



Conserving Canada's Desert Country is Good for Nature, People, and Business

## South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program

# Newsletter

July 2009

### Message from SOSCP Coordinator

#### Partnerships At Work

SOSCP has been working with local government senior planning staff and CAO's in the South Okanagan Similkameen communities to advance ecological standards and practices, as well as develop capacity for increased environmental planning assistance.

We are proud to announce that a collective application to the Real Estate Foundation of BC was successful, and with the funds secured by the District of Summerland, Village of Keremeos, Town of Oliver and the Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance, there will be a shared environmental planner hired (see below) to assist these communities with their environmental planning needs.

This is a forward thinking and unique collaboration, leveraging the kinds of increased value and expertise available through the SOSCP initiative. Congratulations to our local government partners, and thank you to our funders and partners who have worked to make this a reality.



Photo: Conservation Northwest

### *Cross-border Cooperation*

In April, I had the opportunity to sit down with some of our partners and associates in North Central Washington to discuss conservation and the importance of working together for a comprehensive approach for biodiversity that recognizes no borders in our ecological corridor. Please join us as we reconvene the conversation at the Wildlinks Conference in September in Osoyoos BC.

We look forward to learning, collaborating, and participating in cross border species conservation! To register online: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/67724>. For more information and the agenda: <http://www.conservationnw.org/wildlife-habitat/wildlinks-briefing>.

**Bryn White**  
SOSCP Coordinator

## Job Opportunities

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**Environmental Planner:** The South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) on behalf of local government partners (Town of Oliver, Village of Keremeos and District of Summerland) is seeking a dynamic and skilled professional to help advance ecological standards and conservation practices within these smaller municipalities in the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen. This advisory and technical contract position is a unique and collaborative opportunity to assist small communities with their environmental objectives.

You will be involved in a variety of planning and technical activities and or projects including developing environmental bylaws and supportive processes, strategic responses and approaches, implementation plans, policies and procedures relating to environmental issues, as well as technical, regulatory and administrative advice and assistance, as required. The main objectives of this position are:

- Facilitate the adoption and integration of spatial products and criteria to establish Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Areas (ESDPA's) and accompanying bylaw language.
- Establish supporting tools such as criteria for Terms of Reference for environmental assessments, including specifics on sensitive ecosystems, important features, species at risk, and aquatic and terrestrial guidelines for ESDPA's.
- Provide planning review and technical support for large scale development applications in areas with significant ecological values.
- Deliver outreach and extension to elected officials, constituents, and planning staff on the value of integrating new ecological standards into OCPs, especially in the months leading up public hearings for OCP reviews.
- Work with other levels of government to establish stewardship agreements and management plans for parks and right of ways to conserve ecological values.

Applicants should submit a detailed resume, with cover letter, that reflects their knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to the position, no later than 5:00pm, August 7th, 2009 quoting to: "South Okanagan Similkameen Environmental Planner" C/O South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) 102 Industrial Place, Penticton BC V2A 7C8. Fax: 250-490-2231; E-mail (Word or PDF format only):

bryn.white@gov.bc.ca **For more information**, see [www.soscp.org](http://www.soscp.org) under News and Events page. Applicants can also contact: Bryn White (250) 490-8225 between July 20th and 31st or Margaret Holm (250) 493-3313 between August 3rd and 7th.

**JUNIOR-INTERMEDIATE AQUATIC BIOLOGIST** Ecoscape Environmental Consultants Ltd. is an environmental consulting company located in Kelowna, BC. We provide a broad range of environmental services for our clients, focusing primarily on biological and aquatic sciences. We offer exciting opportunities for individuals to work on a wide variety of projects in the southern interior. Interested persons are encouraged to

submit resumes electronically only (via Email) with a cover letter detailing your experience to: [ecoscape@ecoscapeltd.com](mailto:ecoscape@ecoscapeltd.com).

