



# Newsletter

## FALL 2014

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## How to do it right!

By Mary Trainer, OSPS director

**T**he folks in Prince Edward Island know how to do it right -- build and manage first-class trails, that is.

Last summer, a friend and I cycled the 273-kilometre Confederation Trail and were mightily impressed. From our start in Tignish, at the western tip of the island, to Elmira, at the eastern tip, the trail was welcoming, well maintained, educational and a joy to experience.

On returning home to the Okanagan, I immediately wanted to share my impressions: "Look what P.E.I. has achieved – we can do the same here!"

There's no doubt Confederation Trail is highly marketable. Part of the Trans Canada Trail, it stretches across the island on an abandoned railway. After the last trains were removed in 1989, islanders seized the opportunity to create a fabulous walking/cycling trail that opened in 2000. The railway grade (no more than two per cent) winds through scenic leafy forests, along the seaside, and past fields, marshes and farms.

P.E.I. Tourism's outstanding online, print and other resources that include maps and a variety of routes, cycle-friendly B&Bs, tour companies and bike shops make it easy and fun to plan a trip. Once we'd arrived on "the gentle island" and were finally on the trail, those standards of excellence continued.

The quality of Confederation Trail's compact rolled stone surface never wavered. There were few rocks to navigate around and just the occasional sandy or wet spot. Freshly mowed, wide grassy strips attractively lined each side of the groomed trail. Maintenance crews, which we encountered several times,



routinely handle downed trees, weeds, drainage, bridge repair and other trail issues. P.E.I. employs 85 seasonal workers to keep the trail in top shape.

Making for an even better ride is the absence of motorized vehicles. We encountered only one in our 10-day ride. P.E.I.'s Trails Act prohibits such vehicles (except for snowmobiles), and signs indicate this at every entrance. This is not the case in B.C., where the provincial government allows motorized vehicles on some sections of the TCT.

On Confederation Trail, it's easy to find your way, and safely. There are hundreds of open, gated entry points off secondary highways and country roads. Kilometre markers greet cyclists every kilometre in both directions. At major intersections, signs indicate your exact location and where to call for help if needed. Where side trails veer off the main trail, signs provide clear direction.

*Continued on next page...*

## From the Editor

**W**elcome to the Fall Edition of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society Newsletter. As we approach our fiftieth year of operation as a society we are excited about what we have accomplished, are currently involved in and hope to accomplish in the future. In this newsletter, and the back-issues archived at our website ([www.okanagansimilkameen-parksociety.ca](http://www.okanagansimilkameen-parksociety.ca)), the society attempts to broadcast information regarding issues from our region, province and nation. For example check out the forty year old report on forests in our region currently highlighted on the website.

In this edition we take a look at the concept of biodiversity, one of the principles that directed our early members when they took on the issue of mountain sheep habitat in the South Okanagan. Included in this examination is an interesting report from two UBCO professors on biodiversity in the Okanagan. Even the ever industrious bee and a plea for its future free from pesticides is included.

A great report, on her bicycle trip in Prince Edward Island, has been submitted by director Mary Trainer. It paints quite a contrast to some of the trail policies that we have in B.C. Well worth the read.

*Continued on next page...*

**Please use the enclosed membership form on the back page to help us carry out our mission.**

... "How to do it right" from front page

We gave a 'thumbs-up' to the trail planners who thoughtfully included the many benches, picnic shelters and washrooms that dot the route. Frequently we'd stop to read the interpretive panels (in French and English) positioned just off the trail with information on local history, flora and fauna.

P.E.I. has done a remarkable job of integrating railway history into the trail. For example, the restored train station at Kensington (a national historic site), is a natural stop for cyclists attracted by the architecture, arts and crafts shops, and patio restaurants.

Over succulent P.E.I. lobster dinners or feeds of just-out-of-the-ground spuds, we took stock of local economic benefits generated by trail visitors. In our case, there were 10 nights at B&Bs; food purchased at restaurants, grocery stores and bakeries; bike and gear rentals; and shuttle services to the trail start and back.

The positive economic impact of Confederation Trail was highlighted in a study commissioned by the Atlantic Canada Trails Association. It showed that from June to September 2012, 20,028 people used the trail. Cyclists made up 63 per cent of users, pedestrians 37 per cent. Trail-related spend-

ing totalled \$2.6 million, and \$1.5 million of value added to P.E.I.'s economy, including \$1 million worth of revenue and dozens of jobs. The provincial government knows it's onto a good thing, and will open a new 47-kilometre section next year.

