

Celebrating 20 Years of Conservation

Our 20th year of conservation has been a momentous year. This time last year we were fervently working to finalize property deals and exit the CCAA process (*Companies Creditor Arrangement Act*). We are deeply grateful to the creditors who worked with us to bring closure to a lengthy restructuring process. In March the Supreme Court of B.C. issued our Certificate of Completion, and since that time we have been enjoying a renewed focus on conservation. Among many, I have deep gratitude to our Board for keeping TLC's vision and working diligently to ensure that properties were protected.

At our Annual General Meeting on September 23rd, TLC's Board presented our Annual Report and audited Financial Statements. Available from our office

and online, these statements show how far we have come. It is clear that the financial health of TLC has never been better. Staff and Board have been involved in strategic planning and we remain committed to our focus on conservation covenants as a cost effective way to protect habitats. We recognize the need to ensure connectivity between protected areas, while at all times staying aware of climate change and the impact that has on flora and fauna.

Our approach to conservation encourages partnerships and fosters community building. We share a strong interest in finding ways to support First Nation reconciliation efforts in any projects we undertake. We value cross generational teaching and increasing opportunities for people to connect with and learn about the



Owl Island serves as a baseline for the region due to the lack of invasive species and the low human-impact.

Photo Dianna Stenberg

natural environment. We are seeking science based solutions, and our focus is on long term projects that can be monitored over time to achieve lasting results.

In the case of Owl Island, a pristine Garry oak ecosystem off the coast of Salt Spring Island, we are working to partner with local and federal governments, individual donors and the Tsawout First Nation to ensure the stunning waterfront, rich ecological diversity and cultural significance of Owl Island is secure.

In this edition of the LANDmark you will read more about the wonderful work achieved by our Covenant Program staff and volunteers. On Page 4 our summer intern Karen Iwachow shares her experience working on a new TLC initiative monitoring ecosystem health through biodiversity.

Thank you to our members, donors, partners and volunteers who kept the faith. We are deeply grateful. The feeling of optimism that has been washing over the organization in the past months is joyous to behold. Thank you for standing by our side every step of the way.

Cathy Armstrong
Executive Director



Owl Island is home to meadows of seablush (*Plectritis congesta*) and blue-eyed mary (*Collinsia parviflora/grandiflora*).

Photo Dianna Stenberg



Owl Island tombolo with views towards Ruckle Provincial Park on Salt Spring Island across Captain Passage.

Photo Peter McCallister

New Offers for TLC Members and Supporters

Hil I'm Lisa Cross and I'm your new Member and Donor Care Manager. I'm a life-long Vancouver Islander and I consider myself very fortunate to have grown up on the beautiful shores of the Pacific Northwest. I love being outdoors – when I'm not in the office you'll most likely find me hiking, kayaking or possibly on my hands and knees in the forest trying to capture that perfect shot of a bloom or berry!

It's an exciting time of new beginnings at TLC and I'm so happy to be part of the fabulous team. I met a few TLC Members at our Annual General Meeting in September and I look forward to meeting and chatting with more of you as time goes on.

This summer we have been busy revamping the membership program as well as putting together fun and informative resources for TLC Members and supporters. We have more ideas in the works – and I would love to hear suggestions from you about what you'd like to see us share in the future!

In the meantime check out our current programs and new offerings:

Many of you may have already heard that we are registered with the **Thrifty Foods Smile Card Program**. The Smile Card is a reloadable card that is specifically coded to TLC. Use your Smile Card for your grocery

shopping and Thrifty's will donate 5% of all purchases to TLC. A great way to donate at no cost to you! The monies raised will be used for restoration projects on our covenants. The program runs through to the end of April. Our fundraising goal is \$1,500 and we have currently raised \$167.50.

