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Winter 1998-99

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# TLC Tops the \$1 Million Mark

By Gavin Davidson

In October of this year The Land Conservancy passed the \$1 million mark in funds raised toward the acquisition and protection of endangered spaces throughout BC. This accomplishment is remarkable considering that the organization is just over a year old. Yet there have been other notable accomplishments.

In the last year TLC has established a Board of recognized community leaders and we have distinguished ourselves by pursuing conservation covenants and acquisitions in an aggressive manner.

Last August we mounted an effort to protect the Ballenas/Winchelsea Archipelago along with The Islands Trust Fund and Nanaimo and Area Land Trust. Our efforts have since raised over \$450,000 toward the purchase and protection of South Winchelsea Island and have convinced the provincial and federal governments to work toward protected status for 14 publicly owned islands within the archipelago.

TLC has been instrumental in the purchase of over 300 hectares of land that will protect critical salmon habitat on the Horsefly River in the Cariboo-Chilcotin and along Ayum Creek in Sooke. TLC has also provided technical and financial support for the purchase and protection of McFadden Creek heronry on Salt Spring Island, the largest unprotected heron colony in the Pacific Northwest for the endangered coastal Blue Heron.

In the last eight months The Land Conservancy has signed over 30 conservation covenants protecting private land with an additional 50 in negotiation. Together these covenants will protect over 100 hectares of environmentally sensitive lands throughout BC.

In order to help focus and coordinate our expanding activities we have grouped our efforts under two major campaigns, the Coastal Wildlands Campaign and the Interior Grasslands and Forests Campaign. The Coastal Wildlands Campaign will identify and protect ecologically sensitive, privately owned wilderness properties west of the peaks of the Coast Range. The Interior Grasslands and Forests Campaign focuses on the identification and protection of threatened sites within fast developing areas of the interior.

Although we are focused on the protection of specific sites, TLC is mindful that our activities have a bearing upon the larger landscape. That's why we dedicate significant staff resources to stewardship activities on and surrounding TLC holdings. Summer student employees

Eileen Palmer and Conan Phelan spent the majority of their time completing baseline monitoring on TLC holdings. Nichola Gerts, a graduate of the University of Calgary, has recently joined TLC as our Manager of Interior Grasslands and Forest projects. Additionally TLC will establish a Scientific Advisory Committee within the coming months that will:

- Identify and prioritize potential conservation sites;
- Oversee monitoring, and where necessary, restoration on sites we manage;
- Provide input into the management of lands surrounding TLC covenants and holdings.

The committee will be headed by three of our Directors including Dr. Richard Hebda, Briony Penn, and Misty MacDuffee, each of whom have extensive experience in the fields of ecological restoration and stewardship.

Although we are very proud of our achievements, we recognize that our efforts would be largely ineffective if not coordinated and combined with those of other regional trusts, nonprofits focused on the protection of public lands, government bodies, individuals and community groups. Thus we will continue to be an active member of such groups as the Grasslands Conservation Council and the Vancouver Island Sea to Sea Green/Blue Belt coalition.

In the coming months TLC will undoubtedly continue to expand and to strengthen our efforts to protect BC's natural heritage. Within the next year for instance, TLC hopes to mount a third campaign called the Urban Greenspaces Campaign. This effort will target agricultural land, greenways and sensitive ecosystems within urban and rural landscapes.

We have ambitious goals because we realize that we have only a few short decades left in which to acquire and protect many threatened areas. Please support our efforts.

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## Boost for Sea to Sea Green/Blue Belt Campaign

By Gavin Davidson and Katie Stewart

The campaign to establish a protected green belt from sea to sea on the south end of Vancouver Island received a boost in September when TLC and its partners managed to negotiate a deal to purchase a key property that we have named the "Ayum Connector". This 3-acre parcel straddles a salmon-bearing stream, provides an addition to the newly formed Ayum Creek Nature Park and also adjoins the CRD regional Galloping Goose trail.