The same study showed that more than half of Confederation Trail users were non-residents – and nearly 70 per cent of those visitors had planned to use the trail before they arrived. Interesting facts. Here in southwestern B.C., can we honestly invite the world and provide visitors with a great TCT experience? Many dedicated volunteers have worked hard – and continue with passion -- to achieve just that. The TCT can be the showpiece of our nation that connects Canadians.

If P.E.I. has set the bar on how to create and manage an abandoned railway, what can B.C. learn from their achievement? Is there the will to incorporate similar standards of excellence here? Imagine the exciting potential economic and recreational benefits generated by an enhanced TCT and the new Trail of the Okanagans (starting in 2015), both supported by the OSPS.

In the meantime, grab your helmet or walking shoes. The Confederation Trail beckons. Go see how they do it right.

EDITOR continued from front page

Also included for your interest is an article about a new national think-tank interested in the real costs of environmental disregard. Well worth knowing about. Consider the degree of relevance such a group might have. Likewise, contemplate whose role this should be; NGOs?, Different levels of governments?, Societies or who?

Of course once again we have reached back into the past to remind you of issues already reported on. This popular feature reminds us all of how time marches on and what has been accomplished as it does. Also on tap are an array of pictures and photographs that accompany the articles.

The OSPS looks to provide leadership in the area of environmental stewardship and protection in the South Okanagan Similkameen. Read about it and participate in it, Remember we are always looking for members interested in supporting the society in the work that we do. Should you have a letter about one of our features, or an article for a future issue of our newsletter, please email to [anglerem@telus.net](mailto:anglerem@telus.net). Enjoy this issue and look for more in the future.



DIRECTORS INSPECTING PROPERTY

*Members and directors of the OSPS executive are shown here as they met to inspect a piece of land that was being considered for investment as a reserve for an Okanagan ecosystem.*



# Some Food For Thought: Preston Manning, Paul Martin and Mike Harcourt among advisers of new group on economy, environment

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2014

*Bruce Cheadle, The Canadian Press*

**O**TTAWA - Preston Manning, Paul Martin and Jean Charest walk into a bar with 10 economists.

No, it's not a joke, but the punchline is a new, fully private commission that hopes to engineer a fundamental change in Canada's fiscal policies to help the environment — and the economy.

Canada's Ecofiscal Commission launches today advocating a single, overriding principle: To start putting a price on pollution and stop taxing income, employment, profits and other things we actually want more of in our economy.

"We should not be indifferent about how we raise revenues," says Chris Ragan, a McGill University economist who is chairman of the \$1 million-a-year commission. "They're not all the same."

He believes the notion is no less ambitious and controversial than public health care, or the Canada Pension Plan, or continental free trade, policies that have become national orthodoxy.

"We're here to say, 'Hey, not only is this doable, it's smart,'" Ragan, who has served as an adviser to the governor of the Bank of Canada at Finance Canada, said in an interview.

"I actually think this is the next great policy opportunity."

While the message may not be new, the messengers are.

The commission, funded by five family foundations and two corporate sponsors, is comprised of 10 nationally recognized economists and backed by a cross-partisan advisory board that includes everyone from Manning, Martin, Charest and former B.C.

premier Mike Harcourt to tax specialist Jack Mintz, former Alberta finance minister Jim Dinning, Suncor CEO Steve Williams and Dominic Barton, the global managing director of McKinsey and Co.

In some respects it replicates the National Round Table on the Environment and Economy, a research shop begun in 1988 by the Mulroney government but axed in the 2012 budget by the Harper government.

While the official line was that the roundtable's research was duplicated elsewhere, senior cabinet minister John Baird acknowledged the government pulled the plug because the research kept pointing to politically unwelcome carbon taxes.

"We think the independence is crucial," Ragan said of the new, privately funded group.

"The Ecofiscal Commission is independent of all governments. Period."

And while he said the commission won't shy from critiquing policies that are ineffective or counterproductive, "our goal is not to enter into a fight with anybody," said Ragan.

"Our goal is to lay out practical, sensible, good policy options. What we will not do is simply be critical."

These are serious people with a serious agenda, not likely to be derailed by predictable screams out of Ottawa about job-killing carbon taxes.

"Here's where we're hoping that who we are is as important as what it is we have to say," Ragan said.

The commission also has much broader aims than picking a fight with a Conservative government in Ottawa that's been playing off the economy against the environment since it came to office almost nine years ago.

