



South Okanagan Similkameen
Conservation Program

2012-2013 Annual Report

The core administration of the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) is supported by Partner contributions. The work of the SOSCP would not be possible without the generous support of the following organizations:



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Barb Pryce
SOSCP Chair



There are so many achievements and reasons to celebrate conservation in the South Okanagan Similkameen. I hope you take time to savour these accomplishments as you look back on your own contributions to serving nature over the past two years, and read in this Annual Report the collective successes under the SOSCP banner.

The SOSCP continues to be a strong and dynamic web that connects a complex and vast array of initiatives, projects, and partners. It is an inclusive organisation that seeks to foster collaboration and communication between conservation-minded organisations and people. You are encouraged to spend your time, your talent, and your treasure to support the SOSCP and the organisations that undertake the care and protection of the natural world around us. We all benefit from nature and we in turn should do what we can to benefit nature.

I must thank the SOSCP Executive for their support and ongoing commitment to this critical and still urgently needed program. Your efforts are valued, important, and you have made a difference to conservation. The strength of our partnership depends on participation from its members. No single actor, public or private, has all the knowledge and information required to solve the dynamic and diversified problems that challenge conservation. We are in this together.

And finally, I must thank Bryn White, the SOSCP program manager. Bryn is quick to learn and adapt, bringing different perspectives and skills together to form cohesive teams. She is an exceptional communicator who authentically connects with others. Bryn's deep respect for the many voices of the SOSCP is unparalleled. Her leadership has been about managing change and getting us from one place to another that is better than where we have come from.

It has been a privilege to serve as your Chair over the past two years, and I look forward to working with the new Executive as Past-Chair.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Barb Pryce".

Barb Pryce, SOSCP Chair
Southern Interior Program Director
Nature Conservancy of Canada - BC Region

MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

Bryn White
SOSCP Program Manager



Working in conservation has to be one of the most rewarding, difficult, and character-building careers around. I thought developing *Keeping Nature in Our Future – the Biodiversity Strategy* was hard work, but now realize the really heavy lifting begins as we initiate the details around how to implement it.

The strategy is an incredible resource for guiding us into the future as we steward and care for the unique and important ecological treasures of our region. We could not carry forward our plans to make a tangible difference if it wasn't for all of the champions behind *Keeping Nature in Our Future*, including our partners and funders who hold the deep belief that the land and the wildlife of the South Okanagan Similkameen are worth caring for. This holds true now, and for the future.

This Annual Report is a summary of the program and partner accomplishments for the year 2012-2013.

SOSCP continues to be a force for innovation, creativity, and collaboration in conservation delivery. Not only are we advancing strategies for biodiversity objectives in the region, but SOSCP is called upon to provide advice and support to other initiatives throughout the province. SOSCP continues to work closely with our sister initiative, the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program (OCCP), in the north and central Okanagan to collaborate on regional aspects of conservation while continuing to provide quality and effective local delivery in our area.

Every partner and friend of SOSCP should be proud of what we have accomplished to date, and we look forward to tackling all our new challenges and opportunities.

A handwritten signature of Bryn White.

Bryn White
SOSCP Program Manager

ABOUT THE SOSCP

The South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program was founded in 2000 to protect the region's unique species and spaces. The South Okanagan and Similkameen region is Canada's only "pocket desert," and has the highest proportion of at-risk species in the country. The SOSCP is working to ensure that future generations can also know these species and spaces by bringing together multiple levels of government, First Nations, and non-governmental organizations. The role of the SOSCP is to coordinate and facilitate partner activities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of conservation efforts. The vision of the SOSCP is to maintain "a healthy environment that sustains the diversity of indigenous plants and animals while enriching people's lives".

The six broad strategic objectives that guide SOSCP activities are:

- Sustainable Land Use Planning,
- Securing Key Habitats,
- Enhancing Stewardship on Public and Private Lands,
- Expanding Community Involvement,
- Applying a Science-Based Approach, and
- Honouring Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

MEET THE SOSCP EXECUTIVE

Barb Pryce , <i>Nature Conservancy of Canada</i>	Chair
Jan Kirkby , <i>Environment Canada</i>	Vice-Chair
Grant Furness , <i>BC MFLNRO</i>	Past Chair
Carl MacNaughton , <i>The Nature Trust of BC</i>	Securement Team Chair
Ellen Simmons , <i>Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance</i>	Outreach
Jeannette Armstrong , <i>En'Owkin Centre</i>	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
Lucy Reiss , <i>Environment Canada</i>	Land Use
Alyson Skinner , <i>Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Program</i>	Stewardship
Chris Bull , <i>Okanagan Region Wildlife Heritage Fund Society</i>	Member at Large
Ted Makar , <i>Friends of the Oxbow Society</i>	Member at Large
Lisa Scott , <i>South Okanagan Naturalists' Club</i>	Member at Large

2012-2013 HIGHLIGHTS

- SOSCP and partners completed the Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy report *Keeping Nature In Our Future* in December, 2012.
- 14 public consultation sessions held throughout the South Okanagan Similkameen Region in spring of 2013, with public in support of *Keeping Nature in Our Future*.
- September, 2013, the Regional District Board Planning and Development Committee accepted the biodiversity strategy document and directed staff to begin implementation.
- SOSCP contributes to an ecologically sustainable Parks and Trails Master Plan for the City of Princeton.
- SOSCP provides environmental policy and technical support for a number of rural electoral area Official Community Plans, neighbourhood plans, and development applications – including review of environmental assessments.
- South Okanagan Wildlife Management Areas increase by 7500 hectares.
- SOSCP fundraises \$90,000 for core SOSCP projects – *Keeping Nature in Our Future* Biodiversity Conservation Strategy development, Shared Environmental Planner. Environment Canada, Real Estate Foundation of BC, Regional District Okanagan Similkameen and Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation are key core project supporters.
- The Nature Conservancy of Canada invests \$6.68 million in the South Okanagan, and increases protection of important sagebrush and grassland habitat by 3120 acres.



SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PLANNING

Sustainable land use planning is one of the six key pillars of the SOSCP, and is grounded in the idea that land use decisions, policies, and practices recognize the importance of ecological conservation. The SOSCP and partners work to provide decision-makers, planners, and developers with the tools and guidance needed to make sustainable planning choices.

SOSCP Consults on Keeping Nature in Our Future: A Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

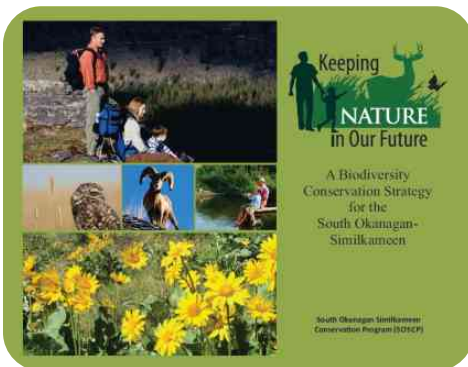
The Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy report and science analysis was completed in December of 2012. The SOSCP, in partnership with the RDOS, followed up on the report by consulting with Advisory Planning Councils (APCs) and the public throughout the South Okanagan Similkameen region—gauging support for the strategy and identifying possible concerns before returning to the RDOS Board for strategy endorsement. Fourteen consultation sessions were held between March and May of 2013 at Advisory Planning Council meetings and public open houses. Each session included presentations on the strategy followed by discussions and question and answer sessions. Feedback forms and longer written submissions were also accepted throughout the consultation process.

Overall, the APC and public consultation was a very positive process and provided extremely valuable feedback to the SOSCP and the RDOS Board around areas of support and concern, and items that require future clarification.

Based on these results, the RDOS Board was confident that there was sufficient public support and those areas of concern or clarification would be addressed during the implementation phase.

The Board officially accepted the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy in September, 2013. The SOSCP and RDOS have begun strategy implementation, starting by integrating the biodiversity information into an Official Community Plan Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Areas review for a number of electoral areas in 2014.

Meanwhile, SOSCP has supported and collaborated with our sister initiative in the north and central Okanagan (OCCP) to undertake a regional biodiversity conservation analysis for their program area, as well as work together to draft an Okanagan region-wide strategy to encapsulate both the south and north/central biodiversity analyses. The Okanagan region-wide strategy is a useful platform for dialogue with organizations that have a broader geographic area of responsibility or interests in the region. SOSCP and OCCP are working on building on this collaboration to more effectively implement aspects of the Okanagan region-wide strategy during 2014 and 2015.