The owners of the property originally placed it up for sale at an asking price of \$218,000. They refused to sell only the portion of the property that CRD Parks wanted as a link from the Nature Park to the Galloping Goose. Since other people were interested in purchasing the entire property, TLC agreed to make an offer to purchase the 3 acres. After several weeks of negotiation, the owners agreed to sell to TLC for \$210,000. However, the deal required that TLC and its partners make a down payment of \$52,000 by November 20th, 1998.

On September 5th, TLC sent a notice to our members and issued a provincewide press release announcing the deal. The public response has been incredible. As of today, September 30, we managed to raise the entire \$52,000 required to make the down payment. Thank-you to everyone who made donations, big and small. We have been very excited by the public response thus far, and we feel hopeful that, if individuals continue to step forward with donations, that we will be able to raise an additional \$10,000, which will help to reduce the

mortgage.

TLC will work with the CRD to subdivide the property and will then sell the portion desired by the CRD to recover approximately \$40,000. When transferred to the CRD, the property will be added to Ayum Creek Nature Park and protected by the same conservation covenant protecting the park. The proposed subdivision will give the CRD a larger protected area than they could have hoped for through purchase from the original owner. It will provide enough room to place any connecting trail well back from the sensitive creek area.

During the subdivision process, the residence on the property will be rented to provide funds for the mortgage. Proceeds of the sale of portion "A" of the property to the CRD will then be used to reduce the mortgage to approximately \$107,500\*. During the subdivision process, further consideration will be given to the ultimate use of the remaining property. TLC is considering retaining the residence and remaining land, using the rent to cover mortgage payments. Eventually, the property could provide a site for a nature education centre, a caretaker's house, or could be restored to its natural state.

The site might also be sold with a conservation covenant placed upon it and the proceeds reinvested in the Sooke Hills acquisition effort.

This campaign builds on a successful four-year campaign by Sea to Sea Greenbelt Society and Western Canada Wilderness Committee, who lobbied the Greater Victoria Water District and the province to make the Water District's off-catchment lands a park, instead of being traded or sold for development, which the Water District was considering. This campaign received enormous public support. The park became reality in 1997 after the provincially-appointed Perry Commission recommended that the lands be transferred to CRD Parks, resulting in the 4,107-hectare Sooke Hills Wilderness Park Reserve.

While this achievement has formed the foundation of the Sea to Sea protected area, other pieces of land and marine areas still need to be added to complete the vision. Thus TLC has joined with Sea to Sea Greenbelt Society as well as Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Sierra Club, Habitat Acquisition Trust, Society for the Protection of Ayum Creek, and Saanich Inlet Protection Society in continuing this important campaign.

As part of several public processes the vision has been endorsed by many community and public bodies including Salt Spring Island Conservancy, Islands Trust Fund, Capital Regional District, Tourism Victoria, the Provincial Capital Commission and others. Together these groups will achieve the goal of a Southern Vancouver Island Green/Blue Belt. Please support them in their efforts.

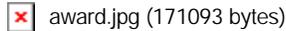
For more information on this project and to learn how you can help, please contact Bill Turner, President of the Land Conservancy at (250)361-7693 or via email at [bturner@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:bturner@conservancy.bc.ca).

\* Editor's Note: We would like to thank

**Pacific Coast Credit Union** for providing the mortgage on the Ayum Connector property and to **Linda Plimley of Essex and Kent** (250) 389-0746 who arranged the mortgage in this precedent setting project. *Linda has further agreed to donate \$100 to TLC for any mortgage that she arranges for a TLC member.*

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## Bill Turner Honoured With Environmental Award

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In June of this year Bill Turner, TLC's President and Volunteer Executive Director was awarded the 1998 Minister's Environmental Award. This award recognizes the extraordinary work that he has done over the past years to protect private land that contains important natural, cultural, historic, scenic, recreational and scientific features. His efforts have resulted in the protection of thousands of acres throughout BC. Bill was chosen as one of 5 recipients from a total of 286 candidates that were nominated by the public and his achievements were recognized at a dinner at Government House in Victoria.