Leona Aglukkaq, the federal environment minister, was back at it Monday in the House of Commons, batting away questions about the latest UN report on climate change by saying the Harper government is "committed to protecting the environment while keeping the economy strong."

Canadian governments of all levels raise about a third of the national GDP in revenues each year. Taxes on environment related activity amount to just one per cent of GDP.

Other comparable countries to Canada in the OECD raise up to five per cent of their revenues from environment taxes.

Ragan called the commission "national in scope but regional in details."

"What we are not doing is looking for textbook solutions and hoping they can just kind of work anywhere. We are aiming our report and aiming our analysis at the provinces and cities because that's where most of the rubber hits most of the road."

The biggest hurdle, said Ragan, is the mind set that it can't be done.

"If a bunch of pretty accomplished, policy-experienced economists, who are non-partisan and fully independent, stand up and say, 'This would be good for the economy and good for the environment,' hopefully that message is credible."



*Even the slow moving snake has a role in the ecosystem of the Okanagan Similkameen*

# UBC Biodiversity Report

BY LAEL PARROTT & CATHERINE KYLE  
October 30, 2014

*The Okanagan Valley is rich with natural capital that provides us with enormous benefits to our well-being and quality of life. Using the best estimates available, based on global studies, the monetary value of this natural capital likely exceeds \$6.7 billion/year (in 2007 dollars).*

Natural ecosystems and biodiversity provide humans with a range of provisioning, regulating, and cultural services upon which we depend for our quality of life and well-being. Examples include: food, raw materials, clean air and water, erosion protection, water flow regulation including flood mitigation, biological pest control, pollination, soil generation and retention, aesthetics and recreational opportunities. Such services are provided for free, and are typically taken for granted until they are lost and human communities begin to experience the negative impacts of those lost services (e.g., increased water treatment costs, respiratory problems due to poor air quality, reduced crop yields as native pollinator populations decrease, beach closures due to water quality advisories, etc.).

While it is difficult, and, some may argue, ethically inappropriate, to attach a monetary value to nature, humans do derive economic benefits from many ecosystem services. These economic benefits, as well as the costs of replacing ecosystem services with a technical solution, can be estimated. Over the past 20 years, extensive research has been carried out to estimate the values of ecosystem service flows provided by different ecosystem categories at global, regional and local scales. The most current estimates available suggest that the global value of ecosystem services in 2011 was \$125 trillion/yr (in 2007 dollars; for comparison, the global GDP in 2011 was \$75.2 trillion/yr in 2007 dollars) (Constanza et al., 2014). At a regional scale, understanding and mapping the value of our natural capital can provide valuable quantitative support to help assess the trade-offs inherent in different land use and development scenarios.

We have calculated a coarse estimate of the

natural capital of the Okanagan, i.e., the value of ecosystem services provided by agricultural and natural land cover types in the valley.

Using the methods described below, the total monetary value of ecosystem services provided by the present day Okanagan landscape is estimated to be \$6.7 billion annually (in 2007 international dollars) (Table 1). Note that this figure is a rough estimate, based on multiplying average monetary values for ecosystem services derived from specific categories of land cover by the total extent of this land cover type in the region. The monetary values used for each land cover type are averages based on studies carried out around the globe. While not specific to the Okanagan, these values represent the most reliable estimates possible at the moment. The total value of \$6.7 billion/year for the Okanagan likely represents a minimum rather than a maximum value because some ecosystem services (e.g., aesthetics, First Nations cultural values, value of habitats that support rare or endangered species) are not accounted for in the calculation due to the difficulty of attaching a monetary value to them. This calculation is provided for the purposes of raising awareness of the economic value of our natural capital, with the intent of stimulating discussion and interest around the value of ecosystem services provided by the Okanagan landscape.

Ongoing work by our research group at UBC Okanagan is aimed at providing regionally adjusted values, and also mapping how ecosystem service provisioning is spatially distributed across the Okanagan landscape. Such work will allow planners to identify areas where multiple benefits could be achieved through management or conservation efforts, and to assess the trade-offs of different land use types and future development scenarios.

## Methods

### *Estimating ecosystem service flow values*

We used the unit monetary values (2007\$/ha/yr) provided by Constanza et al. (2014) for flows of 22 ecosystem services from 16 land cover categories. The values provided by Constanza et al. (2014) are based on the work of de Groot et al. (2012), who compiled aggregate values of ecosystem service flows for the 10 major biomes based on a meta-analysis of over 300 case studies. We have used the values reported in Constanza et al. (2014) because they include finer land cover categories, including crops and rangelands. Our calculations are thus based on the mean monetary values of ecosystem service flows for each ecosystem category, as computed from reported case studies from around the globe. Both Constanza et al. (2014) and de Groot et al. (2012) caution that these values are most likely under-estimates of the true economic importance of ecosystem services flows provided by each land use category since most case studies did not compute monetary values for the whole range of ecosystem services provided by the particular system being analysed.

