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LANDmark

Over the top

TLC completes protection of public access to Skaha Bluffs

by Kathleen Burton
Manager, External Relations

Two years ago, Mountain Equipment Co-op™ (MEC) asked TLC to help secure a permanent public access to one of BC's premier climbing destinations: Penticton's Skaha Bluffs. Now – thanks to that partnership and the support of thousands of individuals from across Canada and the north western USA – the dream of keeping the Bluffs open for everyone to enjoy has come to fruition. With TLC acting as lead negotiator on the project, a 304 hectare property adjacent to the rock climbing area has been purchased. Of the \$5.25 million needed to complete the acquisition, TLC directly raised \$1.7 million, and partnered with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (supported by the Government of Canada) and BC's Ministry of Environment to come up with the balance of the funds.

This success is even more exciting because the purchase protects the homes of approximately 15 species at risk, including California bighorn sheep in a shrub-steppe ecosystem – one of the most threatened ecosystem types in Canada. With the land slated to (eventually) become part of a larger, proposed Skaha Bluffs Provincial Park, saving this special place is a big step in ensuring that these species will be around for generations to come.



Climbers can continue to enjoy Penticton's Skaha Bluffs (also an important wildlife habitat area) thanks to TLC's successful purchase of a property that will ensure a permanent public access to the site. *Photo Howie Richardson*

"The purchase of this property recognizes the importance of providing recreational access and, at the same time, protecting a vital area for the conservation of wildlife," says Bill Turner, TLC's Executive Director.

"The successful completion of the campaign could not have happened without support from the climbing community, and the many wildlife and conservation groups, and individuals who are dedicated to BC's wildlife." ■

Gifts in honour of Calgary climbing enthusiast help push Bluffs campaign to the summit

Colin Wooldridge loved the outdoors. He loved to climb. So when he heard about TLC's efforts to protect Skaha Bluffs, he quickly made a donation and got his company (Calgary-based EnCana) to match it.

But just a few months later, while on a climbing expedition in November 2007, a snow shelf overhanging a cliff above

Colin gave way. Two days later, he succumbed to injuries resulting from the falling snow.

TLC received over \$15,000 in gifts from friends and relatives wishing to celebrate Colin's life and dreams. We are honoured to have been trusted with this generous support, and hope that the protection of the Bluffs will stand as a lasting tribute to his spirit.

TLC would also like to thank the Climber's Access Society of BC, the Guide Outfitters Association of BC, the Wild Sheep Society of BC, and the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, for their help in protecting Skaha Bluffs.

Executive Director's Message



The Land Conservancy
Head Office
301-1195 Esquimalt Road
Victoria, BC V9A 3N6

Ph: (250) 479-8053
Toll-free: 1-877-485-2422
www.conservancy.bc.ca

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I wish you could have been there. It was a very exciting moment for me, and for all of *TLC*.

Earlier this year, The Honourable Iona Campagnolo – former Lieutenant-Governor of BC – volunteered to become *TLC*'s Honorary President. Right away she rolled up her sleeves and starting taking action; beginning with an incredibly inspirational speech she delivered at a fundraising dinner for the Sooke Hills (see opposite page for a campaign update).

Of course I can't convey to you the passion with which she spoke, nor the magnitude of what it means for *TLC* to have Ms. Campagnolo working with us to save special places. But I can share with you some of her words that resonated most with me:

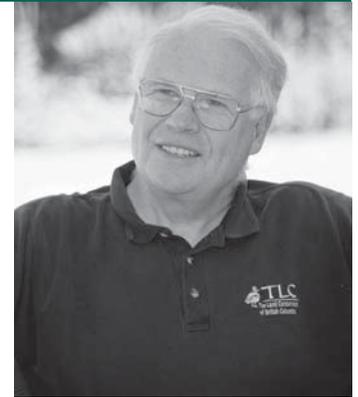
“As The Land Conservancy commences its second decade, consider what our Province would look like without it...The *TLC* Membership has helped to secure such important acquisitions as The Sooke Potholes which, without *TLC*, would most likely be welcoming exclusive Spa-seekers rather than day to day citizens to its [beauty]. ...You would not freely access the historic ‘Salmon incubator’ that is the Horsefly River system. [And] there would be no Abkhazi Garden. Instead...Abkhazi would feature a ‘perennial border’ of 12 towering Townhouses rimmed with vestiges of the famed garden as commercial landscaping! That is just a taste of many dozens of projects that *TLC* has worked to preserve.”