Sustainable Land Use Planning continued

Advisory Planning Councils support Keeping Nature in Our Future



Bryn White, Program Manager for SOSCP, presents on the newly released Keeping Nature in Our Future.

Advisory Planning Councils (APC's) are public committees that operate as a sounding board for elected officials to help provide perspective and feedback on issues that arise around land use and applications or referrals for development in and around communities. APC's in the RDOS area were asked to provide written submissions in response to the strategy. Strengths mentioned most often were:

- the specific, local scale information and guidance to be used in APC review of decisions related to development proposals
- Crown land referrals, and
- ALR applications

Implementation topics of most interest to APC's included:

- integrating the biodiversity strategy-specific planning and conservation tools with existing local government tools such as Official Community Plan Environmentally Sensitive and Watercourse Development Permit Areas
- zoning and subdivision bylaws
- improved tools such as covenants and tax incentives, and
- options for simpler and more effective enforcement under existing legislation

APC's also mentioned the need for technical assistance and expertise to help review and interpret Environmental Assessments and reports, as well as considering site level details and drawing on local knowledge. Conservation issues that are of priority for APC's include:

- improvements to the *Water Act* and protection of water resources, including watercourses, riparian areas, shorelines, and groundwater
- compatibility and conflict issues in the valley
- managing impacts of Crown land activities on local and regional biodiversity, and
- wildlife corridors and connectivity

APC's were supportive of involving key economic sectors and First Nations in the strategy discussion as well as extending outreach to the public on the importance and value of biodiversity to the region. Areas needing clarification for some APC's or individual members included possible conflicts with agricultural policies and the relationship to the ALR, as well as

Sustainable Land Use Planning continued



Members of the public read up on Keeping Nature in our Future.

the economic implications of the strategy and costs to implementation. There was both concern and support for the idea of establishing a local conservation fund. Overall, most APC's were supportive and very interested in the strategy, all requesting more information on how it would be implemented and several noting that implementation would be urgent due to multiple pressures on biodiversity.

Public Open Houses held to showcase Keeping Nature in Our Future

Public open houses throughout the region were co-hosted by SOSCP and the RDOS, attracting a good level of interest from media, stakeholder groups, and individual citizens. The strategy was seen as valuable and interesting by most public participants; they liked that there was good, specific information but indicated the need to package the information more simply for the layperson to connect with. The strengths and possible benefits mentioned most often was that the strategy would provide useful guidance for provincial, regional, and local authorities on biodiversity and environmentally sensitive areas; it "allows informed decision-making"; and, it will raise awareness of what the region has, and what is threatened.

The public felt that more attention to all aspects of water and the aquatic environment, climate change, parks, and economic implications was required. Of most interest to the public was:

- how the strategy would be implemented, specifically what the roles of government and the private sector would be
- to what degree the strategy would become regulatory, policy and/or advisory, and
- the need to integrate the strategy findings into existing legislation and plans

There was some concern that implementation would be slow and opportunities lost, perhaps taking a more local than regional approach if a centralized process was too slow. The public was interested in how to ensure accountability for the strategy implementation and biodiversity protection, and wanted to find ways to harness a sense of community and build on the local knowledge and demonstrated commitments to conservation.

The public also felt there needed to be First Nations involved in the strategy, and broader stakeholder and sector involvement, including key economic

Sustainable Land Use Planning continued



sectors and parks and recreation departments. The strategy could be used to educate the community about the importance and value of regional biodiversity, and that it is important to publicize results of studies and inventories (for example foreshore mapping) through popular media.

Open House Participants Weigh-In On Conservation Priorities

To allow participants to identify the highest priority strategic directions and actions from *Keeping Nature in Our Future*, the SOSCP used an innovative “dot” voting method. Each participant was given 8 dots—4 for local government priorities and 4 for senior government priorities—and used their dots to indicate which components of the Strategy require immediate attention from the different levels of government. The top results are for each category are:

Public Feedback: Setting Local Government Priorities

From the feedback gathered, the public felt the top three local government priorities should be:

1. Improved Land Use Policies and Regulations—better monitoring and enforcement of current environmental protection mechanisms, especially actions of developers and landowners.
2. Expanded Parks and Greenways—increase regional and local parks and protected areas.
3. Improved Internal Government Capacity—increase staff and funding within agencies responsible for implementation.

Public Feedback: Setting Senior Government Priorities

Priority strategic directions and actions for senior government included:

1. Expanded Network of Protected Areas—including mention of national park proposal and looking at provincial options.
2. Enforcing Legislation, Regulations and Standards—protect biodiversity on Crown lands, improve conservation standards, practices and conditions, and more funding for monitoring and enforcement and managing motorized recreation.
3. Interagency Cooperation—improve enabling legislation for local authorities to manage biodiversity.

Sustainable Land Use Planning continued

Public Feedback: Priority Conservation Issues

The main conservation concerns put forward at the open houses included:

- Water management, both quality and quantity
- Wetland, floodplain, and riparian zone health
- Salmon and other fish habitat
- Pollution
- Protection of grasslands and shrub-steppe (antelope-brush) ecosystems
- Impacts of development on biodiversity
- Agricultural activities, including pesticide use

Environmental Planning Support Provided to Local Governments

Local Government Environmental Planning Roundtables Held

The SOSCP continues to host roundtables to engage planners on environmental protection policies and tools, as well as to promote networking and strategizing for environmental capacity and resources. This year's roundtable topic focused on the federal *Species at Risk Act*, and the identification of Critical Habitat. There are 64 SARA listed species at risk in the South Okanagan and Critical Habitat must be identified (and subsequently protected) for roughly 40 of them. Local governments play a key role in habitat protection through regulations and stewardship; implementing green bylaws, zoning, permitting, and covenants, as well as entering into stewardship agreements and providing protection and recovery for species on municipal lands. The roundtable was a chance for local government partners to get to know Environment Canada Species at Risk staff, to ask questions about the federal legislation, Critical Habitat identification and “effective protection”, as well as what the SOSCP and partners are doing to support species at risk recovery. The session paved the way for SOSCP to establish data sharing agreements between Environment Canada and our local government partners to access Critical Habitat data, as well as support our local government partners' understanding of what it means to them.



Sustainable Land Use Planning continued



Alison Peatt R.P. Bio, the Shared Environmental Planner, provides planning support to South Okanagan Similkameen local governments.

Shared Environmental Planner Supports Multiple Local Governments

The contracted Shared Environmental Planner position is funded by SOSCP partners and supporters to provide environmental planning support, as well as technical and policy guidance to South Okanagan Similkameen local governments. Alison Peatt has been contracted for this position, and she has been involved in a variety of initiatives to support the RDOS including participation in planning meetings, assisting with development of OCP and bylaws, neighbourhood plans, reviewing development referrals, environmental assessments, and supporting park planning and management. Delivery has been focused on the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS includes 8 electoral areas as well as communities that the RDOS provides planning service support to) and the District of Summerland, with occasional efforts in support of other communities where requested.

Alison is a Registered Professional Biologist (R.P.Bio) and a member of the College of Applied Biology in BC with a deep level of experience in both the private and public sector. She has worked with provincial ministries, federal jurisdictions and non-profit ENGO's and is quickly getting to know the local and regional government sector. From mining reclamation to biodiversity and protected area planning, Alison has a wide range of expertise to bring to the shared environmental planning project and we are fortunate to have her on our team to support our local government partners with their environmental planning needs, and to help us implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

In Summerland, Alison works in the community planning office one morning a week reviewing development proposals and environmental assessments, responding to referrals and inquiries from the community, as well as supporting larger proactive planning initiatives like the Summerland Urban Growth Strategy. Major accomplishments over the past year for Summerland District include: review of development proposals to assess environmental implications, input into the Trout Creek Ecological Reserve Plan, responding to community members' request for information about Environmentally Sensitive or Watercourse Development Permit Areas and other publically available environmental information; concerns about flooding of agriculture land/causes of flooding, and providing products such as biodiversity maps to support the Summerland draft options for urban growth.

Sustainable Land Use Planning continued

"The City of Princeton has recently adopted our Parks and Recreation Masterplan. With the assistance from SOSCP we were able to highlight key sensitive species and habitats within and around the town boundaries. Also, we were able to incorporate recommendations to preserve and protect habitat and improve public safety while providing recreational amenities, particularly new trail developments parallel to the Tulameen and Similkameen Rivers.