### *Calculation of land cover*

The study area includes all of the land that falls within the boundaries of the Regional Districts of the South, Central and North Okanagan in British Columbia, Canada. Land cover in the study area was grouped into 5 major classes corresponding to classes used in Constanza et al. (2014): forest, grassland, pasture, crop, water (streams and lakes) and wetlands (Figure 1) and the total area in hectares of each of these land cover classes was calculated (Table 1). This classification was done based on provincial and regional land use and land

Table 1: Land cover areas in the Okanagan and values of ecosystem service flows.

| Land cover   | Area (hectares) | Unit values (\$2007/ha/yr)* | Total value (\$2007/yr) |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Crops        | 7820            | \$5,567                     | \$43,535,610            |
| Pasture      | 15520           | \$4,166                     | \$64,654,904            |
| Water        | 64108           | \$12,512                    | \$802,121,298           |
| Wetlands     | 12219           | \$25,681                    | \$313,792,030           |
| Forest       | 1629744         | \$3,137                     | \$5,112,507,587         |
| Grasslands   | 90626           | \$4,166                     | \$377,549,249           |
| <b>Total</b> |                 |                             | <b>\$6,714,160,678</b>  |

\* Unit values are taken from Constanza et al. (2014) for each of the land cover types. The value for forests is based on the estimate provided by Constanza et al. for temperate forests and the value for wetlands is based on the estimate for swamps/floodplains. Since Constanza et al. do not provide a value for pasture, the grassland value is attributed to this land cover type. See below for detailed methods.

cover data sets as described below.

**Water** This land cover type represents the total surface area of all lakes and rivers in the study region. Water bodies that extend beyond the boundaries of the Okanagan have been clipped to include only the area present within the study region. Source data layers included the BC Freshwater Atlas – Lakes and Streams (Province of British Columbia) and the Agricultural Land Use Inventory (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2006).

**Wetlands** This represents the total surface area of all wetlands in the study region. Wetlands that extend beyond the boundaries of the Okanagan have been clipped to include only the area present within the study region. Source data layers included the BC Freshwater Atlas – Wetlands (Province of British Columbia), the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (BC Ministry of Environment) and the Agricultural Land Use Inventory for the Okanagan (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2006).

**Grasslands** Grasslands were identified using a grasslands inventory for the South Okanagan provided by the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP), the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (BC Ministry of Environment)

and the Vegetation Resource Inventory (BC Ministry of Environment, 2012). For the purposes of this classification, grasslands include all shrub-steppe and antelope brush steppe ecosystems, as well as areas classified as grassland or disturbed grassland in the sensitive ecosystems inventory, and areas classified as having >50% graminoids by the vegetation resource inventory.

**Forests** Forest cover was determined strictly from the Vegetation Resource Inventory data (BC Ministry of Environment, 2012) for the study area and includes all areas classified in the inventory as “Treed Broadleaf”, “Treed Coniferous”, or “Treed Mixed”.

**Pastures & Crops** Both of these land cover types were derived from the Agricultural Land Use Inventory for the Okanagan (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2006). Pastures include all areas designated in the inventory as forage or pasture. Crops include all planted fields, including orchards and wineries.

#### References and further reading:

Constanza, R., de Groot, R., Sutton, P., van der Ploeg, S., Anderson, S., Kubiszewski, I., Farber, S. and Turner, R.K. 2014. Changes in the global value of ecosystem services. *Global Environmental Change* 26:152-158.

de Groot, R., Brander, L., van der Ploeg, et al. 2012. Global estimates of the value of ecosystems and their services in monetary units. *Ecosystem Services* 1:50-61.

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity Initiative ([www.teebweb.org](http://www.teebweb.org)) is an international initiative that has been developed to estimate the value of ecosystem services. Their website provides a number of excellent resources and links to case studies.

