



NEWS FROM NATURE

Together we achieved a record-breaking year. Thank you.

Thanks to your support and generosity The Nature Trust of BC (NTBC) raised an extraordinary \$24.8 million in 2024. With these funds we bought **13 properties** to become NTBC conservation areas—spanning a whopping **1,905 acres (771 hectares)** of land across the province, from the Salish Sea's Discovery Islands, to the grasslands of the Okanagan and the vast landscapes of the Kootenays and Northern B.C. This means critical habitats for countless species—many endangered or threatened—have been saved forever, biodiversity has been protected and these environments will remain intact for future generations.

NTBC has safeguarded essential wildlife habitat along the Kw'a'luxw (Englishman) River, home to all five species of Pacific salmon, and more than 250 other species. Now, more than one-third of the riverbank is protected by NTBC and provincial and local governments.

We have conserved more than **872 acres (353 hectares)** of ecologically diverse areas in the Kootenays that offer crucial connectivity for species like elk, grizzly bear and deer while offering critical habitat for the federally endangered American badger. Read on through this newsletter to learn more about our most recent conservation areas.


PROTECTING NATURE, ONE ACRE AT A TIME

Together with our partners and dedicated donors, we have protected more than 500+ conservation areas and more than 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) since we began our work in 1971. And we are just getting started. In the first quarter of 2025 we set another record, raising \$13.5 million and adding seven conservation areas and 2,000 acres to our treasury of B.C.'s protected areas.

We celebrate our successes with you. They wouldn't be possible without your passion and commitment to land and water conservation in B.C. But there is more work to do. We need to buy, protect and restore more vital habitat now before it is lost.

In the uncertain times of 2025, it is vital that we continue to have a strong year. We need to be ready for political and economic uncertainty, postal strikes and wildfires. We are grateful for your continued support in helping us be prepared.

B.C. is the most biodiverse province in all of Canada, yet more than a quarter of our incredible species are at risk of being lost forever. We know that to protect a species you need to protect its habitat.

Your donation to NTBC matters. Your support matters. And every dollar matters in helping us protect B.C.'s natural riches forever. Thank you. 

ISSUE 61 • SUMMER 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

OUR IMPACT

2024 was our biggest year yet!

MEET CARLETON MACNAUGHTON

NTBC Interior and Coastal
Mainland Land Manager

ESTUARY RESILIENCE

Featured in new UN-endorsed
publication

WHAT'S NEXT TO PROTECT?

Quennell Lake-MapleCross
Forest

NEW CONSERVATION AREAS

Discover our newest
conservation areas

SCIENCE SPOTLIGHT

Meet our Director of
Conservation Land Securement



A LIFE PROTECTING THE WILD

Meet Carleton MacNaughton, Interior and Coastal Mainland Conservation Land Manager

Meet Carleton MacNaughton, one of NTBC's Conservation Land Managers who has dedicated more than 26 years to caring for the province's treasured habitats. Before heading out on his first fieldwork of the season, Carleton shares how his career began at The Nature Trust of BC and offers his unique perspective on land conservation.



FAMILY ROOTS AND THE ROAD TO THE NATURE TRUST OF BC

"Living in the Okanagan, all four of my grandparents were outdoor enthusiasts. My grandfather was a BC Parks naturalist and sparked my curiosity in the outdoors. He'd point out plants and talk about how they change through the year. My family has also been in farming for many generations, so being part of that meant immersing myself in the sights and smells of the outdoors."

Choosing a career in conservation was natural for Carleton, but in the late '90s, B.C.'s conservation organizations were small and few. "I volunteered with the fish and wildlife branch in Penticton where I had great mentors who appreciated a new university graduate lending an extra hand," he recalls.

Then, in 1998, an opportunity arose at The Nature Trust of BC as a crew member in the Okanagan. "The work was tough—mostly fence building and repair—but it was worthwhile. About six months later, they needed a land manager, and I jumped at the chance. My volunteer and field crew experience gave me foundation skills, and I got the job. I've never looked back."

Carleton had earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from Royal Roads University, as well as an Environmental Technology Diploma from Camosun College. He later returned to Royal Roads University for his Master of Science in Environment and Management.

How has The Nature Trust of BC changed?

"When I started, there were only five Nature Trust of BC employees—three in Vancouver, one in Nanaimo and myself in the Okanagan. Today, the team has grown to thirty. In its first thirty years, NTBC quietly protected land. I was amazed at how much they held in B.C., especially in the Okanagan. That still impresses me."