Congratulations Bill, given the efforts that you have put in since winning, it seems clear that there will be many more awards to follow.

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## Spend a Week in Paradise and Help Save It

In June, TLC made a down payment of \$140,000 and took possession of South Winchelsea Island, a pristine example of the Garry oak ecosystem, one of the most endangered ecosystems in Canada. TLC is now offering the cottage on South Winchelsea for rent in order to help raise money for upkeep on the land and mortgage payments. The cottage is available weekly (7 nights) and on weekends (3 nights) only. Rent is on a sliding scale based on the season. The maximum number of guests is 6 people, no pets and no camping. The cabin has wood stove heating, a propane range, and solar powered lights.

The cottage will also periodically house a research station to study the 275 Californian and stellar sea lions that winter around the Island as well as the terrestrial ecosystem, thus the number of available dates are limited. Please respond quickly. For more information call the Victoria office at (250) 361-7693.

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## Developer Puts Conservation Before Profit

By Christopher Elliott

If you were an aficionado of bus shelters, I could recommend no better excursion than a trip down Crabapple Drive, in the Whistler subdivision known as Whistler Cay. Towards the end of this road, amidst a scene of otherwise uncompleted construction, stands a particularly fine example, solid and assertive in yellow cedar, whose letters carved deep into the wood declare, to anyone who cares to know it, that it serves Barnfield Farm.

It would have been, doubtless, just an ordinary municipal bus shelter, had the project not been in the hands of Steve Bayly and his partner,

John Paine, who are the owners and developers of the Barnfield Farm site. "We didn't have to build it like that," says Steve, "we just wanted to do it that way." It is precisely that attitude on his part which has led to the development of the Barnfield Farm project in a way that will save a vital stretch of environmentally sensitive wetland, and a stand of old growth trees from the depredations of Whistler's insatiable appetite for new bed units.

Barnfield Farm is a ripe development site. To the west, the Adventures West and Alta Lake Resort developments already cover most of the ground down to the north shore of Alta Lake, while to the north and east, older developments in Tapley's Farm and Whistler Cay, as well as the Whistler Golf Course, take up all the rest of the space as far as Highway 99 and the Village. Barnfield Farm sits between them like a goalkeeper, one arm stretching up to where the River of Golden Dreams ambles lazily past its marshy north-west boundary, while the other stretches south to the peninsula of woodland and old growth at the north end of Blueberry Hill.

Steve's concerns, when the original plans for the development were being drawn up, were to preserve the wetlands to the north, the old growth to the south, and to maintain a wildlife corridor between the two important areas of Blueberry Hill and the Golden Dreams River. He says the Farm is a "radical departure" from past subdivisions in the Whistler area, which are designed first, and then subjected to environmental "tweaking". "An environmental review in fact preceded the design phase," he says, "and the design was shaped to respect the concerns of the environmental impact from the outset."

"This is a highly developable area. The pressures on flat, alluvial forest and valley bottom lands in Whistler are huge, and we wanted to ensure that the lands forming the wildlife corridor and old growth preserve remain so in perpetuity."

Steve and John identified 4 acres of the 24 acre site as the highest, driest, least environmentally sensitive, and ear-marked that for a 23-unit employee housing development. A further 12 acres were set aside for 8 low-density single family residences. The remaining 8 acres, or one third of the original development parcel, now form the protected area.

I met Steve on the site, and he showed me over the green belt, from the banks of the river, through the wetlands, along the wildlife corridor, to the old growth preserve and Blueberry Hill. Bears used to be a common sight through the area until last year; construction activity this summer has kept them away, but Steve hopes that with the corridor in place and building finished, next year will see the return of the local bear population, as well as other users of the habitat.

As we followed a bear track through the wetlands, Steve explained what an attractive site this would be to a developer. I pointed out, superfluously, that he was a developer, and could have developed it himself. "Oh sure," he said, but in a tone of voice which seemed to ask the question, "Why would I want to?"