“*TLC* and its Members dare to dream, and have the faith and negotiating skills needed to sustain risks and do the hard work of forging complex partnerships; absorbing knowledge and information and exercising the discipline required to obtain such exceptional acquisitions.”

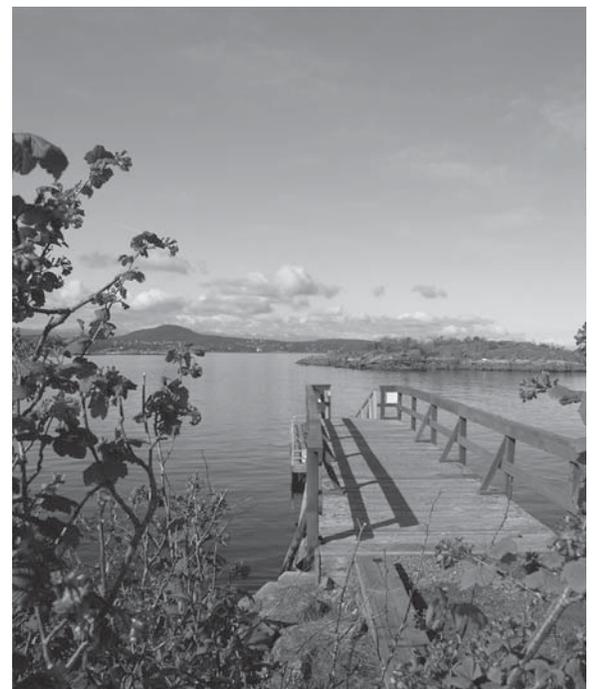
“The accomplishments of The Land Conservancy speak loudly to the wonder of our history, and ‘magic’ of our heritage as British Columbians; allowing new generations of us to ‘walk over’ a bridge of conservation that has been lovingly constructed by [*TLC*] Members and contributors like you.”

Thank you for being a part of this organization that has so inspired Iona Campagnolo, and so many other people in Canada, and around the world.

The dock at *TLC*'s South Wincheslea Island can be the gateway to a summer vacation on your own private island. To find out more, visit www.conservancy.bc.ca/exploreBC
Photo by Christina Symons



Bill Turner,
TLC's Executive Director



Update: Larry Talarico Memorial Campaign

Advancing the protection of the Sooke Hills

by Geoff Reader
Donor Relations

On behalf of the entire Talarico family: thank you! With the help of your support as a *TLC* Member, over \$510,000 has been raised for the Larry Talarico Memorial Campaign so far. The ultimate goal of \$750,000 for this project is coming into focus as we continue our efforts to save the spectacular Sooke Hills – the world class outdoor playground and wilderness area - located on southern Vancouver Island just east of the Sooke Potholes.

The Larry Talarico Memorial Campaign celebrates the life of Larry Talarico, a Victoria-area dentist who suffered a heart attack and passed away in July 2005 while hiking with friends in the Sooke Hills. The Talarico family is proud to support Larry's dream of forever protecting the Sooke Hills and have made a major

donation of \$150,000 towards the campaign.

The area of the Sooke Hills in which Larry had been hiking is part of a much larger vision for BC's wilderness parks: The Sea-to-Sea Green Blue Belt. *TLC*, in partnership with the Capital Regional District (CRD), have been securing large tracts of land stretching from the Saanich Peninsula to the Sooke Basin. This project has been a long-term success story starting with the acquisition of 392 hectares in the Sooke Hills back in 2001.

Every year since, *TLC* has worked with the CRD to raise more money to secure and covenant additional land in the Sooke Hills so that now 3,932 hectares have been protected as wilderness park space.



