



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

**South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program**

# Newsletter

---

March 2010

---

## **SOSCP is Signing on Our 49<sup>th</sup> Partner from south of the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel.**

While Canada and the US are battling it out on the ice this week, a bi-national dialogue for conservation is taking place in both Washington DC, and in Penticton BC.

The O'Bama administration, through the US Fish and Wildlife Service has launched an engagement process on both sides of the border for mitigation and wildlife adaptation to climate change through the *Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative* which includes a large area within the Southern Interior of BC. The applied conservation partnership will provide science and decision support tools to help inform management actions for priority species.

Speaking of partnerships across the border, the SOSCP has been working to strengthen relationships with agencies and organizations in North Central Washington to increase cooperation and collaboration towards maintaining our common ecological corridor.

**This Sunday, SOSCP will welcome our 49<sup>th</sup> partner. Conservation Northwest** is a non-governmental organization based in Washington State, with nearest offices in Spokane and Republic. Conservation Northwest connects and protects wild areas from the Washington Coast to the BC Rockies to benefit people and wildlife. The South Okanagan Naturalists Club will be co-hosting the film *Lords of Nature* with Conservation Northwest this Sunday in Penticton (see calendar) and Jay Kehne will be on hand to sign the SOSCP Statement of Cooperation.

**Our partnership is growing. Stay tuned to find out who will be the 50<sup>th</sup> during Environment Week – April 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

**Bryn White**  
SOSCP Program Manager

---

## **2010 International Year of Biodiversity – Celebrate!**

---

**Report Shares Ancestral Knowledge on Importance of Biodiversity** - Assembly of First Nations' National Chief Shawn Atleo, Chief Councillor Marilyn Slett of the Heiltsuk Nation, Chief Bill Cranmer of the 'Namgis Nation and Frank "Athalis" Brown announced the release of “**Staying the Course, Staying Alive, Coastal First Nations Fundamental Truths: Biodiversity, Stewardship and Sustainability**”, a report that gives voice to ancestral knowledge of BC Coastal First Nations and serves as a formal contribution to the United Nation's proclamation of 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity. The report is available at <http://www.biodiversitybc.org/>

## **Funding Information**

---

**Land Trust Alliance of BC Seminar Series bringing two important fundraising workshops to Naramata:** <http://landtrustalliance.bc.ca/seminarseries.html>

**March 18<sup>th</sup> – Creating Reliable Fundraising in Unreliable Times.** The non-government sector needs dependable strategies for fundraising. Learn how to set up, maintain and expand a systematic fundraising program that is predictable and manageable.

**March 19<sup>th</sup> How to Create a Conservation Fund in Local Communities.** This workshop will explore mechanisms to generate dedicated environment funds through tax based programs. Learn from success within the Capital Regional District and the East Kootenay Conservation Program.

**MEC Community Contributions. Application deadline is March 10 and September 10 2010** for applications for Land Acquisition, Capacity Building, Research, Advocacy and Education, and Access. Urban Sustainability and Grassroots Product Donations applications are accepted anytime. Please see their website for more information: [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)

**The Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia. Application deadline is March 8, 2010 for the Letter of Inquiry.** The Foundation looks for proposals that can become successful grant applications. Successful applications occur when there is strong compatibility between the applicant's and the Foundation's mandate and strategic focus. The Foundation will thoroughly consider the proposal of each organization invited to make an application. Please visit their website for full directions on the application process. <http://www.realestatefoundation.com/howtoapply/howtoapply.html>

## **News**

---

**SOSCP Going Social with CITinfoResource: the Communities in Transition Information Resource!** Social media and the conversation about land in BC

CITinfoResource continues to explore ways to use various social media to support and stimulate what Tim Pringle calls *"the conversation about use and conservation of land amongst various land use practitioners in BC communities?"* This month's post features blogs, audio posts, and video interviews, as well as references to our presence on Facebook and Twitter. Check out **Bryn White**, the Coordinator of the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Partnership (SOSCP), as she describes how SOSCP is [building capacity in local organizations](#), including local government.

**Frogwatch Monitoring Events:** Frogs and Turtles need your help! We are looking for volunteers to monitor amphibian populations in the South Okanagan-Similkameen. No experience is necessary, just enthusiasm for assisting the native amphibian and turtle populations of this region. Training and educational materials will be provided at the following events:

**March 16<sup>th</sup>** 1-3 pm Oliver Wetland Trail Frog & Turtlewatch 87th/85th Street

**March 23<sup>rd</sup>** 7-9 pm Penticton Frogwatch Penticton Museum & Archives

**March 27<sup>th</sup>** 1-3 pm Osoyoos Frogwatch Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre

Please contact Jacquie Likins, OSCA at 250-492-4422 or [outreach@osca.org](mailto:outreach@osca.org) for further information.