## **Funding Information**

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**How to Create a Local Conservation Fund in Your Region!** The East Kootenays Conservation Program (EKCP) is hosting a Panel and Workshop to help others successfully develop community based conservation funds garnered by property tax. Come and learn more about how to get this established from the first region to develop a comprehensive Canadian conservation fund. While other districts in Canada have implemented Land Acquisition Funds, the Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund (CVLCF) goes further than land securement. Water protection, wildlife and habitat conservation, and the conservation of open spaces are all areas that will potentially benefit from this new funding. (Space Limited) Hosted at St. Eugene Mission in Cranbrook, British Columbia 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Online registration available at [www.civicinfo.bc.ca/conference/conservationfund.asp](http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/conference/conservationfund.asp)

**Environmental Damages Fund. Deadline for application is August 31, 2009.** Please visit their website, review the funding available for this year and contact an EDF officer prior to application: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/edf-fde/default.asp?lang=En&n=060B0BF1-1>.

**BC Gaming Commission Direct Access Grants - Environment. Apply between July 1, 2009 to August 31, 2009.** Community gaming grants are designed to fit the needs of a wide variety of non-profit organizations throughout British Columbia. Culture, sport, the arts, public safety, the environment, human and social services, and students' extra-curricular activities — all these areas are supported through gaming grants to community organizations: <http://www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/gaming/grants/directaccess.htm>.

**Mountain Equipment Co-op. Apply before September 10, 2009.** Community Contributions Program provides in-kind support and various grants. Applications for Land Acquisition, Capacity Building, Research, Advocacy and Education, and Access support are accepted twice a year: March 10 and September 10 by midnight Pacific Time. Urban Sustainability and Grassroots Product Donations applications accepted anytime: [http://www.mec.ca/Main/content\\_text.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder\\_id=1408474396038943&FOLDER%3C%3EbrowsePath=1408474396038943&bmUID=1203699307979](http://www.mec.ca/Main/content_text.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=1408474396038943&FOLDER%3C%3EbrowsePath=1408474396038943&bmUID=1203699307979).

**Vancouver Foundation Community Impact Grants - Environment. Application Deadline August 6, 2009.** Letter of Intent was due June 18, 2009 and now the application deadline approaches. The purpose of the Environment Advisory Committee is to encourage and assist in the resolution of broad environmental issues arising in British Columbia: <http://www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca/grants/applicationdeadlines.htm>.

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## News and Announcements

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**Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) Commends Funding Announcement.** On July 13<sup>th</sup>, the federal and provincial government announced a \$5.5 million designation to the B.C. Cattlemen's Association (BCCA) to fund fencing projects on Crown range. BCCA will manage the program along with the Ministry of Forests and Range (MFR), with money used to upgrade and install new fences on Crown range in B.C.'s Interior. Earlier this year, Ducks Unlimited entered into partnerships with the BCCA and the MFR to facilitate programs like this. DUC plans to provide cash, in-kind support and assistance with program delivery, recognizing that fences encourage better grazing management practices, which help reduce impacts on wetlands and riparian habitats. "Wetlands are an important feature on Crown land, providing water and forage for livestock, as well as important wildlife habitat. Fencing helps to protect and manage access to these ecologically sensitive areas", says Brad Arner, DUC's manager of conservation programs.

**The Land Conservancy of BC welcomes Alyson Skinner back from maternity leave.** Lucy Reiss is returning to her job with Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), working on Species at Risk recovery planning. She will be based out of Environment Canada's Meteorological Service office on the UBC Okanagan campus in Kelowna starting next week. For everything related to species at risk recovery she can be reached at [lucy.reiss@ec.gc.ca](mailto:lucy.reiss@ec.gc.ca). For everything TLC/ SOS Stewardship related please contact Alyson at [askinner@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:askinner@conservancy.bc.ca) or 250.809.8802.

**The Land Conservancy of BC Election.** Between now and August 8th, 2009, the membership of The Land Conservancy (TLC) will be electing a new Board of Directors by a mail-in ballot. Mail in ballots for the election will be provided to all members registered by July 8, 2009.