"Initially, the Trust secured land and leased it to partners like the Province of B.C. or municipalities for management. As more land was protected, it became clear the Trust needed to lead land management efforts directly. This shift began in the 1990s, and our land management team has continued to grow since."

What is a Land Manager?

"Many think once we secure land, our job's done. Not at all. That's just the beginning. Land management is a perpetual effort—protecting or restoring habitats to support endangered wildlife."

Carleton's work varies across the province's diverse landscapes—from restoring native plants and collaborating with communities to managing vast northern habitats for vulnerable species.

"We're working hard to protect caribou habitats in northern B.C.," says Carleton. "Caribou are endangered, and one of their biggest threats is linear disturbance—long cleared corridors from industrial activity where predators wait for crossing caribou. We're restoring these areas by planting or dropping trees to reduce predator advantage. Seeing herds cross our protected lands makes me proud to be part of this effort."

What do you love about being a Land Manager?

"There's always something new—a new opportunity, partner, or landscape to consider. But what keeps me most interested is the people. Conservation is about people. It involves working with communities, encouraging personal and collective investment in the land for its future. I've met dedicated people across the province. Conservation can't be done alone—I'm glad I can help foster collaboration to protect habitats we all care about."


A CONSERVATION FAMILY LEGACY

Carleton's passion for conservation has also influenced his family. He says his kids caught the conservation bug early. "Their journey started volunteering with The Nature Trust of BC on field days and traveling with me. Now they're forging their own paths."

His son, an entomology Ph.D student focusing on pollinators, works with The Nature Trust of BC monitoring vegetation during summers. His daughter works at the University of British Columbia's Centre for Indigenous Fisheries, focusing on community-based fisheries research.

What would you say to someone wanting to go into conservation?

"I'd encourage them! If you're an outdoors person, great. If you're an indoors person, that's great too. You're not going to spend every day in the field in the torrential rain. I'd suggest going out and finding a place to volunteer in whatever way suits them best. It could be outdoor fieldwork like me, community work, admin. Get involved and see where it takes you. It worked for me and led to a role at The Nature Trust of BC that still makes me proud."

With more than 500 conservation areas protected by The Nature Trust of BC, it's good news to have people like Carleton making sure B.C.'s habitats continue to thrive. 



New UN-Endorsed Blue Paper features NTBC Estuary Resilience Project

Enhancing Estuary Resilience in Coastal BC, a multi-year collaborative monitoring and research project led by The Nature Trust of BC, is one of 20 global case studies featured in a powerful new Blue Paper produced by the Cultural Heritage Framework Programme (CHFP).

The Blue Paper, *Heritage in the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and Beyond*, coordinated by the University of Edinburgh and endorsed by the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, sets out a bold vision for centering cultural heritage in ocean science, governance and sustainable development. It makes the case for putting Ocean Heritage at the heart of ocean science; linking culture to every Ocean Decade challenge.

Tom Reid, West Coast Conservation Land Manager, said the *Enhancing Estuary Resilience in Coastal BC* project was selected because it “exemplifies the integration of cultural heritage into ocean science, demonstrating a unique approach and contribution to sustainable ocean management.” The project was endorsed by the United Nations Ocean Decade as an action that will help unlock ocean-based climate solutions and support coastal communities.

The *Enhancing Estuary Resilience in Coastal BC* case study highlights how the project integrates traditional knowledge into habitat restoration efforts in collaboration with 16 First Nations/ Indigenous communities at more than 20 sites on Vancouver Island, the central coast and Haida Gwaii—combining cultural heritage with ecological restoration to strengthen estuary resilience.

The project is led by The Nature Trust of BC through the West Coast Conservation Land Management Program and is supported by the B.C. Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund (BSRIF).

It is built on strong partnerships between First Nations, non-governmental organizations, provincial and federal governments and academic groups.

A guiding principle of the project is to ensure equitable funding for First Nations partners at all stages of the project, working with First Nation-owned businesses and employing more than 100 First Nations community members to date.

The project has also developed meaningful and lasting partnerships between First Nations, the Nature Trust of British Columbia and other project partners working together to monitor, research and assess estuary resilience to sea-level rise.

Estuaries and coastal wetlands comprise less than three per cent of B.C.’s coastline, yet they support more than 80 per cent of B.C.’s coastal fish and wildlife. Many culturally and commercially important fish stocks, including Pacific salmon, herring, crab, clams, oysters and forage fish species are dependent on estuaries.

