Malaspina Land Conservancy Society

COASTlines

~ protecting the places you love ~

Spring 2026

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 seven directors:
Rob Southcott - President
Justin Frazer - Vice President
Gord Kennedy - Treasurer
Rachel LeBlanc - Secretary
Lesley Thorsell - Director
Judy Watts - Director
Rachael Sydenham - Director

We have three volunteer staff members:
Janet Southcott - Executive Director
Kelly Chapman - Ecologist
Leeanne Barr - Website Support

We are grateful to live and work upon the territory of the Tla'amin Nation whose presence in this area dates back at least 10,000 years.

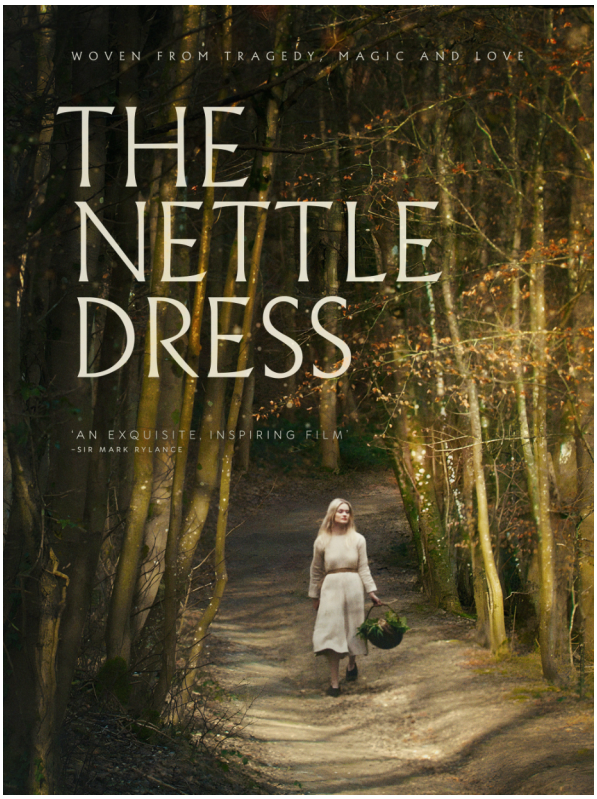
MISSION

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.

Movie Magic



There is something beautiful about sharing a movie experience with 175 people in the darkened surroundings of the Patricia Theatre.

What started as an idea back in the spring 2025, matured into an afternoon of sensory delight on Saturday, February 7, 2026.

The Nettle Dress is a documentary by film maker Dylan Howitt. Over seven years, the film follows Allan Brown, a middle-aged textile artist living in the rural area of Sussex, England.

He frequents Limekiln Wood, a small copse of trees amid miles of ploughed agricultural land. Within the wood is a grove of nettles, which initially spark the question: could he make nettles into clothing?

The film is divided into seasons and stretches only 68 minutes long. The cinematography captures the Sussex hillside, the lush serenity of the forest, and the patience of a man whose family life is woven throughout the story.

Early in the seven years, Allan's father dies. Spinning the dried nettle fibre becomes a constant in his visits as his father deteriorates. And then, Allan's wife is diagnosed with terminal cancer, and after a few months she also dies. Allan works through his grief while harvesting, drying, separating, brushing, spinning and eventually weaving the nettles into cloth, which becomes a dress worn by one of his daughters.

We chose the film as a fundraiser because of the many aspects inherent in the documentary: the need to preserve our wild places, the use of natural plants for clothing, the process of grieving, and how slow, hands on creativity transports us through the hard challenges life brings.

It was a natural fit to have collaborators share the experience and we held a panel discussion at the end. Megan Cole with Sunshine Coast Fibreshed, Amber Gould and Juliette Jarvis with Flax to Linen, Teresa Harwood-Lynn who, as an artist, uses found metals and crafts them into a second life. Biologist Wendy Cocksedge contributed her thoughts on the fragility of wild places, the value of all within the forest and the need to protect what is left, and Rob, as president of our organization, provided a summary of what we do in our work as a land conservancy.

Our appreciation goes out to Laura and Evan at The Patricia, who provided lots of help and encouragement throughout the whole process, our collaborators, everyone who attended the film showing, and, over in England, Allan Brown and Dylan Howitt for bringing such a rich story to us all. Visit nettledress.org for more.

Looking Back on 10 Years

Malaspina Land Conservancy Society holds covenants over two parcels of private land in the qathet region. One of these is within the city, on Fernwood Avenue, and owned by two of our board members and family. They live on the parcel next to the covenant and look after the land.

Another year of living in harmony with a covenant! This year we reached a milestone - 10 years - yet the experience of walking amongst the protected trees in our backyard still feels as fresh as the first day exploring our new home. Over time we've watched the woods grow, we've nurtured them, learned from them, and now have the privilege of sharing the majestic beauty of these dear friends with the next generation of stewards, our nieces, nephews and a grandson! Watching them spend time with their imaginations in a small forest in town, building shelters ("no living branches!" is a cry that's often heard from their overseers), poking at mushrooms and noticing birds is an unparalleled delight. We're honoured to support the growth of their love and respect for the natural wonders of this world, for life.

