



NATURE TRUST BRITISH COLUMBIA

NEWSLETTER • ISSUE #54 • SPRING 2021

NATURE TRUST
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Welcome to our 50th Anniversary

This year marks the 50th anniversary of The Nature Trust of BC and we want to celebrate with you.

The world is changing and people are seeking stability. The Nature Trust has been steadfast in our approach to land conservation for 50 years and with your support we will continue to protect land and save species for 50 more.

We are excited to present a series of stories and videos throughout the year, highlighting the people and places that make The Nature Trust so special.

Visit our website and sign up for our monthly eNews to get the latest stories and hear of upcoming projects and events. Help us commemorate this golden anniversary with a special gift.



Columbia River Wetlands – Edgewater



The Nature Trust of BC celebrates 50 years and 178,000 acres

2021 marks The Nature Trust of British Columbia's 50th anniversary of protecting land and saving species across the province.

Founded in 1971 to commemorate BC's centennial, The Nature Trust of British Columbia, a non-profit organization based in Vancouver, began with a \$4.5 million gift from the Canadian Government and a mandate to preserve the natural riches of this beautiful province.

"When most people think about protecting nature they think about saving wildlife but at The Nature Trust of BC we know that saving wildlife starts with saving their habitat," says Jasper Lament, CEO of The Nature Trust. "We know this work is even more urgent in the face of climate change, development and other impacts so we are accelerating our efforts to protect ecologically significant land."

Together with our partners we have acquired some 500 properties covering 178,000 acres (72,000 hectares) across the province. These properties have been scientifically vetted to ensure they protect vulnerable and threatened species and preserve biodiversity. Vulnerable species like the Behr's Hairstreak Butterfly, the Contorted Pod

Evening Primrose, the Marbled Murrelet, or the Great Basin Spadefoot may not seem glamorous or important, but these rare and wonderful plants and animals are some of the most endangered species in Canada. And, they are some of the species that make BC our most biodiverse province.

Protecting critical habitats saves the rich diversity of wildlife, plants and fish in BC. "Species variation provides resilience; it's a buffer like a savings account without which you could go bankrupt," says Dr. Sally Otto, evolutionary geneticist and Chair of The Nature Trust of BC.

The legacy of The Nature Trust of BC began under the leadership of celebrated Second World War hero, retired Major General and forest industry executive, Bert Hoffmeister and his extraordinary volunteer Board of Directors, consisting of a balance of renowned scientists and business leaders—a board composition that continues to this day.

For 50 years, The Nature Trust has delivered on our promise to build a treasury of natural spaces and protect iconic species in British Columbia. With your support, we will continue to meet our promise for future generations.



Together we did it!

Update on our 2020 priority projects

During 2020, we were fundraising for two properties in different priority areas for conservation in BC. The Princeton Grasslands – MapleCross Meadow Phase II property located in the Similkameen Valley, and the Salmon River Tidal Slough on the rainy shores of Vancouver Island both became official Nature Trust conservation properties at the close of the year. Both of these projects have been made possible by the Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, part of Canada's Nature Fund.

Securing Princeton Grasslands – MapleCross Meadow Phase II brings us one step closer to our most ambitious conservation project in a decade.

Three years ago we embarked on the project of acquiring 2,600 acres of rare grasslands in BC's interior. The property boasts high conservation value. Its size means that our efforts will protect species at a landscape level, and deter encroachment from the surrounding area. The cost and scope of this project presents many challenges. With the cooperation of the landowners, the Atkinson and Hodgson families, we are able to acquire the land in three phases.