Through the integration of cultural heritage into ecological restoration, the projects are increasing marsh resilience to sea-level rise, restoring fish and wildlife habitat and revitalizing Indigenous food systems.

The *Heritage in the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and Beyond* Blue Paper demonstrates through case studies like the *Enhancing Estuary Resilience in Coastal BC* project, the growing bank of evidence demonstrating how heritage-based frameworks advance both conservation and sustainable development objectives.

Learn more about the *Enhancing Estuary Resilience in Coastal BC* project with a new StoryMap collection that showcases restoration and enhancement initiatives to increase estuary resilience.

naturetrust.bc.ca/estuary-resilience. 

Have you wondered how NTBC decides which properties to purchase and protect?

HERE ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR SCIENCE-BASED PROCESS

Each of the 500+ conservation areas in The Nature Trust of BC's portfolio had to pass a science-based screening process before they were purchased and protected forever.

For more than five decades, NTBC has worked hard to buy and safeguard conservation areas of significant ecological value that make a difference today and for future generations.


Here are some of the behind-the-scenes steps NTBC takes with every potential property purchase or donation.

We use smart tools to evaluate the property. The ecological value of a property is evaluated using the Relative Ecological Assessment (REA), a custom tool developed by NTBC to determine if a potential acquisition requires more detailed ecological evaluation. It uses public and private data layers at a provincial scale to evaluate the property for seven criteria from endangered species and wetlands to the proximity of the property to NTBC's existing conservation areas and other protected lands. The resulting score is used to compare this property against NTBC's existing conservation area portfolio using a common set of values across regions within BC. Buying a property with a high REA score helps NTBC improve the ecological value of its conservation area portfolio.

We visit and assess the property in person. If the property passes the REA screening, an experienced member of our conservation land management team visits and reviews the property to determine the level of land management required. Do old structures or invasive species need to be removed? Do new structures like fences and gates need to be built? And what are the longer term requirements such as forest management for species' habitat needs? This part of the assessment process is vital because when NTBC purchases private property it commits to enhancing or restoring native ecosystems and managing the land forever.

We determine the property's Fair Market Value. If the property has passed the REA and the land management assessment, the next step is to have the property independently appraised to determine the Fair Market Value. Fair Market Value is the basis for establishing an appropriate purchase price. This ensures we are being responsible to private and public funders. Sometimes landowners wish to donate some or all of their property, and as a registered charity, NTBC can provide a tax receipt. The federal Ecological Gifts Program also allows landowners to donate a percentage of their land value and receive special tax incentives.

We prepare a Summary Potential Acquisition Review Report for the Board. NTBC's Board of Directors of renowned scientists and business leaders make the final decision on the property purchase based on their depth of knowledge and a detailed property Summary Report. The acquisition is contingent on successfully raising the funds.

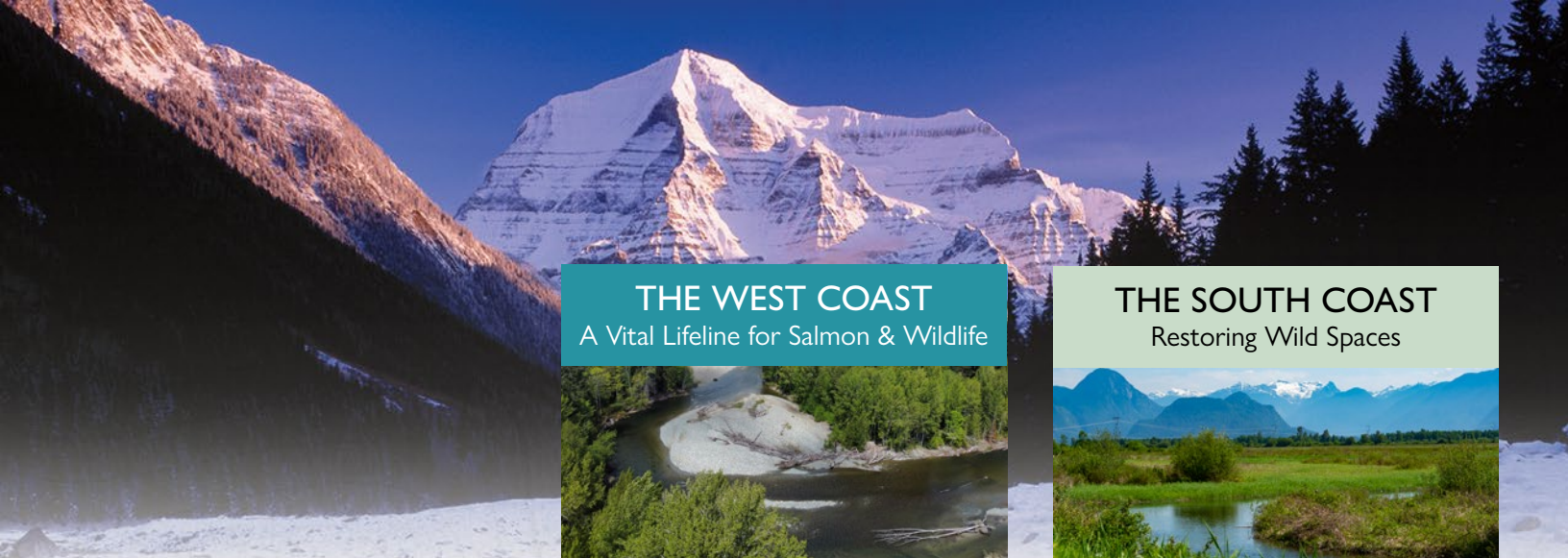
When the funds are in place and a formal agreement is signed with the landowner, the property becomes a conservation area and is added to NTBC's 180,000+ acres of B.C. forests, wetlands and grasslands that are protected forever. 



