

Conservation
in Action



Hosackia pinnatus
Photo credit - Lynda Stevens

Nanaimo & Area Land Trust

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

www.nalt.bc.ca

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Since 1995, NALT has been working to fulfill our mission – to support, promote and protect the natural values of land and water in our area.

We acknowledge with gratitude that NALT is located in the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw people.



TREASURER REPORT

2022

The year 2022 has again been a good one for NALT financially. We have been able to maintain our existing programs and the new stewardship ones established in 2021, while running a very small deficit, which we have funds to cover.

On the revenue side, our general donations and pre-authorized contributions were up slightly. We also had funds remaining from the bequest from Jean Thompson received in 2021 which we were able to carry forward. We also received another generous bequest, from the estate of Dawn Dunphy. Our major funders, the City of Nanaimo and the Regional District of Nanaimo, continue to provide core funding, while the contribution from the B.C. Gaming Fund again increased from the previous year. The last of the funds received from the CEBA grant were also brought into income. However, we still have not recovered fully from the restrictions due to the covid pandemic. For example, we have not resumed the Christmas merchandise sales, nor have we had a wine and cheese social, both of which were significant fundraisers in previous years.

On the expenditures side, our total expenditures were up substantially from the previous year. That was largely due to the increase in payroll and benefits with the stewardship manager and school stewardship programs being funded for the full year. Our other major expenditures, related to the operation of the office, including contract services, were well controlled.

We also have a number of funds held in what are referred to as “allocated accounts”. Some are general funds not required in 2022, such as the bequest from Dawn Dunphy and a donation of shares. They will be brought into income as needed in 2023. Others are funds allocated for a particular purpose, such as the Mount Benson Acquisition Fund, in the amount of \$127,586 and the Nanaimo River Acquisition Fund, in the amount of \$45,303. We also have \$137,137 in our Endowment account, and \$24,487 in our Covenant Management account. Those funds are held in a mix of cash assets, such as GICs, and equities. After several years of significant gains in the values of the equities, 2021 did see a loss in share values. However, they continue to pay a good level of dividends, and the cash assets are now producing a better rate of return. We consult with our investment manager, Andre Sullivan of Integral Investments, regularly, and have benefitted from his advice.

I want to thank the other long-time members of the Finance Committee: Dean Gaudry, Holly Blackburn, and Paul Chapman. I also want to welcome Jack Tieleman, who joined the committee in November. As always, our bookkeeper, Cyndi Pitvor, has done a great job in overseeing our finances and getting our monthly statements to us in a timely manner. Nanette Leather has taken over the job of maintaining our financial records, and has been a great addition to our staff.

Respectfully submitted,
Fraser Wilson, Treasurer
June 2023

A hand is shown watering a small green plant with a water droplet falling from its finger. The background is a blurred green field. The text is centered in a light green circle.

CO-CHAIR
REPORT
2022

Throughout 2022 we saw the cautions of COVID 19 begin to ease and, as we now know, the pandemic declared over. Even with the on again, off again lifting of restrictions, and the challenges of returning to full operations, NALT accomplished many things of which we can all be proud.

The contributions of early NALT champions have been recognized by the naming of trails in our parks. You can enjoy the Barbara Hourston Trail in Linley Valley, while Gail Adrienne's name joins those of Rafe Hutchinson and Gordie McNeil on Mount Benson.

One initiative that was completed in 2022 and is being applied today, is our mapping of priority sites for conservation within the City of Nanaimo. With the volunteer efforts and expertise of Amy and Scott Wilson, and the input of an ad hoc committee of the Board, we identified areas of significant habitat outside of current protections in Nanaimo. This allows us to transition from an endless game of whack-a-mole, reacting to this or that emergent potential habitat loss, to a proactive stance of planned ecosystem protection. The information in the report has been used to inform decisions such as the one that resulted in a 100-meter setback along the western side of the Cable Bay Trail. The areas identified in the report are the subject of on-going discussions with City staff and council.

The School Water Stewards grew from a pilot project to an embedded program carried forward by a tandem of Coordinators. The program connects students to their local watersheds by providing curriculum-based stewardship lessons in and outside of the classroom.

NALT continues to defend our riparian areas by informing City staff and council of the critical role that these streamside areas play as habitat corridors, in storm water retention, and erosion control. In addition to presentations to council and the Regional District of Nanaimo Board, NALT promotes stream stewardship knowledge by delivering Streamkeeper courses. Participants learn the indicators of stream health and strategies and actions to protect and restore habitat. These Streamkeepers form the core of stewardship groups on many of the streams and creeks in our area.

NALT is involved in restoration works in our parks and seeks information on the impacts of infrastructure and facilities renewal in places such as Buttertubs Marsh and Loudon Park.