The overall result is a more ecologically sustainable park masterplan that respects the biophysical resources of the community plan and offers greater public awareness of the resources within the community." John Kirbyson, Senior Associate LEES and Associates.



SOSCP has assisted the City of Penticton to secure funds from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) to undertake a project to assess and develop restoration designs for Penticton Creek. Historically, Penticton Creek was an important producer of kokanee and rainbow trout for Okanagan Lake. Due to land development and flood control works in 1950, there have been major losses of fish populations, fish habitat, riparian and wetland areas. Restoring Penticton Creek was a recurring theme during the downtown Penticton planning process, and now a Council-appointed Penticton Creek Restoration Committee (Chaired by SOSCP Program Manager) is overseeing the four-year project.

The SOSCP Shared Environmental Planner also provided input to the development of Parks and Trails strategy for Town of Princeton and surrounding Rural Princeton (Area H).

The Shared Environmental Planner continues to work closely with the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen. Highlights from this year include a review of a number of development proposals to assess environmental implications; contributions to the completion of Area D2 OCP (products include expanded Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit areas based on the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and direction to address ecosystem and wildlife habitat connectivity); support for regional parks planning (products include draft park management policies/best management practices; draft park information summary framework, field reviews of several local parks with recommendations for environmental management priorities); and scientific support in Rural Princeton (Area H) for a community group to continue to maintain and enhance water quality and fisheries values in the Link, Osprey, Chain Lakes area.

The SOSCP and Shared Environmental Planner organized a unique series of Riparian Area Regulations workshops in the Okanagan delivered by a private consultant and Vancouver Island University lecturer Michele Jones. The workshops targeted existing Qualified Environmental Professionals (QEP's) looking for updates and reminders to improve practices, non-QEPs including local government planners and by-law enforcement staff, as well as local government politicians and advisory planning council members.

SOSCP assisted with negotiating an agreement, and obtained federal Species at Risk Critical Habitat mapping to be available to regional communities and the regional district collectively. Working with Environment Canada, SOSCP and the Shared Environmental Planner will be helping local governments understand opportunities and requirements associated with Critical Habitat as it is identified and mapped.

SECURING KEY HABITATS

Since its inception, another key pillar of the SOSCP has been supporting the acquisition of key habitats, which includes purchases, covenants, or donations of private land, often in conjunction with enhanced protection of Crown lands. The focus of these securements is the preservation of areas with critical habitat for species at risk, and the further restoration, care, and management of these important areas.

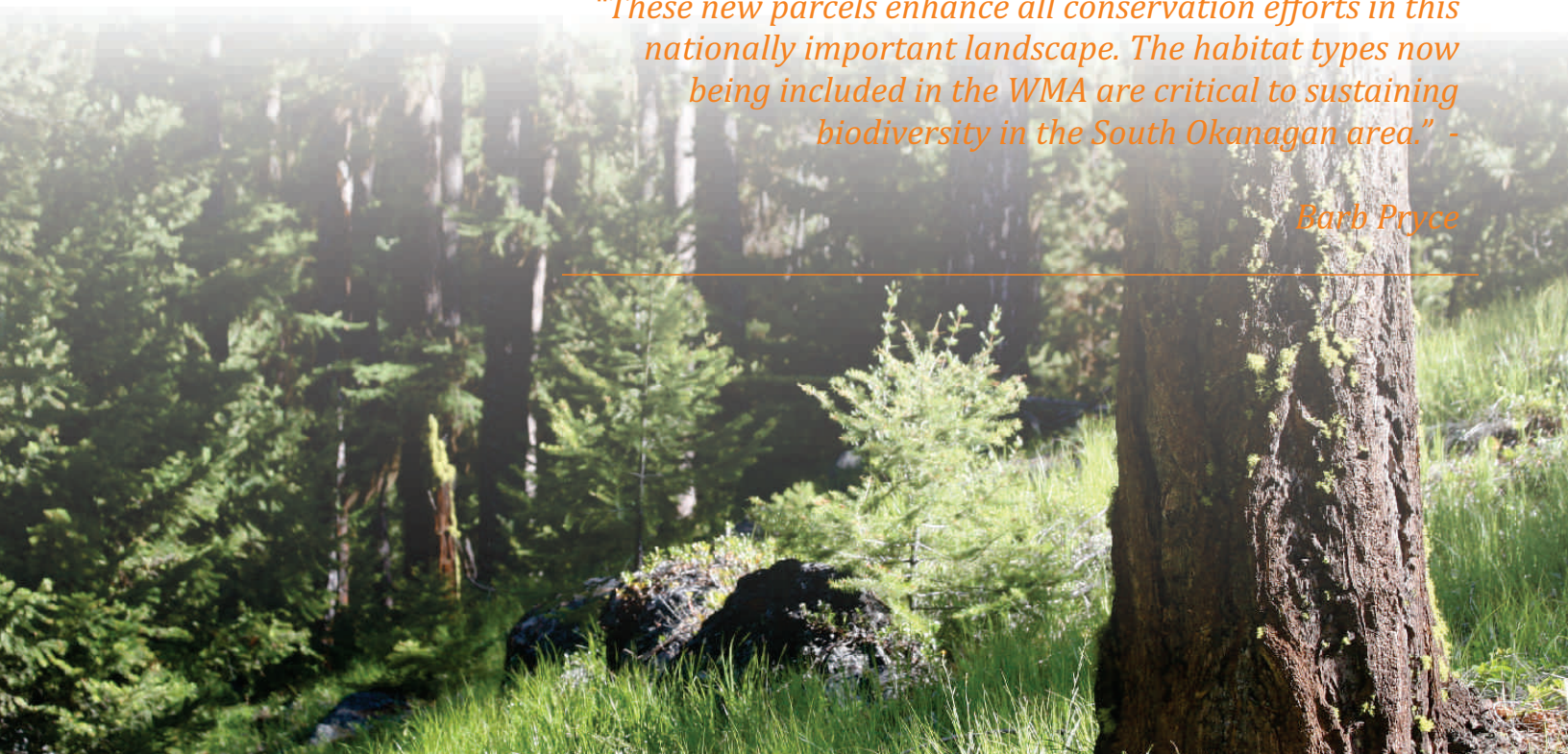
The South Okanagan Wildlife Management Area (SOWMA) is Expanded and Almost Doubles in Size

(Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations)

This past year, the South Okanagan Wildlife Management Area (WMA) received its first expansion since its creation in 1994. This area is composed of a number of parcels of ecologically important land between Oliver and Osoyoos, and includes part of the old floodplain of the Okanagan River, dry benchlands, riparian areas, and ponds. These areas are home to a number of species at risk, including the endangered Behr's Hairstreak butterfly and the Threatened Lewis's Woodpecker. In 2013, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations announced the addition of several parcels of land equalling 514 hectares, which more than doubles the total area to 903 hectares. The expansion of this area not only serves to further protect valuable species like antelope-brush, but enhances the connectivity of wildlife habitat in the South Okanagan, as these areas are adjacent to other lands such as the Haynes Lease Ecological Reserve. Improving the interconnectedness of protected lands is key to maintaining habitat integrity and movement corridors for wildlife, and the expansion of the South Okanagan Wildlife Management Area works towards this goal.

"These new parcels enhance all conservation efforts in this nationally important landscape. The habitat types now being included in the WMA are critical to sustaining biodiversity in the South Okanagan area." -

Barb Pryce



Securing Key Habitats continued



Above, McTaggart-Cowan Family, and below TNT, Province of BC staff celebrate the opening of the new WMA. celebrating the opening of the new WMA.



The McTaggart-Cowan/nsek'tniw't Wildlife Management Area Established Around the Skaha Bluffs

(Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resources Operations, The Nature Trust of BC)

In 2013, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations announced the creation of the McTaggart-Cowan/nsek'tniw't Wildlife Management Area. This area is almost 6500 hectares of visually-stunning landscape surrounding the Skaha bluffs on the east side of Skaha Lake (6,375 hectares Crown land and 116 hectares of property owned by The Nature Trust of BC). These grasslands, coniferous forest, and rugged terrain include critical habitat for the California bighorn sheep, and the establishment of this WMA protects a contiguous range of bighorn sheep habitat from the shores of Skaha Lake to higher elevation areas.

The name for this wildlife management area was chosen to reflect both the history of the area and the contribution to conservation of the late Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan, a founding member of the Nature Trust of BC and one of British Columbia's foremost conservationists. The Syilx language name for the site, nsek'tniw't, was provided by the Penticton Indian Band, and roughly translates to "a gash on the side." The name refers to a portion of the trail traditionally used by First Nations that winds up and alongside a steep walled canyon south of the Skaha Bluffs.