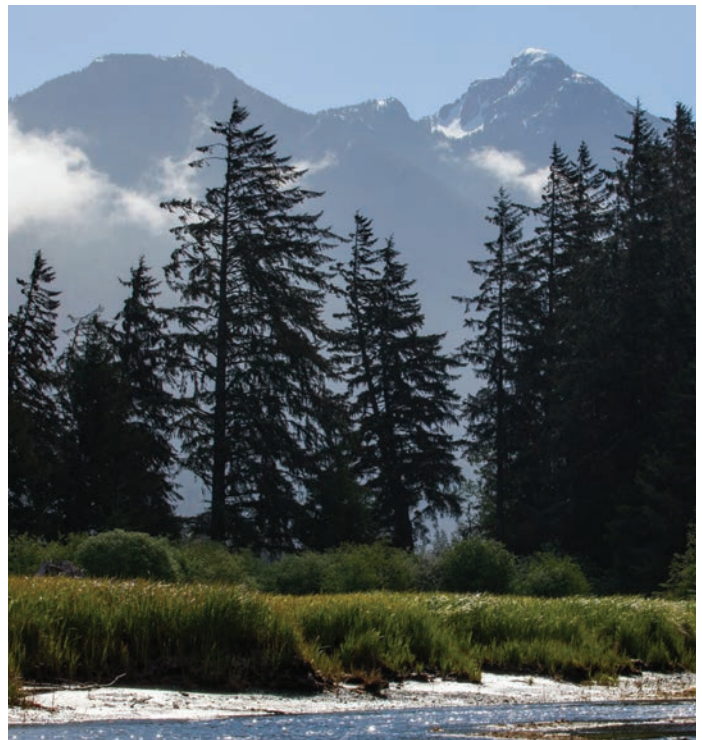
Special thanks to the Lightburn family, the Atkinson and Hodgson families, BC Conservation Foundation, the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, and all of the generous donors and supporters who have helped us complete the first two phases.

Priority Project

We are now working on Phase III of the Princeton Grasslands acquisition. We hope, with your support, that this complex will be one of the crowning jewels of our 50th anniversary year.



Princeton Grasslands



Salmon River – Tidal Slough

Securing Salmon River – Tidal Slough embodies our commitment to building ecologically significant property complexes over time. This 35-acre acquisition is the latest addition in a project we began in 1978 to protect the estuary of the Salmon River on Vancouver Island.

With much of the estuary now protected, this addition extends our conservation complex further up the river, protecting parts of the riparian corridor and the Hammond Creek tributary. Securing larger areas ensures that species can survive and these wild areas endure less impact from surrounding areas.

Since most of the land around the Salmon River is privately owned, we remain patient and persistent. As more properties come to market, we hope to extend the complex further and protect this vital watershed for future generations.

Special thanks to the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, Lightburn family, the Krogseth Foundation, the Campbell River Salmon Foundation, and all of the generous donors and supporters who helped in this vital property acquisition.



2021 Priority Projects

We hope to make this anniversary year our most successful year ever. Our first two priority projects in our golden year will add ecologically significant land to our property complexes in the Okanagan Valley and the Heart of the Fraser.



Western Rattlesnake

Park Rill Floodplain

We have the opportunity to purchase and add Park Rill Floodplain to our White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch. The 153 acre (61 hectare) property is located near the community of Willowbrook in the South Okanagan.

The property supports six sensitive ecosystems: sagebrush steppe, grassland, open coniferous woodland, seasonally flooded fields, wet meadow, and sparsely vegetated rocky outcrops. These kinds of ecosystems are a conservation priority for The Nature Trust.

Rare ecosystems provide vital habitat for many species at risk. The very dry ecosystems on this property provide ideal conditions for many vulnerable amphibian and reptile species. These include the threatened Great Basin Spadefoot, a rare frog that has adapted to dry habitats, and the threatened Tiger Salamander. The Great Basin Gopher Snake and the Western Rattlesnake have also been seen on the property.

Nuttall's Cottontail, a small tawny rabbit whose coat does not change colour in the winter, has been seen on the property. This is one of the rarest rabbits in Canada and can only be found in the South Okanagan.

In order to seize this acquisition opportunity we need your help to raise \$600,000 by June 30, 2021.



Park Rill Creek Floodplain



2021 Priority Projects



Nicomen Slough

Nicomen Slough Parcel A

We have the opportunity to add 18.5 acres (7.5 hectares) to our newest conservation complex in the “Heart of the Fraser River” – Nicomen Slough.

Nicomen Slough is located in an area of continental significance to waterfowl that stop in the area during their migrations. More than 100 Trumpeter Swans spend the winter in the area, alongside owls, ducks and Great Blue Herons. River Otters, Muskrat and Beavers share the land with birds, fish and plant life.