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**FortisBC and Shaw Cable Provide Live Osprey Nest Video.** Both companies have partnered to provide a close-up look at Ospreys in a nest relocated as part of FortisBC's Osprey nest management program. This program is part of FortisBC's commitment to environmentally-responsible business practices. The Company protects Osprey by actively discouraging nest building on energized power poles and providing alternative nesting platforms for the birds. Under the supervision of a registered professional biologist, and following the Ministry of Environment's permit conditions, Osprey nests are removed from energized poles and relocated to alternative nesting platforms on new poles erected nearby. The program has seen more than 40 nest poles installed throughout the southern interior of BC. For more information or to watch the live video of the Osprey nest, visit [www.fortisbc.com](http://www.fortisbc.com). The video will also be available on Shaw digital cable channel 166 throughout the Okanagan.

**2009 Water Supply Outlook for Okanagan Lake.** A summary report released by the Water Stewardship Division (Ministry of Environment) for the BC Fruit Growers' Association, advises for conservation of water to the extent possible. Overall, the

Nov/08-May/09 inflows have been 39% of normal, and Apr/09-May/09 inflows were 44% of normal. This spring has been dry. In summary, for the 1921-2009 period of record, 2009 is the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest inflow. The current inflow numbers are worse than 2003 (2003 was a serious drought year). For more information please check: [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/public\\_safety/drought\\_info/index.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/public_safety/drought_info/index.html).

**Retrospective: Okanagan Basin Thru-hike, May 14-23 2009.** Dannie Carsen has completed a 250 km thru-hike from Osoyoos to Armstrong. The hike was meant to raise money and awareness of the habitat requirements of neotropical birds in BC and in Mexico. Dannie has completed daily updates and a final summary report that highlights his observations of the shrinking bird habitat in the Okanagan Basin and what needs to be done to preserve it. He recorded a total of 107 bird species. Please check his website to follow his journey and read up on some his findings: <http://www3.telus.net/dcarsen/okthruhike/index.html>.

**Kelowna Takes Steps to Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas.** The City of Kelowna has completed inventory and mapping of environmentally sensitive areas including creeks, wetlands, Okanagan Lake foreshore and sensitive ecosystems. All 27 creeks and a total of 278 wetlands including 75 previously unknown wetlands within the city boundaries were inventoried and mapped. This initiative has created an important tool that will help the City make informed decisions to better protect, improve or enhance environmentally sensitive ecosystems. For the full article visit <http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/302n.asp?newsid=3215> and the complete versions of the above reports are available at [www.kelowna.ca](http://www.kelowna.ca) under environmentally sensitive areas.

**The Nature Conservancy of Canada Welcomes a New Regional Vice President.** As Jan Garnett says goodbye to move on to the realms of philanthropy, project development, and partnerships, the NCC of BC welcomes a new Regional Vice President - Jamie Alley. We wish you all the best in your new journey Jan; you will be missed. We look forward to working with Jamie Alley who is soon retiring from his current position as Director of the Oceans and Marine Fisheries Branch in the Ministry of Environment.

**Call for BMPs** – The Land Management Committee for the BC Trust for Public Lands has retained a consultant team (headed by Rachel Holt) to compile examples of best management practices for conservation land in a bibliography style format to determine where there are gaps or deficiencies with respect to key land management issues related to conservation lands or biodiversity, and conduct a workshop to review their findings on Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup>. To ensure that the Consultant team includes all BMP's related to conservation lands that are pertinent to British Columbia; we are asking that you forward any Best Management Practices documents or operational standards/guidelines that address land management activities on conservation or ecologically significant lands to the Project Team. Electronic versions or literature references can be forwarded directly to: Rachel Holt:Veridian Ecological Consulting E-mail: [rholt@netidea.com](mailto:rholt@netidea.com)  
Phone: 250 352-6932 FAX: 250 352-6933

