

ANNUAL REPORT  2018  
THE NATURE TRUST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA





"I want to save special natural areas not just for my own enjoyment but most importantly for my grandchildren and their children. Donating to The Nature Trust of BC achieves that goal for me."

— Denny Wagg, donor

## BC's Biodiversity Matters



Crucial for health of plants, wildlife, fish and humans



Provides resources for forestry, agriculture and fishing



Critical for climate regulation, water filtration and oxygen supply

## Species Loss Is Alarming



70% of Canada's plant and animal species live in BC



Many of these species are at risk



Over 43% of species are on watch lists due to low and dwindling populations

## Vulnerable Habitat Needs Protection



Conserving land is the best way to protect biodiversity



6% of BC's land is private



Most private land is in valley bottoms and coastal areas where plants, wildlife and people live

The Nature Trust of BC saves land and protects species

# Creating a Conservation Legacy

*By Ron Anderson, Chair of the Board*

I am pleased to report that The Nature Trust of British Columbia completed a highly successful year of land conservation achievements in 2018. It was also a year of reflection and planning as we developed our strategic direction for the next five years.

## **Protecting vulnerable habitats**

Our land securement team added three significant acquisitions to our land portfolio. After 16 years of effort, we were thrilled to complete the acquisition of 350 acres (142 hectares) known as the “Heart of Savary”. This was made possible due to an initial gift from the Whitall and Nichol families, and later with the help of the Friends of Savary DL1375, the Savary Island Land Trust and the community. This project conserves one of Canada’s best examples of coastal sand dunes and an important water recharge area. We also protected grasslands at Park Rill Creek expanding our conservation in the South Okanagan as well as the wintering habitat for endangered Woodland Caribou at Kennedy Siding in central BC. The importance of each one of these acquisitions underscores our commitment to protect British Columbia’s rich variety of species.

One of our most important accomplishments this year was developing a five-year strategic direction with our Board and staff. This direction is grounded in our land conservation mission and recognizes the need to protect BC’s rich natural heritage from increasing population growth, climate change and development.





*Nature Trust conservation lands at Park Rill Creek*

The challenge is significant but so are the stakes. BC has the most biological diversity of any province in Canada. Many of these species are at risk of disappearing. This loss of biodiversity has uncalculated consequences for future generations. This is why our Board and staff have made a commitment to accelerate the rate at which we are protecting ecologically significant land and to increase our resources.

Our new Director of Conservation Land Securement, Julian Zelazny, will help us identify properties that meet our securement criteria. It is no coincidence that we are launching this direction in concert with the Federal Government's new funding for the protection of landscape, species and ecosystems. This funding requires a 2:1 match. For every dollar that the government provides we must raise \$2. Each of these government grants requires us to confirm that we can raise these dollars. And this is where we need your help. I encourage you to reach out to our Board and staff to discuss this important initiative and help us with a donation or a pledge of support.

### **Restoring critical land**

Our land management team delivered on our mandate to be "on the ground". Some of the key projects included removing a dyke on the Englishman River estuary on Vancouver Island to improve habitat for fish and wildlife, working with the local community to prepare for the spring thaw and rising water in the Park Rill Creek area, and completing fencing at Carroll Creek in the Kootenays to control livestock in riparian areas.

I am particularly proud of our Conservation Youth Crew program which gives college and university students summer employment while completing important land conservation work on over 75 Nature Trust properties each year.



*Barred Owl*



*Ron Anderson  
and family*

### **Working in communities**

Our staff made presentations and participated in many festivals across the province including coordinating the Brant Wildlife Festival in the Parksville and Qualicum Beach area on Vancouver Island. Our Fall Gala was the best ever. I was particularly pleased to recognize John O'Neill and Liz Webster with The Nature Trust of BC's Conservation Champion of the Year award for their leadership in raising the funds to complete the acquisition on Savary Island.

I would like to thank all of you who donated to The Nature Trust this past year with gifts in your wills, designated gifts to property acquisitions and undesignated gifts for our daily operation—the hardest dollars to raise. The Nature Trust places a high priority on fiscal management. This is reflected in our strong balance sheet which carries no debt and our sound business model. Our Audit and Investment Committee meets quarterly to review our portfolio of investments in comparison to established benchmarks. We value your trust and your support of our land conservation work.

People are at the core of any organization's success and we are fortunate to have an excellent team at The Nature Trust. I would like to thank our staff under the leadership of CEO Jasper Lament for their dedication and professional expertise and especially Marian Adair, our Habitat Ecologist who retired in December after 16 years of service. I would also like to acknowledge our volunteer Board of scientists and business leaders who provide guidance and valuable advice.

