sleeves, and no plastic bags or bottled water! We try to improve each year, and also educate customers and improve awareness on sustainability related issues.

We wanted to improve awareness of

the stance we were taking, particularly in the Cowichan Valley where we are zero waste, but also in Summerland about the importance of compostable cups as an alternative to petroleum based, non-recycled cups. We saw an exposé on how some large coffee chains promoted their recycling program but the cups were ending up in the garbage stream instead. We encourage our customers to drink coffee in the bakery or bring their own vessel. If not, we provide a take away cup, lid and sleeve for a \$.25 donation to The Nature Trust of BC. Our end goal is for the big players to do the same.

We chose a partner whose values aligned closely with our own and where the focus is BC. We love BC. Everything we do comes back to making BC a better place. We are the only bakery in BC that sources grain entirely from BC organic grain farmers. This means we burn a lot less fuel on inbound shipments which means cleaner



Bruce Stewart of True Grain Bread

air. We strive for zero waste; less in the landfill. Now, we can do our small part to help preserve endangered ecosystems with our small quarterly donation.

The Nature Trust of BC is delighted to partner with such a conservation-minded organization as True Grain Bread. If your business would like to support the conservation work of The Nature Trust, contact Deb Kennedy at debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca or call 604-924-9771, ext. 231.



Ray Myles volunteering on the Big Ranch property

Tribute to Ray Myles

Longtime supporter of The Nature Trust, Ray Myles passed away in September 2016. For over 40 years he was an active and committed proponent of conservation initiatives in the Elk Valley in the Kootenay region. Ray was instrumental in supporting the purchase of The Nature Trust's Big Ranch conservation properties and an enthusiastic participant in many stewardship projects on them. In recognition of all this volunteer work, he

was given The Nature Trust Conservation Champion Award in 2007.

He was past president of the Sparwood & District Fish & Wildlife Association. He was involved with the Southern Rocky Mountain Advisory Committee, and the Elk Valley Solid Waste Advisory Committee amongst others.

Nature Trust Kootenay Conservation Land Manager Rob Neil said, "Ray was a great guy; energetic, smiley and positive. He will be missed, that's for sure!"



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Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia
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The Nature Trust of British Columbia

#260-1000 Roosevelt Crescent
North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3R4
Phone: 604-924-9771 or 1-866-288-7878
Fax: 604-924-9772
Email: info@naturetrust.bc.ca
Website: www.naturetrust.bc.ca
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