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With your continuing support, *TLC* can complete the vision of a vast, protected, wilderness area that will be a priceless legacy for future generations. Thank you!

To make your gift to the Larry Talarico Memorial Campaign, call 1-877-485-2422 or visit www.conservancy.bc.ca. ■



Left: Larry Talarico on a hike with his daughter Trina in 1995. Larry's life was the inspiration for a campaign aimed at protecting 932 hectares of spectacular wilderness in the Sooke Hills. Thanks to *TLC* Members, over two-thirds of the campaign goal has been raised so far.

Inset: Hikers enjoying the Sooke Hills. The importance of this area as a popular outdoor playground is one of the key motivations behind *TLC's* conservation work in the area.

Photos courtesy Alison Talarico

One Woman's Commitment to Conservation

\$4 million in privately-owned land protected near Tofino

by Heather Skydt
External Relations Specialist

The Land Conservancy is leading the way when it comes to finding creative solutions for the management of private land in popular recreational destinations such as Tofino, BC.

Every year tourists flock to the well-known city to enjoy the numerous parks, campgrounds, beaches, and surfing or whale-watching opportunities. To ensure that the natural and cultural landscape surrounding this picturesque location stays intact, *TLC* works with local landowners to protect unique features on their properties through conservation covenants.

In January, *TLC* registered a 93 acre conservation covenant on Clayoquot Island (also known as Stubbs Island). The covenant covers 70 percent of the island (valued at 4 million dollars), and represents the largest single gift ever received by *TLC*!

“As an outdoor enthusiast and conservationist, it was important to me that Clayoquot Island – a piece of paradise with unique beauty, forest, wildlife, and shoreline – be protected for future generations to experience and enjoy,” says owner and donor Susan Bloom. “I have been a supporter of *TLC* for years and decided to work with them to establish a conservation covenant against future development.”

Clayoquot Island is located near Tofino at the entrance to Clayoquot Sound.



Stubbs (or Clayoquot) Island shown above is a vital wildlife refuge near the vacation hotspot of Tofino, BC. Over 70% of the island, including some incredibly beautiful forest (shown left) has just been protected by a conservation covenant thanks to the efforts of the property's owner, Susan Bloom, in conjunction with *TLC*.

Photo by Carla Funk
Map courtesy Google Earth

Long used by the local First Nations, it was also the original site of European settlement in the area and a once thriving Japanese-Canadian community. The Island contains a mature old growth Coastal Hemlock forest, second growth forest, beaches, sand dunes, forest boardwalks, and extensive gardens.

Clayoquot Island has become a wildlife refuge to many species of animals. Seasonal changes to the tides make it possible for larger animals to swim across the strait from the mainland. Bears, cougars, and wolves are occasional visitors. An assortment of birds thrive on the Island, including Brant Geese. During their spring migration the Geese use the Island as a rare pit stop along their 6,000 mile journey to the North Pole. Since the 1990s, the Island has been open to visitors on a limited basis, usually on the May long weekend of each year.

As the current covenant protects the old growth forest, historic Japanese Village site, and valuable shoreline for bird-nesting habitat on the property, Bloom says she hopes to one day protect the entire Island and see it used for educational and recreational purposes. ■

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Yellow Point Lodge Registers Covenant

Famous Vancouver Island retreat lauded by Dr. Jane Goodall

by Wendy Innes
Project Officer

Richard Hill, the owner of Yellow Point Lodge near Nanaimo, is excited about the conservation covenant that will soon be registered on his property. “It will formalize for the future the philosophy we’ve embraced at the Lodge.”

That philosophy is something that began back in 1905 when his father, M.G. Hill, first spotted the property south of Nanaimo as a child. Overwhelmed by its spectacular natural beauty, he knew right away that it was a special place. It was during his time as a Prisoner of War in WWI, while living in terrible conditions, that he began a vision of having a rustic resort on that property; a place where people could relax and no one went hungry. Never losing focus on that vision, he worked hard upon his return to Canada to turn his dream into a reality, and Yellow Point Lodge was opened in 1939. Still run in much the same way as when it first opened, Yellow Point Lodge has become a famous retreat and a favourite get-a-way spot for many.

