HABITAT CONSERVATION TRUST FOUNDATION

NATURE TRUST BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Regional Summary Reports

Conservation Lands O&M Grants

Year 3, 2022-2025 Funding Cycle

HCTF Project #0-451

Conservation Lands O&M

Introduction

Conservation Lands Operations and Management (O&M) Program provides funding to the Conservation Lands Program of the Province of British Columbia for the management of ministry-administered conservation lands. The program is delivered in partnership with the Nature Trust of British Columbia (NTBC) and Ducks Unlimited Canada (in the South Coast region), including work undertaken on lands leased to the Province from NTBC. Funding for this program is provided primarily through endowment funds given to HCTF by the Province of British Columbia. This program is limited to a specific set of eligible sites and activities.

West Coast Region

Region: West Coast

Ecological Significance of the Region:

The Vancouver Island West Coast Region contains some of the most diverse and rarest ecosystems in British Columbia and supports internationally significant populations of fish and wildlife as well as some of the rarest species found in the Province.

Estuaries, wetlands and riparian areas are among the most diverse and productive ecosystems in the world. The importance of protecting and managing these habitats cannot be understated given their substantial life history functions and benefits not only to fish and wildlife but to the human population as well (e.g. clean water supplies, flood protection, mitigating impacts from climate change). It is estimated that more than 50% of wildlife species in North America rely on access to wetland habitat for at least part of their life-cycles, and almost 35% of all rare, threatened, and endangered wildlife species are dependent on wetland ecosystems (Wetland Action Plan for British Columbia, 2010).

In British Columbia, estuaries and coastal wetlands comprise less than 3% of BC's coastline, while providing habitat to over 80% of all coastal fish and wildlife species. Approximately 500 species of named plants and animals are associated with wetlands and estuaries, and 70 of those species are federally listed as endangered or threatened. Vancouver Island and the Central contain significantly higher ranked estuaries than any other eco-region in the province (CWS Technical Report Series #476, 2007). Of the 8 Class 1 estuaries in BC, 4 are located on Vancouver Island.

Key Property Complexes

Baynes Sound	Buttertubs Marsh
Cluxewe Estuary	Cowichan Estuary
Dudley Marsh	Filberg Marsh
Kingcome Estuary	Lazo Marsh
Nanaimo Estuary	Orel Lake
Englishman River (PQWMA)	Salmon River Elk Reserve
Salmon River Estuary	Asseek Estuary
Somenos Marsh	Kumdis Slough
Willow Creek	Bella Coola Estuary
Koeye Estuary	Quatse WMA
Tofino Mudflats WMA	

Despite their importance and rarity, approximately 43% of the province's estuaries are threatened by coastal development, modification, and pollution; approximately 60% of marsh habitats along the estuaries of the Salish Sea have been lost.

Since 1976, The Nature Trust of BC and the Province of British Columbia has worked together with several partner agencies to secure these critical habitats on Vancouver Island and the Central Coast. From the Cowichan Estuary to the Kumdis Estuary more than 110 conservation properties have been secured protecting over 15,000ha of critical fish and wildlife habitat along with rare ecosystems.

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

In 2024-2025, $141,745 was invested by HCTF in the West Coast Region. This funding was matched by over $5 million dollars in partner cash contributions as well as $120,000 in in-kind contributions by volunteer groups, local governments and First Nations.

Project Highlights:

- $18,453 was invested at the Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) River Estuary Conservation Area (NRE) supporting land management initiatives complimenting the recent large-scale restoration projects to enhance the vital ecosystems, and species found within. Nearly 200m of split rail fencing installed to designate publically accessible areas, trails and an elevated observation platform. Additionally, the replacement of a new kiosk structure with revised informative signage to help convey information on the estuary and regulations found within. Funds helped support the required maintenance of the restoration projects through invasive plant treatments and watering the newly installed trees, shrubs and grasses.
- $17,950 at the Parksville Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area wherein the ongoing management issues with homeless encampments continues. Regular communication with municipal Bylaw, RCMP and COS agencies help to remove occupants however, clean-up is often resource depleting. In addition, daily land management issues continue with danger tree assessments and removals, regulatory signs and trail enhancement. The Kw'a'luxw (Englishman) River Estuary experienced several years of large-scale restoration projects that resulted in some trails degraded by heavy machinery leaving trails holding water or slippery, muddy terrain. Enhancements like resurfacing trails helps to keep visitors on the paths while making their experience top the estuary more pleasant.
- $15,328 at the Lazo Marsh NE Comox Wildlife Management Area to help complete restoration of nearly 3.5ha of land that was nearly inundated by invasive plants. The restoration site was historically degraded with forests removed and grounds disturbed creating ideal conditions for scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry and tansy. A contractor removed all the invasive plants and graded the lands, seeding with a native seed mixture containing species often found within Garry Oak Ecosystems. Estimate of 100 metric tons of invasive plant materials was removed. Lazo WMA remains one of the only green spaces within the Town of Comox and is reflected by its popularity with walkers, dogs and cyclists. Next steps for Lazo include maintain the restoration site but also formalizing trails through the WMA.

- $10,647 at the Cowichan River Estuary Conservation Area to aid in restoring lands previously farmed back to a functioning estuary while revitalizing food systems to the community and Cowichan Tribes. Quw'utsun / Xwulqw'selu Sta'lo' (Cowichan / Koksilah) River Estuary restoration started by constructing a nursery spanning nearly 2ha is size that will provide the vegetation community to be restore the estuary.
- $10,521 invested in Baynes Sound Conservation Areas that include Fanny Bay, Mud Bay, Coal Creek and Millard Creek conservation areas. Focusing on removal of invasive species, a contractor was used to treat several sites and species posing high threat to the ecosystems and habitat found within each unique site. Engagement with K'omoks First Nations with Cultural Heritage Investigation Permit (CHIP) followed by Preliminary Field Reconnaissance (PFR) to help guide best practices in sites of high archaeological potential within K'omoks First Nations Traditional Territory. Invasive plant treatments focused on Meadow Knapweed encroaching on salt marsh meadows and English Ivy causing regular removals of mature trees within a riparian/saltmarsh habitat. Over 400m² of ivy was hand pulled and removed while over 150m² of meadow knapweed was cut and removed.

Conservation Outcomes:

- Growing partnerships with First Nations, Local Governments, Stewardship Groups, and Local Fish and Game Clubs through shared and invested interest.
- Invasive species control measures taken on approximately 30 property complexes with over 21ha of invasive plants surveyed and 3.8ha of invasive plants treated by hand, mechanical and chemical means.
- 7 volunteer events and public tours in both the Cowichan and Englishmen River Estuaries with focus on restoration projects, nursery, planting and tours held as part of the of Brant Wildlife festival totaling 240 people.
- Compliance with multi-enforcement agencies over incident involving 4x4 vehicles off-roading through the NRE and several restoration sites. 2x vehicles were left stuck overnight with special salvage operation made for recovery. A site investigation and report on all damages was produced to the COS and submitted to Crown for consideration of prosecution.