**Environmental Mind Grind - Call for Judges:** The Environmental Mind Grind pits the environmental wits of school teams from around the Okanagan-Similkameen in a fun, interactive, quiz show-style contest. Teams range from Grade 4 to 12 with the contest split into Elementary (Grades 4-6), Middle (Grades 7-9) and High (Grades 10-12) categories. The annual Okanagan-Similkameen event is held in honour of Earth Day in April, and winning teams will represent the Regional District at the BC Finals held in Kelowna in May. Teams from all over Southern BC compete for \$1,000 for their school and a host of other great prizes.

This year, the RDOS is hosting the event at Cherry Lane Mall on Friday April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1-5 pm. Mind Grind categories include: Waste, Water, Transportation and Air Quality, Forests, Species at risk, Habitat at risk, Climate Change and Energy. If you are interested in being a judge please contact Cameron Baughen for this volunteer opportunity at 250-490-4203. <http://www.rdos.bc.ca/index.php?id=69#1048>

**Sustainable Communities: Urban Growth and the Protection of Wildlife Habitat:**

On March 2nd, 12 p.m. the Penticton Museum Auditorium (Brown Bay Lunch Series) provides us with an overview of the South Okanagan's distinct habitats and the planning and stewardship tools available to protect these valuable assets. The presentation is by Margaret Holm, Outreach Coordinator, Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance.

**Snowpack levels put water supply in peril.** "Okanagan residents should prepare themselves to make some tough decisions about water usage in the future, says the provincial minister of the environment." "Depending on the location in the valley, snowpack levels are between 15 and 35 per cent below normal due to declining precipitation levels, said Penner. Six to eight weeks remain to build up a sufficient amount of snow in the upper elevations to ensure adequate water supplies for the summer. But Mother Nature — which has not co-operated so far — continues to

interfere.” For the full story please follow this link:

[http://www.bclocalnews.com/okanagan\\_similkameen/pentictonwesternnews/news/84180097.html](http://www.bclocalnews.com/okanagan_similkameen/pentictonwesternnews/news/84180097.html)

**The GCC welcomes Bob Moody as new Executive Director.** The Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia (GCC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Bob Moody as the next Executive Director of the GCC. Bob took over February 15 from Bruno Delesalle, who has served the GCC as Executive Director from its beginnings in 1999. The Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia (GCC) is dedicated to the stewardship and conservation of the rare and beautiful grasslands of our province. In partnership with a broad base of members and partners, we build a better understanding of grasslands and provide methods and tools to improve care of them.

**Sustainable Similkameen Project.** The Sustainable Similkameen Project will be unveiling of the draft Sustainable Similkameen Strategy in March and community members are welcome. Spearheaded by the Similkameen Valley Planning Society, it offers residents from Princeton to Chopaka an opportunity to join together and plan for a Sustainable Similkameen Valley.

March 17, 2010 (7:00 - 8:30 PM) Location: Riverside Centre, Princeton

March 20, 2010 (7:00 - 8:30 PM) Location: Village Office, Keremeos

**Osoyoos Desert Center Winter Lecture Series.** This February and March the Osoyoos Desert Society will once again be hosting its popular Winter Lecture Series. The 2010 program focuses on water and land sustainability issues in the South Okanagan, and some of the steps being taken to conserve these vital natural resources. Lecture presentations take place in the mini theatre at the Osoyoos Secondary School (5800 – 115 Street). Two more Lecture Series are set to air on March 9 and March 23 begin at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome to attend. Admission is by donation and proceeds support the conservation and education efforts of the Osoyoos Desert Society. For more information, contact the Osoyoos Desert Society at 250-495-2470 or call toll free at 1-877-899-0897. See below under Calendar of Events and Workshops for more details regarding the presentations.

## Partner Profile

---

### BC Ministry of Forests and Range



The British Columbia Ministry of Forests & Range is the steward of the timber, range and recreation resources of British Columbia's unreserved public (Crown) forest land, which covers two-thirds of the province (about 59 million hectares). Headquartered in Victoria, BC, Canada, this ministry manages land for many uses, including recreation,

forage, timber, and wilderness, and, in cooperation with other agencies, for water, fish, wildlife, tourism, heritage, and minerals.

