

Impact Report



Project 0-606: BC Parks iNaturalist Project

In 2020, B.C.'s Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (MOE) allocated \$10 million in funding for ecosystem and species conservation via the **Conservation Economic Stimulus Initiative (CESI)**. As part of B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan, this new program aimed to support B.C.'s economic recovery by investing in ecosystem and species restoration projects across the province. These projects employed British Columbians, with a focus on demographics such as young adult, women, and Indigenous People who had been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, by funding "shovel ready" conservation projects that also helped to protect and improve B.C.'s diverse ecosystems, wildlife, and freshwater fish species.

Since 1981, the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) has awarded over \$200 million in funding to conservation organizations practicing evidence-based habitat, wildlife, and fish management techniques across B.C. In these unprecedented times, HCTF was proud to partner with the Province to bring further funding to the conservation field, assisting with economic recovery efforts while also improving and securing B.C.'s important natural assets.

Appreciation for our wild places, diverse wildlife species, and abundant fisheries is a value held by all British Columbians; the Conservation Economic Stimulus Initiative will keep this love for BC wilderness in the forefront even as our province continues to recover from the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

63

Projects Completed

22

Stewardship Projects*

18

Habitat Restoration Projects**

\$9.3

Million Dispersed

661

Jobs Created

274 for Women
216 for Young Adults
201 for Indigenous Persons

74%

of Budgets to Labour



* Projects focused on site/area or species stewardship

** Projects completed habitat restoration activities



CESI PROJECTS BY REGION

- Project locations
- Multi-Region**
 - 18 Projects
 - \$2,265,500 Funding
- Vancouver Island**
 - 7 Projects
 - \$1,621,170 Funding
- Lower Mainland**
 - 12 Projects
 - \$1,122,980 Funding
- Thompson Nicola**
 - 7 Projects
 - \$768,493 Funding
- Kootenay**
 - 9 Projects
 - \$1,300,594 Funding
- Cariboo**
 - 0 Projects
 - – Funding
- Skeena**
 - 3 Projects
 - \$952,217 Funding
- Omineca-Peace**
 - 3 Projects
 - \$1,173,764 Funding
- Okanagan**
 - 4 Projects
 - \$120,053 Funding

Through CESI projects, HCTF and funding recipients developed an inspiring range of relationships with partners throughout the province. These partnerships created stronger communities of conservationists and encouraged collaboration to improve the outcomes for fish, wildlife, and their habitats. Our partner governments, Indigenous communities, non-government organizations, and educational institutes supported not only economic recovery, but realized incredible conservation accomplishments.

The variety of projects reflects the rich diversity of species and habitats found in BC's lands and waters. We are so proud of our partners' achievements ranging from wetland restorations throughout the Province, to training territorial stewards and incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge, to enhancing forest and grassland ranges; with many more projects conserving our species such as fishers, goshawks, wild sheep and white sturgeon. At HCTF we look forward to working collaboratively to build on the legacies started through CESI, to ensure BC's wildlife and wild places are cared for and enjoyed for generations to come.

– Dan Buffet, CEO, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation

Project Profiles

A selection of projects achieved through CESI



Building Resilient Bat Populations: Pilot Project on Engaging First Nations in Local Bat Conservation

BC Conservation Foundation

Project 0-600: BCCF worked with six First Nations, five in northeast BC, to pilot the *Bat-Friendly Community* approach to improve resiliency of their local bat populations. Through creating or enhancing bat habitat, providing information to communities and industries, and promoting learning about bats within the region, this project will help ensure that bats and bat habitats are considered and included at a local planning and conservation scale.



Garry Oak Ecosystems: Restoring an Endangered Ecosystem

Habitat Acquisition Trust

Project 1-781: Garry oak ecosystems are some of the rarest and most threatened habitat types in Canada and are critical to many at-risk species that depend on intact habitat for their survival. This project employed a 5-person restoration crew for 8 months to remove invasive species and enhance habitat of more than 12 hectares of Garry oak habitat in multiple conservation areas on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.



Transforming the Tom Berry Gravel Pit into Functional Fish & Floodplain Habitat

Fraser Valley Watersheds Coalition

Project 2-729: During Fraser River flooding, the abandoned Tom Berry gravel pit would fill with water and salmon; but as water levels dropped, the pit became disconnected, leaving fish stranded. FVWC constructed permanent outflow channels, contouring and enhancing the pit to support floodplain ecology to restore over 2,700m² of new aquatic habitats, for a total of over 91,000m² of lake-like conditions.



Peckham's Ecosystem Restoration & Seeding Refurbishment

Ministry of Forests

Project 4-651: Sites that were cleared and converted to domestic fields in the 1970-80's had become degraded; they hosted a variety of invasive plants, patches of bare ground, and a highly reduced capacity to support the habitat and foraging needs of ungulates. By treating these sites using herbicide treatments, scarification of the land, and applications of seed and fertilizer, 464 acres of Crown lands were enhanced; edible forage for wildlife was increased while the ecosystem's resiliency to disturbances such as climate change were improved.



Guardian Program to Support Conservation in the Meziadin Watershed: Assessing Climate Resilience

Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs

Project 6-122: The Meziadin Indigenous Protected Area (MIPA) contains critical habitat for spawning Nass sockeye, chinook and coho salmon; moose, grizzly, mountain goat and other culturally and ecologically significance species. The Gitanyow Lax'yip Guardians and the Gitanyow Fisheries Authority are leading integral stewardship activities in the MIPA. Gathering hydrology and water quality data, assessing health of moose habitat, and monitoring moose and salmon harvest provides much-needed trusted data for Wilp Wii Litsxw to continue to steward the area in a sustainable manner from one generation to the next.



Saik'uz Restoration Plan

SERNbc

Project 7-559: Through three components, this project addressed cumulative impacts effecting the Saik'uz First Nation, highlighting hydrological, riparian, wildlife, fisheries, economic, and First Nations values – both traditional and contemporary. Key activities included the development of an Ecosystem Restoration Plan to guide restoration activities within Saik'uz First Nation's territory, moose habitat enhancement of 4,200 ha to provide forage and movement opportunities for moose and other wildlife, and road rehabilitation that reduced high road densities that negatively impact moose populations and biodiversity as a whole.