This property protects a portion of the rich riparian ecosystem in the Heart of the Fraser – an area that is increasingly threatened with development and habitat loss.

The Heart of the Fraser is a marvelous stretch of the river. This area is prime spawning habitat for salmon and White Sturgeon and serves as a nursery for millions of baby salmon every year. The Nature Trust has conserved almost 700 acres in this area beginning with the Chehalis Conservancy in 1978 and most recently adding our first Nicomen Slough property in 2019.

In order to seize this acquisition opportunity we need your help to raise \$500,000 by August 31, 2021.

Double Your Impact

We are very grateful to MapleCross for their offer to match the first \$200,000 in donations to protect the Nicomen Slough. Now is a perfect time to double the impact of your gift. Visit naturetrust.bc.ca to donate.

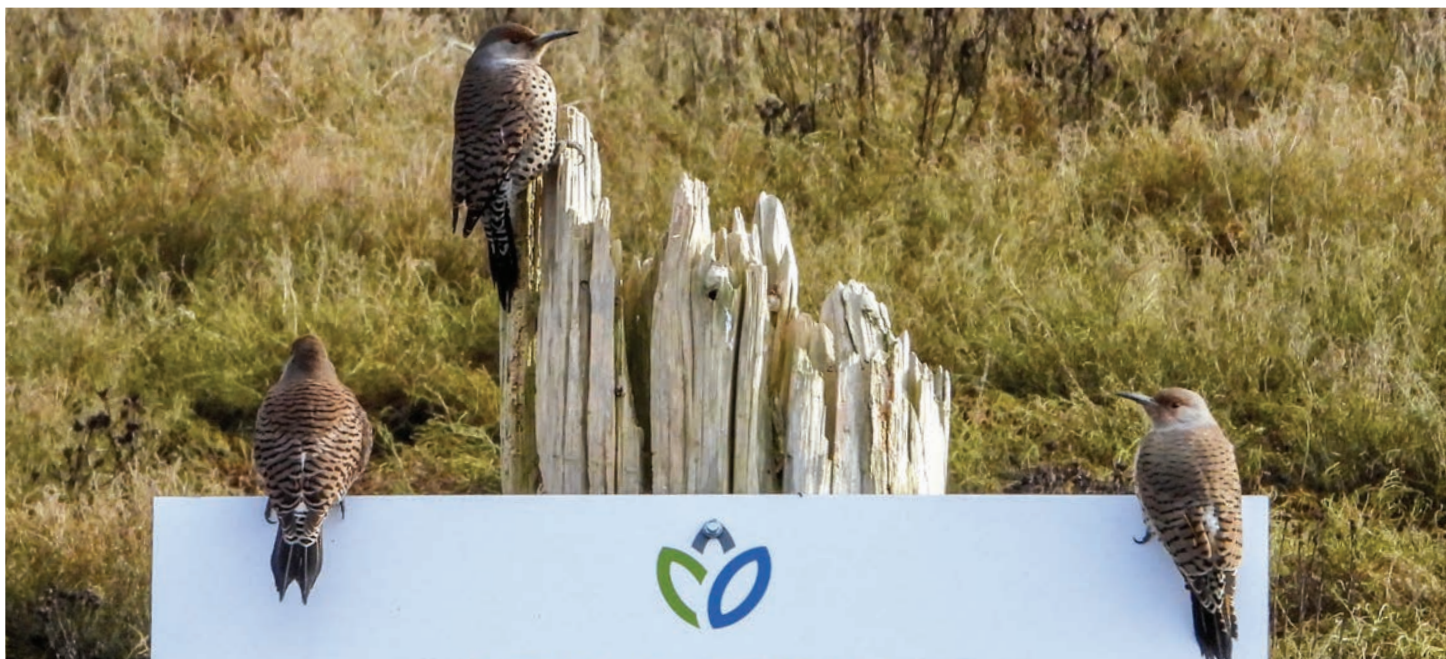
If you are a US taxpayer you can leverage your donation, see the back cover to find out how.



Muskrat



Reflection on 50 years



Dick Richards - Board Chair 1999 to 2001, Advisory Board Member 2007 to Present

As I look back at my involvement in The Nature Trust of BC I am humbled that I was a small part of the accomplishments and growth.