"I'm encouraged to see that we worked together in a government-to-government way to protect this habitat for the priority of wildlife conservation, first and foremost. I would also like to note how proud I am of our traditional ecological knowledge keepers, such as Richard Armstrong for keeping our connection to the land alive though sharing its traditional name—a shared success for all people and our future generations." - Chief Jonathon Kruger, Penticton Indian Band

"I'm sure that my father, Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan, would be delighted as a field biologist and educator that this new WMA will be available for the appreciation and use of future generations in B.C., including his great grandchildren."-Ann Schau, daughter of Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan.

Securing Key Habitats continued

Sage and Sparrow Conservation Area Established to Protect Vanishing Grasslands (Nature Conservancy of Canada)

The subtle scent of sage wafts throughout the new Sage and Sparrow Conservation Area, located on the Canada-U.S. border close to Osoyoos. This critical conservation initiative protects a vast expanse of British Columbia's vanishing grasslands in the South Okanagan Similkameen. The conservation area was assembled by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) in a series of acquisitions, starting with the purchase of Sparrow Grasslands and Sagebrush Slopes in 2012. These two parcels, totaling 1,284 acres, were separated by a large tract of land named the South Block when it was purchased by NCC in 2013. Now complete, the entire conservation area spans 3,120 contiguous acres, and its shared border with the South Okanagan Grasslands Protected Area further enhances connectivity for wildlife.

The Sage and Sparrow lands cover a mosaic of habitat types, ranging from open grasslands and wetlands to forested hilltops and deep gullies, providing habitat for dozens of rare and at-risk species. To date scientists have discovered 33 provincially or federally listed species at risk on the conservation area, including 12 bat species, one of which has never before been documented in Canada. In addition, South Block is a burrowing owl reintroduction site that is run by the Burrowing Owl Society of British Columbia.

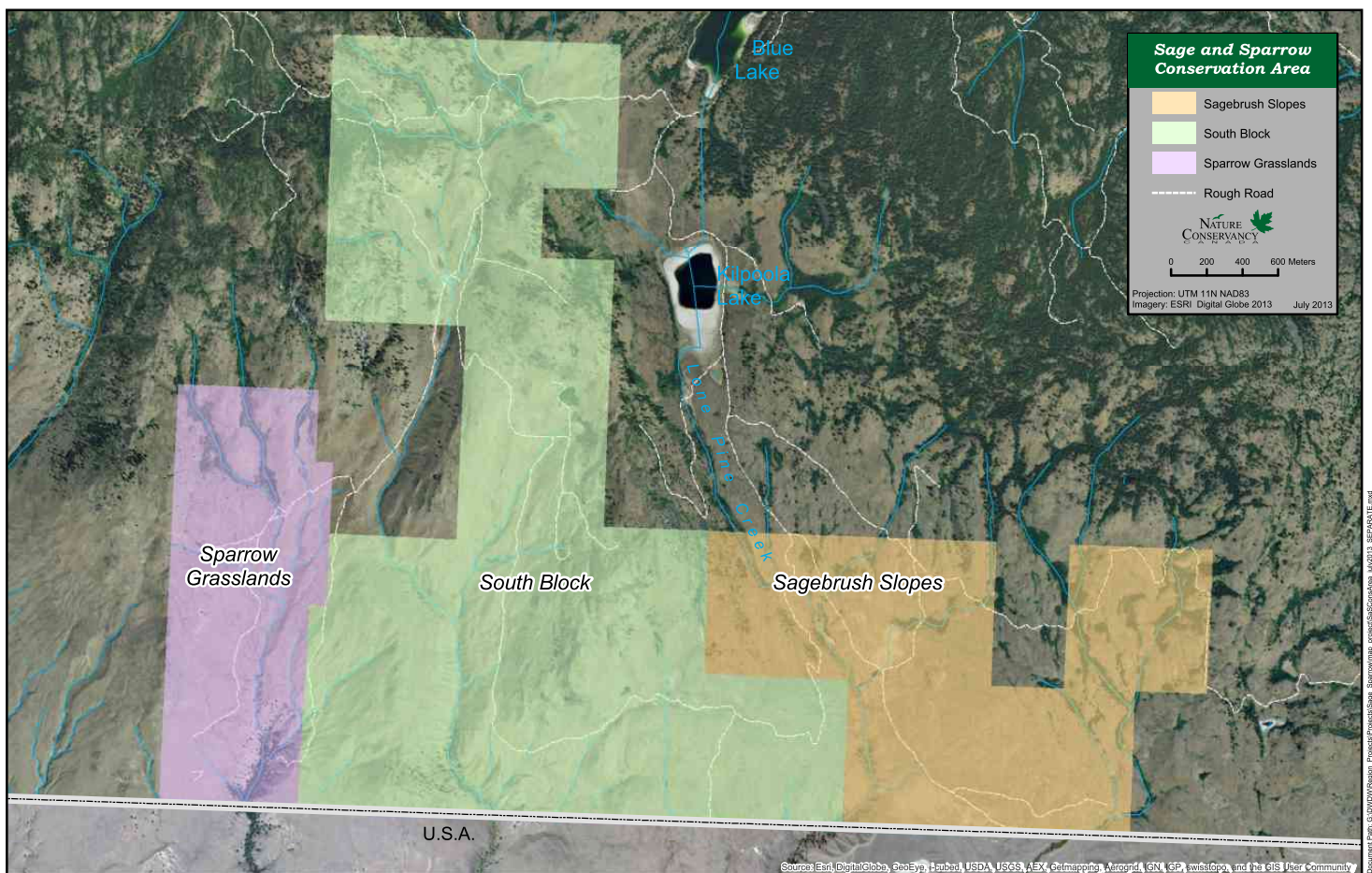
Members of the public are welcome to visit the Sage and Conservation Area, as it has an extensive network of trails for all to enjoy the beauty and splendor of the South Okanagan.



Sagebrush slopes on a sunny Okanagan morning.

Securing Key Habitats continued

Sage and Sparrow Map



Securing Key Habitats continued

Carl MacNaughton of The Nature Trust of BC enjoying the view from the Young Property.



Okanagan Falls Grasslands

(The Nature Trust of BC)

In 2012, Deb and Wayne Young generously subdivided and donated 7 hectares (17.3 acres) to The Nature Trust of BC through the Federal Ecological Gifts Program.

The property is located in Okanagan Falls overlooking Skaha Lake, and adjacent to The Nature Trust's Okanagan Falls Biodiversity Ranch holdings. It features antelope brush habitat which has significant ecological value for a number of rare listed species as well as ponderosa pine forest, grassland habitats, and cliff and rock outcroppings on the steeper slopes.

Species at-risk that have been documented on the property include the blue-listed bighorn sheep, red-listed and endangered Western screech owl *macfarlanei* spp., red-listed and threatened Behr's hairstreak, and the red-listed and endangered night snake.

Over \$9,000 Raised for Twin Lakes and Kilpoola Lake Area Land Acquisitions

(South Okanagan Naturalists Club and Individual Members)

Over the past two years, the South Okanagan Naturalists' Club (SONC) and individual members have donated approximately \$9,000 to help with the land acquisitions at Twin Lakes (Nature Trust) and the Kilpoola Lake area (Nature Conservancy of Canada). Land Trusts and conservation agencies depend on contributions and support from generous individuals and collectives like SONC to achieve the incredible work that they do.

Club members present a cheque to Barb Pryce (NCC) for the purchase of the conservation lands near Kilpoola Lake.



ENHANCING STEWARDSHIP ON PRIVATE & PUBLIC LAND

Another principle of the SOSCP is to promote stewardship activities in important areas, and to encourage landowners and land managers to protect biodiversity, enhance habitat for plants and wildlife, and to manage lands sustainably. This approach emphasizes cooperation, and is only possible thanks to the passion and drive of those who recognize the key role that stewardship plays in the broader conservation picture.

Okanagan River Oxbow Wetlands Restored

(Ducks Unlimited Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada)

Over the years, the Okanagan River has been extensively channelized and dyked, cutting it off from its floodplain, and causing the oxbow wetlands to dry and fill in. Uplands have been converted to introduced forage and have been heavily grazed, and these past land uses and pressures have significantly changed the biological functioning of the lands. Part of these lands include the Quintal lots, which represent about 65 hectares of wetland and upland habitat acquired by Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) in the early 2000's.