You can take part in 3 easy steps:

1. Request a Smile Card from me by calling the office at (250) 479-8053 or email lcross@conservancy.bc.ca.
2. Ask a cashier at Thrifty Foods to load your Smile Card with any \$ amount you choose.
3. Start shopping and pay for your grocery order with your Smile Card.

TLC has an account set-up with **The Bottle Depot** in Victoria. You can take your bottles in to participating locations at 655 Queens Avenue, 3961 Quadra Street or 4261 Glanford Avenue. All you have to do is tell the cashier that you want your refund to go to TLC The Land Conservancy of British Columbia and they will take care of the rest! It's a great way to clear those empties out of your garage (or get the whole neighbourhood involved!) and support TLC at the same time.

We are excited to announce that you can be a **Third Party Fundraiser for TLC!** TLC has recently launched 3rd Party Fundraising

on our website. How does it work? You host an event such as a Birthday or Anniversary Party, Sporting event, Yard Sale, Trivia Competition (you name it!) and raise funds for TLC at the same time. We've put together an easy to use Toolkit to get you started – you can find all the tools you need to get it up and running on TLC's website conservancy.bc.ca. Next time you're hosting an event, think of making it a charitable fundraiser!

I'm most excited about sharing our new **Freebies on our website!** We have been working on some great FREE resources which you can find on our website conservancy.bc.ca. These downloadable PDFs will cover a range of topics. Our first offering is all about Invasive Plants – how to ID and Control them as well as suggestions for substitutions in your own garden. We will be adding more resources as time goes on – keep checking back for new additions.

Thanks so much for your support! ■



Lisa Cross, TLC's Member and Donor Care Manager, loves exploring the great outdoors surrounding her home on Vancouver Island. Get in touch with Lisa at (250) 479-8044 or membership@conservancy.bc.ca.



This holiday season give a *WILD* gift that protects habitat.

Consider adopting a grizzly bear or giving the gift of a TLC membership to someone on your list. Call 1-877-485-2422 to donate today!

will give hugs for a home



THRIFTY FOODS™

TLC has joined the Smile Card Fundraising Program

Contact TLC's Lisa Cross at 250-479-8053 or membership@conservancy.bc.ca to get your card today!

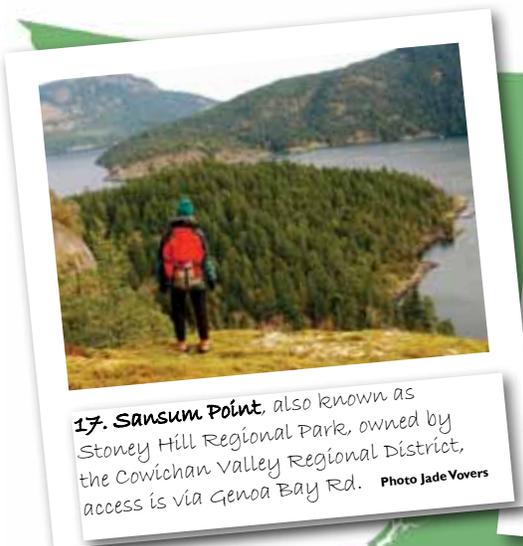
Visit a TLC Protected Site Near You!

TLC's Covenant Program protects more than 240 ecosystems throughout B.C. Many of these sensitive habitats are on private lands making, them inaccessible to the public, however there are a number that are on public land or private lands where access is offered.

Below we have included details on 18 of our covenants across the province for those looking to get out and explore, but there are many more! For details on access or about any of TLC's covenants, contact Covenant Manager Torrey Archer at 250-479-8053 or covenants@conservancy.bc.ca.

1. **Corrigan Park** is a forested public park located in Surrey. With a meandering pathway for visitors to enjoy, the park can be accessed off of either 126th Street or 125th Street at 58th Avenue.
2. **Emerald Forest** is made up of wetlands, an old growth forest and a trail system for walkers and mountain bikers.
3. **Cumberland Forest** is highly enjoyed by hikers, bird watchers and naturalists.
4. **Qualicum Beach Heritage Forest** has a conservation covenant on title held by TLC to protect the land as a sanctuary for the enjoyment of nature.
5. **Hurford Hill Nature Park** is located in Courtenay and contains numerous trails for hiking and recreation.