A lifelong fisherman and outdoorsman, I was excited to be recruited to the Board of this organization which acquired land at risk of changes that would degrade or destroy biological and zoological diversity. The pressure of "development" of critical areas, which are desirable for human uses such as river estuaries, grasslands, winter holding areas for wildlife, plants and other species, threatens biodiversity.

The continued significant increase in holdings and the careful management of owned properties is so important. The Nature Trust has done marvels starting with the small initial grant from Canada.

The mix of scientists, business people, investment specialists, fundraisers and communications people to the Board is invaluable, for it allows interaction on ideas and delivery of results. The Board is flexible and ready to move quickly when necessary. Their conservatism means that all of this has been accomplished without any debt.

May the next 50 years bring even more acquisitions that will benefit current and future generations.



Kip Woodward - Board Chair 2001 to 2003, Advisory Board Member 2007 to Present

It is simple: Nature sustains us. This is why I am proud to be an Advisory Board member of The Nature Trust of BC, a leading non-profit non-advocacy land conservation organization.

The Nature Trust has been working every day for the past 50 years to conserve our province's extraordinary biological diversity. Our business is land securement. We have protected 178,000 acres for wildlife, fish and plants. Our success is due to land owners who share our vision and donors, conservation partners and all levels of government, who support our conservation efforts. I hope you will join me by supporting this worthwhile organization that is keeping nature in our future.



Peter Speer - Board Chair 2005 to 2007, Advisory Board Member 2009 to Present

During the '70s I was on the mailing list for The Nature Trust's newsletters and many years later I was asked to join the Board. I had no reservations. Why? Because the Trust had proven to me that it had brought together business people, scientists, landowners, corporations, community groups, foundations and all levels of government.

In 2006, the year that I was Board Chair, we published *The Nature Trust of British Columbia – 35 Years of Conservation*. Ian McTaggart-Cowan, Director Emeritus, wrote these words in the Foreword – “One of the problems of being a conservationist is that you can win over and over again, but you only have to lose once and the ball game is over.” Well, I believe that The Nature Trust for the past 50 years has been remarkably successful in making sure that the ball game is not over. Far from it! I am very proud of the small role that I played in that.



John West - Board Chair 2013 to 2015, Advisory Board Member 2017 to Present

What inspires me is the foresight of the founders, the federal government and original Board of Directors. With a small staff, the board consisting of scientists and business people worked tirelessly in identifying and accumulating critical properties in British Columbia that set the foundation for the magnificent portfolio The Nature Trust now manages.

Acquiring desirable conservation properties takes patience and quiet persistence. With the help of individuals, companies, conservation partners and governments, The Nature Trust is still adding to conservation complexes that began with a small holding 20 or 30 years ago.

In an increasingly unique and desirable global location, protecting BC's biodiversity and species is more critical than it has ever been. Looking back at what has been achieved in 50 years is exceptional, but securing properties over the next 50 will be critical.



Sally Otto - Board Chair 2019 to Present

My term as Chair is soon wrapping up. It certainly hasn't been the term that I expected! One of my favourite activities on the Board is to visit Nature Trust properties, breathing in the fresh air, seeing wildflowers grow, spying new birds and animal tracks. COVID-19 has restricted our travel and visits around the province, but it hasn't restricted Nature Trust's activities.

Staff have ushered through the purchase of 5 new properties, totaling 456 hectares in 2020. Land managers developed COVID-safe protocols to check in on properties and do the maintenance and restoration activities needed. With partners, Nature Trust's estuary work is going full speed ahead, monitoring how quickly climate is changing in estuaries up and down the coast of BC, crucial data to help guide future land acquisitions and mitigation efforts.

While the last year has prevented us all from travelling as much as we would like across the province, it warms my heart to know that we've worked together to protect a total of 72,000 hectares of natural habitats across the province. The wildflowers are still growing, the birds just now nesting. And we and future generations will be able to visit again and again.



Land Management

Cherry Creek Bridge Replacement



We have committed to caring for our properties forever. Our land management team creates customized management plans for each property, taking into account the kind of management necessary, restoration work, maintenance and budget. Management is an important and ongoing part of everything we do.

