

The CVLT Newsletter

Spring 2004
Number 9

What's New at The Comox Valley Land Trust
"Creating a Local Legacy of Lands and Resources"

WHAT'S NEW

- **ONE SPOT TRAIL** • Finally breaking ground! In Fall '03 the Regional District began work on one section. This spring the Advisory Committee was reconstituted and trail construction schedules are being drawn up. Volunteers are once again instrumental to this project's success. (See "Volunteers," page 3)
- **CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY FOREST** • Some exciting developments in the CCF Society's efforts to purchase 250 hectares of forest adjacent to Cumberland – (1) a Memorandum of Understanding with the Village of Cumberland, and (2) an official written offer from the landowner, John Hancock Insurance, to sell 153 hectares, and (3) grant applications to several foundations. Total money raised to date is \$108,000 in cash and over \$150,000 in pledges. Once the forest is purchased, a conservation covenant will protect it forever. *Please help the community buy this beautiful forest (CVLT issues tax receipts for all donations).*
- **PROTECTION WORK – COVENANTS** • Lynda Fyfe continues her covenant fieldwork on a contract basis, with Project Watershed providing excellent baseline mapping services. A covenant will soon be in place on the Sandwick Waterworks District's 32-acre Sandwick Forest, which will be transferred to the city of Courtenay as a nature park. We are also working on a covenant on Masters Park, an environmentally significant property along the Puntledge River in the Regional District. Two covenants in the Millard/Piercy watershed are moving through the approval process.
- **WHYTE'S BAY** • March was a busy month for the Whyte's Bay Society Board, following receipt in February of a letter of intent to sell from Hancock Forest Management. The WBS is preparing to negotiate the purchase of the 520 hectare Whyte's Bay Community Forest. Initial steps include a resource inventory and assessment, mapping, and a preliminary business plan for potential investors. The WBS Board will work closely with a professional forester, Project Watershed staff, and Ecotrust Canada over the next six months. *The WBS Board thanks the Land Trust and to the Macdonald Wood Park Society for their support of this project.*
- **LAND PROTECTION STRATEGY** • One of the major initiatives we identified for 2004 was a cooperative review of the Valley's land-base to identify areas with environmental values, resulting in a long-term protection action plan. This project is critical, given the Valley's rapid urban growth and the lack among the four local governments of coordinated planning for land-use and a growth strategy. Stewardship groups such as ours need complete and accurate information to focus our resources where most needed. Unfortunately, our applications for funding for the Land Protection Strategy project were unsuccessful. We will not give up the idea, but we will have to reassess our plans in consultation with other stewardship groups and local governments, and look for other ways to get the resources we need to get the job done.
- **HURFORD HILL SIGNAGE** • The Real Estate Foundation awarded us a small grant for interpretive signage in Hurford Hill Park. Susanne Bradfield is working with the City of Courtenay on this project.

This is your Land Trust.... Find out how to work
with your neighbours to protect our green space
Join Us! Bring a Friend!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING INVITATION

Tuesday, May 18, 2004 – 6:30 pm to 9 pm

Comox Community Centre, Meeting Room B – 1855 Noel Avenue, Comox

- ✓ Guest Speaker – Andrew Gage, West Coast Environmental Law – Crown Land in British Columbia:
Current policy, Issues in Other Communities, What We Can Do
- ✓ Election of 2004/05 Board



Bulletin Board

MAY 2 • CV Naturalists Annual Spring Bird Count (Contact Barb Sedge-wick, 335-0064 or Jean Hudson, 338-0380 for more info)

MAY 8 - CVLT Annual Spring Plant Sale (see notice below) 

MAY 18 • CVLT Annual General Meeting (see page 1)

JUNE 12 - Field trip to Wildwood Forest (call Gwyn at 336-8165 or Shirley at 337-1929 for info)

JULY 18 • CVLT Summer Garden Party – Diana Caldwell's garden (Contact Diana at 337-8397 for info)

◆
Take a Nature Walk with the CV Naturalists! (Contact Pat Smith, 334-4939 for info about any of these walks)

