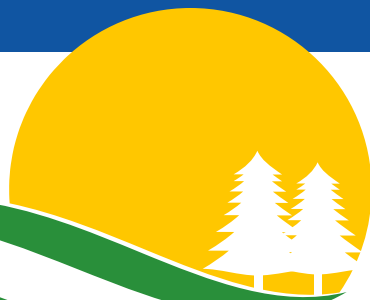


CENTRAL OKANAGAN LAND TRUST



Legacy

...a newsletter of the Central Okanagan Land Trust



caption

Here, the diverse ecosystems in the park—cottonwood forest, cedar forest and drylands Ponderosa Pine—have shown some deterioration in health in recent years, whether as the result of urbanization, change in water table, age or the effects of climate change.

Funding for a multi-year research project has been applied for by COLT to try and determine what is causing the decline by investigating ground water levels, stream flows, the effects of water diversion and land use changes on the park's ecosystem. We also work closely with the Mission Creek Restoration Initiative, helping out with grant applications etc. and our board member, Don Knox, sits on the board helping direct that restoration work.

COLT Collaborates in its Community

by Judie Steeves

Collaborations make all participants stronger. Whenever groups or individuals work together, they find they can move mountains as well as molehills.

The Central Okanagan Land Trust has always collaborated with local government, senior governments, local non-profits with shared interests and individuals who share our commitment to steward the land and conserve natural ecosystems.

Currently, COLT is partnering with a group of students from the new UBCO Bachelor of Sustainability program to restore some Western Red Cedar stands along the Lebanon Creek and Bertram Creek corridors, both of which connect in the Johns Family Nature Conservancy.

This 800-acre property is owned by COLT and is maintained and operated by the Central Okanagan Regional District as a park, in collaboration with COLT. Parts of it are open to the public, and part is conserved as wildlife habitat, open for research, habitat and wildlife monitoring, and restoration work.

The property was forever changed by the 2003 Okanagan Mountain Park wildfire, which burned many of the mature stands of native evergreens, including cedars in the creek corridors, and those have not recovered.

The UBCO students will learn about seed propagation and replanting of this variety of tree with mentorship from COLT board member and Registered Professional Biologist, Tanis Gieselman.

For this project, it was important that Okanagan cedar seed stock be used, to give the little trees the very best chance of survival through the hot, dry summer months they will experience in the Okanagan. COLT is also collaborating with UBCO and the regional district on a research project in Woodhaven Nature Conservancy in Kelowna.

The Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club (CONC) conduct annual ecosystem surveys in the Johns Family Conservancy and help out with birding surveys on other properties as needed.

COLT is also working with CONC on a project in Thomson Marsh, (where COLT holds a conservation covenant on the City of Kelowna parkland), to construct a bird viewing platform.

As well, the two groups worked together on development of Wetland Management Plans for Maude Roxby Marsh and Chichester Pond in Kelowna.

The Friends of the South Slopes, an umbrella organization of non-profit organizations who have taken on the task of maintaining trails in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park, Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park and along the Kettle Valley Rail recreational corridor in Myra Canyon, are another organization COLT collaborates with.

COLT works with the group to identify key properties to add to the conservation lands adjacent to Myra-Bellevue.

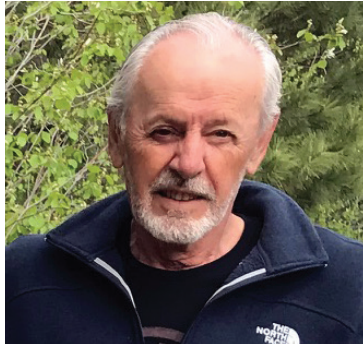
The Friends of Black Mountain, a recently-established regional park, work with COLT on grant applications to create trail systems in the new park and COLT supported the purchase of the parkland.

Improvements to the unique wetland habitat that is Robert Lake in Kelowna are supported by COLT, working with the Friends of Robert Lake.

Construction of a much-needed outhouse in the Johns Family Conservancy was the result of a collaboration between COLT, the Alpine Club of Canada and the Colin and Lois Pritchard Foundation. Both the City of Kelowna and the regional district collaborate with COLT on grant applications for purchases and restoration of parkland and COLT holds covenants on land that is managed as parkland by both civic governments.

It's an approach that works well for all involved and ensures that COLT has its roots deep and wide in its Central Okanagan community.