#### About the authors:

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## Recycled Plastic Gifts in this gift giving season

*The following was a release from last August but is maybe relevant in this gift giving season. Why not provide students with something that they may need anyway and at the same time recycle some of the plastic that our society consumes.*

Thanks to the increase in plastics recycling, more and more everyday products such as school supplies are being made with recycled plastics. So it's now easier than ever to find the things kids need to succeed at school while also helping the environment. Here are some examples:

### BASIC SUPPLIES

School supplies made with recycled plastics help divert used plastics from landfills to become a resource for making new products. When shopping online or in-store, look for

many back-to-school necessities, such as folders, rulers and scissors made with recycled plastics.

### BACKPACKS

For another great way to help the environment, look for backpacks made with recycled plastic fabrics. To make the fabrics, used plastics are melted, stretched into fibers, and woven into durable, lightweight, water-resistant fabrics that then are used to create backpacks in a large variety of sizes, colors and styles.

### LUNCH BOXES AND SNACK BAGS

To help protect food and generate less waste, look for durable lunch boxes and snack bags made with recycled plastics. These often feature plastic foam insulation to help keep food cool, as well as airtight seals that can reduce exposure to air to keep food fresher.

### SCHOOL CLOTHES

From jackets to T-shirts to schools uniforms,

look for styles made with recycled plastic fabrics. Thanks to the versatility of plastics, recycled plastic fabrics are available in a variety of weights and textures, from fleece to poplin. These fabrics are durable, comfortable and surprisingly soft.

### TECHNOLOGY

In more and more classrooms, portable technology is used as an integral part of learning. To help protect your kids' expensive devices, look for tablet covers, laptop bags and smartphone cases made with tough recycled plastics.

### PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

The use of recycled plastics in schools doesn't end with the supplies you acquire for your kids. As the use of recycled plastics expands, schools are investing in durable playground equipment made with used plastic packaging. Depending on size, a single playground can help save tens of thousands of plastic containers from landfills.



# Biodiversity Must Be Maintained

One of the drivers for the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society is the concept of biodiversity in our environment. Biodiversity, short for biological diversity, is the term used to describe the degree of the variety of life found in a region, biome or on Earth. It also addresses all of the natural processes associated with these areas. A very strong influence is exerted by the various aspects of biodiversity on each other. We have only just started to understand the relationships between living things and their environments.

Biodiversity is important for the health of the planet. This is due to manner in which our environments are organized. The Earth's ecosystems provide an example of an interdependent system. In such systems one aspect of the system cannot change without affecting another component. The example provided by the children's program, 'Ecokids' is that "it is helpful to think of an ecosystem as a woven carpet; if you pull on a loose thread it might only affect the thread and those closest to it or it might unravel the whole carpet."

The Okanagan Similkameen is not immune to the need for biodiversity to maintain a healthy environment. While the science concerned with biodiversity is generally well

advanced, we are not yet capable of predicting all of the outcomes of that may occur with the loss of particular plant or animal species, keystone or not, within the Okanagan Similkameen system. We must consider the question, could the loss of a single plant or insect trigger changes throughout the system?

Biodiversity was a consideration for the society as early as the 1960s when it fought for the establishment of the Vaseaux Lake parklands for the purpose of retaining a viable habitat for the South Okanagan's resident mountain sheep population. Subsequent efforts, grants and donations have gone toward assisting with the purchase or lobbying for the setting aside of, additional properties in the area in order to enlarge this protected range. The O.S.P.S. recognizes that it is not just a particular species, which is placed on a list, that must be protected but the various types of flora and fauna that contribute to the species habitat that must be propagated as well.

Larger animals and birds must have safe, quiet areas for nesting, gestation and foraging. They require sustainable corridors to migrate and travel between these areas, a small protected location does little to assist wildlife that requires a range in which to live, grow and reproduce. The O.S.P.S. is committed

to raising public and institutional awareness to the importance of parks, protected areas, ecological reserves and designated private properties in the effort to ensure this occurs.

This means that local biodiversity must be maintained, safeguarded and allowed to flourish. While we can often predict the consequences to plants and/or animals immediately linked to a particular species that is chased or eliminated from a habitat, we do not always realize what it will mean to the plants and/or animals 'downstream' in the system. Eliminating or adding a variable to a system can produce grave results. Biodiversity allows for possible options to occur which can assist in making the system sustainable.