To learn more about NTBC's conservation areas visit naturetrust.bc.ca/map

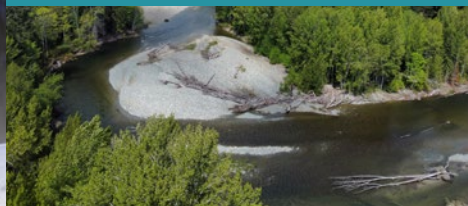


Photo: Nighthawk Hill Grasslands by Dominique Bowden.



THE WEST COAST

A Vital Lifeline for Salmon & Wildlife



With lush old-growth forests, rivers teeming with all five species of Pacific salmon, and picturesque coastal scenery, the West Coast's natural beauty is not to be missed. The Nature Trust's focus in this region has been protecting and restoring the highly at-risk Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystems.

Visit the **Kw'a'luxw (Englishman) River** conservation area to experience the splendour of the West Coast.

THE SOUTH COAST

Restoring Wild Spaces



The South Coast has an abundance of watersheds and waterways, creating rich habitat for countless species. An area with rapid urban development, The Nature Trust's focus in this region is ensuring the few remaining wild spaces remain protected for generations.

Visit **Addington Point Marsh** in the South Coast region to escape the city and get back to nature.

Explore our Conservation Areas Across British Columbia

The Nature Trust of BC has protected more than 500 conservation areas of land and water across B.C.

Visit naturetrust.bc.ca/map to explore all of our conservation areas with our interactive map.

THE OKANAGAN

A Biodiversity Hotspot



The Okanagan is the most biodiverse region in the province. The combination of geography and climate has created some of British Columbia's rarest and most varied plants, animals, and ecosystems. In the Okanagan, The Nature Trust focuses on conserving the region's remaining native grasslands, which are home to an incredible number of endangered species.

Visit **Vaseux Lake** conservation area to experience this biodiversity hotspot.

THE KOOTENAYS

Building Wildlife Corridors



The Kootenay region is known for rushing rivers, Rocky Mountains, and expansive grasslands supporting over 200 of Canada's most iconic wildlife species—including deer, moose, bears and cougars. To protect this wild ecosystem, The Nature Trust focuses on building large conservation complexes and creating migration corridors to ensure that these species can thrive.


Visit The Nature Trust's largest conservation area—**The Hoodoos** to experience the Kootenays.

THE NORTH

A Rugged Wilderness



As the climate changes, conserving lands and waters will provide a vital refuge for wildlife adapting to the new environment. The Nature Trust's focus in the North has been on protecting natural spaces that are home to rare and endangered species and are also connected to larger conservation areas—helping to conserve biodiversity at a landscape level.

Visit **Cold Fish Lake** conservation area in the Spatsizi Plateau to experience the rugged wilderness of the Northern Region. 

