



NATURE TRUST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #51 FALL 2019



Protecting Princeton Grasslands—Phase 1

The Nature Trust of BC has the opportunity to save a 1052 hectare (2,600 acre) grassland property which is home to rare and endangered species with your help.

Located near the community of Princeton, we are working to acquire this property in three phases. Phase 1 covers 447 hectares (1,100 acres), and most of it features native grassland. Only 1% of British Columbia is covered with grasslands which provide habitat for 30% of BC's species at risk. Grasslands support more threatened and endangered plants and

animals than any other habitat type in the province.

Asp Creek runs through the centre of the property and it also includes a wetland and seasonal ponds.

The endangered American Badger has been seen on the northwest boundary of this property. The threatened Northern Goshawk and Barn Swallow have been observed near the western boundary. In addition, Princeton Grasslands provides critical habitat for threatened Lewis's Woodpecker and endangered Williamson's Sapsucker, and important winter range for Mule Deer.

Priority 
Project

Please consider a donation to help us purchase this special land. To donate, visit our website www.naturetrust.bc.ca, call our office at 604.924.9771 (toll free 1.866.288.7878) or mail a cheque to #500 888 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 3K4.



Saving Land for Bears and Badgers

The Nature Trust of BC is pleased to announce the protection of the Columbia River Wetlands - Edgewater property in the Kootenays.

Located near the community of Edgewater these conservation lands cover 423 acres (171.5 hectares) and feature outstanding habitat and connectivity for Grizzly Bears and American Badgers. They also provide winter range for Mule Deer, White-tailed Deer and Moose.

“The Edgewater property has incredible diversity, ranging from wetlands to grasslands and open forest habitats,” said Chris Bosman, Kootenay Conservation Land Manager for The Nature Trust of BC. “From the upper benches, the views across the Columbia Valley and up and down the Rocky Mountain Trench are stunning.”

This property will complement nearby Nature Trust conservation lands that are managed as part of the Columbia National Wildlife Area and Columbia Wetlands Wildlife Management Area. An additional benefit for wildlife is that the Edgewater property adjoins the Columbia Wetlands Wildlife Management Area which serves as significant migratory bird habitat for over 200 species.

The community came together in a big way to help The Nature Trust of BC protect the Columbia River Wetlands-Edgewater property. Key supporters of this project include the BC Conservation Foundation, Regional District of East Kootenay through the Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund, Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program, Golden District Rod & Gun Club, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Kootenay Wildlife Heritage Fund, Lake Windermere Rod & Gun Club and the Canal Flats Wilderness Club as well as individual donors. The acquisition of this property included a generous landowner donation from Denis and Rosemary Tegart.

Our Partners on the White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch

The family-owned Clifton Ranch received the 2019 Ranch Sustainability Award from the BC Cattlemen’s Association and the 2019 Environmental Stewardship Award from the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association for its work to protect critical grasslands and species at risk in the region.

Clifton Ranch has been working with The Nature Trust of BC for two decades, first partnering in 2000 to create the White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch. Clifton Ranch partners with The Nature Trust of BC, and both provincial and federal agencies in the management of the White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch. This partnership ensures that the land is managed for both cattle and wildlife values, not only in the White Lake Basin area but across the whole ranch.

“The Nature Trust’s Biodiversity Ranching Program continues to demonstrate that sustainable cattle management is synonymous with protecting both biodiversity and conservation values,” said Nicholas Burdock, Okanagan Conservation Land Manager for The Nature Trust of BC. “The success of this partnership would not be possible without the co-operation and leadership of Clifton Ranch and the Clifton family.”

“We’re not used to this much attention so it’s very nice to be recognized for all the hard work we’ve been doing,” said Wade Clifton, who started the projects designed to improve habitat on the ranch with his brother Brad, who passed away in February.

“It’s important for us as far as being economically viable because without grass we can’t have cattle. We are sustaining the grass where it is, we’re keeping all of the species that are there and allowing them to expand and survive. It’s a win-win for everybody,” Wade Clifton said.