In 1992 Canada signed on to the international Convention of Biodiversity. Now, twenty two years later, we are still discussing, educating about and fighting for Biodiversity. It is critical for our planet that we continue to do so and to do this we must begin by taking care of our home region first. Join the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society to protect our wild lands and the plants and creatures that exist in them. Make the system work,



*A group of hikers set out on the historic HBC trail from a stop at Horseguard camp. Note the sign indicating some of the features that can be found in this area. The OSPS is one of the partners that provided resources (monetary and human) to the completion of the refurbishing of this trail.*

# Keeping Nature in Our Future: A Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the South Okanagan Similkameen

The South Okanagan-Similkameen region is known for its spectacular landscapes and wildlife, amazing outdoor recreation opportunities, and thriving agriculture industry. It is a biologically unique area with both high species diversity and species at risk, and is recognized as one of Canada's most endangered natural systems.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Key Finding: sensitive areas

Nearly two-thirds of the study area is classified as having high or very high conservation ranking.

### Key Findings: biodiversity hotspots

More than 20% of the study area is classified as having high or very high relative biodiversity. In other words, the region has many healthy natural areas supporting a diversity of wildlife.

The areas with the greatest proportion of very high and high relative biodiversity are Area A (Rural Osoyoos), Area B (Cawston), Area C (Rural Oliver), Area D (Okanagan Falls), and the municipalities of Osoyoos and Oliver.

The valley bottom is very important, even though it is a smaller part of the region. Nearly half of the very high and high biodiversity values occur in the valley bottom. The results also show that a significant amount of habitat in the valley has already been lost, as reflected by the high proportion of low and very low relative biodiversity found there.

Since upland areas do not have the same intensity of land conversion as the valleys, they represent an opportunity for land managers to retain biodiversity values, although protection of these lands is not comparable or interchangeable with protection of valley bottoms.

### Key Findings: land management

Approximately 13% of the study area falls within lands designated as parks, with most of this consisting of provincial parks and protected areas. Municipal, regional, and provincial parks and protected areas together protect only 22.6% of the region's very high and high biodiversity habitats.

Amount of city parkland meets traditional recreation standards but achieves a low overall allocation of land to conservation. A small percentage of land (less than 1%) is allocated to regional parks. The total park and protected areas of all agencies combined in the study area – is the second lowest percent of protected land base of the six regions studied in BC.

The comparatively small amount of land that falls within dedicated conservation lands highlights the need to manage public resource lands to protect multiple values, including biodiversity.

Indian reserves also have a high proportion of very high and high biodiversity habitats, followed by private land. This highlights the need for improved First Nations land use

planning capacity, conservation incentives, and opportunities for voluntary stewardship.

The Agricultural Land Reserve is a relatively small proportion of the entire study area, but because it is concentrated in the valley bottom and has significant high and very high biodiversity habitat values, it is important to consider biodiversity conservation opportunities within these lands.

### Key Findings: linking natural areas

At a regional scale, the Okanagan Valley represents a north-south corridor, facilitating wildlife movement between the US Columbia Basin and the grasslands of the Central Interior Plateau of BC. Human settlements and the transportation network in the South Okanagan-Similkameen represent barriers to wildlife movement. Highways 97, 3, and 5A impede east-west movement and Highway 3 and the Princeton Summerland Road potentially impact north-south movement.

The valley area contains a large proportion of the high and very high values for habitat connectivity and is also under the most pressure from human activities. Along with areas of less rugged terrain located to the east of the Okanagan Valley and throughout the northern half of the study area, the valley area offers the best potential for increased wildlife movement.



*CPAWs has distributed a good map of our area. The rural and urban systems must coexist and make the best combined environment for all inhabitants. It is all one region.*

*Flowering plants provide feed for many animals and contribute to the soil through loosening it with root action, contributing nitrogen and eventually as composted material.*





# NOTES FROM THE PAST

*All past articles were originally published in the Fall of 2007.*

## Coalition Careless with Facts

Dear Editor,

Can it be the spokesman for the Grassland Park Review Coalition is becoming bored and therefore careless with the facts? Since the project was first announced, Greg Norton has been the “Johnny One-note” of opposition to a proposed national park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen.

He claims to speak for “rancher, hunters, quad riders, snowmobile riders, fishermen, backcountry adventurers, loggers,” yet we only ever hear the one voice. And it doesn’t always ring true. In the Penticton Herald article of Nov. 15, Norton appears to confuse the National Park Network, a group working in support of the establishment of a national park, with Parks Canada.

He accuses Parks Canada of “solely concentrat[ing] on analyzing and quantifying the benefits and ignoring the socio-economic costs.” Not so. In Parks Canada’s Spring-Summer 2006 publication “A Draft Park Concept”, they list some benefits on page 13 and an equal number of challenges (no-one has problems anymore) on page 14. It doesn’t get more “balanced” than that. Parks Canada has been conducting its feasibility study with consistent neutrality. In the face of the Grassland Coalition’s shrill opposition, the National Park Network (a citizens group) was formed to provide a voice for

those of us supporting the park concept. Any “promoting the park” has come from them.