6. **Havenwood Park** is a 40 acre dry coastal Douglas-fir forest in Colwood has a network of hiking trails. Access is via Veterans Memorial Parkway between Latoria Road and Cairndale Road.
7. **Cross**, actually two covenants, connects two parklands on Hornby Island.
8. **Gowlland Point Regional Park** is located at 9903 Kloshe Road on the southeastern tip of Pender Island.
9. **Sooke Hills Covenants** protect 2310 hectares including Mt. Manuel Quimper, Grasse, Shields and Crabapple Lakes, and link the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park and Sooke Mountain Provincial Park.
10. **Ayum Creek** Covenant protects 7 hectares including a salmon spawning creek. The park is located adjacent to Sooke Road, 40 km west of Victoria
11. **Oak Haven Park** is a TLC covenant which protects a rare Garry oak meadow and provides opportunities for hiking and nature appreciation in Central Saanich.
12. **Atkins Road**, located at 297 Atkins Rd, Victoria, is a park which contributes to the Galloping Goose Trail.
13. **Matthews Point** is located along Bluff Road on Galiano Island. This covenant is accessible by foot for bird and whale-watching.
14. **Welland Legacy Park** is owned by the Town of View Royal. Welland Legacy Park houses the largest and most diverse community orchard in Canada. The park is located at 1215 Stencil Lane and is open to the public seven days a week from dawn to dusk.
15. **Skaha Bluffs Provincial Park**, located in the south Okanagan Valley, is known for its excellent rock climbing.
16. **Valhalla Mile** is a destination for thousands of people every year who visit to enjoy kayaking, canoeing and camping. ■



Resilience for the Future

TLC's Covenant Program summer intern Karen Iwachow shares her experience working with TLC to protect biological diversity.



Karen (in yellow TLC shirt) with staff from TLC and the Nanaimo Area Land Trust training Vancouver Island University students in ecological data collection.

Photos Peter Chapman

As a student who had just completed my second year of studies, the position of summer intern at TLC excited me as I would have the opportunity to put my knowledge and field skills to work. Currently I hold an Associate Degree in Science and will be graduating from the Environmental Technology program at Camosun College in 2018. I am passionate about conservation, making environmentalism accessible to the community and of course moss - I love moss!

Over the course of the summer I was busy assisting with covenant monitoring, which included data collection to Ministry of Forests standards, repeat photography and analysing data collected, such

as mapping invasive species for management purposes. I was also tasked with the interesting challenge of developing an indicator species list to help determine forest ecosystem health. This list would be used in part to help create management plans to facilitate healthy forest ecosystems. Currently in British Columbia there are no standard protocols to determine ecosystem health that have fostering biodiversity at the forefront. In the forestry sector there are standards which favor the recovery of trees for timber harvest but these standards are aimed at quick growth (e.g. trees are ready for harvest at about 80 years old) and do not address recovering biodiversity.

Maintaining biodiversity is important

because the myriad of creatures and their interactions result in ecosystem services that are crucial for human survival (e.g. provisioning, such as the production of food and water; regulating, such as the control of climate and disease; supporting, such as nutrient cycles and crop pollination; and cultural, such as spiritual and recreational benefits). Essentially, biodiversity gives options and options are sorely needed in the face of climate change and the unknowns it brings. Options give us resilience for the future.

Developing an indicator species list can become broad as many factors are at play and often have nested roles. TLC holds covenants across B.C. but I began my research focusing on the small, rare biogeoclimatic zone (a geographical

area with homogenous microclimate characterized by vegetation, animals and soil regime) called the Coastal Douglas-fir zone (CDF). This zone covers east of Sooke, the Greater Victoria area and along the coast north towards Nanaimo.

