



For Immediate Release:

Ten People, One Lasting Legacy in the Land

January 25, 2021 Vancouver, BC – Thirty years ago a group of neighbours saw the land logged around Rixen Creek near their homes. They decided to take action to protect this watershed by purchasing the land together, planting 20,000 seedlings, and restoring what was once a wild space. With some of the neighbours moving away, and the rest growing older, they decided to donate the 32-hectare (80-acre) property to The Nature Trust of BC, to conserve the forest forever.

“We thought it was time to do something with the property, as leaving it to our heirs would be troublesome for them,” said Chris Speed on behalf of the ten owners. “So we looked to The Nature Trust for a way to solve this problem and still protect this land we love forever.”

Walking the property reveals an intact riparian corridor along Rixen Creek, surrounded by mature Western Redcedar and Western Hemlock. The property supports a diversity of wildlife habitats including forest, meadow and riparian areas. Riparian areas are particularly rich in biodiversity as they are a mixing of land and water. This corridor is used by a variety of wildlife including Cougar, Bobcat, Black Bear, Mule Deer, and Moose.

This property is less than two kilometers away from The Nature Trust’s 98-hectare (242 acre) Marsden Face property complex on the north side of Kootenay Lake. This conservation complex was created in 1994 to protect important wildlife habitat in the Kootenay. The Marsden Face properties are part of the Interior Cedar Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone, a broad geographic area sharing similar climate and vegetation known to have a high number of red and blue-listed species -- provincially vulnerable and threatened -- within the Selkirk Natural Resource District. The Marsden Face property complex lies within the distribution ranges of seven species listed under the Species at Risk Act (SARA) including, the Threatened Common Nighthawk, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and Western Screech Owl, and the Special Concern Short-eared Owl, Wolverine *luscus* subspecies, Couer d’Alene Salamander, and Magnum Mantleslug.

The Nature Trust of BC is fundraising for current and future land management costs associated with the Marsden Face – Rixen Creek property. The management plan includes invasive plant inventory and removal, assessment and management of the forest ecosystems, and the removal of remnant logging roads and infrastructure.

This project was made possible in part, by the Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, part of Canada’s Nature Fund.



A portion of this project was donated to The Nature Trust of British Columbia under the Government of Canada's Ecological Gifts Program. This program provides enhanced tax incentives for individuals or corporations who donate ecologically significant land.

The Nature Trust of BC appreciates the support of all those who made this conservation achievement possible. Together we will leave a lasting legacy to nature.

QUOTES:

"We like The Nature Trust's approach to stewardship of the properties that they own and look forward to passing our property on to them. We feel as if we've found the right 'family' to move into our 'home'."

– Chris and Val Speed

"By working with partners like The Nature Trust of British Columbia and generous landowners, we are protecting important wildlife habitat in British Columbia and across the country. Through programs like the Canada Nature Fund's Natural Heritage Conservation Program and the Ecological Gifts Program, we are making progress toward conserving a quarter of Canada's land and a quarter of its oceans by 2025. Thank you to everyone who made today's announcement possible."

– The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

FACTS:

- Located within the West Kootenay dry warm Interior Cedar Hemlock (ICHdw1) biogeoclimatic zone; only 6.8% of this zone is protected in either parks or conservation land.
- Rixen Creek has an intact riparian corridor that supports mature western redcedar western hemlock, black cottonwood, and Douglas-fir trees. Although the remainder of the property was harvested in 1990, it has a high diversity of tree species, including the previously mentioned species, along with lodgepole pine, grand fir, western larch, white spruce, paper birch, water birch, ponderosa pine, western white pine, and amabilis fir.
- Rixen Creek is known to have rainbow trout.
- The property contains Ungulate Winter Range for Mule Deer, along with habitat for a variety of other wildlife species including Cougar, Bobcat, Black Bear, Mule Deer and Moose.
- The property has a mix of habitat types including forest, meadow and riparian, that occur among varied elevations, slopes and aspects.



ABOUT:

The Government of Canada's Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP) is a unique public-private partnership to support new protected and conserved areas by securing private lands and private interests in lands. The program is managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Federal funds invested in the program are matched with contributions raised by NCC and its partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the country's land trust community.

The Nature Trust of British Columbia is a leading non-profit land conservation organization with a 50 year history of successfully protecting and caring for B.C.'s most critical habitats. Since 1971, The Nature Trust of BC and its partners have acquired more than 178,000 acres (72,000 hectares) of ecologically significant land to save vulnerable wildlife, fish and plants.

To learn more about the Ecological Gifts Program, please visit <http://www.ec.gc.ca/pde-egg/>.

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VIDEO AND IMAGES:

<https://www.naturetrust.bc.ca/news/ten-people-one-lasting-legacy-in-the-land>

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