In 2020, one of the major management projects undertaken by our team was replacing the bridge over Cherry (Mather) Creek, on the The Nature Trust's Bummers Flats – Cherry Creek Conservation Property. Over the last number of years, both the wooden structure and the concrete abutments were becoming increasingly unsafe for crossing. Specifically, high water levels in the spring of 2013 undermined the bridge abutments, which progressively worsened afterwards.

This bridge provides access to the lower fields of the property. These fields include an extensive complex of wetlands that the team has recently restored, which require annual maintenance and monitoring. Emergency access is also necessary for wildfire crews, as the property is within close proximity to local communities.

The new bridge is a 13.4 meter (44 foot) steel I-beam superstructure—a big step up from the old log stringer bridge that was there. The project budget was approximately \$80,000.

The community really came together to help make this project a success. The BC Real Estate Association contributed financially, as well as Mardis Forest Products with discounted lumber. Special thanks also goes out to VAST Resource Solutions and Fiorentino Bros Contracting Ltd. for their expertise and support during the project.



Community Events



Fall Gala

The Nature Trust of BC is holding our virtual fall gala "Celebrating 50 Years" on October 6 with our online auction beginning September 22 and closing October 6. If you would like to sponsor this special event or donate to our auction, please contact Deb Kennedy, 604.924.9771 ext. 231 or debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca



Contemplation by Monica Gewurz

Artist of the Year Award

In honour of The Nature Trust of British Columbia's 50th Anniversary, and the Federation of Canadian Artists' 80th Anniversary, we are collaborating to award The Nature Trust of British Columbia Artist of the Year on October 18. Exhibition October 18 to 31 on Granville Island, at 1241 Cartwright Street, Vancouver, BC.



Brant Wildlife Festival

For the past 17 years, The Nature Trust of BC has coordinated the Brant Wildlife Festival in the Parksville-Qualicum Beach area of Vancouver Island. The festival celebrates the coming of spring and the arrival of the migrating Brant Geese, who stop to rest and feed on the shores before continuing north to their breeding grounds in Alaska.

This year, in response to health and safety regulations we have pivoted to a festival model that allows people to experience nature at their own pace. We hope that these 'events' will inspire people across the province to get outdoors and explore nature.

Events include a self-directed bird trail, with a map to local viewing locations, and species guide. A "bioblitz" sponsored by the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute where participants can use the iNaturalist app to count local species. A local selfie hunt for artistically painted wooden Brant Geese around town and in local businesses.

In a year with social distancing and increased uncertainty, getting out in nature can provide a much needed boost for mental and physical health.



Conversations on Conservation: Stephen Partington



A brilliant microbiological technologist, an engaging speaker and author on the importance of preserving nature, a local environmentalist and a dancer – this is Stephen Partington.

Stephen took time out to share his thoughts and observations on conservation before heading out to review the Camosun Bog conservation project in Pacific Spirit Park, near UBC. The driving rain was no deterrent to his desire to be out in nature.

ON WHERE WE FIT INTO NATURE

Early on I came to the view that the earth, the universe and we are all one. And this was confirmed through my studies of chemistry, biology and people. We're part of a much larger cosmos.

All we have is what we experience but we're part of a collective experience in which no one thing is all that significant.

ON CONSERVATION EDUCATION

The future is real. It's not going away. People can direct what happens in the future by how they channel their resources today. I believe that people want to give; but they just may not know how or they may have a healthy scepticism. They need to know their hard earned money is going to a well-managed organization.

I love to engage people in the experience of nature and I especially delight working with little kids. Childhood is an age of discovery. I like to get down to their level and say, "Wow, look at that!"

I see my role in the conservation community as providing guidance, encouragement and financial support. I seek out exceptional people, tell them that I believe in them and offer them help. I want to empower people to be themselves and to have the self confidence going forward. I want to help people to find the joy in life. The folks at The Nature Trust of BC are exceptional people!

ON LAND CONSERVATION CHALLENGES

The Nature Trust of BC is a fabulous organization but their challenge is getting enough funding. It started as the National Second Century Fund with a gift of federal money but now there are so many competing asks within a finite pool.

The Nature Trust's work in assessment of lands and regions in need of conservation is vital. They are a wonderful group of people whose decision making is based on both economic and scientific wisdom.