THE SCIENCE



LEANNA
WARMAN,
Conservation
Ecologist

Five Reasons to Save Quennell Lake-MapleCross Forest

- 1 The land is located in the Coastal Douglas-fir moist maritime (CDFmm) Biogeoclimatic Ecological Classification (BEC) unit—one of the smallest and most at-risk subzones within B.C. Currently, only 11.6 per cent is protected provincially.
- 2 Old growth CDFmm forests are among the highest carbon storing ecosystems in the world. These forests also play a critical role in building watershed resilience against climate change by maintaining water storage within the landscape.
- 3 The land lies within the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) and the Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture (PBHJV) program areas and is identified as a place of continental importance for migratory birds. Birders have recorded 167 species at Quennell Lake throughout the seasons (eBird 2025).
- 4 Federally listed species-at-risk have been observed within 250 metres of this land, which include:
 - Threatened barn swallow
 - Special Concern species:
 - Evening grosbeak
 - Horned grebe
 - Great blue heron (fannini subspecies)
- 5 Coastal Douglas-fir forests and associated ecosystems represent some of the rarest ecological communities in B.C. and the land may be home to three Globally Critically Imperiled B.C. Conservation Data Centre (CDC) Red-listed ecological communities. Protecting the land forever will build ecological integrity.

6



Photo: Leanna Warman
by Julian Zelazny.



WHAT'S NEXT TO PROTECT?

Quennell Lake-MapleCross Forest: Saving a Vancouver Island ecological gem

Quennell Lake-MapleCross Forest, a rare gem of 281 acres (113 hectares) just outside of the urban area of Nanaimo, is within our reach to protect forever. Thanks to the generous support of our donors, The Nature Trust of BC has raised all but \$476,000 of the \$12,367,938 needed to purchase the final phase of this special property on Vancouver Island.

THE OVERVIEW: Quennell Lake-MapleCross Forest encompasses some of the rarest ecosystems in British Columbia. It is within the Coastal Douglas-fir zone, one of the smallest and most at-risk Biogeoclimatic Ecological Classification subzones in the province.

The conservation project is located within the traditional territory of the Stz'urminus, Snuneymuxw and Snaw-Naw-As First Nations—lands that also fall within the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) and within the Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture (PBHJV) program areas.

It is a place of continental importance for migratory birds. More than 160 species have been recorded here by birders throughout the year.

WHY IT MATTERS: Coastal Douglas-fir forests are vital habitat for species at risk such as the Threatened barn swallow, which may be lost forever in Canada if nothing is done to reverse its decline, and the iconic great blue heron, the horned grebe and the evening grosbeak, all federally listed as Special Concern.

The NTBC science team believes this land may also be home to three *Globally Critically Imperiled* ecological communities, land that is considered to be of high risk of disappearing and in need of urgent conservation efforts to protect it from extinction.

CONTEXT: A legacy of land stewardship began here more than 100 years ago with five generations of a family who have cared for and stewarded this special place. The Nature Trust of BC will continue to honour this legacy for all time.

THE BIG PICTURE: Protecting the Quennell Lake-MapleCross Forest is more than a land purchase—it's a lasting promise to future generations. If we can close the funding gap we can ensure this property becomes a conservation area and part of The Nature Trust of BC's treasury of 180,000+ acres protected forever in B.C. 



Donate at naturetrust.bc.ca or by returning the enclosed donation form.



PROTECTED FOREVER: Two New Conservation Areas in B.C. Lake Errock—Fraser Valley

Thanks to you, we've protected 36.3 acres (14.7 hectares) of Lake Errock's ecologically significant land near Harrison Mills, including forest up to 250 years old. Working together, we raised the final **\$515,900** needed to purchase this ecologically important land.

Lake Errock is located within the traditional territory of the Sq'ewlets First Nation. The area has rich cultural significance.

“*Lake Errock is a biodiversity powerhouse located in B.C.'s Lower Mainland. Saving its forests and carbon-absorbing wetlands will build resiliency in the lower Fraser River watershed. At risk and endangered species like the great blue heron, the western painted turtle and the barn swallow depend on this ecologically significant land for their survival but its timber values and proximity to Vancouver makes this critical habitat vulnerable to harvesting and development.*”

