



agriculture



heritage



nature

Great Basin Spadefoots Found!

Puddles for Peepers program educates landowners on the importance of wetland protection

by Daris Piper
Stewardship Technician

Looking out onto a typical south Okanagan landscape you will see a mosaic of dry grasslands, lush orchards, aligned vineyards, and serene open pine forests. You may also see a wetland bursting with life. Although these wetlands look out of place, they are in fact just where they belong.

Wetlands are one of the most diverse and endangered habitats in the Okanagan and it is no surprise they are home to many species-at-risk including the tiger salamander and the great basin spadefoot. The fact that this bustling community is disappearing has sparked a need for protection and conservation, and thus

the Puddles for Peepers program was born.

Launched in 2005 by Sara Ashpole, a grad student from the University of Waterloo, and Ducks Unlimited, and administered by TLC, the goal of the program is to educate and support private landowners with wetlands on their properties. Staff work with the owners to ensure they make sound ecological decisions about their natural landscapes. The program also focuses efforts on creation, restoration, and enhancement of wetland habitats.

Staff currently monitor nearly 40 acres of local wetlands. Out of these desert oases, volunteers and landowners have pulled three full dump trucks of scrap metal and another dump truck full of household waste. During one property cleanup, the staff and the landowner discovered 52 great basin spadefoots, a federally listed threatened amphibian, nestled among the debris. This was quite the find, and it opened everyone's eyes to the importance of protecting wetlands.



Great basin spadefoots are one of the many wetland species that stand to benefit from restoration projects like Puddles for Peepers. Thank you TLC Members for supporting our efforts to enhance habitats on private lands. Photo Sara Ashpole

Seeing a shift in landowners' perspectives about wetlands is one of the most rewarding aspects of the program. At times, there may be a sense of reluctance towards these fragile habitats, as they may appear as a nuisance or problem. But once landowners are armed with

knowledge about the critters who call them home, there is without a doubt a change in their outlook. Puddles for Peepers is another great program that your support as a TLC Member helps make happen. For more information about this program, please call TLC's Penticton office at 250-492-0173. ■

Food, Farmers, and Fulfillment at Lohbrunner Farm

by Paula Hesje
Agricultural Program Coordinator

Tucked away in a rural setting just outside of Victoria, two young farmers – Ian King and Christina Michalenko – are likely tending their crops, mixing their compost, and thanking Norma Lohbrunner for one of her tasty cookies. These three have come together because of Norma's vision for the future. In 2007, Norma donated her 40-acre farm to TLC using a legal agreement called a life estate. A life estate means that Norma can live in her home for the rest of her life; it means that she has donated the land to TLC who must manage the property as per her wishes.

Thankfully, Norma's wishes are to see the forest protected as a bird sanctuary and the farmland used for food production. With Ian and Christina's love of farming and the fact they provide organically grown produce to the local community, we have a winning combination.

Recently, a Lohbrunner farm support group has formed to talk about how to foster the success of the farm. The group is also helping write a Whole Farm Plan using a guide developed by TLC. The process involves collecting information pertaining to the property, creating a vision and goals for the farm, and deciding on farm agreements which will guide how certain aspects are managed or protected on the farm.

Lohbrunner farm is the perfect example of community involvement, land stewardship, and food

production working together to create a legacy for future generations. ■



Lohbrunner farm is part of TLC's Conservation Partners Program, a province-wide initiative that unites ecological conservation with sustainable agriculture values and practices. The program supports exemplary farmers, ranchers, orchardists, and vineyard owners who use their land not only to produce food, but also to protect natural habitat and biodiversity. Photo Ramona Scott

Annual General Meeting on Vancouver Island

Saturday, September 26, 2009
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
St. Stephen's Hall
7921 St. Stephen's Lane, Saanichton, B.C.

Special tour of
Madrona Farm at
9:30 a.m.
4317 Blenkinsop Rd.



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TLC MEMBERS: 25% of my commission goes to TLC!

Dear TLC Members,

To say it's good to be back would be an understatement. No one can deny that the last several months have been horrible for everyone involved with TLC. And while I don't want to dwell on the past, I realize that we can not go forward without recognizing what has gone before. TLC will now be forever changed as we build an even stronger future for B.C.'s special places.