Large sums of money are required to do conservation in the areas where it's most needed and where it's critical but that's usually where people want to live. Buying private land means competing with the real estate market. The urban industrial pressure is huge. There's continuous encroachment. And it's an emotionally charged subject because people also need someplace to live.

Waterways and estuaries are also prime places for industrial activities which are a threat to those habitats.

Stewardship of the land – land management – is also a challenge. Just because you own the land doesn't mean it won't be impacted by people directly or indirectly.

At the same time, these can be places where young people can get educated, where people can be deployed through volunteering activities that make them feel good and connected: raising the consciousness of society to these needs.

ON GIVING TO SUPPORT CONSERVATION

I've been lucky. I've had a really good life and some successes. Now I have the opportunity to give back and that's what I've done and will continue to do.

One thing that is wonderful about donating within one's lifetime is that you have the knowledge of giving back, the recognition of what you've done and the satisfaction of seeing the result. It's a way of doing something really positive. For me, that can't be beat.





Leave a Legacy



Princeton Grasslands - MapleCross Meadow. Photo by Graham Osborne

COVID-19 has reminded us all of the importance of nature not just for us, but for all the animals and wildlife that depend on it. We are very grateful to the people who have prepared their wills and included a philanthropic gift in support of nature during this time.

At The Nature Trust of BC, we call these people our visionaries. Two of these special people are Heidi and Michael Rodway. We recently had the pleasure of working with them on their wills.

Heidi and Michael understood the importance of writing a will. They wanted to make their own choice about what happened to their estate. They didn't want to waste part of the estate on the legal process if a will was not present and they didn't want to burden family members. "People you care about may already have a lot to deal with. We didn't want our last impacts to be negative or frustrating if we could avoid it."

Michael and Heidi had been wanting to write their wills for many years, but the difficulties associated with choosing an executor and researching beneficiaries resulted in procrastination. However, they did know that they wanted to support charities devoted to wilderness,

wildlife and animal welfare.

From childhood, Michael and Heidi enjoyed the outdoors with family and friends. "We've had an innate love of nature, animals and wildlife from an early age." This led both of them to pursue careers as professional wildlife biologists.

Heidi and Michael selected a number of charities to receive gifts from their estate. When asked why they supported The Nature Trust of BC, Heidi said that "given continuous human expansion, it is clear that the future of wildlife and wild places on our planet is in great peril. We

We want to help provide protection for wildlife and wild places in BC into the future.

want to help provide protection for wildlife and wild places in BC into the future. We want to do this not because conservation will benefit humanity (although it will) but because wildlife and their habitats

have intrinsic value and are as deserving of existence as we are. The Nature Trust will use the funds we leave to them directly for the protection of ecosystems and wildlife. Leaving funds to a charity also has financial benefits but we consider this to be a bonus rather than a decisive factor."

We are honoured to help people like Heidi and Michael with their wills. It is gratifying to say thank you today for a gift tomorrow.



Nature Trust News

Leveraging donations from the USA

The Nature Trust of BC works hard to leverage funds by seeking matching grants from government agencies, foundations and other individuals.

One powerful leveraging opportunity comes from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA). This opportunity applies to donations from US sources to protect habitat for migratory birds on their cross-border flights to nesting grounds.

A tax-deductible donation that goes through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act will be leveraged 3:1.