MAY 9 • Cumberland Forest with Gwyn Sproule. Meet at Riverside Park at 9:30 AM or at Jumbo's Cabin on Comox Lake Road at 10 AM (bring a lunch)

MAY 15 • Annual pub-to-pub walk (Oyster River to Salmon Point). Meet at Riverside Park at 9:30 AM (bring a lunch or buy at the pub)

MAY 23 • Hurford Hill Park-Valleyview Greenway. Meet at end of Glen Urquhart at 10 AM

MAY 30 • One Spot Trail. Meet at Riverside Park at 9:30 AM

We have not inherited the world from our forefathers—we have borrowed it from our children. • Kashmiri proverb

Fundraising is based on Friend Raising

In Fall 2003, Odete Pinho developed a three-year fundraising strategy for the CVLT. Odete is now working on a volunteer basis to help us implement this strategy. Now we are laying the foundation for serious fundraising campaigns, all of which will be linked to specific land protection objectives. We are clarifying our mission and goals and ensuring our objectives and fundraising plans fit our long-term mission.

It is particularly important this year to expand our Board of Directors and to establish a skilled, committed fundraising team of 10-12 people.

In 2005 we will focus on increasing our public profile, "friend raising" in the community, and organizing selected, well-managed fundraising events. One event already in the works is the raffle of a heritage theme quilt donated by the North Island Quilters for Community Awareness.

By 2006, with our donor program in place, we expect to hire a half-time coordinator to continue building our fundraising strength.

We believe that our community will generate the public and financial support to protect a heritage of lands.

CROWN LANDS & THE LANNAN FOREST CAMPAIGN

• submitted by Shirley Ward

Since November 2002, the Land Trust (CVLT) has been working with the Comox Valley Crown Lands Coalition (CVCLC) to retain key Crown lands in public ownership.



Lannan Forest, a 40-acre Crown land parcel adjacent to the Crown Isle subdivision, is the last publicly-owned natural forest in this rapidly-urbanizing area, and had been designated as a future park in Regional District's plans. Despite this designation, Land and Water BC (LWBC), the provincial government's real estate arm, began secret negotiations in 2002 to sell Lannan to Silverado Land Development, the developers of Crown Isle. This direct sale was stopped in June 2003 by a petition campaign within the City of Courtenay.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2003 CVLT and the CVCLC pressured LWBC to give the Regional District and the community the option of purchasing the forest. Inventory work carried out in 2003 by Chris Walther, a Registered Professional Forester, showed that most of the forest was properly classified as "sensitive ecosystems" according to the criteria of the




government's own Conservation Data Centre.

In spite of this new environmental information, and the clear indication of community interest in retaining the forest, LWBC announced in December 2003 that the land would be listed for sale by open bidding. CVLT objected to a process that forced local government and residents, attempting to retain environmentally sensitive public land, to bid against developers interested in profiting from destroying it. Nonetheless, CVLT launched a fundraising campaign to try to save the forest. In less than a month, \$410,000 was raised with pledges, cash donations, and loans – a truly amazing indication of community support. With CVLT's contribution, the Regional District was able to submit a bid of \$621,000. Silverado's bid was just over \$1 million. Requests to George Abbott, the newly appointed minister responsible for LWBC, for a review of the Lannan sale were unsuccessful.

This sale means the loss of one of the Comox Valley's few parcels of publicly-

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ANNUAL PLANT SALE - SATURDAY, MAY 8 Comox Band Hall • 10 AM to 1 PM

 great selection of plants  Master Gardeners answering questions
 composting display (aka "making your own 'black gold'")

YOUR GARDEN TREASURE DONATIONS MAKE IT HAPPEN

Please pot up donations of herbs, house plants, shrubs, trees, perennials, native plants, & seedlings.

Drop off is appreciated at the Band Hall on Friday, May 7 from 5 PM to 9 PM.

To volunteer in any capacity or for more info, call Joan, 334-2936.