Contact: Alex McLean or Anne Skinner Range Officers

Website: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/for/>

## **Calendar of Events and Workshops**

---

### ***February 28***

#### **Lords of Nature: Life in Land of Great Predators**

A documentary premiere: Top predators hold a key to life itself. Can people and predators coexist? Can we afford not to? Wolves and cougars, once driven to the edge of existence, are finding their way back—from the Yellowstone plateau to the canyons of Zion, from the farm country of northern Minnesota to the rugged open range of the West. This is the story of a science now discovering top carnivores as revitalizing forces of nature, and of a society now learning tolerance for beasts they once banished. *Narrated by Peter Coyote.* Co-hosted by the South Okanagan Naturalists Club and Conservation Northwest. The event takes place at **MBody Living Arts Centre**, 125 Eckhardt Ave East in Penticton. Doors open at 6:30 pm. The movie plays from 7:00 – 8:00 pm followed by discussion. Admission is \$5 and children under 13 are free.

### ***March 4***

#### **COMMON GROUND for COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY: Integration of Economic Development and Planning for Healthy Communities. Kelowna BC**

A unique, no cost, workshop for economic development officers, administrators and planners, local government and First Nations government, health professionals and parks and recreation staff for one day to discuss common goals and challenges to planning for community sustainability.

Video-conference centres are provided in Williams Lake, Kelowna, Kamloops, Nelson and Cranbrook. The start time is 9:45 am until 4:00 pm. Send in your request to register soon by clicking on this link to register: <http://www.createsurvey.com/c/77545-jNy10N/>

### ***March 9***

#### **Osoyoos Desert Centre Winter Lecture Series: Sustainable Land – From the Perspective of a Geotechnical Engineer**

Join engineer Nigel Skermer at 7:00 pm as he

outlines the bedrock and soils geology of the Okanagan Valley and takes a closer look at soil and rock stability issues in the region.

### ***March 9-12***

#### **Indigenous Earth: Praxis and Transformation**

This conference will connect an emerging and diverse range of scholars and practitioners to share theories, experiences and methods for applying indigenous knowledge to complex environmental and social realities. This conference will launch a series of research publications that propose solutions to address current environmental concerns and build bridges between Indigenous knowledge and western scientific approaches.

Register for this conference at [www.eplyevents.com/indigenousearth](http://www.eplyevents.com/indigenousearth). For more information, visit <http://www.enowkincentre.ca/home.html> or contact Ellen Simmons at [ecomunity@vip.net](mailto:ecomunity@vip.net).

### ***March 9-12***

#### **Restoring Natural Habitats in Vineyards**

The Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (OSCA) and Environmental Farm Plan are offering a free workshop for vineyard owners and managers on natural habitat restoration and wildlife management. Tinhorn Creek Winery is hosting the event on Friday, March 12, 2010 from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. For further information contact: Joe Lariviere, EFP by telephone at 250-689-0498 or email [joe.lariviere@vip.net](mailto:joe.lariviere@vip.net); Margaret Holm, OSCA by telephone at 250-493-3313 or email [margaretholm@shaw.ca](mailto:margaretholm@shaw.ca).

### ***March 16***

#### **Spring Clean up and Celebration at Forbes Wetland Trail, Oliver BC**

Join *TLC* The Land Conservancy, the Town of Oliver, the Forbes Family Farm, and the Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance on Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 3pm to restore, clean-up, and celebrate the Forbes Wetland Trail. This trail connecting 87<sup>th</sup>/85<sup>th</sup> Street to the Okanagan River channel is used daily by community members who recreate along the river channel. In addition, the trail skirts along an important wetland which is home to many birds, turtles, frogs, and animals.

At noon, the new wetland educational signs will be unveiled and Mayor Hampson will be cutting the ribbon to the new sitting bench. A short presentation about the importance of this remnant wetland and the Okanagan River Restoration Initiative occurring across the river will follow. Refreshments and snacks will be provided.