**Call for papers, posters and field trip leaders** – The Society of Ecological Restoration BC and OSCA are pleased to announce the "Shared Responsibility for a Responsible Landscape" Conference in Naramata, BC from November 5th to 8th, 2009. This conference will bring together a wide range of land stewards who will share their experiences and methods of caring for our region. Collectively, we will explore ways of connecting the ideas, people, and, ultimately, the landscapes represented. This conference acknowledges the positive role that people can play in the restoration, management, and protection of ecosystems as we continue to advance toward a more sustainable future together. Details can be found at [www.ser.org/serbc/events.asp](http://www.ser.org/serbc/events.asp). Send submissions to [outreach@osca.org](mailto:outreach@osca.org) no later than **July 15, 2009** and for general inquiries [tamara@desert.org](mailto:tamara@desert.org).

**Simon Fraser University Launches Certificate in Dialogue and Civic Engagement - FALL 2009.** If involving citizens in your plans is becoming central to your work, this innovative program is for you. Learn to think critically and creatively about the range of approaches to civic engagement. You will be guided by skilled and knowledgeable faculty/practitioners on effective ways to plan and implement a range of engagement models. The program includes four core courses, a choice of four skills workshops and a Practicum.

The first series of courses and workshops begin in September 2009 and run until the end of April 2010. For more information about the program and application forms: <http://www.sfu.ca/dialogue/study+practice/certificate.html>.

## Partner Profile

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The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - BC Chapter is a registered non-profit society that works to preserve wilderness and maintain the ecological integrity of parks throughout British Columbia. The Chapter plays a key role in establishing new protected areas and in improving the management of existing parks. As a lead member of the Grasslands Conservation Council of BC, CPAWS-BC monitors existing intact grassland to ensure they are managed to protect their ecological integrity. CPAWS also supports the conservation of interior grasslands and is spearheading efforts to establish an Interior Grasslands National Park. Currently, in the Okanagan-Similkameen, CPAWS-BC has been active in supporting 1) the proposed South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park and in 2) bringing attention to the proposed Shanker's Bend Dam project in Washington State that would flood a portion of the Lower Similkameen Valley in BC.

**Website:** <http://cpawsbc.org>

## Calendar of Events

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*September 23-24*

**Wild Links 2009: Thinking Across Borders: Recognizing the Needs of Wildlife (Osoyoos BC).** This is a prime opportunity to connect with conservation information and organizations across disciplinary, cultural and geographic boundaries. Wild Links provides an amazing opportunity to share information on a landscape that is critical to wildlife in our region, while building relationships and placing each person or agency's work into a larger context. This year's focus – how do we better coordinate across the US and Canadian border for wildlife and wildlife habitat. To register online: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/67724>. For more information and the agenda: <http://www.conservationnw.org/wildlife-habitat/wild-links-briefing>.

### ***September 24***

**Workshop on Best Management Practices for Conservation Lands (Institute of Ocean Sciences, Sidney, BC).** This workshop aims to present information and findings from the compilation on Best Management Standards (BMP's) for conservation lands used by jurisdictions relevant to British Columbia. The information is currently being compiled for review by Veridian Ecological Consulting and will be discussed at the workshop. The main issues to consider will be the gaps that exist between BMP's for conservation lands, priorities for developing new BMP's on selected land management issues and tasks under a possible Phase II of this project. Indications of interest or any questions can be directed to Jim Hope at [jhope@naturetrust.bc.ca](mailto:jhope@naturetrust.bc.ca).

### ***October 1***

**2009 ESRI Regional User Conference: Call for User Presentations.** You are invited to participate in the Regional Conference in Penticton taking place at the Trade and Convention Centre. Join GIS professionals for this exclusive opportunity to learn about the latest advances in GIS technology and hear how others in your community are using a geographic approach in their work. The main conference (plenary sessions, user presentations and technical sessions) will be held on Thursday, October 1, 2009. Enhance your conference experience with a pre-conference workshop. Workshops will be held on Wednesday, September 30, 2009. For more information: <http://www.esricanada.com/english/Event.asp?eventtype=RUC&search=eventtype&bytype=GO>.