President's Report Gord Savage



They say time flies and it seems as if this past year has done just that, flown by. Spring is now upon us in full swing. It is satisfying to know that we have places within our community that are spared from our ever-growing city. Places like Munson Pond, Robert Lake, Thomson Marsh, Benvoulin Wood, and the John's Family Nature Conservancy provide quiet environments for nature to thrive.

This has been another very busy year for the Central Okanagan Land Trust. It was a year ago in May that the Johns Family Nature Conservancy officially received the designation as a Nocturnal Sky Preserve from the Royal Astronomical Society. This was brought about by the hard efforts of our friends at the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

UBCO and their Bachelor of Sustainability Program have partnered with COLT to provide a small group of students the opportunity to work with COLT on a two year project looking at reforestation in the Lebanon Creek and Bertram Creek corridors and specifically the planting of cedars in these areas that had been seriously impacted by the Okanagan Mountain wildfire in 2003. This project was kick started this year and will get under way in September at the start of the school year. Our Vice President, Tanis Geiselman, has volunteered to lead the project.

Along similar lines we are also supporting the UBCO/Capstone program on a four year study looking at environmental issues and conservation endeavours in the Woodhaven Regional Park adjacent to Bellevue Creek. Currently the University is seeking funding through government grants.

Last year I hinted that we had three property owners expressing interest in donating lands to the Land Trust for our conservation interests. I am very pleased to say that COLT has received ownership

of one of these properties. We will be working with the previous owner to do a proper press release. The property is 19 acres and is bounded on two sides by a small creek. COLT is now starting to plan the re-naturalization of this property which will take some time and effort before it can be properly enjoyed by the public. We are excited to get going on this and over time creating an expanded wetland and forested habitat along the existing creek that flows around the eastern and northern portion of this property.

You may notice in this newsletter that we have changed a couple of things. First is our Mission Statement. A couple of years ago Past President and Director, Barry Jones, suggested that it was time to revisit the mission statement since COLT had evolved over the past few years and we needed a statement that more clearly described our reason for being. We put together a small committee to tackle this and last spring we finally agreed to the statement contained herein. Secondly, our communications committee came up with a revised logo which you can also find in this newsletter. Small but very timely improvements.

We had two board members step away from the board this year. Robert Groves, who had been on the board since 2013 and who, as a lawyer, provided much sage advice on our activities and also on how we ran our meetings. Brenda Gendron who had only been on the board for a year as our Treasurer had to step back for personal reasons that kept her away. Thanks to both Bob and Brenda for their service.

This year we brought on two new board members. Shane Matheson, an accountant, has joined us and taken the important role of Treasurer. Kalin Ocana is a student at UBCO who works part time for the Regional District as a specialist in wild birds and their habitat. Kalin brings his unique expertise and enthusiasm to our board.

I will close off by saying that the work we do at the Land Trust plays an important role in our community and we have an educated and competent board working hard in this regard. The Okanagan is identified as being amongst Canada's most at risk habitats according to the World Wildlife Federation (WWF). It is one of five habitats across the country that need environmental protection. We at COLT, in partnership with the Regional District and the City of Kelowna and with the help of our generous donors are making a difference.

Gord Savage
President – Central Okanagan Land Trust

Executive Director Report Wayne Wilson



If you glance back through the past few newsletters, you'll quickly see that COLT has become increasingly busy with the work of habitat restoration and with efforts to secure more land for wildlife as our regional community grows. What is particularly satisfying about that work is the success we have had in this work.

Some of this is on-going projects such as invasive plant management or our participation in the Mission Creek Restoration Initiative. Other efforts involve an increasing emphasis on collaboration with other collegial environment, parks, and wildlife groups.

One of the strongest of those collaborative projects over the last year has been COLT's support of the Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club (CONC) work to construct a bird viewing platform at the SW corner of the Thomson Marsh. The interest in having such a platform grew out of the Thomson Marsh Management Plan. Specifically,

continues...

the goal was a structure that would help bring wider access to the community's growing interest in bird watching and, thereby, a stronger understanding of the value of bird life to the marsh and the region as a whole. Funding is now in place to see the platform built over the next year.

Another strong and exciting collaboration is with the Friends of the South Slopes in efforts to find and secure natural lands that would enhance the wildlife and natural habitat areas between Okanagan Mountain Provincial and Myra-Bellevue Provincial Parks. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of this work is the potential to work with the RDCO and the City of Kelowna to purchase lands that can be added to existing parks or act as stand-alone parkland.

Over the coming year, we will continue to pursue these opportunities and, as you will see in this newsletter's feature article, there is so much potential to improve the area's ecology through collaboration and partnership. Thank you for your support as we continue this valuable work.

