



HABITAT
CONSERVATION TRUST
FOUNDATION

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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FOUNDATION PROVIDES \$479K FOR LOCAL FISH & WILDLIFE PROJECTS

Fish and wildlife on Vancouver Island will be better off this year, thanks to a contribution of nearly half a million dollars made by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation for conservation projects on the Island.

The environmental granting organization announced on Friday that it will be providing funding for 13 projects exclusive to Vancouver Island, and several others with activities taking place within the region.

Included among this year's grant recipients is the Habitat Acquisition Trust's Good Neighbours Project. The program helps residents find ways to protect and improve upon the habitat values of their properties.

Each year, the Good Neighbours program focuses its outreach services on a different region of the CRD. This year's program will focus on working with the residents of Tod Creek in Saanich.

HAT's Executive Director Adam Taylor says the program assists property owners in becoming habitat stewards. "We offer events, workshops, and home visits to help people learn about their conservation values of their land and find solutions to problems like invasive plants. We teach them how to reduce or eliminate use of artificial fertilizers and pesticides that end up polluting waterways."

Land owners who make the commitment to maintaining their land in ways that will benefit wildlife are presented with a Habitat Stewards plaque.

"By recognizing the efforts of these land owners, we are changing the way our community thinks about landscaping and nature," adds Taylor. "HCTF has supported the Good Neighbours program for many years, and have helped to make the program a success."

Other local projects receiving grants from the Foundation include a program working to reintroduce western bluebirds to the Georgia Depression, and a project examining the feasibility of enhancing fish habitat in Elk Lake through a water quality improvement program.

Most of the money HCTF uses to fund these projects comes from conservation surcharges on fishing and hunting licences.

"The Foundation is a concrete symbol of the user's investment in the resource," said HCTF Chair, Harvey Andrusak. "Few people realize how much of the critical conservation work taking place in this Province is funded by anglers, hunters, guide outfitters and trappers. We all benefit - these

projects improve conditions for a tremendous range of species, not just those targeted by contributors.”

You can find a complete list of funded projects on the Foundation’s website at hctf.ca.

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