The Clifton family has operated the Clifton Ranch for just over 100 years and four generations. The ranch is owned and operated by Wade and Sandra Clifton, and Dianne Clifton.





Photo monitoring at White Lake Basin

Our Conservation Youth Crews

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

In 2019 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 the crews.

“The opportunity to apply the skills I had learned in school to a position with a non-profit conservation organization based out of my home town was too great to miss!” — Rebecca Merenyi, Lower Mainland crew



Crew member Simon Ferguson receiving award from Shawn Lukas, crew supervisor

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 Simon Ferguson on the Vancouver Island crew who received the award in 2019.

“The Nature Trust’s commitment to conservation is a benefit to all residents and visitors to BC, and will be for generations to come.” — Simon Ferguson, Vancouver Island crew

2019 Fall Gala



Singers Allison Cociani and Jason Cook with pianist Annabelle Paetsch

Thank you to all our sponsors, guests and donors who helped raise funds to save critical habitat and protect species in BC.

Presenting Sponsor

Wheaton Precious Metals

Emerald Sponsor

Rocky Mountaineer

Sapphire Sponsors

Endeavour Silver Corporation

Stephen Partington

PH&N Investment Services

Phillips, Hager & North Investment Management

Reception Sponsor

McCarthy Tétrault LLP

Gold Sponsors

4Front Mortgages

Ron & Diane Anderson

Doug & Eva Christopher

Connor, Clark & Lunn Financial Group

Crew Energy

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Rudy & Elizabeth Kerklaan

Odlum Brown Limited

Sitka Foundation

Teck

John & Gail West

Table Wine Sponsor

Port of Vancouver

Media Sponsor

The Globe and Mail

First Nations Auction Table Sponsor

Pacific Salmon Foundation

Okanagan Wine Auction Table Sponsor

Dilworth Homes Kelowna

Photographer

Matt Kennedy



Wade and Sandra Clifton, our partners on the White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch



Nature Trust Past Chair Ron Anderson and Chair Dr. Sally Otto flank 2019 Conservation Champion Award winner Don Krogseth and his wife Jeri

2019 Fall Gala

Be a Catalyst for Conservation Campaign

Matching Gift Donors

Val & Dick Bradshaw
Grayross Foundation
Sitka Foundation

4Front Mortgages
Ron & Diane Anderson
Ashley Armstrong
Peter R. B. Armstrong
Jeff Bay
Bill Bennett
Verena Blatter
Dan and Ursula Bowditch
British Pacific Properties
Reid & Laura Carter
Esther Chetner
Brian Clark
Brian Coote
Crew Energy
Natalie Cushing
Karen Davis
Janice Dale Dixon
Endeavour Silver
Sharon Fenton
James Ferguson
Timothy Garrish
Bob & Penny Gayton
Emily Griffiths-Hamilton & Paul Hamilton
Grosvenor Americas
Sam Gudewill
Chris & Anne-Marie Harvey
Rod & Patricia Hoffmeister
Doug Janz
Deb & Tom Kennedy
Kootenay Wildlife Heritage Fund
Krogseth Foundation
Jasper & Caitlin Lament
Richard & Claire Lament
Drummond & Elizabeth Laviolette
Janette Lindley & Danny Peart
Andrea & Neil MacLeod
Carleton & April MacNaughton
Cecil Morrow
Marisa Nichini
Brent Nichols
Sally Otto & Michael Whitlock
Pan American Silver Corp.
Stephen Partington



Dennis Perry & Susan Drury
Ian & Ebie Pitfield
Sunipa Rassameeuthai
George, Wendy & George Reifel
Bill & Heather Riedl
Doris Schuh
Berhard Schwab
Alison Sinclair Burns
Scott Smythe
Michael & Alex Steinmann
Shirley Thompson
John Thwaites & Pia Gemma
Peter & Janet Thwaites
Brooke & Tracey Wade
Wheaton Precious Metals
Gerald Whittall
Robin & Al Wilson
Richard & Sabine Wood
Jack Woods & Sally Aitken
Owen Wright in memory of Rosemary Wright

*Thanks to those who donated
after the newsletter was printed*



Minister of Agriculture, Lana Popham



Conversations on Conservation: Dr. Sally Otto

Acclaimed evolutionary geneticist, Dr. Sarah (Sally) Otto, the Chair of the Board of Directors of The Nature Trust of BC, brings her perspective as a scientist and her commitment to conservation to her new role.