In the fall of 2012 and the spring of 2013, DUC and NCC undertook significant restoration activities on these lands. This included shallow excavation to restore over 2.7 kilometres of historical oxbow channels, the creation of three shallow ponds suitable for Great Basin Spadefoot habitat, and the planting of a number of riparian areas with native vegetation for the benefit of ducks, songbirds, and other important wildlife.

Future management of these areas will focus on finding a balance between enhancing habitat for wildlife and maintaining some agricultural uses. Haying or limited grazing could provide revenue for project management while maintain a working relationship with the local agricultural community, and serving to retain habitat values for waterfowl and other wildlife. In addition, annual monitoring will likely be conducted to evaluate ecosystem



*Digging new ponds for
Great Basin Spadefoot.*



*Home sweet home, Spadefoot
toads and friends!*

Enhancing Stewardship on Private and Public Lands continued



Okanagan River Restoration Initiative Part II.

Phase II of the Okanagan River Restoration Initiative Completed

(Okanagan Nation Alliance, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Okanagan Region Wildlife Heritage Fund Society, and other ORRI partners)

Restoring the Okanagan River to its original meandering form took another step forward with the completion of phase II of the Okanagan River Restoration Initiative (ORRI). The ORRI is a team of government and non-government organizations dedicated to restoring portions of the river and improving habitat for a variety of wildlife species and fish, including sockeye salmon and rainbow trout. The project is funded by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation and a number of partners. Phase II was carried out by the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) between August and October of 2013, and involved work on a one kilometre stretch of the river near Oliver. The restoration returned that portion of the river to its original, circuitous path while still maintaining public use areas. The success of the project was due in large part to the commitment and dedication from many partners and landowners, and to the hard work of project leader Camille Savoie-Rivard.

Landowner Outreach Increases Species at Risk Knowledge—Nine New Wildlife Habitat Stewards Sign On

(Okanagan-Similkameen Stewardship Society)



Young naturalist, Aiden Skinner, on a sunny afternoon hike at Skaha Bluffs.

In 2013, SOS Stewardship reformed and officially incorporated as a non-profit society called the Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society (OSSS). In the last year and a half, the OSSS was very active in recruiting landowners to sign up as Wildlife Habitat Stewards and to commit to managing their properties in a conservation-friendly fashion. A total of 65 landowners owning approximately 1400 hectares of wildlife habitat were contacted with respect to protecting 19 different species at risk. Sixty site visits were then completed, and ultimately nine new landowners signed on as Wildlife Habitat Stewards.

In addition, OSSS staff wrote a number of media articles for local papers, and multiple newsletters and program updates were distributed to 388 landowners and partners. Four community events were held in priority geographic areas, and ten habitat enhancement projects were completed including native plant enhancement, invasive plant management, and livestock exclusion fencing.

Enhancing Stewardship on Private and Public Lands continued



Anthony Haddad from the City of Penticton pitches in for "TD Tree Days".

Riparian Habitat Restored at the Mouth of Ellis Creek—over 800 Native Plants Put Back in the Soil

(SOSCP, Friends of the Oxbows, Okanagan-Similkameen Stewardship Society, Province of BC, and City of Penticton)

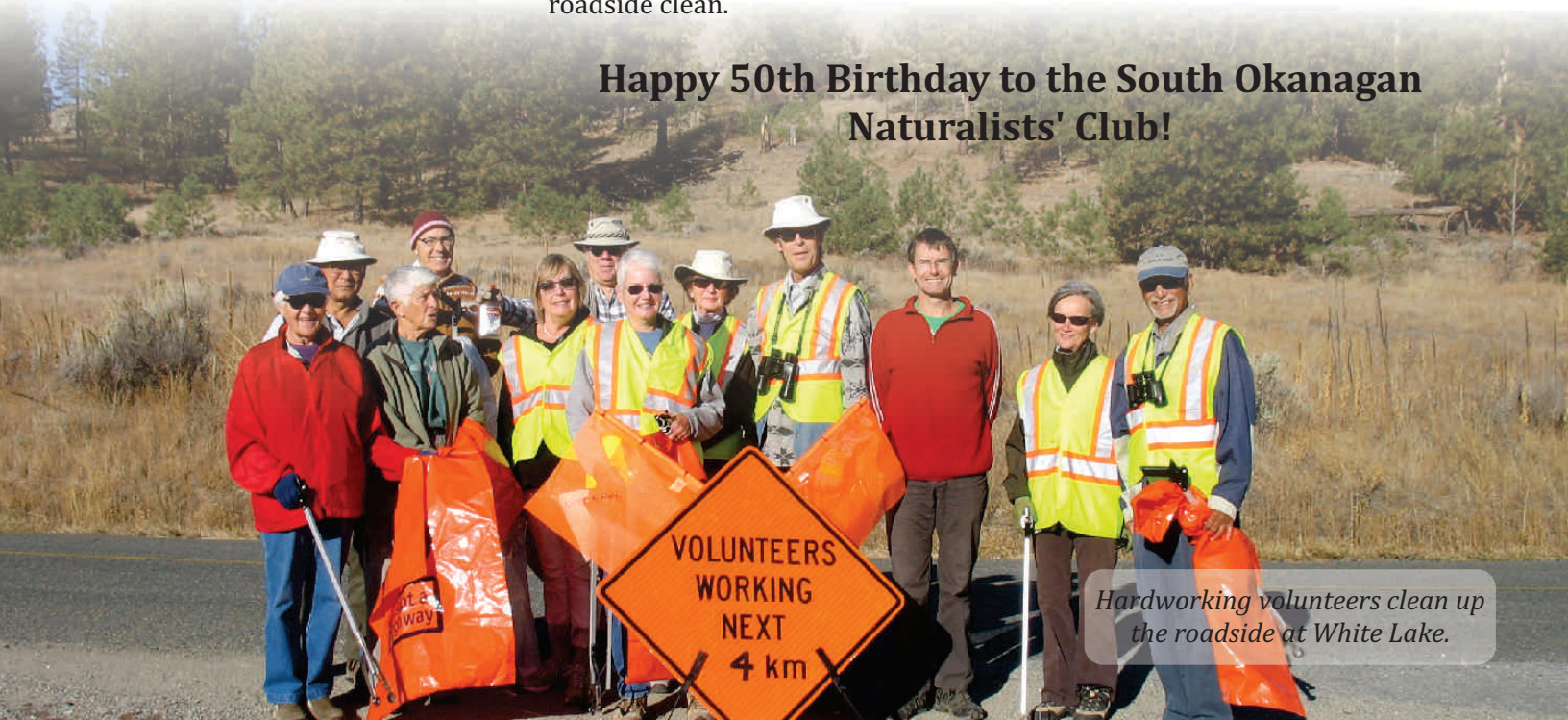
In 2013, the SOSCP led a project to enhance riparian habitat at the mouth of Ellis Creek. Friends of the Oxbows in Penticton, the Okanagan-Similkameen Stewardship Society and many of the provincial government staff from the office adjacent to the site rolled up their sleeves and worked to plant over 450 native riparian plants in the basin. Due to the success of the spring planting, the City of Penticton partnered with SOSCP to deliver the annual Penticton "TD Tree Days" event the following fall to continue the habitat restoration and volunteer effort with an additional 400 native plants. TD Bank staff, City of Penticton staff, and community volunteers of all ages came out to lend their hands toward the habitat restoration.

White Lake Roadside Kept Beautiful by Volunteers

(South Okanagan Naturalists' Club)

The South Okanagan Naturalists' Club actively participates in a variety of community events, and for two years now their volunteers have done a roadside clean-up at White Lake. One of the many beautiful drives in the South Okanagan was made even more beautiful by the hardworking SONC, whose volunteers braved the hot Okanagan sun to pick up trash and keep the roadside clean.

Happy 50th Birthday to the South Okanagan Naturalists' Club!



Hardworking volunteers clean up the roadside at White Lake.

