

President's report 2013

This has been an interesting year for a number of reasons. In September 2012 it looked likely MLCS was going to start a major fundraising campaign to purchase land on Texada Island. The actual land did not end up coming up for sale, but in preparation for such an event I focused upon how to best mount a campaign, what would be involved, who would need to be involved and how such an idea could be floated first among membership and second to the general public.

At the 2012 AGM John Dove attended and spoke about the 500+ acres that span waterfront on the west coast of the island.

In the summer 2013 I was contacted by Andrew MacKinnon, a staff person working for The Land Conservancy, TLC. He asked if MLCS would be interested in assisting TLC by doing the monitoring of the Texada land. In September, armed with a camera, clipboard and scant information from the monitoring done in 2009 by TLC together with a couple of maps, Rob and I met with the owner on his land. It took two trips for us to complete the monitoring.

Completing the monitoring and writing up the report was a great experience as this was the first time MLCS had been involved directly with monitoring covenants. It was also well-timed.

In October, I attended the Land Trust Alliance of BC's conference on conservation covenants. The workshop was led by the Nature Conservancy of Canada and more than half the land conservancies in BC were represented at the event. It was a fabulous opportunity to network and find out not just about covenants, but also about other aspects of successful land conservancies. At the event contact was made with Cortes Island representative Sabina Leader Mense and on November 23 and 24 Rob and I will be on Cortes meeting with representatives from land conservancies throughout the northern gulf islands. The aim of this meeting is to learn from each other, support each other and also look at how we might influence the same tax incentives for landowners provided by Islands Trust for the southern Gulf Islands.

In the summer we were also contacted by a land owner in Roberts Creek who was wishing to name us as second recipients of his property. The primary recipients would be Sunshine Coast Conservation Association. His lawyer alerted me to the need to have Section 218 and 219 of the Land Titles Act designation to allow us to hold covenants.

Researching these sections, they must be applied for at the time of negotiating a covenant, not before, and after we have a few covenants under our belt, designation will be granted without further application.

We attended Seedy Saturday and the Newcomers' Society events to raise awareness of the society. We signed up new members at both of these events.

Two new items were created this year. The first was a brochure to assist people wishing to leave a legacy to the society. The second was the paperwork required to set up direct deposit giving for anyone wishing to give regularly to the society.

Toward the end of the year, Wendy Cocksedge and Anne Parkinson stepped down as directors. Anne moved to Salt Spring Island and Wendy needed more time for her family. We are therefore entering the 2013-2014 year desperately needing more board members, especially in the Treasurer and Secretary positions.

Together we need to work on maintaining and increasing membership, publicity, research (so that we are not shocked by such a thing as Section 218 and 219 of the Land Titles Act) and fundraising.