### ***October 29***

**“How to Create a Local Conservation Fund in Your Region”.** The EKCP is hosting this event at the St. Eugene Mission in Cranbrook. Presenters include U.S. and BC experts in conservation finance. Conference fee, including lunch is \$100. Space is limited. To register or for more information please contact Nancy Newhouse [ekcp@cyberlink.ca](mailto:ekcp@cyberlink.ca).

### ***November 5-7***

**Society of Ecological Restoration Conference: Shared Responsibility for a Sustainable Landscape.** Taking place in Naramata this conference will be of interest to ecological restoration practitioners, researchers, land managers, resource industries,

consultants, community leaders, public interest groups, First Nations, parks and public works managers, farmers, ranchers, and students. The focus will be on sharing experiences and methods of caring for the Okanagan-Similkameen region, exploring ways of connecting the ideas, people, and, ultimately, the landscapes represented. This conference acknowledges the positive role that people can play in the restoration, management, and protection of ecosystems as we continue to advance toward a more sustainable future together. For more information:

[http://www.ser.org/serbc/pdf/conference\\_announcement.pdf](http://www.ser.org/serbc/pdf/conference_announcement.pdf).

## **Public Opportunities**

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**Residents of Electoral Area “H” (Princeton Rural – including Princeton fringe area, Tulameen, Coalmont, Eastgate, Missezula Lake and Five Mile Valley) in the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) are invited to participate in a review of the Official Community Plan (OCP).** As a first step in this process, a survey is being circulated to all households in the Electoral Area to assist in the identification of important issues and to contribute to the formulation of a “community vision” for the area. The survey can be completed on line, or downloaded from the Regional District’s website at [www.rdos.bc.ca/AreaH/OCP](http://www.rdos.bc.ca/AreaH/OCP). For those without access to the internet, the survey is also available in printed form at the RDOS Building Inspection Office located at the Riverside Wellness Centre in Princeton. The survey should take less than 20 minutes and **must be returned to the RDOS no later than July 31, 2009.**

**The Similkameen Valley Planning Society** is a registered non-profit society with a mandate to work for the social, economic and environmental well-being of Similkameen residents. Member partners include the Regional District Okanagan – Similkameen Electoral Directors (Areas B, G and H), the Village of Keremeos, Town of Princeton and the Lower Similkameen Indian Band.

The Society would like to invite applications from community members to participate in a “home-grown” Sustainable Development Strategy process for the entire Similkameen Valley. Applicants are encouraged to write a brief paragraph (250 words) outlining their background, interest in planning for the Similkameen, and strengths/skills that would benefit the process. **Applications can be directed to: Similkameen Valley Planning Society C/O Sustainable Development Strategy Panel, Similkameen Valley Planning Society (SVPS). Box 516 Keremeos, BC V0X 1N0**

## **Your Contribution**

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If you would like to have your conservation project listed, to submit a news item for the SOSCP Newsletter, or would like to provide feedback on this issue, we’d love to hear from you!

### **SOSCP Newsletter**

South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program  
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Penticton, British Columbia  
V2A 7C8

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[www.soscp.org](http://www.soscp.org)

*This e-mail has been sent as you have requested to be kept abreast of news through the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program website. — If for any reason you wish to be removed from this mailing list please send an email to: [soscp2@gov.bc.ca](mailto:soscp2@gov.bc.ca) and your email address will be removed promptly from our mailing list. To update your email address please send your request to: [soscp2@gov.bc.ca](mailto:soscp2@gov.bc.ca).*

## **Donation Information**

**If you, or your organization, would like to support the coordinating function of the SOSCP, please contact one of the following**

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### **Environmental Legacy Fund**

**Bruce Johnson**

*Executive Manager*



**Bryn White**  
*SOSCP Program Coordinator*

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