Enhancing Stewardship on Private and Public Lands continued

Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program provides funding for groups to implement activities that conserve habitat for species identified as at risk under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). Since 2012, the program has provided close to \$400,000 of funding in support of projects focused on species at risk conservation and stewardship in the SOS area:

Project title	Organization
Osoyoos Oxbows Riparian Habitat Stewardship Project	Nature Conservancy of Canada
OCCP Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Central and North Okanagan Years 2 and 3	Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program c/o Allan Brooks Nature Centre
Restoration and Protection of Riparian Habitat within the Lower Similkameen Valley	Lower Similkameen Indian Band
Riparian habitat rehabilitation of priority sites for Yellow-Breasted Chat recovery in the south Okanagan, British Columbia	Okanagan Nation Alliance
South Okanagan-Similkameen Stewardship Program: private landowner contact in the SOSCP	The Nature Trust of British Columbia on behalf of SOS Stewardship
Wildlife Tree Stewardship in the Okanagan-Similkameen	Federation of BC Naturalists
Riparian Habitat Rehabilitation for Species at Risk in the South Okanagan and Similkameen	The Nature Trust of British Columbia



Enhancing Stewardship on Private and Public Lands continued

Riparian Fencing Projects Help to Protect and Enhance Critical Habitat

(Environment Canada, The Nature Trust of BC)



The Nature Trust of BC Directors, staff and partners at Twin Lakes and McLean Ranch Conservation Areas.

Riparian habitats host an unusually high number of endangered and threatened plant and animal species, and in the South Okanagan these habitats have been severely impacted by human activities to the point where only 10% remain in a relatively natural condition. Much of the riparian ecosystem has been removed for development, and that which remains is often degraded, primarily from livestock damage and human encroachment.

This Habitat Stewardship Program project uses rehabilitation techniques such as fencing to control livestock access and restore critical riparian ecosystems, or to provide security to existing, high-quality riparian areas. The Yellow-breasted Chat, Western Screech-owl, and Blotched Tiger Salamander (all Threatened or Endangered) are the focal species for this project, and the recovery of their critical habitat is the primary goal. Bird community response to the project has been monitored at multiple sites, and a recovery for Yellow-breasted Chats at two past project locations has been documented.

This is the 12th year of this project, which has installed a total of 61 km of fencing, leading to the recovery of 433 hectares of riparian habitat, plus additional upland habitat. This year, one major fencing site was completed, directly involving conservation lands and a local ranching lease-holder; approximately 2,470 meters of fencing was installed, protecting 11 hectares of riparian habitat, 4.5 hectares of associated upland habitat, and two significant water bodies from access by cattle. In addition, two other projects were initiated by surveying conservation area boundaries for future fencing initiatives.



Enhancing Stewardship on Private and Public Lands continued



Salmon-Safe B.C. Program Adopted by Several Okanagan Wineries and Vineyards (Pacific Salmon Foundation)

Salmon-Safe B.C., a joint initiative of the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Fraser Basin Council, is a certification program that recognizes progressive, environmentally friendly management practices on agricultural and urban lands to help protect Pacific salmon habitat and enhance water quality. Starting in April 2012, Salmon-Safe B.C. was successfully introduced to Okanagan vineyards. Tinhorn Creek Winery and Nk'Mip Vineyards were the first Salmon-Safe certified wineries, along with Covert Farms and Rustic Roots who participated in the certification pilot phase in 2010. During the course of 2013, six more wineries and vineyards were successfully assessed and certified, resulting in a total of more than 1,800 acres transitioned to Salmon-Safe practices.

Preserving High-Value Wildlife Trees in the Okanagan-Similkameen (Wildlife Tree Stewardship Program)

The Wildlife Tree Stewardship Program is an initiative funded by the Habitat Stewardship Program, and administered by BC Nature, that focuses on the conservation and recovery of four at-risk bird species that are dependent on wildlife trees. Wildlife tree habitat is managed through the application of a Decision Support Tool for local government and site visits with private landowners. During the breeding season for each species, trained volunteers and staff monitor suitable nest locations on public and private land, assess habitats for threats and identify future restoration opportunities. Focus is on the Ponderosa Pine and Bunchgrass biogeoclimatic zones in BC's Southern Interior.

No Oasis for Invasives

(Okanagan Similkameen Invasive Species Society)

The Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS) is one of 17 Regional Committees in BC dedicated to partnering with other agencies to stop the spread of invasive species. This society was formerly referred to as the South Okanagan-Similkameen Invasive Plant Society. Historically, efforts have targeted provincially and regionally noxious species listed under the *BC Weed Control Act*, and other aggressive invasive plants. In 2012, society members opted to change the constitution to encompass invasive species, and subsequently changed the name of the society. Partners collaborate to prioritize management activities, provide public information programs and take on-the-ground action. Key target species include aquatic molluscs such as zebra and quagga mussels, riparian plants such as yellow flag iris, and dryland plants such as puncturevine, blueweed and hoary alyssum.



EXPANDING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT THROUGH OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Getting community members involved in conservation and excited about nature has always been recognized as a key driver of the SOSCP and its partners. This includes a variety of activities such as workshops, school programs, festivals, and outdoor seminars that help to foster a love and understanding of nature and the outdoors in the young and the young at heart.

Annual Meadowlark Festival Draws Visitors from All Over the World

(Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance)

The Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance again organized the immensely-popular annual Meadowlark Nature Festival, which has now been voted best annual community event in the South Okanagan for three years running. The festival hosts ninety events over a four-day period, and draws visitors from all over the world to explore nature on guided tours with local scientists and naturalists. The 2012 festival theme was climate change, with guest speaker Jim Hoggan, and the 2013 theme was “The Future of Food” and sustainable land use, with guest speaker Michael Ableman.

Wildlife Guides Developed to Reduce Landowner and Wildlife Conflicts

(Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance)

In 2012 and 2013 OSCA ECOManagement focused on producing and promoting wildlife guides for species that pose problems for rural and agricultural landowners. Partnering with the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen WildSafeBC program, “Living with Wildlife in BC” is a series of nine wildlife management guides that offer options for wildlife management, worker safety, and animal deterrents.

The goal of the guides is to provide management options that result in less mortality for wildlife, or in the case of rodent control, the least impact on non-target animals. The Living with Wildlife in BC project received financial assistance from the Agriculture Environment Initiative, which in turn is funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture.



Margaret Holm from OSCA presenting to the public.

Expanding Community Involvement through Outreach & Education continued



Two New ECOstudies Programs Developed

(Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance)

The ECOstudies program introduces kids to nature by connecting local environmental educators with teachers and students in the Okanagan Similkameen. This fun and interactive program continues to evolve, and this past year two new ECOstudies programs were funded by Shell Canada and Telus. “Save our Salmon” focuses on the Sockeye Salmon migration and spawning habitat restoration efforts, and “Water Sense” encourages classes to examine water quality through chemical analysis and the presence or absence of aquatic invertebrates that are sensitive to water contamination.



Osoyoos Desert Centre Draws Nearly 10,000 Visitors

(Osoyoos Desert Society)

Nearly 10,000 people visited the Osoyoos Desert Centre over the last year and a half, and approximately 250 guests attended the Society's four-part winter lecture series. Other 2013 programs included a Rare Plant Walk with Terry McIntosh and themed early morning and evening tours at the Desert Centre. In addition, the Desert Society continues to steward 67 acres of endangered habitat at the site of its interpretive facility, the Osoyoos Desert Centre, as well as maintain two spadefoot breeding ponds.



Pilot Workshops Held to Support Voluntary Stewardship Practices

(Environment Canada, Stewardship Centre of BC, SOSCP, Partners in Flight)

Environment Canada partnered with the Stewardship Centre of BC and SOSCP to deliver workshops in Penticton on three pilot documents produced to promote voluntary stewardship practices. The pilot programs focused on stewardship practices for: rock climbing, reducing domestic and feral cat predation on birds, and riparian areas in settled landscapes. Partners in Flight informed Environment Canada's approach to the free-roaming cat issue by collecting and summarizing information on municipal cat bylaws and licencing across Canada, and obtaining official positions of veterinary medical associations on feral cats.

APPLYING A SCIENCE-BASED APPROACH

A further pillar of the SOSCP is its commitment to ensuring that it uses a science-based approach to guide actions and decision making, and to promote and facilitate further scientific research where needed on species at risk and critical habitat in the Okanagan Similkameen.



Pilot the Burrowing Owl.

A busy year for the South Okanagan Rehabilitation Center for Owls (SORCO)

(SORCO, OSCA, Burrowing Owl Winery, and volunteers)

It has been another productive year at SORCO. The bulk of the construction of the brand new clinic is complete, and the Grand Opening of the clinic will take place at SORCO's Annual Open House on May 4th, 2014. The new clinic will provide a big boost to the centre, allowing for even better care for the region's raptors. SORCO also conducted over 40 presentations and tours with local schools and community groups in 2013, and recently joined the ECOSTudies Education Program headed up by Margaret Holm in conjunction with the Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance.