Photographs

Cowichan River Estuary plant nursery with volunteer planting event

Nanaimo River Estuary 4x4 vehicle incident with member of Cowichan Tribes and COS during investigation

Nanaimo River Estuary 4x4 vehicle incident with member of Cowichan Tribes and COS during investigation

PQB WMA Englishman River Estuary and ongoing homeless encampments

Baynes Sound and the Millard Creek Conservation Area invasive English Ivy inundating forested habitat

South Coast Region

Region: South Coast

Ecological Significance of the Region:

Most of the Lower Mainland region conservation projects focus on the Fraser River and its tributaries. The Fraser River, one of the largest rivers in the world, flows for the Rocky Mountains south and west to the Fraser-Puget lowland and into the Pacific Ocean through the Strait of Georgia. The Fraser River delta is highly productive from an agricultural perspective due to the sand and silt that is carried down the river and deposited in the Strait of Georgia. As a result, this area has been heavily altered due to human development and is the socio-economic centre of the province.

The Fraser River delta supports an incredible level of diversity for fish and wildlife. The Fraser River is the world's largest salmon-producing river, and the estuaries provide critical resting areas for juvenile salmon migrating from fresh to saltwater. This area also provides important year-round habitat for many bird species and is a vital link in the Pacific Flyway, which supports over 1.5 million birds from three continents and 20 countries. The Boundary Bay, Sturgeon Bank, Roberts Bank, and South Arm Marshes Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) have been designated as Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network sites. The Fraser River estuary supports the largest wintering shorebird and waterfowl populations in Canada. Also, the area provides habitat for significant numbers of raptors and marine mammals.

The South Coast Region contains 23 Conservation Land complexes, administered regionally, including several properties owned by the Nature Trust of British Columbia (NTBC).

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

In 2024-2025 $99,444 was invested in 17 conservation land complexes in the South Coast region, to assist regional staff and partners in achieving management objectives. Significant investments were made to eradicate invasive species, maintain infrastructure and public access, remove rubbish, and identify ecological restoration opportunities from these conservation lands.

In October 2017, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) partnered with Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC), NTBC, and the Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment and Climate Change Canada to initiate the South Coast Conservation Land Management Program (SCCLMP). The primary purpose of SCCLMP is to conserve and manage provincial conservation lands throughout the BC South Region for the

benefit of fish, wildlife, species at risk, and their habitats. This collaborative approach is modelled off the successful West Coast Conservation Land Management Program (WCCLMP) and continues to leverage resources and partnerships to apply a strategic focus to the management of Wildlife Management Areas on the South Coast. A full-time Coordinator leads the partnership, including overseeing the South Coast HCTF Conservation Lands O&M budget and expanding the capacity of the program by soliciting additional funds and promoting community stewardship throughout conservation lands. HCTF O&M funding continues to support the activities of the SCCLMP partnership program.

The work related to the Sturgeon Bank Sediment Enhancement Pilot Project continued into the 2024-2025, with sediment addition occurring in late September at Sturgeon Bank WMA. Ongoing monitoring will continue into 2025 to provide information on the success of the restoration work and allow for adaptive management to occur.

In the spring of 2023, the City of Surrey working with Semiahmoo First Nation and the City of Delta constructed the first “living dike” pilot site in the Mud Bay around of the Boundary Bay WMA. The living dike aims to expand and raise the tidal marsh platform outside the dike to support coastal flood protection for the adjacent communities, while also providing sediment for tidal marshes to remain resilient with sea-level rise. In the winter of 2023, construction of the second pilot site began within the City of Delta’s borders of the Boundary Bay WMA. Ongoing monitoring and follow-up restoration work, such as plantings will continue into 2025 to provide information on the success of the work and allow for adaptive management to occur.

Project Highlights:

$6,062 was invested in Boundary Bay WMA for property inspections, rubbish removal, invasive plant management, sign maintenance, and engagement with local stakeholders for integrated planning. Extensive rubbish was removed during shoreline clean up events with local stewardship groups. Both phases of the living dyke pilot project have been completed with ongoing monitoring and restoration work, including planting, occurring. Species inventory and invasive species removal occurred within the coastal dune ecosystem to support the development of a potential restoration project at the site.

$4,713 was invested in Camp Slough Conservation Area for property inspection, invasive species management, and rubbish removal. The former agricultural field has been replanted with native plants and invasive species have been removed during planting events with local stewardship groups. Planted areas have been maintained and kept free of invasive species.

$3,420 was invested in the Chilliwack River Conservation Area for property inspection, invasive species management and rubbish removal. Several illegal encampment sites were cleared and

planted with native species and invasive species were removed to restore the floodplain forest ecosystem.

$10,062 was invested in Lhá:lt/Harrison-Chehalis WMA for property inspection, invasive species management, and rubbish removal. The SCCLMP WLRS staff have worked with Sts'ailes First Nation to make significant progress on drafting a new WMA management plan.

$18,620 was invested in the Pitt-Addington Marsh WMA to maintain and clear water control structures, assess land management needs and ecological values, maintain informational signage, and maintenance of public access trails. Invasive species were removed through manual cutting and smothering followed by planting and staking of native species at Addington Point. SCCLMP staff have maintained the nesting beach for the red-listed Western Painted Turtle and have worked with partners to develop a beach monitoring program for the site.

Conservation Outcomes:

Restoration and enhancement of conservation lands for habitat values ensures that these lands are optimal for use by fish and wildlife that depend on them; approximately 25 hectares of conservation lands were directly restored or enhanced in 2024-2025. Informational signage, indicating property ownership and management partners, serves to demarcate boundaries and to provide the public with the means to contact a land manager to discuss management concerns and issues. Maintenance of access points, facilities and infrastructure on conservation lands ensures that public access will be safe.

Significant progress was made on the Lhá:lt/Harrison-Chehalis WMA management plan as SCCLMP and WLRS staff re-engaged with Sts'ailes First Nation to continue work on the document. The draft document has reviewed by Sts'ailes and their feedback has been incorporated, with the intention to have the Indigenous voice in the plan. Meetings were held with Cheam First Nation to discuss changing the designation of Cheam Lake Wetland TAC and the development of a management plan for the property. The Nation has expressed support for the designation change and is interested in co-management of the property.