Working with MLCS has been instrumental in opening our eyes to the ongoing, evolving beauty contained in a small parcel of woods and the privilege of protecting this in perpetuity. We've been enthusiastic members of the MLCS board for several years now, and remain forever grateful to be a part of this organization and the work they do.



LeBlanc/Frazer photo



LeBlanc/Frazer photo

In-house Printing

This newsletter you are reading is not glossy and the photographs are perhaps not as punchy as they could be. Instead of sending it out to be printed commercially, we printed it in-house.

The paper is FSC controlled, and EarthChoice®. Information on the packet reads: "…because they [the papers] are made using wood fibres from responsibly-managed North American forests, companies and consumers who care about the environment can do their part to ensure a healthier planet today—and tomorrow."

We used to have a printer that sucked ink cartridges dry every month. It was totally unsustainable to keep using it. So, a few years ago we purchased a printer that doesn't have cartridges, and instead uses ink tanks. We print regularly and yet only just replaced our first, out-of-the-box, supply of ink.

We feel better about the decision to print our handout materials in-house, and we hope you will understand that our decision to do so aligns with our overall vision for MLCS. Electronic copies of our newsletters and brochures (in which the photos are crisp and beautiful) are available on our website at malaspinaland.ca should you wish to download more copies to pass around.

New Kid on the Board

At our November AGM, we were delighted when Rachael Sydenham joined our board as a director. Here is an interview to introduce her to our community.

Where are you from and what has been your background?

We moved here from Quesnel, but I was born in Vancouver. I have a background in Archaeology, Urban Design, publishing, and land stewardship.

What drew you to the qathet area?

My family was drawn to qathet because I used to visit my father here quite often. His family goes back three generations in the area, they worked in the forest industry and he especially came to regret the damage our harvesting techniques had done here and around BC. He's gone now, but I feel like land conservancy and stewardship is a way to honour his realization and legacy.

What skills do you bring to the land conservancy arena?

I currently work in land stewardship, I bring a dedication and passion in protecting our wild spaces, rewilding overly developed areas, and combating issues such as climate change through community efforts and connections to nature.

What would you like to see as a future for biodiversity?

I would love to see a future where biodiversity is seen as much of a benefit as financial gain. If we could understand that feeding money into corporate coffers at the expense of our planet is going to lead us all into disaster, we might be able to stop the way we're headed currently. I would like to have biodiversity and the natural world taken into consideration above all else when planning and developing our country. The concept of working to build a better world for generations to come rather than to stuff our own bank accounts and parade material wealth is outdated. We need to step into the future, think about those who are coming after us, and understand our place in the great web of life.



Rachael Sydenham, director

What would you like to know more about regarding the land conservancy movement?

I would like to know more about funding the land conservancy movement. There are several beautiful and incredibly important areas in the qathet region that are at risk of potential development. It would be amazing if we could find the money to get them into a spot where they are carefully managed and safe for generations to come.

It's All About Connections

Rob and Janet travelled to Victoria in November to attend the Canadian Land Trust Summit. With 160 delegates, it was a chance to learn and network with conservancies across the nation. It was also a chance to hear from some powerful speakers, Canadian Senator Rosa Galvez being one. Originally from Peru, she is a senator based in Quebec, who has made strides by following her passion and working within the establishment to make change. She really helped us see the impact one person can have. She continues to bring climate change and the environment to the forefront of her colleagues' minds, by speaking in terms of jobs and economy, using "their" language to bring about agreement. Her website rosagalvez.ca is well worth a read.

Working within uncertain political times brought the need to diversify our conservancy's income, align with likeminded organizations and make unlikely alliances. Elevating our presence in our community is also important, and with that, to have a strong and consistent voice together with working on issues that matter. A more sobering note was that advocacy is the long game and that wins come at the end of decades of sustained pressure. And we need to build our membership. Numbers really count when it comes to having impact.

Another amazing speaker was Karla Point, a University of Victoria lecturer who speaks on reconciliation. In recent years, emphasis has been placed upon acknowledging and working with indigenous rights to traditional land. Karla's keynote focused upon restoring our relationship, that small amendments to wording can make a big change, and left us with a quote from Waya Wolf: "Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed - it means the damage no longer controls our lives."

Participating in these conferences, being embraced by the power of the land conservancy movement, is both motivating and inspiring.

Who We Are





MLCS Board
Clockwise:
Justin Frazer
Rachel LeBlanc
Rob Southcott
Judy Watts
Lesley Thorsell
Gord Kennedy
Rachael Sydenham








Volunteer Staff
left to right
Janet Southcott
Kelly Chapman

Email Change Reminder

It is amazing how long an email address follows us around.

We changed our email address due to some changes with Google accounts. So, please use our address malaspinalandinfo@gmail.com.

The change has meant that our history of email communication since we began MLCS in the spring 2008 to now has been lost. We have been transitioning to this new email address since September 2022.

Be sure to reach out to us, even if just to say hello, and ensure we have your email address to correspond with in future.

Thanks!

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.



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 interests in land, we are having more opportunities for members to participate in rehabilitation and restoration activities. There is always room for more board and committee 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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