

WHO WE ARE

Established as a non-profit organization in August 2008, we became a registered Charity in January 2010.

We have a board of six directors:

Rob Southcott - President
Ted Crossley - Vice-President
Gord Kennedy - Treasurer
Rachel LeBlanc - Secretary
Lesley Thorsell - Director
Justin Frazer - Director

We have three volunteer staff members:

Janet Southcott - Executive Director
Kelly Chapman - Ecologist
Leeanne Barr - Website Manager

We have four committees:

Membership
Fundraising
Public Engagement
Land

MISSION

Protection of natural, agricultural, recreational, historic, and scenic lands in our region through the use of conservation covenants, land acquisition and education.

VISION

People living within a healthy diverse region where respect for the natural world is paramount.

Fundraising for Parks

Want more parks in the region? Now is a great time to plan ahead.

The Powell River Regional District announced three new regional parks recently: Divers' Rock north of Lund, End of the Road (Lund Gazebo area) and Rossander Park south of town.

And, two fundraising campaigns have been initiated: one on Savary Island for the second half of Lot DL1375, and one for Stillwater Bluffs, should this property become available for purchase.

The creation of Rossander Park is the final piece in the substantial forest legacy left by Martin Rossander, who died in 2012. Situated at the corner of Dixon and Dolmage roads in the Lang Bay area, this is 17 acres of treed land.

The park comes with a restrictive covenant. This covenant specifies the wishes Martin had for the land and restricts its use to pedestrian only. At a recent open house, hosted by the regional district, attendees could make any suggestion they wished regarding the use of the park. However, only those suggestions that are in line with the covenant will be considered.

For many years, Savary Island Land Trust has been fighting for the preservation of a

...Continued on page 2



Lesley Thorsell photo

Rossander Park is one of the newest regional parks in the area. This 17-acre forest is the third and final piece of the land legacy left by Martin Rossander. At a recent open house, attendees were able to make suggestions on the use of the property. However, only those aligned with the restrictive covenant will be considered.

National Conference News

Networking, education, idea sharing and the opportunity to learn from others, were the reasons we sent our volunteer executive director to the 2017 Canada Land Summit conference in Victoria.

Over 100 representatives from across Canada and the US attended the three-day conference in November. Keynote speakers Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and his wife Joan spoke of the need

to work with local nations through the land conservation movement.

David Courchene Jr, of the Anishinabe First Nation, is quoted as saying: "The longest journey we will ever make as human beings is the journey from the mind to the heart."

Taking a moment to think about this quote, remember the story above, which relates to fundraising for parkland. How can we, as a

...Continued on page 2

Conference News

continued from page 1...



Stillwater Bluffs. Photo by Rachel Walker

Fundraising

continued from page 1...

large piece of land close to the centre of the island. Recently, the private owners agreed to a sale price and so SILT is now actively raising funds.

The entire lot is 350 acres. Nature Trust of BC owns half. The purchase will be for the other half. This land contains “the greatest remaining example of dunes within the rare Coastal Douglas Fir biogeoclimatic zone and one of the best examples of coastal sand dunes in Canada,” according to SILT executive director, Liz Webster. To find out more, visit savaryislandlandtrust.org/savetheheart.

Many are familiar with the beauty of Stillwater Bluffs. Few realize, when visiting the property, that they are trespassing upon private land. DL3040 is over 100 acres in size and is owned by Island Timberlands as private managed forest land. As such, local government has no jurisdiction over this property, but the local community has made it clear they would like to own the property as parkland.

Friends of Stillwater Bluffs Association (FOSBA) formed in 2017 to help make this a reality, should the property ever come for sale. As a charity, Malaspina Land Conservancy Society has offered to receive and hold funds for this purpose.

A benefit concert by BC singer-songwriter Luke Wallace will help generate interest in, and funds for, the campaign. Enjoy an evening of entertainment at Cranberry Community Hall on Sunday, March 25, 2018 and find out more about this beautiful area known as Stillwater Bluffs.

And, in more news on the parkland subject, Powell River Regional District heard from FOSBA, who asked

community, hope to achieve such grand ideas and run successful campaigns if our hearts are not part of the picture?

In 2013, the David Suzuki Foundation launched its Blue Dot Campaign. The campaign engaged thousands of volunteers in the push to acknowledge the human right to a healthy environment. But it wasn't really until children became involved that media picked up the story and found its focus.

The inclusion of children heightened awareness that today's world is fraught with pollution, strife, hunger and anger. So, the campaign took that and refocused on a positive vision, that was compelling, evocative, powerful and alternative.

We will have to wait until late spring to hear whether the human right to live in a healthy environment is accepted into the Canadian constitution.

As we approach the idea of fundraising, we would do well to remember that seven out of ten people will donate to local causes, if asked. Fundraising provides a donor with the opportunity to invest. We provide a cause they can put their money into and help them make a difference.

People are more likely to make a donation if they have been involved with the reason for the campaign. If the campaign centres around purchasing parkland, people who have experienced that land and regularly visit and walk its trails are more likely to become donors. By being on the land and absorbing its natural qualities, people have connected with their hearts and will want to make a difference.

A well-told story can also take them there in their minds. Storytelling is a powerful tool, and if used wisely, can instill trust and familiarity. It can make a cause more human, more visceral, and more memorable. There is a story behind every campaign, a reason, an emotion, a trigger, a threat or danger, a need to act quickly.