In B.C. the CDF zone has the greatest density of species of provincial and global concern, has experienced the highest level of ecosystem conversion to human development (49%) and almost all of its forests have been logged since European contact, with only about 1% remaining as old growth (Forest Practices Board, "Conservation of Imperiled Coastal Douglas Fir Ecosystem," June 2010).

The covenants TLC holds on lands across this zone have all been touched

by logging and the biodiversity of managed forests is not well understood, hence the need for indicator species research. After clear cutting, trees were planted much denser than nature would have done and are typically only one species; both factors change the succession of biodiversity as the stand ages. Since these forests were essentially man made, it is difficult to expect them to be exactly as they would be if grown "normally". To monitor biodiversity, we selected species that are characteristic of the CDF zone and we will gather data on their presence and abundance. Using several studies as guides I chose flora and fauna characteristic to maturing stands which start at about 50 years of age and are divided based on biophysical conditions such as slope, elevation and hydrology. I also included species at

risk according to provincial listings as well as COSEWIC, a nationally-focused conservation group.

This is the beginning of a huge project on which I have only just touched the mere tip. On Vancouver Island there are still several different forest zones to consider, let alone across B.C.

My first experience in the field has gone beyond my wildest expectations; I have learned a great amount thanks to my mentors who facilitated my learning and believed in me. It is a very exciting time at TLC and being a part of the growth and movement towards long-term scientific based conservation thrills me. I look forward to continuing to watch and participate in this growth. ■

Top 12 Items to Pack for Covenant Monitoring

Heading out to volunteer with TLC's Covenant Program but unsure what gear to bring? Covenant Manager Torrey Archer shares her top 12 list of favourite items in her pack.

1. **Measuring Tape** – handy when establishing photopoints and when used in conjunction with a compass we can determine the height of a wildlife tree (good ol' Pythagoras's theorem!).
2. **Headlamp** – monitoring sessions can run late into the afternoon and you never want to be caught in the woods in the dark!
3. **Clippers a.k.a. Secateurs** – to remove invasive species when pulling isn't possible.
4. **Clinometer** – enables you to determine

the slope of a hill or how tall a tree is. This is important when documenting wildlife trees and determining their decay class.

5. **Snacks** – you never know exactly how long you'll be in the field so it's always a good idea to have some quick nutrition and a bottle of water on you!
6. **Extra Batteries** – the most important equipment for documenting our monitoring requires them. You can never have enough!
7. **Plants of Coastal B.C.** – a.k.a. "the plant bible" for the Vancouver Island region, this book helps us ID tricky species and learn about First Nations uses.
8. **GPS Handheld Unit** – this device not only tracks our monitoring route (which we upload back at the office to create maps),

it also provides covenant boundaries so that we know exactly where we are and can mark points of interest such as rare plants.

9. **Sunscreen** – along with dressing for our changing weather, sunscreen is a must!
10. **Gloves** – to remove invasive species or to pick up garbage we happen upon.
11. **Pens** – to record everything we observe! Always have more than one in case a volunteer needs to borrow one.
12. **Compass** – orienting yourself while monitoring is paramount, as is knowing what direction to take your repeat photos.
13. **First Aid Kit** – we just couldn't leave this one out! We bring it everywhere for any unforeseen complications (includes moleskin, antihistamines, bug spray, etc.). ■



Turn your bottle returns into protected habitat!

Simply tell cashiers at Victoria Bottle Depot locations that you are donating your returns to TLC!