I returned to the subject later on; clearly a project of this kind involves some sacrifice, from a business point of view, on the developer's part, since the financial potential of the purchase will not be fully realised. He could, I suggested, have made a considerable profit on all this protected land, had he wanted to. "Yes", he agreed, as if it wasn't really any of his business, "we could have made a lot more money;" and again, the tone of voice seemed to ask the question, "Why would I want to?"

The philosophy which asks this question, and which lies behind the whole Barnfield Farm project, is an unusual composite of the commercial and the environmental; a world which favours simple categories and small digestible truths habitually views these two standpoints as mutually antagonistic. Barnfield Farm is an example of the folly of such absolutism, and the fusion of concerns which is possible in enlightened minds, from whichever side of the argument. The question for a developer such as Steve is not "How much can I make?", but rather "How much do I really need?", thus allowing other concerns and priorities a voice in the boardroom of legitimate business endeavour.

As to the logistics by which they achieved their purpose, Steve and John simply transferred the land they wanted to protect to the Municipality, but did so subject to conservation covenants in favour of TLC requiring that the land be protected and preserved in its natural state. Covenants in favour of adjacent landowners were not used, since the opinion of future owners, and even future opinion of present owners, could not be relied upon to maintain the preservation agenda. It was felt unlikely that TLC would suffer any such change of heart.

Whistler seems to like using place names that are conspicuously out-of-date and descriptively inapt. Alpine Meadows was never much of a meadow, and no one can remember the last time Lost Lake was actually lost. Equally, there are few who can remember John Barnfield paddling a milk-laden canoe around the valley making deliveries from his farm. No doubt changes will continue to take place in Whistler, and we will continue posthumously labelling them. Perhaps one day, when buses have become obsolete, there will be a little development on Crabapple Drive called Bayly's Bus Shelter, and no one will know why. Thanks to Steve and John, however, whatever else may happen in the valley, the green belt running through it will never change, whatever variety of names we may give it over the years. They have created something about which truly one can say, "This will last forever". And, developers or not, there are few of us who can say as much.

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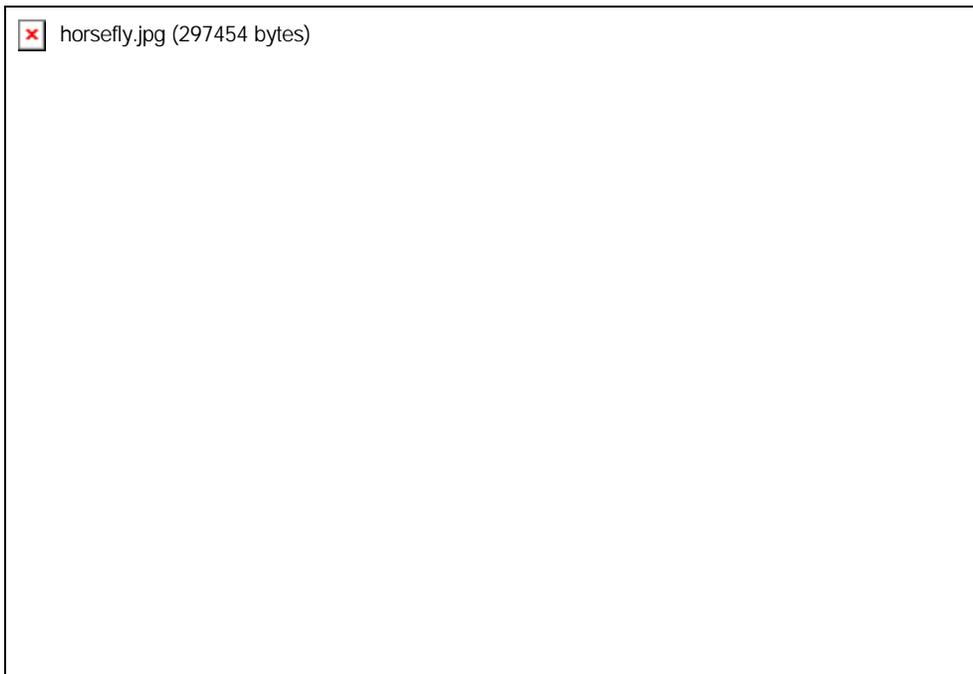
## Your House Could Become a Home For Nature.