Through the past months the wonderful people who make up the staff and volunteers of TLC have done a fabulous job of keeping things running, looking to the future, and coping with the uncertainty that has challenged them daily. To all of you, please know this organization wouldn't be here without your dedication.

I also want to express my sincere gratitude to TLC Members for taking part in the recent election. Incredibly, over 55% of you voted - showing not only how much you care, but also the true strength of TLC's Membership.

For the candidates who agreed to run for the very important positions on the Board, I want to thank you. No one takes on the task of being a board member of an organization the size and complexity of TLC without having a desire to be of service to the organization.

Coming out of these troubled months I am very optimistic about the future for TLC. I believe that TLC can be a stronger organization because of the renewed commitment of our members and the public. There is nothing like nearly losing something really important to you to help you realize how vital it is.

The election has brought us a new Board of Directors who have now begun the process of learning about TLC and putting their mark on its future direction. They bring passion and a wealth of knowledge as well as commitments to transparent governance and accountability. I would like to welcome them all including Al Craighead (Chair), Briony Penn (Vice-Chair), David Merner (Secretary), and Elspeth McVeigh (Treasurer). They are devoted to our mandate, and fundraising to ensure a healthy future for TLC.

Membership - which is so fundamental to the long-term stability of the organization - continues to grow steadily and is a renewed area of focus as we move forward. Our new "Million Reasons" campaign (see page 4) is currently in the works to broaden TLC's membership base throughout B.C., in particular the Lower Mainland. In order to enhance our communications, this fall we will be launching a survey to hear your thoughts and ideas as well as a revamped website with more tools to facilitate feedback and discussion.

Thank you again for sticking by us during the past turbulent times. If you have any comments, feel free to call me at 250-479-8053 or toll free at 1-877-485-2422.

Sincerely,



Bill Turner
Executive Director



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Help save B.C.'s special places for future generations by making a planned gift to TLC.

For more information on remembering TLC in your Will or other planned gifts, please contact Anne Armstrong at:
1-877-485-2422 or
aarmstrong@conservancy.bc.ca

Horse Lake Community Farm Cooperative



Photo Barb Matfin

Preserving farm land, for farmers, forever.

Help save this 133-acre farm in the central Cariboo. Support sustainable, community driven agriculture by purchasing your co-op member-share today or by making a tax receiptable donation at www.conservancy.bc.ca.

\$75,000 is needed to finalize the purchase by December 18, 2009.

Introducing TLC's New Chair of the Board of Directors: Alastair Craighead

I have always admired the work of The Land Conservancy. When I ride the Galloping Goose trail to the Sooke Potholes Regional Park with my son, I am proud to have helped in a modest way with both of these acquisitions and I admit to a healthy self-interest in their success.

I suspect my love for the land and my desire to protect it comes from idyllic childhood days at my grandmother's cottage in the Scottish Highlands. I believe this is how many of us are moved into action for a cause - it goes back to personal experiences while growing up. And, as adults those experiences resonate in the community in which we live and want to make a difference.

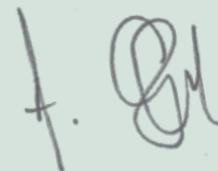
It was an honour to be asked to stand for TLC's Chair of the

Board of Directors. In this role I hope to serve you well, meet your expectations, and help achieve your hopes and dreams for TLC.

TLC has reached a stage where it will be assessing the unparalleled accomplishments of the organization under Bill Turner's leadership. Considering the current and likely future situation, we'll be looking at new opportunities and determining the way ahead.

We have listened to many TLC Members and donors over the past few months and we look forward to hearing from more of you at our upcoming Annual General Meeting on September 26, 2009. All of TLC's past accomplishments have been possible because of your support, the work of TLC staff, the generous response of individuals in the community at large, and

the solid partnerships TLC has developed with foundations, corporations, and all levels of government. As we look towards the future, these same supports will be critical to our success, and I look forward to working with you. ■



Horsefly Receives Funding Boost for Monitoring and Evaluation

by Barry Booth
Regional Manager, North Region

The Horsefly River Riparian Conservation Area (HRRCA), located 25 km from the town of Horsefly, was one of TLC's first acquisitions. The property was acquired because the Horsefly River is one of B.C.'s most valuable sockeye salmon rivers. This initial purchase started the arduous, yet rewarding task of restoring the site's fish and riparian habitat.