Photographs

1. Lhá:lt/Harrison-Chehalis Wildlife Management Area – removal of invasive Scotch Broom.

2. Pitt-Addington Marsh Wildlife Management Area – smothering cut blackberry patches with benthic mats.

3. Chilliwack River – Native planting in areas disturbed by illegal encampments.

4. Boundary Bay Wildlife Management Area – conducting shoreline cleanup.

5. Pitt-Addington Marshes Wildlife Management Area – Clearing vegetation from the Western Painted Turtle nesting beach

Thompson Okanagan Region

Region: Thompson Okanagan

Ecological Significance of the Region:

The Thompson Okanagan Region has a dry, continental climate, as it lies in the rain shadow of the Coast and Cascade Mountain ranges. Vegetation varies from Engelmann spruce and lodgepole pine at subalpine elevations, Douglas-fir at lower elevations, and ponderosa pine, bunchgrass, and sagebrush at the valley bottom. These vegetation zones are in relatively close proximity to one another, resulting in extremely rich biological diversity in a small area.

The Thompson and Nicola landscapes in the north and east of the region vary from the Cariboo Mountains in Wells Gray Provincial Park to rolling grasslands and the river valleys of the North and South Thompson Rivers that merge in Kamloops and reach the Fraser River in Lytton. The region also extends beyond into Lillooet and the surrounding Coast Mountains through the Bridge River valley which flows from snowfields in the Coastal Mountains and joins the Fraser River near Lillooet. The landscape has more than 300 lakes, sage-dressed hills, rolling grasslands, looming mountains and alpine valleys. The grassland areas north of Kamloops Lake are recognized for their importance to wildlife, primarily California bighorn sheep, mule deer and many species at risk.

The Okanagan portion of the region, especially in the south, contains large numbers of unique flora and fauna, as it is the northern extension of the Columbia Plateau. Analysis has shown that the South Okanagan is both the top biotic rarity hotspot and the top species richness hotspot in British Columbia. It has more federally listed species at risk than any other area of the province, and more provincially Red-listed and Blue-listed species than elsewhere. Furthermore, with some 303 species of birds recorded from the Okanagan, and similar richness in other animals and plants, many species are found here and nowhere else in Canada (Scudder 2006).

Human development over the past century has resulted in dramatic reductions in native habitat. Grasslands, and the antelope-brush ecosystem in particular, have been greatly impacted. Over the past 15 years, the antelope-brush ecosystem has been reduced in area by over 65%, with current loss estimated at 2% per year. Channelization of the Okanagan River for flood control in the 1950s reduced its associated marshland by 85 to 90%, seriously impacting riparian habitat viability in the region. With population expected to double in the next 25 years, habitat in the Okanagan will become increasingly endangered over time.

The Nature Trust of British Columbia (NTBC) has been working in the Okanagan area since 1971. To date, 25 properties have been secured with the help of many funding partners, totalling over 5,247 hectares. These conservation holdings are particularly contiguous, providing habitat corridors on a landscape scale.

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

A total of $101,063 Conservation Lands O&M money was invested in the Thompson Okanagan Region in 2024-25. This funding was leveraged with an additional $737,303 in partner funding and in-kind support. Together these funds greatly assisted the conservation partners in addressing key land management objectives on Conservation Lands in the region.

Project Highlights:

- **$75,000** (through Together for Wildlife funding allocation) was invested at nʔaʕx̌ʷt/Ginty's Pond Lease Wetland Restoration Phase II, with an additional **$171,884** partner contributions (funds and in-kind support). This project was completed in partnership with Southern Interior Land Trust, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, BC Wildlife Federation and many community partners.
- **$116,111.83** (including funding from Stewardship-LUP base) was invested to complete the well decommissioning, house and garage demolition at the Skull Mountain Complex. This project represents a significant investment from multiple partners to mitigate and remove long-standing hazards at this property. The final stages of this project included purchase of native seed to begin to restore disturbed areas around the old house site.
- **$80,000** in partner funding was invested at nsək'ɬniw't/McTaggart-Cowan WMA to support collaborative management of the site with Penticton Indian Band through funding the Indigenous Guardian Program at this site.
- **$30,000** in partner funding was invested at Swan Lake WMA for Collaborative Management Actions/Planning. Actions completed included completing invasive species inventory and management plan, species at risk inventory and management plan, water quality baseline sampling, and aquatic soil baseline sampling.
- **$2732.75** was invested at Menzies Lake ACQ to conduct a building inspection and hazardous materials assessment.
- **$6000** of HCTF O&M funding was invested at White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch, with an additional $159,000 of outside funding. Outside funding was used to replace 3 km of boundary fence and chemically treat priority invasive plants over an estimated 120 hectares of shrub-steppe grassland containing critical habitat for multiple federally listed species at risk.
- **$4125** was invested at Vaseux Lake Schneider along with an additional $65,000 of outside funding. The additional funding was used to improve and restore antelope-brush habitat by removing conifers. Crews implemented pre-existing prescription plans to

complete one 10 ha treatment unit. NTBC crews spent a number of days inventory invasive plants with the conservation complex.

Conservation Outcomes:

Each of the conservation lands in the Thompson Okanagan Region has distinct management needs and objectives that reflect the unique landscape and ecology of the area. Numerous conservation outcomes were achieved on these lands in 2024-25 using Conservation Lands O&M funding. Partner contributions to conservation land management continued to be high in 2024-25, which speaks to the importance of these lands in a regional context.

Operations and maintenance activities to address public safety and liability concerns was a significant focus for 2024-25, especially managing derelict buildings on conservation lands. In total, $43,818.58 of the HCTF O&M funding for the Thompson Okanagan Region, plus an additional $75,026 in partnership funding, was invested in addressing historical infrastructure concerns at two properties (Skull Mountain ACQ and Menzies Lake ACQ).

On-the-ground restoration and enhancement works were another significant focus for 2024-25. A highlight of the year was the completion of Phase II of the 'nʔaʕx̌ʷt/Ginty's Pond Wetland Restoration Project: this included deepening 1.0 ha of cattail dominated wetland to open water conditions as well as the creation of 0.7 ha of new shrub-thicket riparian habitat to benefit species at risk. Furthermore, 0.63 ha of cattail regrowth in the Phase 1 restored area was mowed back (to setback). Over 115 large pieces of Cottonwood, Douglas-fir and Larch (including stumps) were added to the wetland for long-term habitat structure enhancement and about 2,500 native trees and shrubs (2,200 rooted and 300 live stakes) were planted in the newly constructed riparian area. This work could not have been done without our partners including Lower Similkameen Indian Band, who contributed to project planning, excavation, habitat enhancement and cultural monitoring. Another significant project this year was the removal of the Carrier House from Skull Mountain. This completed work to reduce public safety risks and liabilities associated with the site, which had seen unauthorized occupation in the past.