Wayne Wilson
Executive Director

COLT logo updated by Judie Steeves

In the past year, the Central Okanagan Land Trust has begun an update of its promotional materials, beginning with a newly-re-designed logo.

In discussion at the board level, directors felt it should include a representation of both land and water, since both are vital parts of what the COLT works to conserve, as well as a couple of key components in Nature: the rising sun (or moon), and trees. The result was a collaboration between professional graphic designer, Buddy Cole, and the board. (see right)

COLT has also re-defined its Mission Statement and, after considerable soul-searching came out with: COLT's mission is **'To steward the land in its trust for the conservation of natural ecosystems in the Central Okanagan, in perpetuity.'**

The committee who worked with the board on the new statement noted that it was also important to remember that the trust's objective is to keep lands protected, connected and natural.

With a new logo in place, the board embarked on a re-design of its promotional brochure and made the decision that, with today's emphasis on not using paper unnecessarily, a smaller card, directing people to our website, would make more sense than a rack-sized, folding brochure.

That meant the three-year-old Communications Committee next needed to turn its attention to the website, which is a bit clunky and out-of-date and no longer contains the technical elements needed to keep up with today's rapidly-evolving technology.

That project is now in progress and it's to be hoped by the next newsletter, you will be invited to peruse the new COLT website as well.



Our Mission
To steward the land in its trust for the conservation of natural ecosystems in the Central Okanagan, in perpetuity.

Board of Directors

Gord Savage - President
Tanis Gieselman - Vice President
Shane Matheson - Treasurer
Steve Thomson - Secretary
Judie Steeves - Recording Secretary
Bill de Bosch Kemper - Director
Laura Hooker - Director
Don Knox - Director
Kalin Ocana - Director
Angela Corman - Director
Eve Wegscheidler - Director
Leah Schurian - Director
Kim Inglis - Director

Ex Officio – Wayne Wilson, Executive Director
Ex Officio – Representative, Regional District Central Okanagan

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Kalin Ocana – New Board Member West Kelowna, BC

Kalin has lived all of his life in West Kelowna. He grew up on the edge of the beautiful Rose Valley Regional Park, where he spent his childhood exploring the forested hills and documenting the biodiversity of the park. Kalin is a Park Interpreter for the Regional District of the Central Okanagan, and a passionate conservationist, with a particularly keen interest in bird life and native habitat restoration. He is also a hardcore birder, and has recorded 296 species of birds in the Central Okanagan. Kalin is currently completing his undergraduate degree in Human Geography at UBCO, with the goal of pursuing a career in Urban / Park Planning. While not in school, he keeps busy with bird related field jobs locally and around the world. His other interests include Canadian history, photography, bass guitar and back country exploration.

Shane Matheson – New Board Member Kelowna, BC

Shane was born and raised in Kelowna and graduated from KSS. He started a culinary apprenticeship while in high school and earned a Red Seal designation. Shane travelled all over BC and Alberta cooking, notably at the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge, The Wickaninnish Inn in Tofino, and Tableau Bistro in Vancouver. He returned to Kelowna in 2016 to open a restaurant here. Then, the desire to spend more time with his family led to a career change. In 2021 Shane obtained a BBA in accounting from Okanagan College. Shane now works for Iconic Wineries of British Columbia as an accountant focusing on the retail and hospitality side of the business. Shane has been happily married for ten years and has two children, Jack (5) and Archer (8). Shane is passionate about conservation, the environment, and sustainability.



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at Central Okanagan Land Trust



Follow us on Instagram @colt.landtrust

Partners

The Central Okanagan Land Trust is fortunate to enjoy the financial, operational and/or development support of individuals, companies, local government, and other agencies. These partnerships help build a stronger network of parklands and conservation areas for wildlife – and we are the collective and individual beneficiaries of those healthy natural spaces. We thank all of them for their continuing support of our work and for their faith in our land stewardship practices.



Named Endowment Funds

- Central Okanagan Land Trust Fund
- COLT Johns Family Conservation Area Fund
- COLT Munson Pond Fund
- Bootle Family Fund
- COLT Cynthia Hunter Fund
- Dick & Jean Hall Fund #1
- Hobson Family Fund for COLT
- Bernice Mabee Memorial Fund
- Charles & Kay Pettman Family Fund
- J.W. & M.E. Scott Family Fund
- Trinity Fund
- Westheuser Family Fund
- Ruth Nuyens Whitson Fund
- John & Monica Shantz Fund
- Wilson Family Fund