It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of this outstanding organization for the past two years. I am pleased to announce Dr. Sarah Otto is our incoming Chair as of June 2019. Dr. Otto is The Nature Trust's second scientist to be Chair. She is the recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship "genius grant" and a leading researcher in how evolution has led to the remarkable diversity of life. We are fortunate that she has accepted this position and responsibility.

I joined The Nature Trust of BC in 2012 because I wanted to protect our natural surroundings—the landscapes, species and ecosystems in BC—for my daughters and generations to come. The Nature Trust does this by protecting and conserving ecologically significant land. This is an organization with an excellent track record and clear vision for tomorrow. I hope you will join me by including The Nature Trust in your philanthropic plans and help us leave a lasting legacy.

# 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:

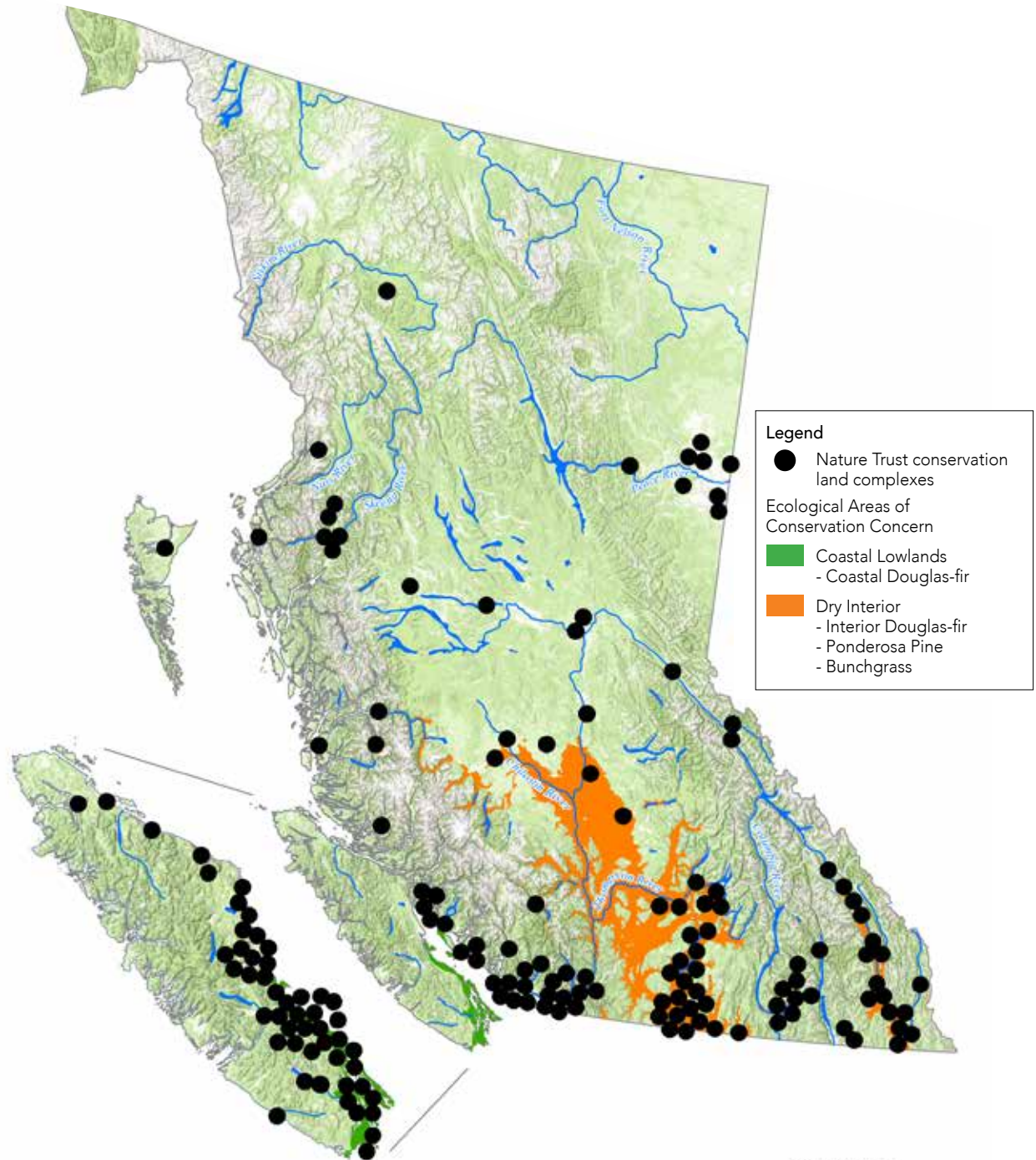
- secure habitats of high biodiversity values and at greatest risk of being lost; and
- manage conservation lands as part of landscapes to ensure ecosystem resilience and connectivity

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 Conservation Lands



*Park Rill Creek*



## Park Rill Creek

80 acres

This property in the White Lake Basin in the Okanagan is home to endangered and rare species such as the Half-moon Hairstreak butterfly, Sage Thrasher and Painted Turtle.