Norton’s assertion that what the Grasslands Coalition has “always tried to so is get that kind of balanced approach” also stretches the truth. As early as January 2005, he protested in print that “a national park will turn every aspect of my life upside down.” That hardly sounds like searching for a balanced approach. Instead of a single note of opposition, we should hear a range of voices and perspectives. Add yours to the composition.

KATHRYN MCCOURT, SUMMERLAND  
*Penticton Herald – Nov. 21, 2007*

## Breaking the Barriers of Water Reuse

**REUSE IS A REALITY  
AND A NECESSITY**

Water reuse is not an abstract concept; it is both a reality and a necessity. For the reason cited below, the requirements and opportunities for water reuse will continue to grow at an increasingly rapid rate.

- **Economic Factors.** In addition to the treatment technology costs, it is necessary to factor in that raw water costs are steadily increasing, and will continue to do so, reflecting the requirement for better quality water, and costs associated with meeting new regula-

tions. Also, there are the intangible benefits of creating the image is responsible stewardship.

- **Lack of commitment.** The commitment to reuse is more dependent upon consumer perception: “Drinking recycled sewage,” “Toilet to tap,” etc. In reality, the majority of the world’s population now drinks from rivers and streams that are receiving wastewater discharges. For example, the Colorado River receives 280 wastewater discharges before it becomes the source of drinking water for Los Angeles, and the Thames River receives 360 wastewater discharges before becoming the source of drinking water for London’s 7.3 million people.

PETER CARTWRIGHT  
*Canadian Water Quality Association  
Technical Consultant*

## Trail Talk from the Summerland Trans Canada Trail Society

We have some positives to report:

Three of our four bridges are completed and paid for, thanks to some of you and a generous grant from the province of BC. It was a joy to celebrate paying off the last of \$346,000 for the big bridge near the Research Station. We also have two new interpretive signs at the kiosk there.



*These two white tail deer were startled by the photographer as they foraged among scrub grasses on a hillside. Deer graze down various plant species and provide food for a host of animals from insects to wolves.*



# NOTES FROM THE PAST

*All past articles were originally published in the Fall of 2007.*

This year, we were hosts to the Trails BC (the overarching trails organization in our province) annual general meeting.

There was a good turnout of locals and from all across BC. We heard exciting historical talks, and it was a chance to compare problems and be buoyed up by the successes of other trail builders.

I also went to the annual national meeting of the Trans Canada Trail Foundation (the group that finances 10% of our projects) which was in Vancouver this year.

There was representation from almost every province including the Yukon. We found out how Quebec is ahead of us in making all of their Trans Canada Trail free of motorized traffic.

ATVs (all-terrain vehicles) and dirt bikes have been our nemesis in BC.

Our Summerland TCT Society worked with the government to try and prevent a showdown with the local ATV Club when they hosted their provincial jamboree in August. We had visions of ATVs ripping up everything we have attempted to build. A compromise solution was found, the ATVers promised to stay off our supposed non-motorized trail if they were granted an ATV reserve. So far, BC doesn't have any legislation making the TCT non-motorized. But this legislation is in the works now, and for the first time, six different provincial ministries have met to solve

the problem. We have some very dedicated advocates in government, so we are hopeful that there'll be enforceable rules by spring. The ATV clubs are also very happy that they'll have a huge reserve.

As always, donations are most welcome: \$50 will buy you a donor's plaque with one name, and \$200 will give you a larger plaque for several names. What a nice way to celebrate an occasion, friend, family member or yourself! This makes a good Christmas present! Please send your donations to Geoff Solly, 6803 Nixon St., Summerland, BC, V0H-1Z9. You'll get a charity receipt and a certificate for your donation. We are thankful to you, who are helping to make the TCT a reality!

SUBMITTED BY MARILYN HANSEN (PRES.)

*Summerland Trans Canada Trail Society*

## Survey of Environmental Law, Enforcement and Compliance in BC

### CLOSING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the last two decades, the level of environmental protection afforded by the province's law and policies has risen and fallen dramatically. Government efforts to enforce and ensure compliance with these laws have

mirrored these changes.