The Natural Abundance Native Plant Nursery continues to provide plants for gardens and restoration projects as well as being the first point of contact with NALT for many members of the community. Member support makes this possible. Your participation with NALT equates as community support to our funders, and as concerned citizens to governing agencies. These accomplishments and actions are our accomplishments and actions. All of us.

On a personal note, long serving Co-Chair Dean Gaudry suffered a stroke in the beginning of the year. Thanks to quick and effective medical care, therapy, and the support of family and friends, Dean has enjoyed a full recovery and a swift return to active participation on the Board.

The work of 2022 carries into 2023 as we build a network of stewards, defend our watersheds, and apply the information of the priority conservation report to protect areas like the Harewood Plains.

Submitted by,
Dean Gaudry, Co-Chair & Nina Locke, Co-Chair



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

2022

From January to December 2022, we experienced a journey as we entered the period of a new normal with the transition out of a pandemic. We all began to return to the family and community connections that are essential to our individual and collective well-being. NALT's reemergence into full operations is evidenced by the various reports in this document: our stewardship activities; our school programs, the native plant nursery and the increase in volunteer activities and hours.

A few of the highlights of 2022 in which NALT played a crucial role include: the creation of a 100 meter buffer along the western side of the Cable Bay Trail; the announcement of the purchase of land by the City of Nanaimo (the City) and The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) that connects Westwood Lake to Mount Benson Regional Park across an area of the Westwood Ridges; and the transfer of Link Island from the Swift family to the Island Trust Conservancy (ITC).

Our list of active partnerships grew in 2022 including, but not limited to:

- City of Nanaimo – Parks, Recreation and Culture; Community Planning; and Development Services
- Cowichan Community Land Trust
- Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association
- Gabriola Land and Trails Trust
- Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team
- Island Trust Conservancy
- Land Trust Alliance of BC
- Lasqueti Island Land Conservancy
- Mid-Island Stewardship Caucus
- Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable
- Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC
- Province of British Columbia – Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
- Regional District of Nanaimo– Recreation and Parks; and Drinking Water and Watershed Protection
- Schools in School Districts 68 and 69
- Streamkeepers – Cat Stream; Departure Creek; Walley Creek
- The Land Conservancy of BC
- The Nature Trust of BC
- Vancouver Island University
- Wellington Action Committee
- Yellowpoint Ecological Society

There were some significant changes to staffing in 2022. Ava Breakwell moved on from her role as Administrative Assistant but not before showing the ropes to Nanette Leather who in addition to the regular duties has also taken the lead on refreshing the NALT brand and relaunching our website. The School Water Stewards Coordinator also saw changes as Sarah Spencer handed the reins to Emily Wharin.

I often say that we are building a culture of stewardship, and I have an example of one of the ways that we do this. In the spring of 2022, students from syuwén'ct Elementary School (formerly Coal Tyee Elementary) who have been enthusiastic participants in our School Water Stewards program, noticed a smell coming from a storm drain which discharges into Northfield Marsh. The students reported it to their teacher, who in turn reported it to NALT. NALT contacted the City's Environmental Enforcement Officer who discovered that a sewer line had been improperly hooked up to the storm drain system. The situation was rectified. This stewardship action came from connecting the students with their watershed.

In 2023, as we build on the momentum of 2022, we seek to add to our success stories, expand our partnerships and continue to build a culture of stewardship.

Thank you for your support,

Paul Chapman
Executive Director



VOLUNTEER
COORDINATOR
REPORT
2022

Volunteers are essential to NALT pursuing its mission – to support, promote and protect the natural values of land and water in our area.

NALT benefits from the support of those who were able to help carry out our programs and activities. Quite often our volunteers are the face of NALT in the community. The level of support from the community, as expressed by the number of volunteers and the hours donated, is an incredible asset to NALT. Not only does this support allow us to do the work of the organization, it also allows us to leverage those volunteer contributions to strengthen our case when we apply for grants. Volunteer support can be expressed in dollar amounts that allow NALT to show significant "in-kind" contributions when filling out grant applications. For instance, to meet government standards, we are often limited to calculating the value of a volunteer's time at the minimal rate of \$20/hour. Calculated at this rate, we showed volunteer support valued at \$50,880 in 2022. The real value of a volunteer's time and skills, however, is considerably higher.

In 2022, 9 volunteers donated more than 100 hours, 5 volunteers more than 200 hours and 2 volunteers more than 300 hours. Most of these are volunteers at our Natural abundance Native Plant Nursery but this year they are joined by a couple of folks whose focus is primarily outside of nursery operations. This is an incredible gift of time and effort.