“The White Lake Basin is one of the gems in The Nature Trust of BC’s conservation land portfolio,” says Nick Burdock, Okanagan Conservation Land Manager. “The Park Rill Creek property is one of the finest examples of mixed riparian habitat along the Park Rill corridor. You really get the sense that this piece of land has been cared for in a way that protected its conservation values.”

Funding for this project was provided by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, South Okanagan Conservation Fund which is overseen by the Regional District of the Okanagan-Similkameen, BC Conservation Foundation, Sitka Foundation, Collings Family Foundation, Gosling Foundation, Burrowing Owl Estate Winery, BMO Bank of Montreal, Odlum Brown Limited Land Acquisition Fund, the South Okanagan Naturalists’ Club and individual donors. This project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change.



*Sage Thrasher*



*Grey Beach Peavine*

## Savary Island

350 acres

This property features one of the best examples of coastal sand dunes in Canada and provides habitat for two at-risk plants: Grey Beach Peavine and Contorted-pod Evening-primrose. In addition, it has old forest and second growth forest, and is the largest groundwater recharge area on the island.

In 2002 The Nature Trust of BC acquired a 50% interest in this land with support from the provincial government. With the Friends of Savary DL 1375 and the Savary Island Land Trust (SILT), we secured the remaining 50% interest.

"SILT is thrilled to see the Heart of Savary protected after more than 20 years of working towards this goal. We are grateful to John Nichol and Dick Whittall whose donation in 2002 was pivotal to starting the process," said Liz Webster, Executive Director of SILT. "As a small land trust, we are thankful for the many donors who contributed to this campaign."

"Over 175 Savary Island residents donated \$3.5 million and a land management endowment through the Friends of Savary and SILT to make this happen. It was truly a community effort," said John O'Neill of the Friends of Savary DL 1375, a group of volunteers who led the negotiations to acquire the land for The Nature Trust of BC.



*Savary Island*



*Woodland Caribou at Kennedy Siding*

## Kennedy Siding

551 acres

This property in central BC provides critical habitat for threatened Woodland Caribou that winter on the property from October through January.

The Nature Trust of British Columbia purchased the Kennedy Siding property in partnership with the Peace Region Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP). FWCP, a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of BC, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations and public stakeholders, funded the purchase of the property which is now part of a larger complex of conservation lands. FWCP conserves and enhances fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by existing BC Hydro dams.

“Funding land securement is one of our most effective tools to help wildlife over the long-term,” says FWCP Peace Board Co Chair and public representative, Wayne Sawchuk. “We’re providing funding for this project because it is a rare opportunity to eliminate the risk of development on privately-owned land that is valuable habitat for caribou—one of our priority species we’re supporting.”

## 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 75 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.

In 2018 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, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, and The Tony Cartledge Fund to help fund our crews.



*Ethan Ingham, 2018 Jim Walker Conservation Youth Crew Award winner (left)*



*Okanagan crew setting up photo monitoring*

### **Jim Walker Conservation Youth Crew Award**

In honour of the late Jim Walker, who was a director of The Nature Trust of BC for 10 years and was well known for his expertise in wildlife management and land-use management, an award was established. This award recognizes and celebrates an exceptional individual from our Conservation Youth Crew program, which helps to develop the next generation of conservation leaders in BC. Congratulations to Ethan Ingham on the Kootenay crew who received the inaugural award in 2018.



*Aerial view of Englishman River estuary on Vancouver Island*



*Heavy equipment removed the dike which restored the water flow*

## Restoring the Englishman River Estuary

Estuaries teem with life. Where the Englishman River on Vancouver Island meets the ocean, brackish waters – a mix of fresh water from the river and salt water from the ocean—help create a mosaic of forest, salt marsh, beach, mudflat, tidal channel, and eelgrass ecosystems.

The Englishman River Estuary provides habitat to over 250 species of birds, 23 mammals, Pacific salmon, forage fish such as herring and Pacific sand lance, plus several amphibians and reptiles. For over 30 years, The Nature Trust of BC and our partners have worked to secure land along the river.

Historically, the Englishman River Estuary was over 4 km wide, extending from Parksville Bay to Rath Trevor Beach. Over the past 100 years, the City of Parksville has grown around the estuary and the estuary has been impacted by agriculture, dikes, and industry.

The five-year restoration of the Englishman River Estuary to improve habitat for fish and wildlife started the summer of 2017 in Parksville on Vancouver Island.