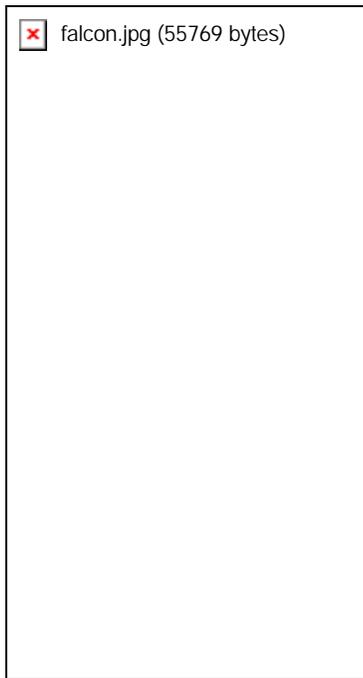
It goes without saying that The Land Conservancy is always interested in donations of land which meet our goals for the protection of biodiversity and heritage. But, did you know that we also welcome donations of land, residences and even timeshares. We call all of these trade lands. Trade lands donated to the conservancy will be treated as an investment and sold at the appropriate time to help us purchase important lands for protection or to fund other important work. A condo in Vancouver could thus fund the purchase of hundreds of acres of important habitat in B.C.'s interior.

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## Black Creek Ranch purchase kicks off TLC's Interior Forests and Grasslands Campaign

By Melinda Jolley





A valley ranch on the Horsefly River becomes a haven for wildlife and spawning salmon.

TLC kicked off its Interior Forests and Grasslands Campaign in October when we took ownership of a part of the Black Creek Ranch on the banks of the Horsefly River about 55 kms east of Williams Lake in the Cariboo Region. A local community group as well as provincial and federal agencies have been interested in protecting this property for some time since it includes over 800 acres of valley bottomland and contains prime salmon and fresh water fish spawning and rearing habitat, riparian areas, moose winter range and waterfowl habitat.

In 1993 the Horsefly River, comprised over 50 percent of the Fraser River Sockeye run and 36 percent of the total salmon catch for the provincial coastal waters, yielding a catch of \$68 million. The Horsefly also spawns a unique race of rainbow trout that has the second largest body size in the world and makes up 75 percent of the trout in Quesnel Lake, the second largest sport fishery in the Cariboo region.

After site visits during the last year and discussions with all interested parties, TLC commissioned an appraisal of the market value of the property. In August we secured funding from the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund for \$450,000 and \$150,000 from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and negotiated a purchase option for \$700,000. The Conservancy became owner of the Land on October 31st, 1998.

Most of the land will be leased to the Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks for 99 years with management by a committee including representatives from the local community, The Land Conservancy, provincial ministries and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Restoration work will be needed in order to protect and re-establish important habitat values and could begin as early as next spring. The important restoration work would not be possible without protective ownership, since it will compromise, to some extent, the revenue generating capacity of the ranching operations.

Enhancement and restoration projects will include re-establishing riparian and off channel rearing habitats, rehabilitating eroded stream banks and controlling livestock access to the area. These steps will maintain and improve habitat values necessary for salmon, rainbow trout and many other species such as the trumpeter swan, sandhill crane, wolverine, red fox, river otter, moose and grey wolf. The area is known for its high density of black bears and bald eagles that gather to feed on spawning sockeye in the fall. The area is also of the type that may be home to the red-listed Northern Long-eared Myotis bat. Our primary objective in acquiring this property is to ensure long term preservation of habitat for these creatures.

However, provisions have been made to keep Black Creek Ranch as a working ranch for the previous property owner. Two specific areas of the ranch will be leased back to the rancher during certain times of the year for up to twenty years while alternate lands are brought into production.