—DR. JASPER LAMENT, CEO OF THE NATURE TRUST OF BC

Xwésam (Salmon) River—West Coast Region

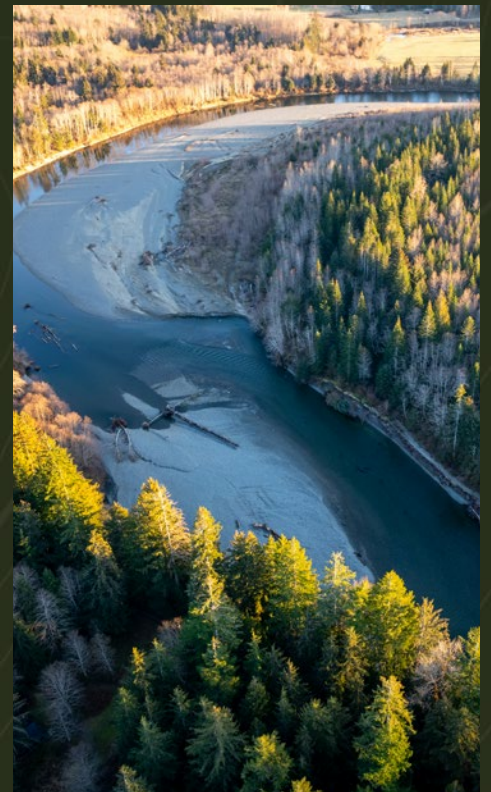
Together, we've protected an incredible 105.6 acres (42.7 hectares) of rare coastal wetland habitat and floodplain forest ecosystems on Vancouver Island. The land, located within the K'ómoks First Nation traditional territory and just outside the village of Sayward, provides vital habitat for some of the province's most iconic species, including the majestic great blue heron, the western screech owl and marbled murrelet, and the Roosevelt elk—the largest subspecies of North American elk.

It is a critical stopping point for migrating birds and all five Pacific salmon species, along with steelhead and blue-listed cutthroat trout pass through the estuary and depend on the river. Recently, grizzly bears have also returned to the river

to feast on the abundant vegetation in the estuary.

The Nature Trust of BC has been working to protect this river since 1978. Part of this involves us working collaboratively with K'ómoks First Nation on the Estuary Resilience project. By expanding our existing Xwésam (Salmon) River Estuary Conservation complex, we're strengthening survival possibilities for all the species that use it by increasing the connectivity and resilience of sensitive estuarine and riparian ecosystems within the river and its estuary.

Thank you to all the donors and supporters who helped raise the final \$294,000 needed to protect this special place forever. 🌿





SCIENCE SPOTLIGHT

Bryn White, Director of Conservation Land Securement

What is a typical day for you at The Nature Trust of BC?

I help The Nature Trust of BC purchase and accept donations of ecologically important lands. Each day I get to work with landowners who care about where they live and who want to see their special places protected. I also work closely with all The Nature Trust of BC staff and Board members who are passionate about conserving nature and our partners and funders who help us achieve our conservation goals.


Why is science so important to your work?

The Nature Trust of BC is committed to protecting ecologically important places that are at risk of being lost forever. Having a science-based approach underpinning our decision making ensures that we are focused on the right places and priorities.

Bryn was the Program Manager of the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program for more than 14 years and has served on the Real Estate Foundation of BC's Land Awards Committee, the Board of the Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia, Okanagan Basin Water Board Stewardship Council, Stewardship Centre of BC Board, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation Pacific Region Board, and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation of BC Stewardship Technical Committee. Bryn has been with The Nature Trust of BC since 2021. 



The Magic of Monthly Giving

Monthly giving is a powerful way to make a permanent impact while enjoying a simple, hassle-free giving experience. As a monthly donor, your steady support helps us plan with confidence, knowing we have a reliable income stream throughout the year. This stability allows us to focus on our mission, protect the natural beauty of British Columbia, and continue our important conservation work. Plus, you'll receive a single consolidated tax receipt at the end of the year, making tax time a little more straightforward. Your ongoing commitment ensures that we can create lasting change, year after year. Join the Arbutus Circle today! 

“ We're proud to know that our new monthly gift is helping to protect and preserve the natural beauty of British Columbia for future generations —especially for all six of our incredible grandchildren. It feels especially meaningful to contribute to something that will make a lasting difference for them and for the world they will inherit. It's our way of ensuring that the beauty we cherish today will be there for them to enjoy tomorrow. ”
—GRAHAM & LILIANA HILL, MONTHLY DONORS



Photos: (TOP) Kootenay River at Cherry Creek by Graham Osborne. Bryn White photo by Bryn White. (BOTTOM) Cortes Island—Manson Bay Forest by Tyler Cave.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

  @NatureTrustofBC  @NatureTrustBC
 The Nature Trust of British Columbia

CONTACT US

The Nature Trust of British Columbia, 500-888 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 3K4
t: 604.924.9771 1.800.288.7878 e: info@naturetrust.bc.ca w: naturetrust.bc.ca
Charitable Registration Number 10808 9863 RR0001