It has been an up and down year for burrowing owl breeding. Fewer owls fledged than expected: 17 young banded in 2013, compared to 30 young in 2012, and one possible reason for the low numbers could have been the exceptionally wet weather. On a positive note, SORCO bred the new owls received from Oregon last year, with three pairs bred at the Oliver Facility, and the others sent to the other two facilities. With the three Oregon pairs and one other pair we had 20 new young born at the Oliver facility, which was a great success.

Finally, new burrows were dug on a provincial site in the South Okanagan called East Chopaka, where SORCO has a ten-year research permit for this property. This September, 24 burrows were dug by staff at Burrowing Owl Winery, and then burrows installed and finished by local volunteers. This site is close to the other two field sites for the owls in the South Okanagan, thus increasing connectivity.

SORCO wishes to thank all participants for a great year in the South Okanagan, including all the ups and downs!



The hardworking crew building the new clinic.

Applying a Science-based Approach continued



Studying Bird Migration at the Vaseux Lake Bird Observatory

(OSCA, Meadowlark Festival, Baillie Birdathon, Canadian Wildlife Service)

The Vaseux Lake Bird Observatory, located one kilometer north of Vaseux Lake, is a member of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network. The Canadian Wildlife Service monitored bird migration from 1994 to 1998, and after a two-year hiatus, the station was revived by the Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance and monitoring has been done ever since. The station now has fall migration records covering a twenty-year period, which can be used to monitor long-term bird population trends. The station operates every morning from August 1 through October 15, and migrants are sampled through banding, a daily census, and general observations. The project is funded by Baillie Birdathon donations, done as part of the Meadowlark Festival, and the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Testing Native Seed Mixes and the Wildlife Camera Project

(Osoyoos Desert Society)

The Osoyoos Desert Society continued work on a multi-year seed mix study funded by the Real Estate Foundation of BC. This study, in partnership with six local vineyards, is testing native seed mixes for use as a cover crop between vineyard rows. An effective native seed mix will create habitat for local wildlife while providing vineyard operators with a low water-use cover crop to control erosion and reduce dust. In addition, the Desert Society conducted a Wildlife Camera project to monitor and record data on wildlife at the Desert Centre. The project, funded by TD Friends of the Environment, also included the development of wildlife checklist bookmarks for distribution to the public.



Applying a Science-based Approach continued



Researching water, a precious resource in the Okanagan

(Environment Canada, the Okanagan Basin Water Board)

Environment Canada (EC) is partnering with the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) on a three year Lake Evaporation Study in the Okanagan-Similkameen. The study is a key component of understanding the overall water budget in the area, as the amount of evaporation off the main lakes is a big unknown when it comes to understanding how much water we have in the valley. Five buoys were deployed across Okanagan Lake beginning in July 2011, and the data they are generating every 10 minutes will inform final reporting, refinement of lake evaporation rate estimates, and integration of findings into the Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Project during 2014. Unfortunately, EC had to cut back on some of its regional transboundary groundwater monitoring in 2012-13, and are no longer able to run a groundwater monitoring program in the Osoyoos Lake area. However, EC did participate in a three-year initiative, ending in 2013, with the OBWB and other partner agencies, involving an expansion of BC's groundwater monitoring program in the Okanagan basin.



Recovery Strategies Posted for Species at Risk

(Environment Canada)

Environment Canada has now posted final recovery strategies for a number of species at risk. These recovery strategies are prepared in partnership with other organizations, and use the most current scientific knowledge to outline a strategic approach to identifying and mitigating risks to a species in order to achieve its recovery. Specific recovery strategies were recently posted for Branched Phacelia, Grand Coulee Owl-clover, Lemmon's Holly Fern, Nugget Moss, Princeton plants, Rusty Cord-moss, and Short-rayed Alkali Aster.

Inventory and Monitoring Continues for Over 30 Species at Risk

(Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, partners, and volunteers)

The ecosystems group within FLNRO worked with partners and volunteers to inventory or monitor over 30 species at risk on Crown land, including the annual paintbrush, Western Screech-owl, Tiger Salamander, Nuttall's Cottontail and Half-moon Hairstreak butterfly.

Applying a Science-based Approach continued



Partners in Flight, Environment Canada with US and Mexican scientists.

Tri-Nation Pilot Program Started to Coordinate Bird Conservation Efforts

(Partners in Flight)

In collaboration with Mexican and US partners, and as a result of the Fifth International Partners in Flight Conference in 2013, Partners in Flight is piloting a tri-national project using state of the art bird conservation science to inform watershed management decisions in western forests in the three countries. They will continue to work with Mexican and US partners to explore the possibility of forming a western forest alliance in Mexico to help coordinate conservation efforts and provide a mechanism to help leverage funds from Canada and USA for bird conservation efforts in Mexico.

Lewis's Woodpecker Studies Initiated to Support Recovery Planning

(Environment Canada - Canadian Wildlife Service, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, Partners in Flight)

The Blue-listed Lewis's Woodpecker is recognizable by its distinctive pink belly and red face. The Okanagan is the centre of abundance for the species in its northern range distribution, and although it is a migratory bird, some individuals remain in the Okanagan year-round. Partners in Flight began habitat suitability model testing and population trend monitoring of Lewis's Woodpecker across their Canadian range, including the South Okanagan. This data will inform recovery and action planning for this species.



Lewis's Woodpecker

Applying a Science-based Approach continued

Three different projects supported under the Aboriginal Funding for Species at Risk Program

(Environment Canada)

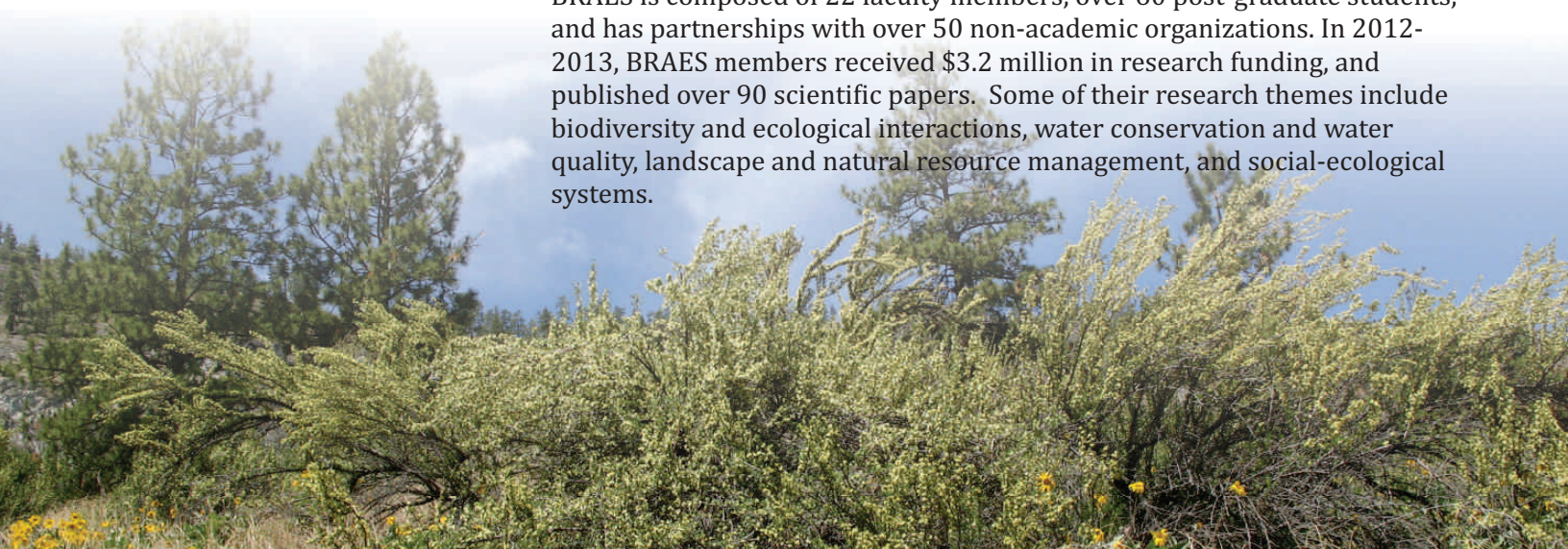
The Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk (AFSAR) is a national funding program that was established in 2004 as part of the implementation of the Species at Risk Act (SARA). SARA requires that aboriginal traditional knowledge be taken into account when assessments of species at risk are done, and that this knowledge be used when protection and recovery measures are developed and implemented. The AFSAR program provides funding to specific projects that support Aboriginal involvement in activities that protect or conserve habitats for species at risk. Over the past year and a half, the AFSAR program has supported projects such as the ECommunitY Place led by the En'Owkin Centre and projects in the Lower Similkameen through the LSIB leadership.