The purchase of these lands from Black Creek Ranch would not have been possible without donations received from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and from the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund. HCTF is a provincial fund dedicated to protecting important areas of

wildlife habitat and is supported by recreational hunters and fishers.

The Land Conservancy has a one year mortgage of \$175,000 for which money must still be raised through conservation organizations, corporations, foundations and our members. We urge everyone to make a financial contribution so that we can repay the mortgage and protect this important land for future generations. Every 25 dollars donated purchases and protects 101 square metres of land in this project. Sponsorship certificates make a wonderful Christmas gift and the money donated is tax deductible.

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## Bequests

Leave a lasting legacy for generations unborn. When you are making out your will, please consider a Conservancy Bequest of land or money. If you would like information on Bequests or if you would like to establish a conservation covenant on your land please contact Bill Turner, Executive Director, TLC, at 250-361-7693, or by e-mail at [bturner@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:bturner@conservancy.bc.ca)

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## VOLUNTEERS - TLC HEROS

By Eileen Palmer, Volunteer Coordinator

The Land Conservancy of BC has had a very successful and impressive year. We have succeeded in protecting habitat for wild salmon at Black Creek Ranch on the Horsefly River and on Ayum Creek in Sooke, areas susceptible to urban encroachment in the Highlands North of Victoria and in Whistler, as well as a pristine example of one of the most endangered ecosystems in Canada. TLC has also begun to collaborate with numerous community groups, individuals and native nations and we have been active throughout the province working to protect endangered spaces.

None of these achievements, however, would have been possible without the efforts of our volunteers. This year volunteers helped TLC staff information tables and displays to raise awareness about the importance of protecting all forms of biodiversity. Volunteers also spent arduous, but fun hours removing Himalayan blackberry and Scotch broom from South Winchelsea Island. The goal behind this removal is to, over the years, regenerate growth of the Island's native vegetation.

If you are interested in helping The Land Conservancy, there are lots of ways that you can get involved. For instance, we need help to:

- Do baseline inventories and covenant monitoring on properties throughout B.C.;
- Undertake restoration work, such as the removal of blackberry and broom on South Winchelsea Island;
- Complete data entry, GIS modeling, filing and other office related work;
- Spread the TLC gospel through presentations and at display tables;
- Research potential acquisitions and conservation covenants, site histories and tax reform measures designed to facilitate conservation donations;
- Write articles, photograph sites and create artwork for the newsletter and displays.

And, if you have other skills that you think might be useful, give us a call, we are always open to suggestions and ideas. The Land Conservancy acknowledges and greatly appreciates those who have contributed time and energy. As well, through E-team provincial government grants, two post-secondary graduates, Tamsin Baker and Mark Krause, have donated more than the average work week for TLC-related events.

We thank those who have volunteered and look forward to meeting and working with many more people. Sorry if we missed anyone!

## The Land Conservancy Volunteers

Clint Abbott, Diana Angus, Lisa Arsenault, Paul Bach, Don Benn, Linda Beare, Renata Blank, Kristi Bowie, Lindsey Brass, Diane Carr, Trudy Chatwin, Diane Cragg, Stan Coe, Carla Davidson, Gavin Davidson, Victor Derman, Jane Eert, Jean Forrest, Liz Freyman, Lauren & Dean Gaudrey, Nichola Gerts, Burke & Susan Gillespie, Rod Golver, Laura Gorecki, Kathy & Elliott Gose, Jonathan & Michelle Grant, Eric Gunderson, Donald Gunn, Tyrone Guthrie, Velma Hainsworth, Nythia Harris, Richard Hebda, Cliff & Laura Hermann, Barbara Hourston, Glen Jamiseon, Melinda Jolley, Michael Kennedy, Ruth Keogh, Paula & Emam Khan, Adrienne Limpus, Dawn Loewen, Peter MacAllister, Kim MacDonald, Misty MacDuffee, Andrew MacPherson, John McKay, Ken McKinnon, Amrik Manhas, Joanne Manley, Ruth Masters, Raul Mehra, Will Millar (the Irish Rover), Jonah Mitchell, Ron Mosurinjohn, Colleen O'Brien, Bob Ogivlie, John Olafson, Rebecca Olson, Eileen Palmer, Bob Peart, Briony Penn, Conan Phelan, Ann Richardson, Kelly Ridley, Christina Rocha, Marian Rowat, Denise Savoie, Darlene Schneider, Graham Schuley, Joe Simpson, Nonie Smith, Katie Stewart, Edward Stillinger, Daniel Su, Aaron Toporowski, Gerie & Bill Turner, Isobela Turner, Nancy & Bob Turner, Trudy Usher, Clare & Don Vipond, Sharron Waite, Jeremy Webb, Darla Wicker, Derek Woods, Audrey Woodward