Guided by a comprehensive assessment and restoration plan, initial efforts to restore and enhance the property were overseen by the B.C. Ministry of Environment and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. These efforts involved literally thousands of people and hundreds of heavy machinery hours. In later years, these efforts have been assumed by TLC, guided by a local management committee.

Thanks to everyone's hard work there has been a dramatic transformation to large parts of the HRRCA. The conifer seedlings planted in 1999 and 2000 are now starting to look like trees, and in some places a forest is taking shape. Shoreline vegetation is making a slow and gradual comeback as a result of willow staking and riparian plantings. Also, there has been construction of off-stream habitat and breaching of containment dykes to help restore the natural flow of the river.

While we have seen many changes in the flood plain of the HRRCA, monitoring and evaluation is essential to help gauge the effectiveness of this work - and that is exactly what will occur this fall and next spring. With funding from the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund and the Fraser Salmon and Watershed Program, TLC and our partners will



Old hay field in 1999



New forest growing as of July 2009



Hay field along Horsefly in 1999



Same hay field in 2009 showing much riparian growth

Photos 1999 by Richard Case,
2009 by Barry Booth

be evaluating a number of the past projects at HRRCA.

The literature on restoration is full of projects that come up short in the area of monitoring and evaluation. Restoration experts also emphasize the need for carefully planned, executed, and monitored projects. This is where TLC is heading with our work in the HRRCA because we want to learn to do things better and gain knowledge through our results. In so doing we will ultimately be more effective in the restoration of this extraordinary piece of B.C. ■

TLC Teams Up With the University of Victoria on New Sustainable Development Course

by Tara Todesco
Volunteer Development Coordinator

TLC has a long history of working with the University of Victoria (UVIC). From early partnerships with students conducting research on interior grasslands and coastal restoration projects to successful student internships, TLC has always been committed to growing educational opportunities for the public at our properties.

This past summer, TLC embarked upon a new and experimental collaboration with Dr. Duncan Taylor, a professor with UVIC's School of Environmental Studies. Together, TLC and Dr. Taylor fashioned a course that brought together the theory and practice of sustainable development by matching classroom study with hands-on service work with TLC. Students contributed muscle and sweat at TLC partner sites like Madrona Farm, and significant brainpower in completing service assignments for Wildwood, and TLC's Agricultural Program.

Two students spent a full day crawling through Wildwood forest, identifying and photographing 60 plant species and then close to another 50 hours researching and writing the plant ecology. Their efforts created an up-to-date illustrated plant species inventory for Wildwood that will be available on the Ecoforestry Institute's website. Another group created an entire teaching module on bees and integrative pest management for



For the past 70 years, Merve Wilkinson has been practicing selective logging on Wildwood's 70-acre old-growth forest just south of Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. It is the oldest ecoforest on the west coast of North America, and was purchased by TLC in 2000 to ensure that the property would remain available as a learning site forever. Jay Rastogi, Site Manager, regularly gives tours of the property to students as well as the public. Photo Mila Czemerz

TLC's farm-related Conservation Holidays program, including brochures on building Mason bee boxes and a full colour bee species identification kit.

The learning outcomes and feedback from staff, students, and professor have been incredibly positive – proving that community-based learning can not only increase community capacity, but can also inspire students to participate directly in resolving environmental problems.

In a world where our ecological and social problems often seem too complicated and insurmountable to approach, helping motivate a new generation of active citizens is the most inspiring and hopeful result of this innovative course design. TLC would like to thank Dr. Taylor and the UVIC students for this great opportunity! For tours call 250-816-1816. ■

Wild Holiday Gifts!

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This issue's property highlight: In 2003, Dale and Anita Lehman donated their 60-acre old-growth forest to TLC under the Federal EcoGift Program. This unique forest is home to 600-year-old trees, including the second tallest Western Larch on record in Canada, and at least nine natural springs, marking the headwaters of 9 Mile Creek. Photo of TLC staff during site visit.