The Nature Trust of BC land management staff worked with various partners to maximize Conservation Lands O&M funding at eligible conservation sites. On-the-ground, restoration and enhancement work continued to play a key role in NTBC's land management efforts in 2024-25. NTBC was able to secure a large amount of partner funding for the 2024-25 season seeing well over $300,000 of additional funding being invested across the region. Highlights of this work include replacement of approximately 3 km (6 total) of boundary fencing at each the Ok Falls and White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch complexes. A large investment was made to remove confers to help improve antelope-brush habitat at Vaseux Lake Schneider. Invasive plant management

continues to play an important role in the conservation land management for 2024-25. NTBC was able to secure outside funding to help treat over 120 hectares of shrub steppe grassland at White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranch. 2024-25 saw NTBC staff continue to work with School District 53 and 67 along with other partners to help restore approximately 1.5 ha of antelope-brush habitat. Staff with help from grade 6 and 7 students from two school districts were able to plant approximately 450 individual antelope-brush seedlings. HCTF and partner contributions were leveraged to create a successful space for students to be involved in place-based learning while actively contributing to Antelope-brush restoration. Each year the program solidifies and becomes more sophisticated in its restoration outcomes.

Photographs

Wetland Restoration at nʔaʕx̌ʷt/Ginty's Pond Lease looking at Phase II with Phase I in the background, September 2024.

Mowing cattail at the Phase I restoration area of nʔaʕx̌ʷt/Ginty's Pond Lease, October 2024.

Volunteer planters at the Phase II restoration area of nʔaʕx̌ʷt/Ginty's Pond Lease, November 2024.

House demolition at Skull Mountain, March 14, 2025.

Skull Mountain after the house demolition, March 14, 2025.

Conifer Thinning at Vaseux Lake – Schneider (LEA 8)

Bat Guano Monitoring at Skaha Lake Eastside (LEA)

Antelope-brush planting event with SD 67 School kids at Vaseux Lake Emery

Kootenay Boundary Region

Region: Kootenay Boundary

Ecological Significance of the Region:

The Kootenay region is world renowned for its scenic beauty and biological diversity. Forest, shrub, grassland and wetland ecosystems provide habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species, including many species at risk.

From the heights of the Rocky Mountain Range, there are vantage points where you can overlook the entire expanse of the East Kootenay region of southeastern British Columbia. The western horizon, viewed from these vantage points, is profiled by the Purcell Mountain range which is separated from the Rocky Mountains by an enormous valley known as the Rocky Mountain Trench. Two great rivers begin here; the Kootenay flowing south through dry grasslands, with signs of historic wildfires, and the Columbia flowing north through a series of long valley-bottom lakes and lush wetlands. This great river eventually swings south at Boat Encampment and continues south between the Monashee and Selkirk Mountain ranges in the West Kootenay and into the state of Washington at Waneta. Another important river, the Elk, begins its journey in the eastern Rocky Mountains and winds its way along towering cottonwoods to join the Kootenay immediately south of the small community of Baynes Lake.

The geographic diversity of the Kootenay landscape along with wide variations in climate has created conditions and habitats that support rare plant life, productive aquatic systems, and important populations of elk, deer, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, mountain goat and moose. Such abundant wildlife naturally attracts predators and consequently, wide-ranging carnivores are still common in the Kootenay's. Additionally, over 270 species of birds make use of the region, many on their migratory travels along the Pacific flyway.

From a rare species perspective, the grasslands, dry forests, montane forests, scattered wetlands, and cottonwood habitats in the Kootenay region provide unique habitats that support rare species such as the American badger, Swainson's hawk, Northern leopard frog and Lewis' woodpecker.

However, the low elevation valleys of the Kootenays, which provide some of the most important habitat for a wide spectrum of wildlife, continue to be developed and attract increased levels of human settlement. In turn, this creates additional pressures on the landscape and impacts wildlife habitat and biodiversity values. Fortunately, the Ministry of Water Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) along with The Nature Trust of British Columbia (NTBC) have worked for decades to conserve ecologically significant habitats within the region. As a result, dozens of properties have been secured and, when combined with properties

conserved by other land trusts and agencies, have resulted in a significant area of the Kootenay landscape being conserved in perpetuity.

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

In 2024-25, $111,395 of HCTF funding was invested into 22 NTBC and WLRS conservation area complexes in the Kootenay/Boundary region, to assist regional staff and partners in achieving management objectives.

The funding was used for a wide variety of operations and maintenance activities, highlights of which are outlined below.

Project Highlights:

Project highlights for the Kootenay/Boundary region during the 2024-25 year include:

- $6,500 of HCTF funding was directed to the **Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area** in the 2024-25 season. HCTF O&M contributions went towards the mowing/control of vegetation along water control dikes, management of water levels, invasive species removal, annual inspections, management of problem wildlife, and maintenance/management of water control structures.

- $11,894 of HCTF funding was invested into the **Grave Prairie (Big Ranch)** Conservation Complex in 2024-25. HCTF financial contributions supported the large 5-year Big Ranch Ecosystem Enhancement Project (BREEP), which is primarily funded through a Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) Ecosystem Enhancement Program grant, as the final year of the project was implemented. The project proponents are the Sparwood and District Fish and Wildlife Association (SDFWA), who worked closely with NTBC and WLRS for project guidance, approval and professional support. Project highlights from 2024-25 BREEP were planting of large spruce stock along roadsides to provide a visual buffer, invasive plant treatments, and monitoring of results from past projects. The overall contribution from the BREEP project was approximately $48,276 in 2024-25. Additional work on the complex in 2024-25 included forest thinning, maintaining exclosure fencing around aspen stands, boundary fence repair, and identification of future work priorities.

- $15,585 of HCTF funding was invested into the **Bummers Flats** Conservation Complex in 2024-25. Work continued on a multi-year restoration project initiated in Year 2, in a partnership between ʔaq̓am, WLRS, NTBC, and Ducks Unlimited Canada, supported by additional funding from Columbia Basin Trust, Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program and

Teck Resources (now Elk Valley Resources). Activities undertaken so far include project planning, and on-site collection of drone imagery, wildlife camera imagery, water depth logger data, elevation data, mapping of ditches and wetland basin rims, a hydrologic/hydraulic/geomorphic study, and preliminary wetland designs completed by consultants during the 2024 field season. A tender process in early 2025 selected an engineering/environmental consultant to design the wetland project, supervise construction and assist with environmental mitigation/management and revegetation post-work. The overall contribution by the project in 2024-25 was approximately $160,000. Within the Cherry Creek (western) portion of the complex, 120 native tree and shrub species were planted surrounding previously restored wetland basins, by NTBC staff working with the Wildsight Youth Climate Corps. Additionally, NTBC and WLRS lands in the complex were impacted by the St. Mary's wildfire in 2023. Recovery efforts undertaken in 2024-2025 included application of seed to fire guards, roadsides, and new fencelines, hazardous tree removal, and assessment and planning, including preparation of a prescription by a Registered Professional Forester, for potential tree harvest, to mitigate the risks and barriers to wildlife passage as decay progresses among the burnt, dead trees. Finally, mechanical and chemical invasive plant treatments were implemented on priority species, and an inventory was undertaken on the Purple loosestrife infestation, to inform ongoing management.