Since 1995, there has been a significant decline in the number of enforcement activities taken by the Conservation Officer Service; this is true even for enforcement actions that lack an immediate consequence, such as written warnings. Two possible causes for this decline are the loss of staffing resources during the same period, combined with the creation of a number of difficult to enforce "result-based" laws. It appears that the government has moved towards a potentially difficult to enforce "results-based" regulations system, without implementing an adequate check and balance system. While further research needs to be done, it seems that when easier to enforce, more prescriptive laws were dismantled, and replaced with laws which require more data and effort to enforce effectively, the government failed to ensure that a fully developed and adequately funded monitoring, compliance and enforcement program was in place.

Ministry staff have suggested that the tools necessary to track the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement efforts are being developed, but these accountability systems have yet to be adopted. Meanwhile the dramatic decline in enforcement actions should concern all British Columbians who want to see their laws upheld and the environment protected.

*West Coast Environmental Law - 2007*



*Hikers cross a bridge built on the HBC trail in the Cascades. This is just one of the ecosystems that the OSPA has invested in protecting over the past couple of decades. The biodiversity of this area is open to inspection by hikers as they follow the historic trail.*

# MEMBERSHIP FORM Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society • Box 787, Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0

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## Health Canada and the Bees

*Health Canada has 100,000 new reasons to rethink approval of controversial pesticides November 5, 2014*



**O**TTAWA – More than 110,000 people have told Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) not to register flupyradifurone, Bayer's latest bee-killing pesticide.

Over the past three weeks, Sierra Club Canada Foundation, David Suzuki Foundation and SumOfUs.org spearheaded a campaign to inform the public of the opportunity to submit formal comments to the PMRA.

"We shared the facts about flupyradifurone, and the response has been incredible," said Paul Ferris, of SumOfUs.org. "Over 110,000 Canadians sent a clear message to PMRA: Protect the bees."

The PMRA proposed approving flupyradifurone in September, initiating a mandatory comment period that ended November 3, 2014. Flupyradifurone has the same "mode of action" as bee-killing neonicotinoids: both types of pesticides attack the nervous systems of insects. In its decision, the PMRA said flupyradifurone, like neonicotinoids, is toxic to bees and could also pose a threat to birds and small mammals.

"We're calling this the new f-word," said Lisa Gue of the David Suzuki Foundation. "Clearly Canadians share our concern about allowing yet another pesticide in this class to

contaminate the environment."

The PMRA announced a review of neonicotinoid pesticides in 2013 after admitting on its website that their use as a seed treatment on corn and soybeans is unsustainable because they kill bees. Despite the review, the PMRA has continued to allow use of neonicotinoid pesticides in Canada.

"Why does the PMRA continue to approve more bee-killing poisons?" asked Mr. Bennett. "It's time for a complete review of how pesticides are regulated in Canada."

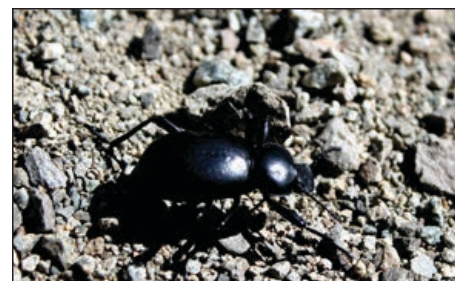
The following organizations are calling on Health Canada to reject flupyradifurone:

Sierra Club Canada Foundation  
David Suzuki Foundation  
Pollination Canada  
National Farmers Union  
SumOfUs.Org  
Conservation Council of New Brunswick  
Friends of the Earth  
Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment

For more information contact:  
Lisa Gue, David Suzuki Foundation,  
(613) 914-0747, lgue@davidsuzuki.org  
John Bennett, Sierra Club Canada Foundation,  
(613) 291-6888, jb@sierraclub.ca

## The value of natural capital in the Okanagan

**N**atural ecosystems provide humans with a range of provisioning, regulating, and cultural services upon which we depend on. Examples include food, raw materials, clean air and water, erosion protection, water flow regulation, biological pest control, pollination, and recreational opportunities. Such services are provided for free and are typically taken for granted until they are lost. Lael Parrott and Catherine Kyle from the Okanagan Institute for Biodiversity, Resilience, and Ecosystem Services (BRAES) at UBC-Kelowna, have estimated the value of ecosystem services provided by agricultural and natural land cover types in the Okanagan Valley. The total monetary value of ecosystem services provided by the present day Okanagan landscape is estimated to be about \$6.7 billion annually.



*Even the smallest creature has a role in an ecosystem. This beetle pollinates plants and provides food for larger creatures.*