### ***March 18-20***

#### **Land Trust and Stewardship Seminar Series**

Join BC's land trusts, naturalists, stewardship, conservation and land use organizations & agencies in this foremost Land Trust and Stewardship Seminar Series, hosted by the Land Trust Alliance of BC. This three day event includes site visits to protected areas, including [Skaha Bluffs](#), restored riparian areas and other Okanagan cultural sites. Plus local experts, Harold Baumbrough and Mike Sarrell, will give fascinating presentations on snakes, fire and other features of BC's incredible biodiversity. In addition to a full day workshop by renowned North American fundraiser Kim Klein, there are another 15 seminars about protecting BC's biodiversity and carbon storing forests and grasslands for healthy communities and a healthy climate. This event is open to all, plus a ride sharing connection service is available. For more information please call 250-538-0112 or email [info@landtrustalliance.bc.ca](mailto:info@landtrustalliance.bc.ca). For the program and registration: "[Seminar Series 2010 Program and Registration](#)".

### ***March 23***

#### **Osoyoos Desert Centre Winter Lecture Series: Invaders Make Bad Neighbours.**

Join guest speaker Lisa Scott, Invasive Plant Program Coordinator for the Okanagan-Similkameen, as she explores the impact of invasive plants on our local habitat.

Challenges - as well as success stories - will be discussed, including what individuals can do to help control the spread of invasive species.

### ***March 22-26***

**World Water Week Committee Planning Splashy Affair.** The Okanagan Basin Water Board is joining forces again with UBC Okanagan to organize what will be an exciting week-long salute to water. Robert Sandford, Canadian Chair of the UN International Decade “Water for Life,” will be the keynote speaker. For details visit [www.ubc.ca/okanagan/speakers](http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/speakers).

### ***March 25***

#### **2010 Drought Response Planning Workshop, Kelowna BC**

Drought conditions can impact communities and individuals in many different ways. Being prepared to respond to droughts when they occur will help communities manage water for drinking, sanitation, fire protection, agriculture and other economic activities. It will also help protect fish and aquatic ecosystems. The Ministries of Environment and Agriculture and Lands, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada are hosting four drought response workshops, one of which is taking place in Kelowna from 1:00-4:30pm. These half-day workshops, delivered a day ahead or after the Water Act Modernization (WAM) workshops, seek to gather input for the development of a drought response plan with region-specific actions in times of low water flows. The workshops will engage you to participate in developing a plan that will be put into action this coming summer and fall. If you are interested in attending one of the drought planning workshops, please respond directly to [Elaine.Jennings@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Elaine.Jennings@gov.bc.ca) to see if spots are still available.

### ***April 20-21***

#### **Aboriginal Cultural Awareness for Natural Resource Managers, Revelstoke BC**

This two day interactive workshop will provide participants with the practical tools for engaging Aboriginal peoples, communities, organizations, and institutions in resource management discussions and decisions. The nature of culture and the role that cultural differences can play in interpersonal interactions are examined. Our instructors are Bob and Anne Moody of Global Indigenous Services. Details and registration are at: <http://www.cmiae.org>.

### ***May 31 - June 6***

#### **2010 Wetlands Institute, Kamloops BC**

Presented by the BC Wildlife Federation, the 2010 Wetlands Institute is now open to participants who are passionate about conserving and restoring wetlands. Download the agenda at <http://www.bcwf.bc.ca/programs/wetlands/documents/Agenda%202010%20WI.pdf>.

## **Public Opportunities**

---

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Calendar  
<http://www.rdos.bc.ca/index.php?id=415>

Village of Keremeos Council Meeting Schedule  
<http://www.keremeos.ca/Village/municipalcouncil.html>

Town of Oliver Council Meeting Schedule  
<http://www.oliver.ca/siteengine/ActivePage.asp?PageID=25>

Town of Osoyoos Council Meeting Schedule  
<http://www.osoyoos.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?NewsID=19>

City of Penticton Council Meeting Schedule  
<http://www.penticton.ca/city/council/meetings/default.asp>

District of Summerland Council Meeting Schedule  
<http://www.summerland.ca/municipalhall/calendar.aspx>

## **Your Contribution**

---

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  
102 Industrial Place  
Penticton, British Columbia  
V2A 7C8

[soscp2@gov.bc.ca](mailto:soscp2@gov.bc.ca)

[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**



### **Environmental Legacy Fund**

P.O. Box 24081  
Penticton, BC, V2A 8L9

Tel: (250) 493-9311  
Email: [info@cfso.net](mailto:info@cfso.net)

Website: [www.cfso.net](http://www.cfso.net)



### **Bryn White** *SOSCP Program Coordinator*

Penticton BC  
Tel: (250) 490-8225  
Email: [bryn.white@gov.bc.ca](mailto:bryn.white@gov.bc.ca)  
Website: [www.soscp.org](http://www.soscp.org)