One Girl's Commitment to Mother Nature

by Heather Skydt
Manager, Communications

Hannah Vorell loves nature. She loves it so much that at the age of three she asked her neighbour to stop cutting down one of his trees on his property. "Trees help us breathe and they are home to lots of birds," says Hannah with a smile on her face while visiting TLC's Eagles Estate Heritage Garden. Now six, she is putting her conservation efforts to good use as she donated half of her birthday money, a whopping \$120, to help protect more trees through TLC. Hannah's appreciation for the environment may stem from her parents' interest in hiking and cycling, or her regular visits to Deer Lake in Burnaby, but her mother thinks she was born with it. "When I saw Hannah outside my neighbour's house crying over a tree, I knew we had a conservationist in the family," says Susan Vorell. "Many times

when Hannah sees development, she comments on how she doesn't like it because it affects nature and the birds." There is no doubt that Hannah gives TLC Members hope for the future of conservation. Thank you! ■



You too can become one of TLC's Community Action Heroes like Hannah. Send us your pictures and stories about events you have hosted benefitting TLC, and we may feature you in the next edition of the LANDmark. Photo Heather Skydt

Second Target Reached for Madrona Farm Campaign

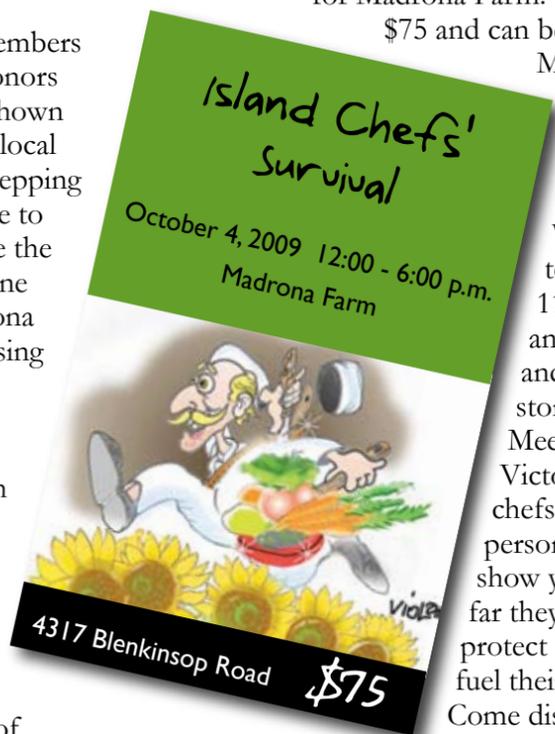
\$950,000 more needed for January 2010 deadline

by Heather Skydt
Manager, Communications

TLC Members and donors have shown their love for local produce by stepping up to the plate to help complete the second deadline for the Madrona Farm fundraising campaign. Thank you to all who donated! With the final payment of \$950,000 looming by mid January 2010, there is still plenty of work to be done to save this community asset.

Join the hundreds of people who believe in protecting agricultural

land for future generations by attending the 2nd Annual Island Chefs' Survival. On Sunday, October 4, 2009, 12 - 6 p.m., TLC and farmers Nathalie and David Chambers will host a culinary arts performance and music festival for Madrona Farm. Tickets are \$75 and can be bought at Madrona's veggie stand, 4317 Blenkinsop Road, Wednesdays to Fridays, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. and at Hemp and Company stores in Victoria. Meet 15 of Victoria's finest chefs up close and personal as they show you just how far they will go to protect the farms that fuel their restaurants. Come discover your new favourite restaurant, or watch and learn from some of your favourite chefs as they cook up their magic in the fields of Madrona Farm. For more information, please email: madrama@telus.net. ■

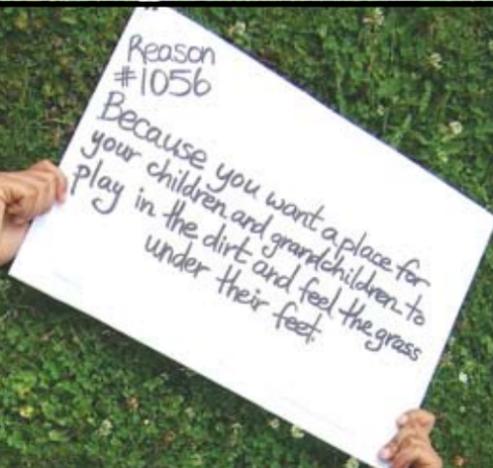


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To become a member online, please visit www.conservancy.bc.ca/reasons

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