For Richard it made perfect sense to trust TLC with the future protection of the property. “TLC has an excellent reputation and I was familiar with their ongoing hard work with nearby Wildwood and Merv Wilkinson (Wildwood’s founder), who was a friend of my father’s.”

The significance of this conservation covenant has not gone unnoticed. In a letter to Yellow Point Lodge, world renowned anthropologist

Dr. Jane Goodall called the decision “a visionary action” and “a good example of high environmental standards that all businesses should be striving to achieve...”



Richard and Sandi Hill, owners of Yellow Point Lodge near Nanaimo, partnered with TLC to protect important habitat on their property.

Your grandchildren and their grandchildren will be truly thankful.”

The covenant, to be co-held by TLC and the Nanaimo & Area Land Trust, will cover over 65 acres of beautiful forest, which extends right down to the pristine shoreline, thus protecting vital habitat for many rare species including the Great Blue Heron, Tufted Puffin and Marbled Murrelet. ■

Whether or not you own the special place you want to protect, you can make a difference by remembering TLC in your Will.

Find out how to create **your** legacy for future generations by contacting Carla at 1-877-485-2422.

Reclaiming Gonzales Hill

TLC volunteers lead the way in restoring local green space

by Tara Todesco
Coordinator of Volunteer Development

Much of TLC's work is about saving special places. Sometimes, it's also about restoring them.

Near Victoria's Abkhazi Garden, high atop a rocky hill that provides some of the city's best views of Juan de Fuca Strait and Washington's Olympic Mountains, TLC volunteers have spent the last 12 months quietly transforming a regional park into a very special place.

Gonzales Hill Regional Park is a small, urban green space surrounding the Gonzales Observatory – a magnificent heritage building that now provides an

office to many of TLC's Vancouver Island regional staff. But after years of neglect, the park itself had become completely overrun by invasive species like English ivy and Scotch broom.

In early 2007, TLC put out a call for volunteers who could help restore the site to its former glory. Through the summer, dozens of dedicated helpers removed truck loads of invasive plants from the site, and replanted thousands of native species in their place. Some volunteers even helped conduct valuable plant and bird surveys that will help track the health of the park over time.

The project has become a great example of how TLC brings people and communities together to save the places that matter to them. To find out more about how you can get involved in a TLC volunteer project near you, contact Tara at: volunteer@conservancy.bc.ca or call (250)479-8399. ■



Volunteers are critical to many TLC projects! At Gonzales Hill, they have helped restore a native plant community in an important urban green space.

Photo Tara Todesco

Skiing for a Difference: Julia James goes the distance for TLC

After over four hours, 30 kilometres, and sub-zero temperatures, Julia James has done it! She has completed her X-country Ski Marathon for Positive Change, and become a TLC Community Action Hero!

As a certified life coach from Vancouver, Julia recently decided to train for and finish her first cross country skiing marathon. Why? She wanted a personal challenge, but also wanted to promote three of her favourite charities, including TLC, in a unique way. "I chose TLC because of the collaborative and inclusive approach to reach your goals of

conservation of natural and historic sites" says Julia. TLC was highlighted on Julia's website and many donations were received in honour of her amazing feat.

You too can take the reins and save some of BC's most special places by becoming a Community Action Hero like Julia! Help us build community spirit and raise awareness for TLC's work through a community event of your own design. If ski marathons aren't your thing, become a hero with a bake sale, bottle drive, or bike-a-thon...take action your way!

So get out there and become a Hero today! Just be sure to send us your stories and photos, and you too might appear in a future issue of the LandMark!



Julia James completes an X-country ski marathon to raise money for special places, becoming a TLC Community Action Hero.