Dr. Otto is a professor in the Department of Zoology and Biodiversity Research Centre at the University of British Columbia. She has been honoured with numerous prestigious awards including the MacArthur Fellowship—commonly known as the Genius Grant. Her long list of achievements includes helping to establish the Canadian Society of Ecology and Evolution and launching the Liber Ero Fellowship Program in conservation biology. She received her PhD from Stanford University.

Dashing in from a busy day at UBC, Sally met us at her home to talk about evolutionary legacies, the tree of life, the awe of our BC wilderness and trash—yes, trash.

What drew you to The Nature Trust of BC and attracted you to the role of Chair?

I will start with a story. I remember as a young child being on a road trip – I think it was from New York to Nebraska – and we would open the window and toss out our trash. That’s how we dealt with trash. Everybody did it. The highways were littered with trash.

We didn’t realize the profound human impact that our collective actions had on the world.

I think back to this memory and realize how much we have changed our view of the planet. Back then we thought that the world was so vast, humans so few, that we could do what we wanted and the world would bounce back. Now we recognize

that nature is limited and precious. We would be appalled to use nature as our garbage can in the way that we did back then.

While we better recognize that nature needs protection, we still have a tendency to expand and use land for our purposes. I think it is critical that we, as a community, discuss: How much expansion is too much? When have we impacted wilderness too much?

That’s where The Nature Trust of BC can really help by engaging us in that important conversation. We can work together – the staff, the Board, and the community – to define those spaces that are so important to the wild plants and animals of BC that we need to protect them. Plus The Nature Trust allows each of us to contribute to protecting our natural heritage to the degree that we can, from donations that allow land to be purchased to community efforts to restore sites to their natural condition.

What would you say to someone wondering why conservation is so important?

I would ask them to think about a place that amazed them – of scenery they found astounding; something that they saw that was beautiful and filled them with wonder. Almost all of those memories are about nature; about vistas of wilderness, especially here in British Columbia. That’s something we want for future generations—that sense of awe.

As a scientist myself, I also think about the evolutionary history of each of the species alive today. As we lose species, we’re pruning the evolutionary tree of life. And as we lose branches of this tree, we lose our ability to understand how species came to live the way they do, how they came to survive past environmental challenges. Species contain in their DNA the solutions to how their ancestors survived. So as a scientist, I see

that protecting nature is protecting this evolutionary legacy.

For example, many organisms have evolved genes that protect them from other species and that can benefit us too, from antibiotics that fight off diseases to chemical defenses that we use as muscle relaxants in surgery. As we lose species, we lose our ability to learn from these natural solutions.

I would also say that we don't have a very good understanding about how the ecosystem as a whole is impacted when we lose a species from an area—it's like reaching into a car engine and pulling out a piece at random. The car might work for a while, but if we keep doing it, we know it isn't going to be good in the long run.

Beyond these motivations as a scientist, in this world that is so electronic and high pressured, I feel that we need spaces where we can free our minds and just be with nature.

What do you think are the greatest threats to conservation?

I think the biggest threat comes from continuing business as usual. Doing things in ignorance—reducing habitat—to the point where it becomes too late for wildlife. Mountain caribou in eastern BC are a case in point; habitat loss of the South Selkirk herd led their population to decline to only three females last year. One of them died over the winter, one female cannot be found, and the last has been removed to join a breeding program. We have just lost this part of BC's natural heritage.

We're basically injuring natural systems by many small cuts, the sum of which can severely harm something that's precious to us. I think we need to play the doctor's role and say when the cumulative

injuries to nature are too grave. We then need to focus on healing and protecting nature. Here again The Nature Trust can help.

Why does The Nature Trust focus on protecting private land?

