

B17 - Successful Private-Public Land Conservation Partnerships

Presentation # 1 title: Land Trust Case Studies of People Protecting Places in BC

Presenters:

Sheila Harrington - The Land Trust Alliance of BC

Bill Turner - The Land Conservancy of BC

Abstract

Conserving natural areas both large and small, is important to provide healthy resilient landscapes and adaptation options for communities and the economy. There are more than 30 land trusts in BC who have worked to protect close to a million acres (450 ha) of land in partnership with local governments, private land owners, professionals, donors and volunteers in their communities. The Land Trust Alliance of BC researched and produced a report in 2008 on the Climate Change and Economic values of protecting specific ecosystems in BC. New research to be presented at this conference will provide suggested methods for using new conservation lands as both offsets for carbon sequestration, and to identify and count ecosystem services to mitigate and adapt to BC's changing climate. This presentation will present some of the key findings in these reports, plus give concrete examples of how land trusts have worked with local governments, developers, and landowners to protect our natural capital - and our communities for the long term. A selected number of 2 minute interviews with landowners who have sold, donated, or covenanted their lands will be presented, along with other resources useful for land use professionals and local governments. Land trusts also work within their communities on stewardship, education and restoration projects. The more than 30 land trusts in BC also work to permanently protect land through acquisitions and by registering conservation covenants on private lands and on regional parks. In some cases, they work with local governments to create, manage and steward greenways, trails, and to assist in identifying and mapping areas of high biodiversity. The LTABC will present case studies and resources which provide economic incentives, ecological services and cultural benefits that will be essential as we adapt to change in the 21st century.

Speaker Biography

Sheila Harrington has been Executive Director of the Land Trust Alliance of BC since its founding in 1997. She has worked in the field of environmental education for 15 years, as a publisher and editor of several books, manuals and formerly a national magazine. She was coordinator and editor with Judi Stevenson of the award winning Islands in the Salish Sea, a Community Atlas. Her formal training is in both education and design, which plays out in her interest and work in community and local mapping, green building and the sustainability of both natural and cultural heritage features.

Presentation # 2 title: Fostering Conservation Partnerships for Positive Change

Presenter:

Bryn White - South Okanagan- Similkameen Conservation Partners

Abstract

No community or professional sector alone can address and adapt to the dynamic and challenging issues of land use. Non-traditional partnerships are critical to achieve desired natural and cultural objectives, thereby ensuring the health and longevity of our wild and human communities. The South Okanagan and Similkameen Conservation Program is a unique partnership of 46 entities including federal, provincial and local governments, national, provincial and local non-government organizations, land trusts, academic institutions and public working toward shared conservation and sustainability objectives. The SOSCP fosters collaborative approaches that leverage the knowledge, capacity and resources to reconcile human settlement and environmental issues in one of the most biodiverse, sensitive and rare ecosystems in Canada, and one of the fastest growing regions in the province.

Supporting decision makers and professional sectors with the right information and expertise, the tools, processes and opportunities to address and adapt to a rapidly changing landscape is just one of the strengths of this conservation partnership. This session will outline the necessary program structures, supports, and elements to achieve a successful partnership and therefore address complex and diverse impacts to land use.

Presentation # 3 title: Partnerships for Grasslands Conservation and Stewardship in B.C.

Presenter:

Ryan Holmes - Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia

Abstract

Grasslands are a small but significant component of British Columbia's (B.C.) natural landscape. Representing less than 1% of the province's land base, they provide critical habitat for over 30% of B.C.'s species at risk and are the cornerstone of the ranching industry. Natural grasslands are considered one of Canada's most endangered ecosystems, and are even more endangered than B.C.'s 'ancient', or old growth forests. Many of B.C.'s native grasslands have been lost to urban development, intensive agriculture, and other land uses, and continue to be threatened by population growth and rampant development throughout the southern interior of the province. The Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia (GCC) is a diverse alliance of organizations and individuals with a deep commitment to B.C.'s grasslands. The GCC is working with land managers to inform decision making processes that will achieve effective grassland conservation and stewardship on public and private lands. Focussing on high priority areas in the southern interior, the GCC is developing partnerships with municipalities, Regional Districts, First Nations, provincial agencies and landowners to minimize impacts to grassland landscapes and protect their inherent values. The presentation will focus on three key initiatives: Priority Grasslands, Planning for Change and the Aberdeen Ecological Assessment. Each of these three projects demonstrates how public-private partnerships can successfully reach the common goals of maintaining the province's natural capital and ensuring that working ranches remain part of B.C. communities.

Speaker Biography

Ryan Holmes is a Land Use Planner and Spatial Analyst with eight years of experience in the public and private sectors of B.C.'s land and resource management industry. He is a member an active volunteer for the Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia, and currently resides in the sleepy northern town of Telkwa with his wife and giggly infant daughter.