4261 Glanford Ave ■ 655 Queens Ave ■ 3961 Quadra St

Party with a Purpose

TLC's 3rd Party Fundraising Program includes a step-by-step guide to planning your next event in support of TLC

TLC's online Toolkit is available now at conservancy.bc.ca/fundraise



Going Wild for Serenity

By Lisa Cross
Member & Donor Care Manager

Are you feeling stressed? Caught up in the frantic pace of this high-tech world? Psychotherapists are increasingly recommending people combat the frenzy of everyday life by spending time engaged in nature or ecotherapy. Studies have found that being out in nature can have a positive effect on our bodies - decreasing stress hormones, slowing our breathing, lowering our heart rate and even increasing our cognitive function.

I'm a huge advocate of going wild to find serenity. I know when I'm feeling tense and out of balance it usually relates directly to a lack of time spent outdoors. Although I enjoy many recreational activities, the one I find most restorative is hiking in the woods. Interestingly, Japanese researcher Yoshifumi Miyazaki of Chiba University has found that a 15 minute walk in the woods causes measurable (beneficial) changes in physiology. He believes that our bodies relax in pleasant, natural surroundings because they evolved there.

Fortunately for me, the Greater Victoria area is home to some amazing hiking trails, all within a short drive from the downtown core. One of my favourite local hikes is in Mount Work Regional Park. The hiking trails are accessed directly from the parking lots and are varied, ranging from an accessible 650 metre smooth gravel loop, to narrow and winding with rocks, roots and steep climbs. This stunning park also happens to encompass two of TLC's conservation covenants: Barer and Kinghorn. These beautiful covenants abut each other along the Western boundary of the park and are home to a second growth Douglas-fir forest that is crisscrossed with seasonal streams and wetlands.

The lowland areas of Mount Work are heavily treed and remain cool and damp much of the year. Here you will find an abundance of moss, sword ferns, big leaf maple, western red cedar, salmon

and thimbleberry and fragrant skunk cabbage (to name a few). Just make sure to keep an eye out for banana slugs crossing the trail!

I like to hike the Summit Trail from the Ross-Durrance Road entrance. This trail rises fairly steeply from the parking lot and the forest grows drier, giving way to rocky outcrops with russet-barked arbutus trees and thick patches of flowering ocean spray. The steep sections are great places to take it slow or to stop and catch your breath. And stopping provides an opportunity to take a closer look at the local flora and fauna – you might spy some fruiting Oregon grape or maybe a massive bracket fungi trailside.

It's this act of 'looking closer' that can open us up to seeing the world in a fresh new way, noticing little details we tend to overlook in the rush of our everyday lives. And it's in these moments, in these little pauses, that serenity lies. Take a moment to breathe and see.

The summit is about 2.5 kilometres from the parking lot. The views are actually not the best here, so give yourself a pat on the back for making it this far, then carry on past the summit (slightly downhill) to get to the prime viewpoint. You'll know when you get there – it's spectacular!

I like to take a longer break here for some meditative contemplation. It's also a perfect place to refuel with a snack and a drink before your descent. The breeze is usually blowing a bit, offering a chance to cool off. I find a smooth rock to sit on and gaze out over the stunning views of Mt. Finlayson, the deep, fjord-like branches of Saanich Inlet and the forested, rolling Highlands. If you sit quietly for a while you might hear a raven in the trees or spot a hawk or eagle circling in the wind.

Eventually, I make my way back, past the



Slowing down enables park visitors to appreciate even the smallest flora in the Barer Covenant.

Photo Karen Iwachow

summit, and down the long, winding trail that returns to the parking lot. I toss my backpack in the backseat of the car and take a few minutes to stretch out my tired muscles. Glancing up at the towering fir trees surrounding me, I feel lighter and brighter and well...more serene. It reminds me of the National Geographic article, *This is Your Brain on Nature*, I recently read. In the article, University of Utah researcher, David Strayer, says "At the end of the day...we come out in nature not because the science says it does something to us, but because of how it makes us feel." I couldn't agree more.