Since the 1930s, the Englishman estuary has been impacted by dikes, roads, residential development, industrial uses, and ditching. The first step of this 5-year restoration project was to remove an old abandoned roadway on the west side of the estuary that was originally constructed in the 1960s for log booming operations. Other activities include enhancing tidal channels, increasing habitat complexity for fish and wildlife, and removing invasive plants.

Funding for this project is provided by Canada's National Wetland Conservation Fund and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

This project is coordinated by the West Coast Conservation Land Management Program on behalf of The Nature Trust of BC, and involves several partners including Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, BC Conservation Foundation, Mid Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society, the Arrowsmith Naturalists, and Guardians of Mid-Island Estuaries Society.



*Mid Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society collected data on fish species*



*Arrowsmith Naturalists planted trees and removed invasive plants*

# Community Events



Nature Trust Chair Ron Anderson (left) and CEO Jasper Lament (right) present Conservation Champion Award to John O'Neill and Liz Webster at Fall Gala



Dr. Sally Otto (left) at Young Leaders event in Vancouver



Meadowlark Festival in Okanagan



Elkford Rod & Gun Club at Nature Trust Big Ranch in Kootenays



## Financial Highlights

In 2018 The Nature Trust of BC secured \$4,832,000 in property holdings and spent a further \$1,543,000 on land management. This would not have been possible without the generous financial support of our donors and partners who contributed \$7,342,000.

We were also able to increase our net assets by \$5,285,000, while contributing \$548,000 to our land management fund.

Every dollar raised by The Nature Trust stays in BC!

### Summarized Statements of Financial Position

December 31, 2018 and 2017	2018	2017
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and receivables	1,371,000	911,000
Investments	27,044,000	25,598,000
Capital assets	106,000	548,000
Properties	101,795,000	96,963,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	130,316,000	124,020,000
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current	140,000	61,000
Deferred revenue	3,699,000	2,767,000
Net Assets	126,477,000	121,192,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	130,316,000	124,020,000
<b>INCREASE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>5,285,000</b>	<b>4,968,000</b>

This statement has been derived from the complete audited financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2018 and 2017.



Bluebird nest

# Take a Walk with Me

*By Deb Kennedy, Director of Marketing & Development*

The South Okanagan is one of my favourite places in BC. I have been coming here since I was a young girl with my family for vacations. When I married an Okanagan boy, we continued this tradition with our own family.

The lakes surrounded by grass covered rolling hills—green in the spring and dry brown in the summer—are etched in my mind. The climate and geography of the South Okanagan is unique in Canada. You can find a host of species—many of them rare and endangered—like Bighorn Sheep, Behr's Hairstreak butterfly, and the Yellow-breasted Chat. It's a magical place. For this reason, this area has seen significant development.

The South Okanagan is one of The Nature Trust's priority areas with our largest conservation holdings. One of my favourite jobs is to take donors for a walk on these lands. It is a perfect way to demonstrate what we do and why we do it.

This past summer I toured donors on our most recent acquisition at Park Rill Creek in the White Lake Basin and our first Okanagan acquisition along Vaseux Lake. We also stopped on the edge of Skaha Lake to visit a cairn in memory of Dr. Ian McTaggart Cowan, our past director and one of the fathers of Canada's land conservation movement.

Skaha Lake Eastside was acquired in 2016 to expand our protection of Bighorn Sheep habitat. This rocky terrain is disappearing at an alarming rate. Dr. McTaggart Cowan said, "The assumption is always that when you develop land the wildlife goes elsewhere, but there isn't any 'elsewhere'."

As I walked to a different property, I was thrilled to see Bighorn lambs scampering up and down the hill with their mothers in close pursuit. I hope these creatures always have a place to live.

In addition to the South Okanagan, you will find The Nature Trust working across BC including Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland and Kootenays. Every day our dedicated team brings professional expertise and passion for acquiring land for conservation and caring for it in these areas.

I hope you will continue to support our vital work with an annual gift. Please consider a donation of publicly listed shares or make a pledge over a few years. And we are always honoured to receive a future gift in a will.

If you would like to learn more about how you can help, please call me at 604.924.9771 ext. 231 or email [debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca](mailto:debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca).



*Deb Kennedy at Nature Trust Park Rill Creek tour*



*Tour of Nature Trust conservation lands at Park Rill Creek*



## Estates and In Memory

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 2018.

### Estates

Guy Chance  
Marjorie Marling Greene  
Evelyn R. Irving  
Sabine Murdoch

John W. Rebbeck  
Marjorie Vivien Smith  
Anna Josephine Wall

### In Memory

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Don Walls

# 10 Year Donors: Our Douglas Fir Circle

Donors who give regularly offer us the encouragement and financial support to continue our leadership in conserving critical habitat in BC. We would like to acknowledge donors who have supported us for 10 years and made a donation in 2018—the year being reported.

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