Private land is where the pressure points are. That's where people live, work, and play. In fact, the map of where species at risk are located in Canada overlaps most with private land and that's where all of The Nature Trust properties are.

Beyond BC, the government of Canada is working towards meeting an internationally agreed upon target to protect 17 per cent of terrestrial habitat for biological diversity. To protect private land—where a lot of the pressures are on biodiversity—the government is turning toward land conservation organizations like The Nature Trust to help. So, we're a really important piece of that larger solution.

How would you draw more young people into the conversation about conservation?

Younger people get it. They know the planet is limited and that nature is precious. Memories of hikes and camping trips and BC's amazing views connect them to the land. It is often the youth who call most strongly to protect this planet!

I think we should all aim to chip in together, according to our financial abilities, to protect what we can.

Besides, it is kind of thrilling to "own" a piece of land through The Nature Trust. Of course, we don't own the land personally, but we know that the land is there, protected for future generations.



Nature Trust Salmon River estuary property



Red-naped Sapsucker



"The work that Nature Trust is doing is incredibly important at a time when we collectively face dire threats to biodiversity and habitat. Thank you for your ongoing work." — James Tate

US Taxpayers Can Support Our Conservation Work

Thanks to a partnership with American Friends of Canadian Conservation (American Friends) you can help us protect BC and receive a tax benefit in the US.

- Donate online at American Friends' website: conservecanada.org
- Donate stocks, bonds or mutual fund shares to avoid US capital gains taxes while receiving a tax deduction for the current value of your securities. Contact Sandra Tassel at 360.515.7171 or sandratassel@conservecanada.org for instructions
- Mail a cheque (in US funds) to: American Friends of Canadian Conservation, 336 36th Street #717, Bellingham, WA 98225

Print, fill out, sign and send a Grant Recommendation with your cheque to request that American Friends use your donation to make a grant to The Nature Trust of BC. The language in the recommendation is necessary for your gift to be tax deductible in the US.

If you have any questions, contact Deb Kennedy at debkenedy@naturetrust.bc.ca or 604.924.9771 ext. 231.

UPDATES



New Staff

Welcome to **Jason Emery** as our new Director of Conservation Land Management. He will be working with our regional Conservation Land Managers identifying innovative stewardship opportunities and landscape-scale approaches to

conservation on Nature Trust lands. He will be implementing habitat restoration projects to maintain and increase ecosystem resiliency on the land base.

Jason is joining us from the Ecological Restoration Program and the Fish and Wildlife Program at BCIT. Prior to that, he worked in environmental consulting as a wildlife scientist.

New Directors

We are pleased to announce that Peter Armstrong and Jack Woods have joined The Nature Trust of BC's Board of Directors.



Peter Armstrong is the founder of Armstrong Group, owner and operator of the Rocky Mountaineer luxury train company as well as numerous holdings in the travel and tourism sector. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Sauder School of Business. In 2019, Peter completed the Harvard Executive MBA program.

Peter was born in Saint John, New Brunswick and has been a proud and active resident of Vancouver for over 50 years.



Jack Woods is a professional forester who spent the early part of his career with the BC Forest Service as a scientist leading work on coastal Douglas-fir genetics. In the second half of his career he led SelectSeed Ltd. and managed the provincial cooperative leading all forest genetics

activities in BC. He has received the Forest Genetics Council of BC Achievement Award, and the Association of BC Forest Professionals Climate Innovator Award.

NATURE TRUST
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Suite 500 - 888 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver BC V6C 3K4
Tel: 604.924.9771 1.866.288.7878
info@naturetrust.bc.ca www.naturetrust.bc.ca
Charitable Organization Number 10808 9863 RR0001

Board Chair
Sarah Otto *PhD*

CEO
J. Jasper Lament *PhD*

Board

Ron Anderson	Andrea MacLeod <i>PhD</i>
Peter Armstrong	Justin Roach
Trisha Beaty	Brooke Wade
Bill Bennett	Richard Wood
Brian Clark <i>RPBio</i>	Jack Woods
Emily Griffiths-Hamilton	Jim Wyse
Doug Janz	