- $7,247 was invested into the **Elizabeth Lake** Conservation Area in 2024-25. HCTF funding continued to support a large riparian restoration project, led by the Rocky Mountain Naturalists and Keefer Ecological Services, in partnership with the Province. This project has a focus on planting riparian vegetation around Elizabeth Lake, to enhance structure and stabilize the shoreline. Wildlife habitat enhancement continued to take place in 2024 which included tree plantings, upkeep of nesting boxes, and placement and anchoring of logs for turtles and waterfowl. Additionally, HCTF funding contributed towards invasive plant treatments and continued assessments of infrastructure removal on the property. As this property is in the city limits of Cranbrook, Elizabeth Lake presents a great opportunity for education and outreach. An example of this is the annual Turtle Day, in which the Rocky Mountain Naturalists and the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program invite the public, including the local schools, to learn about turtle conservation.

- $13,465 of HCTF funding was invested into the **Columbia Lake Westside** Conservation Complex in 2024-25. Ten wildlife tree recruits were modified and inoculated with native heartrot fungi by a contractor. Monitoring at the site of the 2021 wetland restoration continued, through collection of drone imagery and annual vegetation monitoring plots. In partnership with ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation and BC Wildlife Federation, hydrological

investigation was conducted to better understand project impacts and consider the potential for a second phase of restoration in the surrounding area. The cattle exclosure fencing around this site was a priority for maintenance work, as well as areas of priority boundary fencing. Invasive plant treatments were conducted in partnership with the East Kootenay Invasive Species Council. Contractor support was enlisted to continue work on the management plan for the complex, bringing it nearer to anticipated completion in the upcoming cycle.

Conservation Outcomes:

The 2024-25 season brought the continuation and completion of many on-the-ground operation and maintenance activities on Kootenay region conservation lands. These activities included, but were not limited to: planting and seeding to restore native species, repair and replacement of range fencing, development of prescriptions/plans, as well as habitat restoration, monitoring, and inventory activities.

Approximately 35km of fenceline was assessed/repaired/replaced by either NTBC conservation field staff or a contractor to reduce trespass of livestock and unauthorized motor vehicle use on sensitive conservation area in 2024-25. Conservation complex boundary signage and guidance signage was installed in key locations throughout the region to inform the public of land ownership and protect the important conservation values unique to each property.

NTBC and WLRS staff continue to apply for funding to supplement HCTF O&M funding on conservation lands in the Kootenay Region. 2024-25 was a very busy season, as the region continued on with large multi-year projects, inclusive of multiple partners (Wycliffe, Bummers Flats, Elizabeth Lake, and Grave Prairie). Additional to these ongoing projects, the Kootenay region supported the Fernie Rod and Gun Club, in partnership with Yaq̓it ʔa·knuqƛi‘it First Nation, in project planning and seeking funding to begin a new, multi-year enhancement project at Wigwam Flats.

Mechanical and chemical invasive plant treatments were undertaken on many complexes (approximately 21.5 ha), intended to help restore compromised ecosystems to native vegetative conditions. NTBC and WLRS continue to trial and assess innovative approaches to invasive plant management in region, including projects such as the Bummers Flats Pollinator Project, Wasa Slough Pollinator Project, and the solarisation/conveyor belting trials at Cherry Creek and Wasa.

Funding also supported future conservation through the undertaking of important planning activities, including condition assessments, infrastructure inventory, and invasive plant

inventories. Results will assist in adapting work plans over the 3-year HCTF cycle on Kootenay/Boundary conservation areas, and ensuring management activities are meaningful and effective.

A partnership with the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) continued in 2024-25, with a focus on pursuing restoration of Waldie Island, with particular attention to invasive plant treatment and bank stabilization through revegetation with native plants. ONA staff have taken the lead on project planning, and we are working together to gain a true sense of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge and First Nations significance of the site before finalizing any restoration plans. This has been a valuable partnership, and may very likely lead to other partnership projects on conservation lands, specifically in the West Kootenays.

Photographs

Figure 1. Planting trees and shrubs in Cherry Creek Conservation Area wetland exclosures.

Figure 2. Marking candidate trees for wildlife tree recruitment at Columbia Lake Westside Conservation Area.

Figure 3. Planting White spruce (10 gallon stock) at Big Ranch Conservation Complex.

Figure 4. Trail (visitor) counter deployment at Cherry Creek Conservation Area.

Figure 5. Installing a wildlife camera at Marsden Face Conservation Complex.

Figure 6. Observing Great blue heron and other wildlife at Waldie Island Conservation Area, from shore.

Figure 7. Camas meadow enhancement work party at Marsden Face Conservation Complex, hosted by KNPS with participation by volunteers, WLRS, and local First Nations.

Figure 8. NTBC and BC Wildlife Federation staff loading materials for construction of beaver dam analogues at Newgate/Barr 40 Conservation Area.

Figure 9. BCWF, WLRS, and NTBC staff discussing and viewing beaver dam analogue and wetland enhancement project with at Newgate/Barr 40 Conservation Area.

Figure 10. Observing wildlife tree recruitment work by arborist at Wasa Slough Conservation Area.

Figure 11. Observing BrandenBark installed to enhance bat habitat at Wasa Slough Conservation Area.

Figure 12. Wildlife camera footage showing American badger in recently restored wetland basin on a hot day at Big Ranch Conservation Complex (NTBC).

Figure 13. Hand-pulling invasive plants at Redfish Creek Conservation Complex.

Figure 14. Forest thinning treatments in progress by Ktunaxa Nation-owned Nupqu Resource Development at Big Ranch Conservation Complex.

Figure 15. Forest thinning treatments in progress by Ktunaxa Nation-owned Nupqu Resource Development at Big Ranch Conservation Complex.

Figure 16. Tree assessor inspecting extent of decay and cavities to determine hazardousness near a trail at Redfish Creek Conservation Area.

Figure 17. Assessing Wild licorice plants for signs of Silver-spotted skipper egg laying activity at Bummers Flats.

Figure 18. Evidence of egg-laying observed on Wild licorice plant.