SPECIAL THANKS TO –

Volunteer Corner

• submitted by Diana Caldwell

* The dedicated volunteers coordinating work on the *One Spot Trail* • Gordon Fyfe, with assistance from Wendy Prothero, is working with the Regional District and the Back Country Horsemen of BC to plan and coordinate trail building and maintenance. Contact Gordon at 338-8956 if you feel like helping out. • Krista Kaptein is coordinating the signage program for the trail, including interpretive signs funded by the Real Estate Foundation of BC. Krista's interest in local history, experience in graphic design and expertise as an amateur naturalist are a perfect combination for this project.

* The organizers of the *Annual Plant Sale* on May 8th • Shirley Jorgensen, Joan Erickson and Diana Caldwell, with help from our friends in the MacDonald Wood Park Society. For information, see notice on Page 2.

* Designer of our *upgraded website* • Maaike Pen did a wonderful job of redesigning our website to make it more visually appealing and easy to use, and worked with Joka Belyk to implement the changes.

* Everyone who helped out with the *campaign to purchase Lannan Forest*. • Angela Burns, Bob Campbell, Dawn Christian, John Edwards, Joan Erickson, Terry Fright, Chris Hilliar, Ted Holekamp, Susan Holvenstot, Bob and Karen Lannan, Ruth Masters, Mel McLachlan, Chris Pielou, Brendan Read, Glen Sandford, Angela Smailes, and Chris Walther, and the many, many others who made donations and pledges.

* Comox Valley Road Runners for donating half their proceeds from the Comox Valley half marathon for work on the *One Spot Trail*.

ALSO, THANKS TO.... Odete Pinho for chairing the Fundraising Committee, Karen Melnyk, Patti Matthews, Ann Halstead, Ted and Karen Bensen, and Winston Schell, for manning the Land Trust's Information Booth at Seedy Saturday, to our newsletter volunteer, Linda MacLean, for consistently producing a well-designed, accurate and on-time newsletter, and to Naomi Stevenson for helping with our contact list and office work. We are delighted that Odete Pinho has agreed to coordinate the implementation of a fundraising plan for the Land Trust.

Our *Advisors* are crucial to our success. They extend our network of contacts into the community and provide valuable feedback. Thanks to our Advisory Board for their time and support –

Agriculture – Edgar Smith, Danny Thran

Biology/Botany – Dr. Chris Pielou

Business/Economic Development – Kathy Penner, Shelagh Saprunoff, Peter Gibson

Community Service/Philanthropy – Peter Gibson

Conservation & Stewardship – Angela Smailes

Fisheries – Chris Hilliar

Forestry – Sybille Walkemeyer

Land Use & Planning – Alison Mewett

Law – Ted Holekamp, Andrea Rowe, Kathy Slater

Policy – Les Cartwright, Kel Kelly, Angela Smailes

Real Estate – Mark Fleming

Recreation/Provincial Parks – Ron Quilter, Peter Gibson

Regional/Municipal Parks – Alison Mewett

Residents' Associations – Rona-Rae Leonard

Tourism – Paul Jonson



And finally, thanks to all the hardworking volunteers on our *Board of Directors*, who put in countless hours helping out with everything from special events, fundraising, and covenants to administrative work.

TLC CONSERVATION HOLIDAYS

Looking for a different holiday idea? The Land Conservancy of BC offers "conservation holidays". You can visit a beautiful protected landscape, learn new skills, and have the satisfaction of doing valuable work that contributes to conservation of BC's ecological and cultural heritage! TLC offers a number of

conservation holidays close to home – Cowichan River, South Winchelsea Island, and Wildwood Forest. For more information about TLC's protected areas, or to sign up for a working holiday, visit the TLC website at or call (250) 479 8053.



☐ Crown Lands & Lannon Forest (cont'd)

owned Crown land, and is part of a province-wide policy of selling Crown land for urban development. We will continue to work with groups elsewhere in the province to encourage government to change this policy.

REDIRECTION OF LANNAN FOREST CONTRIBUTIONS – CVLT thanks everyone who contributed time, energy, and money to the Lannan Forest campaign. It was an amazing community effort, and although we did not save Lannan Forest we want to make sure that some of this effort goes to the retention of other important natural areas.