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## Now is The Time to Trade Your Stocks For Land

Are you aware that you can help the land conservancy by donating appreciated stock? Current Revenue Canada rules allow you to reduce your capital gains charges to 37.5% if you donate stock certificates for companies listed on public exchanges. Please contact Bill Turner at [btturner@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:btturner@conservancy.bc.ca) or by phone at (250) 361-7693 for details.

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## TLC Announces Grassland Stewardship Program

 bowls.jpg (88590 bytes)

By [Nichola Gerts](#), Manager of TLC Interior Grassland and Forest Programs

"We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see the land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Aldo Leopold.

The Land Conservancy is happy to announce plans for the East Kootenay Grassland Stewardship Program. This project will be one of the first under the Interior Forests and Grasslands Campaign.

Bill Turner and I visited the East Kootenays this summer as part of the Friends of Ecological Reserves Grassland Landowner Contact Program. We have been working throughout the year with ranchers and managers to discuss the future of grasslands, and our mutual goal of keeping large grassland spaces in perpetuity. In the East Kootenays however, a new challenge has presented itself. Many of the large grasslands have been already been subdivided into small holdings and ranchettes.

With the grasslands stewardship program we aim to engage these landowners in discussions that help profile grasslands and their importance as a biome. We will invite local community members and the Naturescape Program of HCTF to join with us in establishing projects that enhance and protect this system through the involvement of community members. Something as simple as learning how to identify and remove invasive weeds, which can have terrible impacts on neighbouring properties, can start to create change in this area.

In its simplest form this program can serve to educate the landowner about local history, ecology and developments. However, we believe that the effects will be much greater than this alone. We want to involve individuals in hands on projects, backyard restoration and conservation. Through fostering a concern for the systems contained within single a property we hope to create a bigger picture. These actions and questions can be undertaken on a broader scale to promote a community land ethic, and increase the profile of grasslands in the area. Involvement in group activities will serve not only as a learning experience, but also to help validate each individual's contribution to a larger accomplishment.

To become involved or learn more about this initiative please call Nichola at 250-385-9246.

## Memorial Gifts

To remember a loved one, please suggest that friends and relatives send a donation to the Land Conservancy of B.C. Their support will help to create a lasting legacy by supporting the purchase of South Winchelsea and other endangered places.

## TLC Welcomes New Board Members

Earlier this year Karen Wristen, a lawyer with Sierra Legal Defense Fund and Joe Simpson a lawyer in private practice in Cowichan resigned as Directors from TLC because they were unable to make the commitment of time and effort that they felt TLC deserved. We thank them for their support and we wish them well in their future endeavours.

At our AGM in September TLC members agreed to expand the total number of Directors to a total of 12. This will allow our Directors to share the workload and gives us greater capacity to allow for representation from regions throughout the province. TLC has thus been able to elect four more Directors to fill the slate. Our new Directors include:

- **Dr. Richard Hebda**, Head of Botany and Earth History at the Royal BC Museum and an Adjunct Professor and Faculty Coordinator of the Restoration Program at the University of Victoria;
- **Katie Stewart**, President with the Garry Oak Meadows Society and Composer with the Times Colonist newspaper;
- **Clint Abbott**, Manager of the Freshwater Ecocentre in Duncan;

• **Dr. Paul Bach** a medical doctor at Vancouver General Hospital who is also very active in the East Kootenay Environmental Society.