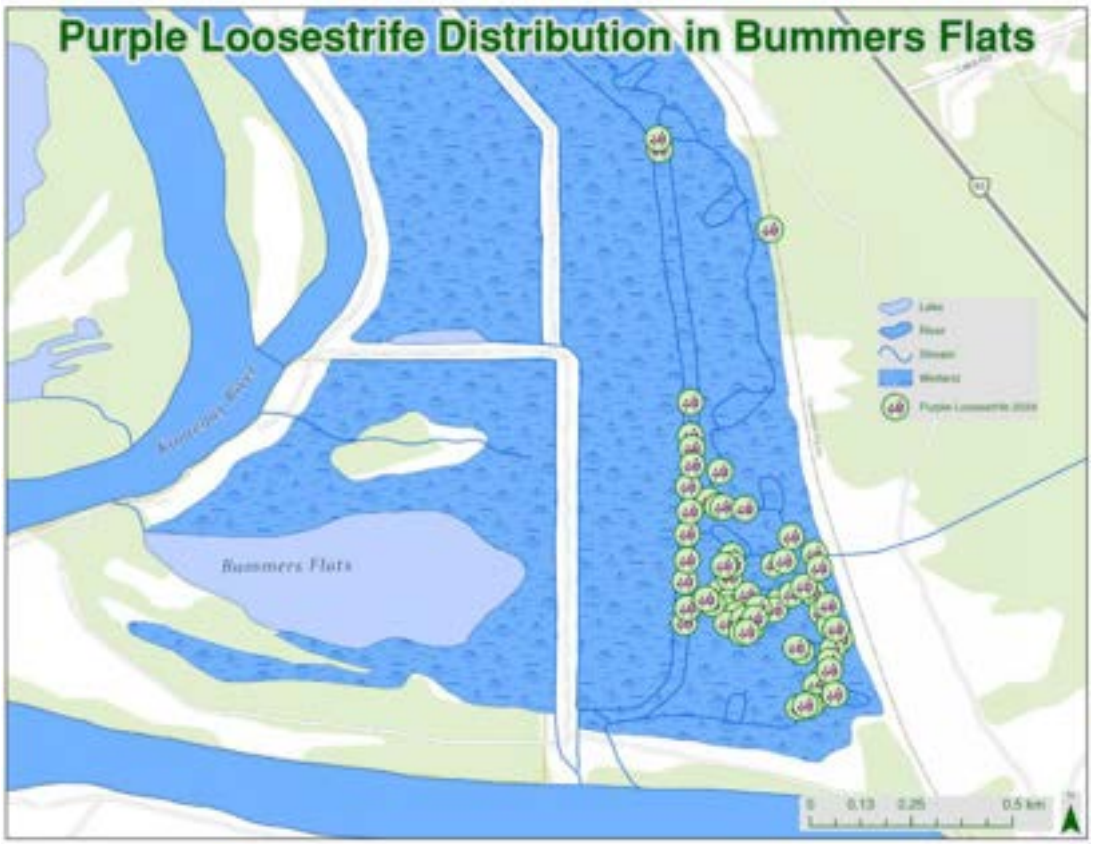


Figure 19. Map of Purple loosestrife infestation at Bummers Flats. EKISC inventoried the site in 2024.

Figure 20. Drone imagery of Bummers Flats in May 2024. A wetland restoration project has been initiated in a partnership between WLRS, NTBC, DUC, and ʔaq̓am.

Figure 21. The annual Turtle Day at Elizabeth Lake is a family-friendly event that highlights the on-going conservation efforts for the blue-listed Painted Turtles (*Chrysemys picta*).

Figure 22. Fallen logs were moved into Elizabeth Lake's edge to enhance habitat for waterfowl and turtles. These logs provide important habitat for turtles for basking, resting, and foraging.

Cariboo Region

Region: Cariboo

Ecological Significance of the Region:

The Cariboo Region is a diverse landscape, ranging from the Coastal Mountains to the vast dry grasslands of the Chilcotin Plateau, and east to the interior rainforest of the Cariboo Mountains. There are three main rivers within the region include the Fraser, Chilcotin, and Quesnel Rivers. These varied terrains and conditions result in an equally varied diversity of habitat and wildlife.

The Cariboo Region contains 7 Conservation Land complexes, administered regionally, including several properties owned by The Nature Trust of British Columbia (NTBC).

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

In 2024-25, $26,859 was allocated to the 7 conservation land properties in the Cariboo Region, to assist regional staff and partners in achieving management objectives, including assessments, maintenance for safety and ecological integrity, and wildlife surveys.

Project Highlights:

$13,810 was invested in the Chilanko Marsh WMA conservation land to assess the property for safety and ecological concerns. The signs and 4.4km of perimeter fence were inspected, maintained and repaired or replaced where required. Two illegal dumping areas were cleaned up, a building roof inspection was completed, and a Management Direction Statement was written for the property. $3,400 in-kind contributed.

$8,382 was invested in the Chilcotin Lake & Marsh conservation land area to assess the property for safety and ecological concerns. 21.5km of perimeter fences were inspected, maintained and repaired where required, and a Management Direction Statement report was written. $4080 in-kind contributed.

$ 750 invested in the Dale Lake conservation land area to conduct property assessments for safety and ecological concerns, and maintenance of property information signage.

$ 792 invested in the Tautri Creek conservation land area to conduct a property assessment for safety and ecological concerns, and to maintain property information signage. The Management Direction Statement was completed. $680 in-kind was contributed.

$ 342 was invested in the Hanceville conservation land area. $6,175 of in-kind work was contributed towards working with Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG), WLRS, and DFO on the new hatchery.

$ 1,652 was invested in the Knife Creek conservation land area. 5.1km of fenceline was inspected and fences were repaired. $1,020 in-kind was contributed.

Conservation Outcomes:

The 2024-25 field season included several land management activities on Conservation Lands within the Cariboo Region.

Fence maintenance at Chilcotin Lake & Marshes, Chilanko Marsh WMA, and Knife Creek serves to protect sensitive habitat areas from inappropriate use. There is ~4.4 km of fence at Chilanko Marsh, ~21.5 km of fence at Chilcotin Lake & Marshes, and ~5.1 km at Knife Creek to maintain. Assessments of the ecological attributes and issues specific to each property form the basis for activity planning for the following field seasons.

The Hanceville property has an operational pilot fish hatchery with a proposal to build a permanent hatchery facility. This project has involved TNG, DFO, and WLRS staff.

Photographs

1. Chilanko Marsh – Fences assessed and maintained to prevent livestock access. Signs installed and maintained. Trespass dumping areas cleaned up.

2. Tautri Creek – Infrastructure and property inspected. Forest understory continues to recover, post-wildfire.

3. Dale Lake – Conservation area inspected. Signage installed at boundary and invasive plants assessed for treatment.

Skeena Region

Region: Skeena Region

Ecological Significance of the Region:

The Skeena Region covers approximately one third of the province of British Columbia. It is a highly varied landscape, characterised by mountainous terrain, interspersed with large plateaus, a multitude of lakes and several of the province's largest rivers including the Skeena, the Nass and the Stikine.

The Skeena Region includes BC's North Coast from the Coast Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. This area is rich in biological diversity and noted for the Pacific Flyway, an important migration corridor for birds. Large rivers, such as the Nass and the Skeena, flow into the Pacific Ocean, providing critical estuarine habitats. The Skeena Region's extensive wilderness areas provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Both Black and Grizzly Bears occur here, and salmon are abundant in the major rivers and tributaries.

The Skeena Region contains 8 Conservation Land complexes, administered regionally, including a number of properties owned by The Nature Trust of British Columbia, a Wildlife Management Area, and a Wildlife Habitat Management Area.

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

In 2024-25, $13,880 was allocated to 6 properties in the Skeena, to assist regional staff and partners in achieving management objectives.

