
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Environment
Nature Conservancy of Canada

\$ 1 million to preserve and protect B.C. conservation lands

VICTORIA – The Province of British Columbia and the Nature Conservancy of Canada have partnered to ensure the continued protection of several ecologically sensitive properties formerly owned by The Land Conservancy of BC (TLC).

The Province has committed \$1 million and will assume ownership of several of the 26 conservation properties transferred from TLC to the Nature Conservancy of Canada in September 2015. The Province's contribution supports the Nature Conservancy of Canada's agreement with TLC, which required a cash contribution to assist in the repayment of TLC's creditors.

These high-priority properties contain some of the most biodiverse habitats in British Columbia, and are home to a wide variety of wildlife.

In October, the Province assumed ownership of the following properties:

- 3.7 hectares (two land parcels) along the Cowichan River on Vancouver Island, which includes streamside habitat with a maple forest grove and rare wildflowers.
- 45 hectares on the Similkameen River, featuring a rare riparian floodplain and upland grasslands habitat for species at risk, which is adjacent to the South Okanagan Grasslands Protected Area.
- 35 hectares known as the Woods Family property, which provides habitat for bighorn sheep and is adjacent to Syringa Park near Castlegar.

The Province intends to add these properties to existing parks and protected areas within the next five years. Additional properties to be acquired as part of this partnership will be announced next year.

Quotes:

Mary Polak, Minister of Environment –

"I am thrilled that the Province and the Nature Conservancy of Canada were able to work together to ensure these important properties remain protected for future generations to enjoy. These lands will complement B.C.'s already beautiful world-renowned parks system."

Nancy Newhouse, B.C. regional vice-president, Nature Conservancy of Canada –

"The Nature Conservancy of Canada was extremely motivated to ensure these important properties remain protected, and to uphold the expectations of the donors who had originally contributed to their conservation. We are grateful for the support of the Province in helping to

ensure these conservation lands will continue to be part of the British Columbia's incredible conservation legacy."

Quick Facts:

- In British Columbia, there are 1,029 provincial parks, recreation areas, conservancies, ecological reserves and protected areas covering more than 14 million hectares or approximately 14.4% of the provincial land base.
- British Columbia has one of the largest protected areas systems in North America.
- One of the largest park systems in the world, British Columbia has the highest percentage of its land base dedicated to protected areas of all provincial Canadian jurisdictions.
- Since 2004, the system of Class A parks, conservancies, ecological reserves and protected areas has increased by more than 3.3 million hectares.
- Since 1962, NCC and its partners have helped to protect more than 1.1 million hectares (2.7 million acres) of land coast to coast.

Learn More:

To learn more about the Nature Conservancy of Canada and what they do, visit:

<http://www.natureconservancy.ca/en/?gclid=CMuN5KT4cgCFYJqfgodZrsNfw>

To learn more about BC Parks, visit: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/>

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