We feel very fortunate to have attracted such a talented team of leaders. Their collective energy and skills will certainly allow TLC to expand and strengthen our role in land protection throughout BC.

## Green Christmas Gifts for Family and Friends

By Katie Stewart

*Christmas is coming,  
So let's have a chat,  
Why not put some money,  
In TLC's hat.*

Sorry about the doggerel and take off on an old Christmas rhyme, but I'd like you to think about a different kind of Christmas this year.

- Can't think of what to get Grandpa or Grandma, who already have everything? Buy them a sponsor certificate for a TLC project. For example, every \$25 in their name purchases and protects four square metres of South Winchelsea Island in perpetuity. There are a number of different projects that you can support throughout the province. Your loved ones will receive a certificate, a card and a map showing the property's location and you receive a tax deductible receipt.
- Don't know what to get the sister-in-law or co-worker whose name you pulled in the Christmas gift exchange? Buy them a gift membership in The Land Conservancy.
- Want a green Christmas for your family without all the piles of wrapping that have to be hauled away? Buy family members "Adopt an Acre" certificates. Your gift will help cover the costs of monitoring on one of over 30 conservation covenants that TLC holds. Recipients of these gifts will also receive a certificate, a card and map.
- Prefer something tangible as a gift? TLC has very good quality T-shirts, sweatshirts and golf shirts with a discrete and tasteful TLC logo available in sizes S, M, L and XL.

## South Winchelsea: Over Half Way There

By Gavin Davidson

South Winchelsea contains an undisturbed example of the Garry oak ecosystem, and its protection is of utmost importance. In Canada this ecosystem occurs only on southeast Vancouver Island and on the Gulf Islands, and only a minute fraction of its area remains in such pristine condition."

Adolf Ceska, BC Conservation Data Centre

Thank-you to everyone who has donated to the protection of South Winchelsea, a pristine example of one of the most endangered ecosystems in Canada. Because of your tremendous support we have managed to raise over \$450,000. The island was purchased at a price of \$595,000, however, the cost of interest payments will bring the total cost to over \$750,000. We therefore have about \$300,000 to raise.

South Winchelsea is one of 19 islands in the Ballenas/Winchelsea Archipelago north of Nanaimo on the east coast of Vancouver Island. The effort to protect the Archipelago began last summer when the Islands Trust Fund, Nanaimo and Area Land Trust and TLC joined

together to mount a fund raising effort to purchase and protect South Winchelsea.

In March of this year the Provincial and Federal governments announced that they are working toward protected designation for 14 of the 15 publicly owned islands within the Archipelago. This step occurred as a direct result of the publicity that our campaign has drawn and shows their support for our efforts.

In June, thanks to donations from Mountain Equipment Coop, The Gowland Foundation, Canada Trust Friends of the Environment and the Body Shop as well as hundreds of individuals, we made the down payment of \$140,000 and took possession of South Winchelsea. Since then volunteer crews have been working hard to remove patches of blackberry and broom that have encroached upon the island. We have also led a number of boat tours to the archipelago so that people can see the sealions, eagles, rare wild flowers and other beautiful sights. Crews have also been working hard to repair the cabin so that it can house researchers interested in studying the marine and terrestrial ecosystems as well as small groups of visitors.

If you are interested in making a donation, using the cabin as a retreat, or helping in restoration efforts, please contact our Victoria office (250)361-7693.

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## The Harlequin Duck



The Harlequin Duck is the symbol of the Land Conservancy of British Columbia.

The Harlequin ranges throughout BC, from rocky coastal shores and islets to turbulent inland mountain creeks and calm lakes. A vulnerable species, the Harlequin population is endangered due to habitat loss and degradation.

When challenged by boulders and swift spillways the Harlequin will clamber over them, tuck into eddies, dive deep and swim through the current. The plucky Harlequin is an inspiration for us to persevere in overcoming our obstacles.

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