Interested in exploring Mount Work Regional Park? You can access the park, including the accessible loop trail, from Munn Road (near the Barer/Kinghorn covenant areas) or from the opposite side, off Ross-Durrance Road. ■

Working in Partnership for Conservation

By Frances Sloan Sainas
Board Chair

It is with pleasure that I write my first greeting in the LANDmark as Chair of TLC's Board of Directors. First of all, I would like to thank each TLC Member, supporter and volunteer for believing in the future of our organization. I also want to recognize and sincerely thank my Board and TLC staff for all of their contributions and hard work.

Since the last LANDmark, we have been working together to sustain and improve the viability of TLC. As of March 6, 2017, TLC exited the CCAA (*Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act*) process. Achieving this major milestone creates the opportunity for TLC Board and staff to execute new roles to promote conservation.

One of these new roles is to align with like-minded conservancy organizations to jointly work to conserve important and valuable land. This spring, Cathy Armstrong and I met with the Galiano Conservancy Association to partner on securing Chrystal Cove. This partnership, which will include a protective conservation covenant to be held by TLC, will see the protection of two kilometres of undeveloped waterfront encompassing old growth Douglas-fir forest and bordering a nature sanctuary. With this parcel secure, the connected refuge on Galiano Island will protect 1,258 acres.

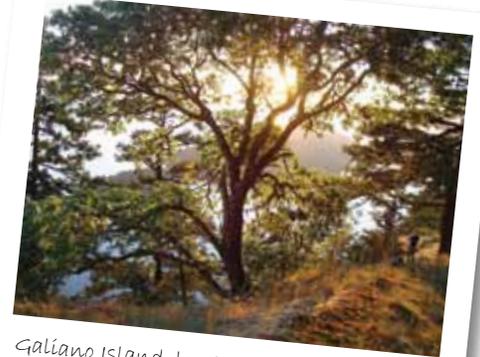
Under the Covenant Program, lead by

our Covenant Manager Torrey Archer, TLC is partnering with various groups, such as the Greater Victoria Green Team, in land management and conservation activities. Recent activities include our training of Vancouver Island University (VIU) students in our standardized ecological data collection methods with the Nanaimo Area Land Trust. The impact of this program is felt not only on the lands protected and restored, but by those participating. As one VIU student put it, "learning about plants in their natural environment from a knowledgeable individual while doing something I enjoy definitely makes the learning easier."

In total, this summer saw our Covenant Program engage with 219 volunteers who gave a combined 975 volunteer hours towards covenant monitoring and restoration activities.

We are actively adding new covenants to TLC's protective portfolio. On Salt Spring Island we are working with the Salt Spring Island Conservancy to protect the Fulford Watershed. On Cortes Island we have just completed a covenant on Hollyhock, a 34 acre campus for an educational institute offering leadership programs to advance consciousness, connection and cultural transformation. The property includes 4 acres of wetland and a mature Douglas-Fir and Western Red Cedar grove.

Going forward, our Board's strategic plan includes financial transparency and operational accountability. I look forward to reporting and sharing our progress with you as we rebuild your trust in TLC. ■



Galiano Island, located in the heart of the Salish Sea.

Photo GCA.



Along the southwest shore of Galiano Island lies Chrystal Cove, a stretch of unspoiled coastline where the peregrine falcon builds its nest.

Photo Rene Zich



Chair's Challenge

Together TLC Members and donors have raised \$14,700 to match Frances Sloan Sainas' \$20,000 matching challenge to support the Covenant Program in celebration of TLC's 20th year of conservation.

Donate to sponsor a covenant today to take advantage of Frances' generous matching gift offer!

Board of Directors

Mel Lehan ■ Fred Newhouse ■ Briony Penn
Francis Pugh ■ Lori Roter
Fran Sloan Sainas ■ Andrew Stewart ■ Tom Watson

TLC is honoured to be the recipient of donations in memory of:

Daryl Armstrong, Vic Derman, Robin Edwards,
Arlene Kulai and Suzie Edwards.

To remember your loved one with a special gift call 1-877-485-2422