Project Highlights:

$1,425 invested in the Alice Arm conservation area for review of industrial activity plans, to minimize potential for negative impacts to ecological values.

$2,100.00 invested in the Kitsumkalum Lake – Nelson River conservation area for property inspection, access and safety evaluations, installation of property signage on boundaries, and garbage removal.

$1,800.00 invested in the Lakelse Lake – Mullers Bay conservation area for property inspections, access and safety evaluation, boundary sign installation, monitoring for invasive plants, and extensive shoreline rubbish removal.

$1,570.00 invested in the Lakelse River conservation area for property inspection, maintenance of trail etiquette and boundary signs, garbage removal, and monitoring for invasive plants.

$3,500.00 invested in the Nadina River Valley – Owen Lake conservation area for property inspection, garbage removal, invasive and native plant assessments, and sign maintenance.

$2,000.00 invested in the Hubert Hill conservation area for invasive plant removal and monitoring, fence and Kiosk sign maintenance, and habitat monitoring.

$0 invested in the Todagin Wildlife Management Area in 2024/25

$0 invested in the Smith Island conservation area in 2024/25

Conservation Outcomes:

The 2024-25 field season resulted in management of a number of Conservation Lands within the Skeena Region Activities included evaluation of ecological attributes and safety concerns, which guide activity planning for ongoing land management.

Informational signage, indicating property ownership and management partners, with contact information, was posted and maintained on properties where appropriate. This serves to demarcate boundaries to protect habitat values from inappropriate public usage, and to provide the public with the means to contact a land manager to discuss management concerns and issues.

Site restoration of Hubert Hill, near Telkwa, is ongoing. Success is being achieved with removal of invasive plants and re-introduction of native species.

In 2024-2025, approximately 5 hectares of conservation land was enhanced through rubbish removal in the Skeena Region.

Photographs


Kitsumkalum Lake – Nelson River: Signs posted on conservation area boundaries. Rubbish removed.


Lakelse Lake – Mullers Bay: Extensive rubbish removed from shoreline. Signage maintained.

Lakelse River: Rubbish removed, and signage maintained on multi-use recreational trail.

HABITAT CONSERVATION TRUST FOUNDATION

NATURE TRUST BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Omineca Region

Region: Omineca

Ecological Significance of the Region:

The Omineca Region encompasses a large portion of northern British Columbia, with a diversity of landscapes ranging from the broad flat pine forests of the Central Plateau to the rugged peaks of the central Rocky Mountains. This Region includes the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies, Mount Robson (3954 m).

The Omineca Region encompasses the headwaters, or portions of the headwaters, of several provincially important rivers, including the: Frazer, Nechako, Pine, Finlay, Parsnip and Stuart. Within the drainages of these rivers lie several regionally important lakes and the province's largest reservoir, Williston Lake, which lies behind the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. The rivers and their tributaries provide spawning grounds for Chinook, Coho, and Sockeye Salmon. Arctic Grayling, White Sturgeon, Rainbow Trout, Bull Trout and Lake Trout, as well as several species of whitefish, suckers, minnows and Burbot, all live within the Omineca Regions lakes and streams. One of the highest valued recreational rainbow trout fisheries is the Stellako River, which became the Omineca Region's first Wildlife Management Area in 2013.

Regionally important wetlands, such as those on the Hominka and in the Cranberry Marsh / Starratt WMA, provide much needed rest and refueling stops for migratory birds. Populations of American White Pelicans forage on some of the region's lakes and White Swans winter on several rivers. The northern extent of Sharptailed Grouse range occurs on southwest facing meadows in the southern portion of the region and in the agricultural lands local breeding groups of Long-billed Curlews and Sandhill cranes can be found in the spring.

The largest herds of Mountain Caribou left in the province reside in the mountains on the eastern side of the region, and in the north populations of Northern Caribou still roam. Throughout the Omineca Region there are Moose, Grizzly bear, Black bear, Fisher, Marten, Lynx, Wolf, Mountain goat, and Mule deer, with local populations of Stone sheep, Elk, White-tailed deer, and Cougar where snowpacks are thinner. Rare plant associations, ecosystems and habitats are scattered across the Omineca bolstering regional biological diversity, including the northern extent of Whitebark pine and Douglas fir, and the largest population of Haller's Apple Moss in the world, as well as most known locations of Crumpled Tar Paper Lichen.

Given the highly diverse and geographically large area that the Omineca Region covers it contains relatively few Conservation Lands. Six conservation land are administered regionally, and they cover a small selection of the habitats that can be found in the region.

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

In 2024-25 $20,694.58 was allocated to 6 conservation properties in the Omineca region, to assist regional staff and partners in achieving management objectives.

Project Highlights:

$13370.00 invested in the Cranberry Marsh / Starratt WMA. Ongoing activities include maintenance of signs, community and partner engagement, management planning, trail assessment and minor repair of trail infrastructure, invasive plant management, and seasonal inspections.

A danger tree assessment was conducted around the Cranberry Marsh trail in the spring. A non-functional culvert was removed along a historical access road in the WMA that was contributing to trail flooding issues. A fish inventory was conducted by WLRS in July, with participation from the Regional Aquatic Specialist, to identify species present and investigate an observation of goldfish in the WMA.

$3,660.00 invested in the Stellako River WMA for property inspections, garbage removal from public access points, invasive species management, updated signage placement, and continued review of transmission line project construction. Non-compliance of the approved management plan for the construction of the transmission line within the WMA was identified. WLRS working with Omineca Natural Resource Officers (NROs) to address non-compliance.

$1,030.00 invested in the Joanne Lloyd property for invasive species management and seasonal inspections. Garbage removed from public access points.

$475.00 invested in the North Nechako Tyee conservation property, to conduct management and safety inspections, monitor for invasive species, and maintain informational signage.

$2,060.00 invested in the Mount Robson Ranch property to assess property condition, needs, and public usage. Perimeter signage was maintained. Wildlife cameras were monitored to assess wildlife usage at cold seep wetland.

$100.00 invested in the Natasha Boyd property for property and signage inspection. Minor brushing activities conducted around site sign to maintain good visibility from highway 16.

Conservation Outcomes:

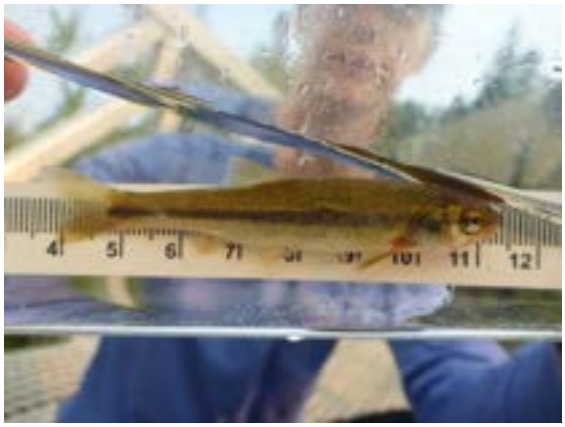
Maintenance of infrastructure, inspection and installation of signage, site inspections/visits and trail maintenance were undertaken by the NTBC and WLRS staff at Omineca administered Conservation Lands. Fisheries management continues to be a priority at the Stellako River WMA.