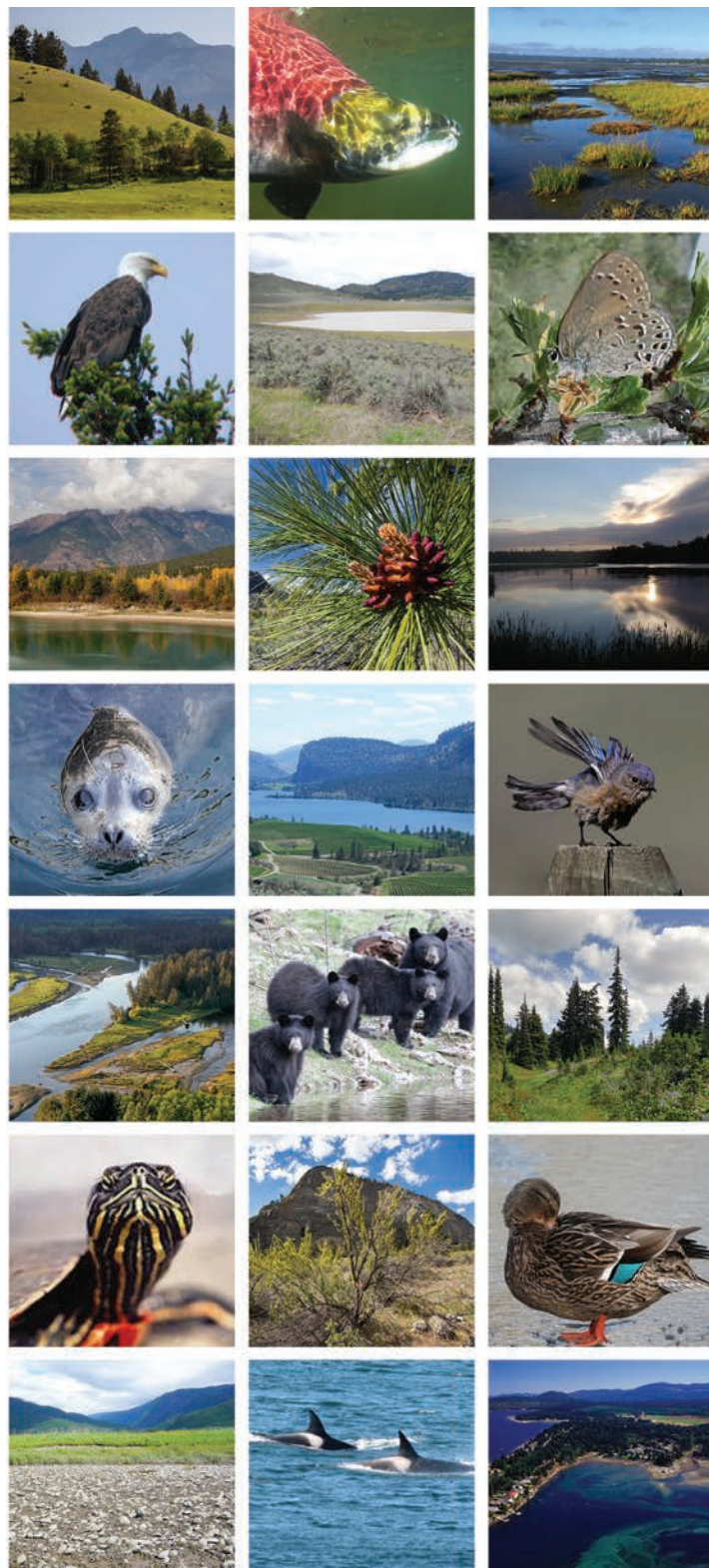
For example, a gift of \$100 USD from an individual, foundation, or corporation to The Nature Trust of BC will generate a total of \$400 USD for a Nature Trust wetland or estuary project in BC.

Sound too good to be true? Check out our website for more details.
<https://www.naturetrust.bc.ca/our-givings/us-taxpayers>

Conservation Field Crews

We are excited to be hiring conservation field crews in four regions this year: Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland, the Okanagan, and the Kootenay. The conservation field crews provide opportunity for young people to gain skills and field experience in conservation and land management. They have a chance to learn about land conservation and take on critical projects on Nature Trust properties. The Nature Trust is proud to be able to support the next generation of conservationists. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support from the Province of British Columbia and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation. Special thanks to Wheaton Precious Metals for title sponsorship and all our other crew supporters.

Bequests to The Nature Trust of BC are a way to leave a lasting legacy to nature. If you would like more information on how you can leave a gift in your will to The Nature Trust and become one of our visionaries, please call Deb Kennedy at 604.924.9771 ext. 231 or e-mail debkenedy@naturetrust.bc.ca



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
Peter Armstrong
Trisha Beaty
Brian Clark *RPBio*
Rob Doyle
Emily Griffiths - Hamilton
Doug Janz

Andrea MacLeod *PhD*
Justin Roach
Brooke Wade
Richard Wood
Jack Woods
Jim Wyse