Photo courtesy Julia James

Real Estate Secrets Revealed

A local realtor shares what you need to know about commission fees before buying or selling your home

Commission fees: two words that send shivers up the spines of many home buyers and sellers. Not only can they be confusing, but where does all that money go anyway? Greg Rowland of Holmes Realty in Sidney, BC, sat down with *TLC* to explain these fees, and share with you how you can make commission fees go towards things you really care about.

TLC: Let's start with the basics. How much should commission fees cost?

GR: Like all things in real estate, the commission fee is negotiable. It's decided when a home is listed for sale. The fee comes out of the proceeds of the house sale. Most commonly, the fee is negotiated in terms of two percentages: one for the first \$100,000 of the sale price, the second for the balance. For example, if you negotiated fees that were 6% of the first \$100,000, and 3% of the balance, on a \$300,000 home the commission fee would be \$12,000 (plus GST on that amount).

TLC: And where does that money go?

GR: That depends on who sells the home. If the agent working with home

seller (listing agent) sells the house, then 100% of the fee will go to that agent's brokerage or company. If the house is sold by an agent working for a home buyer, then a portion – often 50% – of the fee goes to the brokerage of the buyer's agent. You can find out this information at any time by asking your agent. Agents are required by law to disclose how much they will make on any home sale.

TLC: What then are referral fees?

GR: Now this is the exciting part that home buyers and sellers need to know about. In the real estate industry, if you use an agent to buy or sell your home based on a referral from another company, that company will likely, by prior agreement, receive a portion of the agent's commission fee. Sometimes that percentage can be as much as 25% of the fee an agent receives; often a significant chunk of money.

TLC: That's like *TLC's Advantage Program*?

GR: That's right. When someone contacts me to buy or sell a home as a result of seeing my name on *TLC's* website, I give 25% of my commission back to *TLC*. These referral fees are a great way that *TLC* Members can make sure that a significant portion of their commission fee goes toward something they really care about.

TLC: And why did you decide to participate in the *Advantage Program*?

GR: I grew up in the Lower Mainland along the Fraser River. My family were boaters, so I spent



Matthew's Point: buying or selling your home using a real estate agent participating in *TLC's Advantage Program* can help save special places like this. Photo courtesy CRD

much of my childhood exploring the Gulf Islands, and I fell totally in love with them. The islands were these incredible wild places, free of predators, where kids could walk around and explore.

I remember vividly when the construction boom began in places like Pender Island in the 1970s. Witnessing some of those changes that happened really made me realize that there's a place for development – people need somewhere to live – but it's not everywhere. Some places are more suitable for development than others.

I got involved with Bill Turner and *TLC* when they were first working on Matthew's Point. The Garry oak ecosystem there is simply divine – it's just like it's always been. I instantly admired *TLC's* foresight in protecting it, and fell in love with the grassroots way in which they work. The *Advantage Program* is one way I can help protect certain areas that are too important to lose.

Find out more about Greg Rowland and other real estate agents participating in *TLC's Advantage Program* by visiting www.conservancy.bc.ca/advantage. ■



Greg Rowland

2481 Beacon Avenue • Sidney BC Canada V8L 1X9 • phone: (250) 665-6868
fax: (250) 665-6858 email: greg@gregrowland.ca • www.gregrowland.ca
TLC MEMBERS: 25% of my commission goes to TLC!

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A Change in your Member Care contacts:

Wendy Innes has traded in her telephone for some gumboots. After spending two years helping TLC Members save special places, she has moved within TLC to help landowners with their conservation covenants. We wish her the best of luck in her new role as she stomps through the muck, and does some hands-on conservation!

I have been working with Tom and Wendy as a part of the Member Care team for several months. With Wendy taking on a new challenge, I was excited to step-up and move into a frontline role in working with you, our TLC members. You are the driving force behind all our work to save special places, so I will always do everything I can to give you the best possible service.

Tom and I are just a phone call or email away if you have any questions, comments or concerns - we would love to hear from you! We can be reached anytime by calling 1-877-485-2422, or by emailing membership@conservancy.bc.ca.

Thank you!

Cassie (+ Tom)



Photo Carla Funk

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