Over the next month, CVLT will be contacting all the people who made pledges for the purchase of Lannan to ask them how they would like us to use their pledge. The three options will be: (1) Cumberland Community Forest purchase fund; (2) contingency fund for land acquisition (so we have a head start on the next Lannan Forest); or (3) monitoring and enforcement fund for land protected by conservation covenants.



One Yard (and house!) At A Time

• submitted by Judy Walker

Everywhere we hear and read about smart growth, the words "green buildings" pop up. Even trendy home magazines now write about the effects of synthetic materials we use in our homes, garden magazines show sod roofs on garages, and BC Hydro encourages new/old ideas to reduce power consumption. In a recent advertisement for a conference, I picked out several sessions all dealing with "green" - "Greener Buildings and the Triple Bottom Line," "Greening by Example," and "Creating a Market for Green Buildings." But what are *green buildings*?

The impact of human activity has reached extreme levels, due to our numbers, technology, and consumerism. As buildings (one of those activities!) are connected to their surroundings, architects, designers, landscape architects, and engineers looked to how buildings - their construction, operation and demolition - affected regional ecosystems and watersheds. As early as the 1970's they recognized that conventional practices needed to change to protect and enhance the environment, and the "green building" movement was born. But with the move to greener buildings, came the need for a system to design, construct, and certify these structures.

LEED stands for "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" and is a rating system developed in 1995 by the

US Green Building Council. There are 3 levels of LEED certification: certified, bronze, silver and gold, for varying levels of energy savings and environmental benefits. The LEED checklist covers 6 categories: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality and innovation, and design process.

The sustainable site category is of particular interest to me. This requires that the site must not be on prime farmland, in a floodplain, on a protected habitat, within 100 ft. of a wetland, or on public parkland. (Seems like common sense!) Points are gained for concentrating development to urban areas, locating near bus lines, providing bicycle storage, limiting site disturbance, reducing the footprint of the building by 25%, implementing a storm-water management plan, reducing light pollution, providing open-grid paving and vegetated roofs.

All great goals! And now LEED's for subdivisions is being developed which could help guide planners, developers, architects, engineers, and homeowners into setting smart criteria for better land use.

For more information check out "LEED BC or Canada Green Building Council on the Internet.



In Memory of Melda Buchanan

The Land Trust learned with great sorrow of Melda Buchanan's death on April 14. Melda was a driving force for wilderness preservation in the Comox Valley and throughout the province. She was instrumental in the creation of Seal Bay Park and worked tirelessly with the Naturalists and other stewardship groups to take care of the Valley's special places. From the Land Trust's inception Melda was one of our most generous supporters. Everyone at the Land Trust will miss Melda's sharp wit, her understanding of nature and her commitment to conservation.

THE CVLT NEWSLETTER is designed and produced by CVLT Volunteers.
PLEASE RECYCLE and pass it on to a friend or neighbour.

• Who's Who • at the Land Trust

OFFICERS

- Shirley Ward, President
- Diana Caldwell, Vice-Pres
- Pam Munroe, Treasurer
- Judy Walker, Secretary

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

- Peggy Carswell
- Grace Doherty (joined Board Feb. 04)
- Leslie Henderson (resigning but continuing on Fundraising Committee)
- Winston Schell (resigned Mar. 04)
- Peggy Zimmerman (joined Board Feb. 04)

• BOARD EXPANSION •

In 2004/05 CVLT is expanding & strengthening its Board • If you would like to serve, contact Shirley Ward - 337-1929

• Donation Receipts •

Receipts are now issued for fees & donations of \$20 or more

• Membership •

Our members are our strength. If you aren't already a member of the CVLT, please consider joining today. If you are already a member, we need your continued support. A membership form is attached to this newsletter.

• Board Meetings •

3rd Tuesday Monthly
7 - 9 PM
221 - 2270 Cliffe Avenue
Members Welcome

• Land Trust Contact •

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