Ecological Research at UBC Okanagan continues to evolve

(Okanagan Institute for Biodiversity, Resilience and Ecosystems Services)

UBC Okanagan's Institute for Species at Risk and Habitat Studies (SARAHS) continues to evolve, which includes changing its name to the Okanagan Institute for Biodiversity, Resilience and Ecosystems Services (BRAES). BRAES is a consortium of UBC Okanagan Faculty members, students, collaborators and partner organizations working together to advance research and teaching in conservation and ecology. Their underlying motivation is to increase scientific understanding of ecological systems from the genetic to landscape scales and to inform management and planning decisions that promote environmental sustainability.

BRAES is composed of 22 faculty members, over 60 post-graduate students, and has partnerships with over 50 non-academic organizations. In 2012-2013, BRAES members received \$3.2 million in research funding, and published over 90 scientific papers. Some of their research themes include biodiversity and ecological interactions, water conservation and water quality, landscape and natural resource management, and social-ecological systems.



HONOURING & APPLYING FIRST NATIONS' WISDOM

The First Nations of the Okanagan and Similkameen have a long, rich history with our species and spaces. The knowledge and customs of the Syilx are centred on their relationships to the land, water, and living beings—relationships that everyone can learn from. One of the main pillars of the SOSCP is honouring and applying First Nations' wisdom."

En'owkin Centre

Syilx Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) represents the knowledge of generations, who have upheld the indigenous customs, local Syilx area experts, who have been handed down specific knowledge for ensuring responsibility is maintained through past, current and ongoing Syilx practices.

TEK is very specific and localized indigenous knowledge. The option of drawing lines, dots or polygons on maps disregard the complexity of TEK, as a TEK practice it is derived through a systems approach which considers how all things interact and relate to each other, support sustainability and environmental viability, and ensure the integrity of whole systems are maintained including our (human) interactions required.

TEK incorporates the historical and intergenerational knowledge of Individuals and families who have maintained a connection to and therefore an intimate knowledge of the land. The TEK perspective provides a framework to bring the vast knowledge contained within community together; to look at the needs of both competing and complementary interests. Taken from this complex perspective, mapping specific plant species, or uses on maps cannot show systems interrelationships which form an integral part of the decision making processes and weight of our impacts in the natural world.



Honouring & Applying First Nation's Wisdom continued



These processes passed down from the ancestors, who provided frameworks to ensure fair and equitable decision making for viability of the ecosystem and Syilx survival within it. These traditional models of governance (decision making) were the responsibility of every person in the area; to uphold to the highest standards, a regard for place, with consideration for kinship ties, land based training, character and sense of responsibility to tmixw and to the land which is central to all existence.

The TEK activities from September 2012, continues proving the need to include and transfer Syilx (Okanagan) indigenous practices, values and ethics within the modern paradigm of living in today's world. In efforts through varied approaches of education, awareness outreach at various levels of community engagement and support for the people living and interacting with the natural world within the Syilx territory.

In order to articulate the TEK perspective and outlook for the natural world it is imperative to understand certain Syilx indigenous concepts of living and life. In capturing awareness of differing beliefs such as creation, this foundational point of view, may provide insight to the relationship with the natural world in itself. The Syilx TEK perspective defines the connection and relationship to the natural world. Further to this perspective, the responsibility deriving from our relationship and interactions between the humans and the natural world from a Syilx perspective.....have an impact for those yet-to-be.

Respectively submitted on behalf of the En'owkin Centre Traditional Ecological Knowledge Keepers

Richard Armstrong TEK Specialist & Chad Eneas TEK Coordinator

Meet the New En'owkin Centre Executive Director

Lauren Terbasket is from the Okanagan Nation and a member of the Lower Similkameen Community. She is a masters Candidate in Leadership and Training through Royal Roads University. Lauren has extensive experience in aboriginal education including both curriculum development and teaching, cultural community development, and environmental conservation. Lauren has taught Community Development, Business, and Organizational Development, Education and Cultural Development Courses in Aboriginal Communities and for Aboriginal Colleges/Institutions throughout Canada for over 20 years. Lauren Teaches Okanagan Cultural courses and is a facilitator utilizing Okanagan Based and decolonizing methodologies. She currently holds the position of Executive Director for the En'owkin Centre in Penticton British Columbia and is a Council representative for the Lower Similkameen Community.

LOOKING FORWARD

Looking forward to ongoing and future projects, SOSCP expects to increase collaboration with OCCP in a number of project areas, for example the implementation of the basin-wide Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Okanagan Wetlands Protection Strategy, and connectivity planning. In spring of 2014, we will undertake a comprehensive review of Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Areas for a number of rural electoral areas within the RDOS, including revised maps, requirements, exemptions, supporting guidance to Qualified Professionals and a public engagement and review process. In 2014, SOSCP will also be bringing forward a proposal for a Local Conservation Fund as part of a strategy to achieve objectives as laid out in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.



SOUTH OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN CONSERVATION PROGRAM PARTNERS

April 2014

BC Conservation Foundation
BC Lake Stewardship Society
BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural
Resource Operations
BC Ministry of Agriculture
BC Ministry of Environment
BC Nature
BC Wildlife Federation
BC Wildlife Federation – Okanagan Region
Burrowing Owl Conservation Society of BC
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – BC
Chapter
Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture
City of Penticton
Conservation Northwest
Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Destination Osoyoos
District of Summerland
Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory
Ducks Unlimited Canada
En'Owkin Centre
Environment Canada – Canadian Wildlife
Service Pacific Yukon Region
Federation of BC Naturalists
FORREX
Friends of the Oxbows
Green Earth Movement (GEM) Penticton High
School
Grasslands Conservation Council of BC
Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
The Land Trust Alliance of BC



SOUTH OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN CONSERVATION PROGRAM PARTNERS

April 2014

The Nature Conservancy of Canada – BC Region

The Nature Conservancy of Washington

Town of Osoyoos

Town of Oliver

North Central Washington Resource
Conservation and Development Council

Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program

Okanagan College

Okanagan Region Wildlife Heritage Fund Society

Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance

Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society

Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society

Osoyoos Desert Society

Osoyoos Indian Band

Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society

Pacific Salmon Foundation

Partners in Flight

Penticton Museum and Archives

Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen

Royal BC Museum

Southern Interior Bluebird Trail Society

South Okanagan Rehabilitation Centre for Owls

South Okanagan Naturalists Club

The Land Conservancy of BC

University of British Columbia Okanagan

Village of Keremeos

WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife



WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT US



"We would never have accomplished our OCP work without the support and leveraging of this partnership. The highlight of this project is my new understanding of the uniqueness, sensitivity and importance of the natural environment of the South Okanagan."

- Ian McIntosh, District of Summerland, Manager of Development Services



"...the results of this excellent program should be shared with other jurisdictions...we suggest you actively promote the environmental planner and SOSCP structure with other regional districts in the province."

- HCTF Board Technical Review Committee



WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT US

"The work that your group has done is phenomenal, especially the important linkages and the capacity building that you have achieved with local governments and regional districts around biodiversity values in the south Okanagan. As well, doing this work with so little funding is amazing."

Brenda Costanzo, BC Ministry of Environment

"Among the most influential regional groupings are organizations such as the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program..."

*Tim Pringle, Former Executive Director,
The Real Estate Foundation of British
Columbia*

Regarding Keeping Nature in Our Future. "What an impressive document! Thoughtful, comprehensive and smart. With that framework, no wonder there is such great conservation in the SOS. Goes to show the impact that comes from creative thinking and good process."

*- Linda Hannah Ph d, Regional
Vice-President, British Columbia*



Support SOSCP

If you, or your organization, would like to support the important work of this collaborative partnership to

“Keep Nature In Our Future” contact

Program Manager Bryn White.

Tax receipts are available.

South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program

102 Industrial Place

Penticton, BC V2A 7C8

email: bryn.white@gov.bc.ca

website: www.soscp.org

Conserving Canada's Desert Country