Staff developed options to address trail flooding concerns at WLRS Cranberry Marsh / Starratt WMA, to be addressed in 2025. WLRS conducted a fish inventory at Cranberry Marsh / Starratt WMA to identify species present and investigate public reports of goldfish.

Invasive plant management is ongoing at Cranberry Marsh / Starratt WMA, Stellako WMA, and Joanne Lloyd. Implementing invasive plant management plans was completed in conjunction with the NorthWest Invasive Plant Council (NWIPC) and Simpcw Resources Group. In 2023-24, the cumulative area surveyed at the three sites was 4 ha, with mechanical removals covering 0.5 ha.

WLRS initiated discussions with all conservation partners at Cranberry Marsh / Starratt WMA about a proposed expansion, incorporating 42 ha of adjacent provincial land and the potential addition of four parcels recently acquired by NTBC. WMA expansion proposal to move forward in 2025 with support from conservation partners. Simpcw Resources Group, in discussion with WLRS, initiated a garter snake habitat enhancement project at Cranberry Marsh / Starratt WMA that will be completed in 2025. Activities completed thus far include the placement of coarse woody debris across a 0.2 ha area for improved habitat complexity and basking opportunities near a known hibernaculum.

Photographs



1. Cranberry / Starratt Marsh WMA – Trails and habitat assessed for safety and ecological integrity. Minor trail upgrades and invasive plant species management activities were completed. Fish inventory survey of Cranberry Lake conducted.

2. Stellako River Wildlife Management Area – Boundary signs installed and maintained. Rubbish removed from access points. Transmission line construction inspected.

3. Mount Robson Ranch – Property assessed for safety and ecological concerns. Property monitored for wildlife usage. Boundary signs maintained.

4. North Nechako Tyee – Property assessed for safety and ecological concerns. Boundary signs maintained.

5. Joanne Lloyd - Property assessed for safety and ecological concerns. Boundary signs maintained. Invasive plant management conducted. Garbage removed from public access points.

6. Natasha Boyd – Property assessed for safety and ecological concerns. Boundary signs maintained. Vegetation growing in front of conservation land sign removed.

HABITAT CONSERVATION TRUST FOUNDATION

NATURE TRUST BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Northeast Region

Region: Northeast

Ecological Significance of the Region:

The Northeast Region of British Columbia is located between the Rocky Mountain foothills and the Alberta Plains.

This region consists of the Peace River and Liard River drainages of the Arctic watershed, featuring plateaus, plains, prairies, and lowlands lying east of the Rocky Mountains. Areas at higher altitudes are poorly drained, resulting in extensive muskeg areas. The region is characterised by boreal forest with critical wetlands and lakes interspersed throughout.

Since the 1950's, the Northern Region has experienced rapid development of oil and natural gas resources, resulting in increased fragmentation of this landscape. A number of Class 1 wetlands provide critical habitat for numerous waterfowl.

Summary Statement of Regional Investment:

In 2024-25 $40,142.00 was spent on 6 project areas in the Northeast, to assist regional conservation partners in achieving management objectives.

Project Highlights:

$9,010.00 invested in the Boundary Lake conservation area for property assessment, maintenance and inspection of water control structures, review of industrial activity plans and activities, and management of invasive plants.

$3,188.00 invested in the Comstock Marsh conservation area for property assessment, maintenance and inspection of water control structures, and invasive plant management. Boundary signs were installed and maintained, and rubbish was removed from public access points.

$5,038.00 invested in the Dunlevy Creek conservation area. The property was assessed for safety and ecological issues. Signage was installed and maintained on site. Conifer seedling ingrowth was removed on 20 hectares of former hayfield, to maintain ungulate foraging habitat. A trespass vehicle access and camping area was deactivated.

$2,688.00 invested in the Fort St. John Potholes conservation area for property assessments, maintenance and inspection of water control structures and property boundary signage.

$15,555 invested in the McQueen Slough conservation area. The property was monitored for site security, safety and ecological issues. Water control structures were managed and maintained for optimal water levels. Invasive plants were monitored and treated as needed. The driveway was graded for safe public access, and fencing installed to prevent vehicle use beyond the parking area. Public had

been driving though the dilapidated fence and missing gate, not only degrading the sensitive habitat, but also causing damage to things like birdhouses (2 were knocked over by vehicles). Doggie bags and a dispenser for dog waste as well as garbage/recycling bins were placed on site to reduce the regular garbage dumped in the parking area. Regular pickup of the garbage and recycling will be a partnership between WLRS, Timberline Trail and Nature Club, and the Peace River Regional District. A picnic bench was also purchased to allow for increased accessibility (rest site) to support regular users that have requested improved accessibility (seniors and the clients of the Dawson Creek Society for Community Living). An outhouse and small sign kiosk were donated by the northeast Recreation Parks and Trails team. The old outhouse was in deplorable shape and needs to be removed. A toilet stem was purchased to allow for usage of the new outhouse. Oil and gas industry plans were reviewed and activities inspected post-completion.

$4,663.00 invested in the Worth Marsh conservation area for property inspections, maintenance of property signage, maintenance and inspections of the water control structure, and review of oil and gas industry activities adjacent to the conservation area. Invasive plants were removed from the water control structure area.

Conservation Outcomes:

The 2024-25 field season included a number of important land management activities on conservation lands in the Northeast Region, working to ensure that habitat values are maintained or enhanced, and that public access to these conservation lands is safe and appropriate.

Informational signage, indicating property ownership and management partners, with contact information, was posted and maintained where appropriate and required. This serves to demarcate boundaries to protect habitat values from inappropriate usage, and to provide the public with the means to contact a land manager to discuss management concerns and issues. Property assessments, including evaluation of the ecological attributes and issues specific to each property, form the basis for activity planning for the following field seasons.

Over 20 hectares of land at the Dunlevy Creek Conservation Area was maintained for ungulate forage by clearing conifer seedlings. Between the 6 conservation lands, approximately 4 hectares had invasive plant management occur this year.

Photographs

McQueen Slough: new fencing installed to prevent vehicle access into sensitive habitat areas as well as doggie bags to help with the defecation on site (with Melissa Stewart and Inge-Jean Hansen, WLRS).

Boundary Lake: water control structures maintained, invasive plants managed, and signage maintained.

Dunlevy Creek (clockwise from top left): New signage; Conifer seedling removal to maintain ungulate forage area; deactivation of trespass vehicle access and camp area; deactivation of ATV trail near camping area (with Melissa Stewart, WLRS).