Whether there is a physical or mental opportunity to explore and connect with the campaign's goal, in both cases, that mind-to-heart journey will have happened.

The opportunity to participate in the conference cannot be taken lightly. MLCS is a young conservancy. There is a lot we can learn from the trials and tribulations of other conservancies. Conservancies are not in competition with each other, so there is open sharing of what works and what doesn't work.

Every conservancy, big or small, is concerned with ensuring that there is a natural world for our children and grandchildren to be awed by and enjoy.

...continued on page 3

SAR Study Continues

Last year we joined forces with a group of biologists from the Lower Mainland to look more closely at our Coastal Douglas-Fir ecosystem here in the Powell River region.

Powell River is situated along a narrow band of Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone. People like to live where this forest likes to grow. Unfortunately, only one per cent of this forest remains. And, of that one per cent, only nine per cent is protected in some way.

We joined with Aimee Mitchell, biologist and owner of Athene Ecological, and her team, to help educate people in this region about six species at risk (see right). We generated a number of talks and conversations, and a sign was erected at the entrance to Willingdon Beach Trail.

Over the year, Aimee and her team have worked with locals to survey Lasqueti and Texada islands, and the Powell River region for Western Screech Owl, amphibian egg masses, rare plants, bats, snakes and mosses.

Lots of animals and plants find their home within the Coastal Douglas-Fir biogeoclimatic zone. But because the CDF forest is being broken up and the land developed for urban use, those species are having a hard time surviving. This is leading to species at risk of extinction.

If and when these species are found, the next step is to ensure the habitat is not destroyed, by forming some kind of protection. That's where MLCS can help.



Little Brown Bat



Western Screech-Owl
(*kennicottii* species)



Red-legged Frog



Rigid Apple-Moss



Sharp-Tailed Snake



Western Toad

We can assist with landowner stewardship, monitoring, and holding conservation covenants.

There will be a short series of updated talks presented around Powell River this spring. If you wish to help find these species at risk, come to one of the talks or take a good look at these photographs and keep your eyes open when exploring our beautiful countryside.

Truthfully, there hasn't been a lot of success finding these six species. The biologists of Athene Ecological were funded for two years by the federal Habitat Stewardship Program and are applying for funds to allow the study to continue.

So it's not too late for you to help. If you see any of these six species while within the Powell River region, please call 1.604.989.1007 or email atheneecological@gmail.com and state where you saw it, how many you saw, any GPS location information, what date and time you saw it and send along any photos. Thank you!

Fundraising

continued from page 2...

that the Parkland Acquisition Strategy, accepted back in February 2017, be implemented, particularly the parkland acquisition fund.

Having a dedicated fund allows fundraising to happen through the regional district, sure in the knowledge that those funds will go only toward the purchase of parkland for the region.

The board agreed to do this and, as with all political paperwork, the wheels will turn slowly to create an enabling bylaw, that will put a line item on the regional district budget, allowing accumulation of funds specifically for the said purpose.

People will then have a choice: they can donate directly to MLCS or to the regional district, knowing their funds will add greenspace for generations to come. And, just like MLCS, the regional district can provide tax receipts.

Many people were involved, almost a decade ago, with the creation of the Parks and Greenspace Plan for the area. This movement by the board to create a dedicated parkland fund is a large step forward toward achieving the goals set out in the plan.

Who We Are



Here's our current board members and staff: [back row from left] Ted Crossley (vice-president), Gord Kennedy (treasurer), Rob Southcott (president); [seated from left] Lesley Thorsell (director), Janet Southcott (executive director) and Kelly Chapman (ecologist). Inset: Justin Frazer (director) and Rachel LeBlanc (secretary). Missing from photo is website manager Leanne Barr.

What is a Land Conservancy?

A land conservancy is a non-profit, charitable organization committed to the long-term protection of natural and/or cultural heritage. A land conservancy may own land itself, or it may enter into conservation covenants with property owners to protect or restore natural or heritage features on the owner's land. Land trusts also engage in stewardship, restoration and management of lands. The terms land trust and land conservancy are often used interchangeably.

Presentations to Community Groups

We are happy to provide a presentation to your community group about the work of land conservancies.

If you would like to schedule a talk, please contact us at info@malaspinaland.ca.

Earth Day Covenant Review

We decided to mark Earth Day 2018 by being outside!

On April 22 we will be at one of the properties protected by a conservation covenant. It is time for us to review the covenant. At the same time, we will hold a work party to help the owners clean up invasive species and garbage.

To find out about how covenants protect land here within our Powell River area, or how you can be involved in future work parties, call 604.485.0077 or email info@malaspinaland.ca.



Join Us

Perhaps we are biased, but we believe we are a nice bunch of people to work with. Why not join us? We have various places for volunteers, and with our progress into owning interest in land, we are having more opportunities for members to participate in rehabilitation and restoration activities. There is always room for more board members, too, so get in touch!

How to get in touch...

If you wish to become a member, are looking for more information, or have land to conserve through purchase, donation or conservation covenant, please contact us.

Send mail to Malaspina Land Conservancy Society
3852 Gordon Avenue
Powell River, B.C. Canada V8A 2T5

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