Whether 200 hours or two, NALT continues to depend on the time that all of you are able and willing to give. Thanks to everyone who was able to volunteer with NALT in 2022.

Submitted by Paul Chapman, Executive Director

23%

increase in
participation



128 volunteers



2544 hours over
17 events/activities

Activities included stream restoration, wetland restoration, invasive species removal, water quality monitoring, nursery operations, turtle habitat enhancement, fundraising, board & committee meetings to name a few.

The hours continued to show an increase over 2020 & 2021 levels as we return to full operations.

Active Conservation Covenants (from North to South)

CONSERVATION COVENANTS REPORT 2022

Mount Trematon Nature Reserve, Lasqueti Island - 140.85 acres (57 hectares)
John Osland Nature Reserve, Lasqueti Island - 157 acres (63.5 hectares)
Kwell Nature Reserve, Lasqueti Island - 51.89 acres (21 hectares)
Salish View Nature Reserve, Lasqueti Island - 28.34 acres (11.47 hectares)
Wilson Covenant, private property in Errington - 1.44 acres (.584 hectares)
South Winchelsea Island - 25.69 acres (10.4 hectares)
Mount Benson Regional Park, Nanaimo - 524 acres (212 hectares)
Elder Cedar, Gabriola Island - 161.5 acres (65.36 hectares)
Coats-Millstone, Gabriola Island - .612 acres (.248 hectares)
Yellow Point Lodge, Cedar - 67.58 acres (27.35 hectares)
Link Island - 47.7 acres (19.30 hectares)
Siddoo Park, Cowichan Valley - 20.84 acres (8.4 hectares)
Rainbow Island, Quamichan Lake - 3.2 acres (1.3 hectares)

Conservation covenants are legally binding agreements held on land titles that follow the succession of owners, protecting land from development in perpetuity and maintaining integrity of the land's natural values. These are the best tools we have to protect land for future generations.

I would like to recognize the outstanding work of our Conservation Covenants Monitor – Emily Barnewall and to thank NALT's Conservation Covenants Committee members: Harriet Rueggeberg, Fraser Wilson, Dean Gaudry and Linda Brooymans. They help ensure we have strong covenants registered on title of these protected lands.

I would also like to recognize the incredible generosity of Betty Swift and family. The Swifts donated Link Island to the Island Trust Conservancy (ITC). As NALT holds a covenant on the property, both at the time of the Swifts ownership and subsequently ITC, we were involved in the transfer discussions and welcome the Gabriola Land and Trails Trust (GaLTT) as new partners to the covenant. There is an agreement in place, somewhat like a life estate, that ensures the current Swift family access and use of the island consistent with the terms of the original covenant. The private nature of the property allows NALT, ITC, GaLTT and the Swifts an opportunity to conduct research on this lightly used, well-loved island.

As of 2022 NALT co-holds 13 conservation covenants protecting over 1230 acres (498 hectares) on the east coast of Vancouver Island, including some of the most sensitive ecosystems throughout the Gulf Islands. This hasn't changed from the previous year and there are no new covenants being negotiated at this time.

NALT conducts annual monitoring visits to ensure the natural values and the conditions of these conservation covenants are upheld. With the travel restrictions lifted in 2022 we were able to monitor all of these properties. We are grateful to our conservation covenant partners, the Lasqueti Island Nature Conservancy, the Islands Trust Conservancy, the Gabriola Lands and Trails Trust, the Gabriola Historical and Museum Society, the Cowichan Community Land Trust and The Land Conservancy of BC for their dedication to stewardship.

NALT continues to seek out opportunities with conservation partners to preserve lands rich in biodiversity and natural values for future generations.



NURSERY COORDINATOR REPORT 2022

2022 was a stabilizing year for the Nursery, a near return to normality after the pandemic. Acting as a self-sustaining committee of NALT, volunteers maintained a steady presence at the nursery throughout the year, following public health guidance and Nursery protocol.

Ongoing Activities at the Nursery Site

Activities include sales to individuals and organizations, care and propagation of plants, seed collection, preservation, and packaging, and maintenance of the 2-acre site and building. In 2022 there were increased requests for plant and garden advice on the Plants portion of the NALT website. The number of customers and volunteers both increased. Volunteers acquire a wide variety of plant and landscape skills while maintaining the ongoing nursery business. We are very fortunate to have a dedicated core of volunteers!

Activities in the Community

Activities off site included limited salvages and representing native plants and seeds at a few local community events. We worked with homeowners and professionals on orders for property restoration and enhancement. The customary annual RDN order of plants and seeds for their community events April – October, which had been cut due to COVID, returned to about half the previous quantity. Many community events were cancelled in 2022, where the nursery had previously had an active, visible presence.

What's New

A memorial shelter to honour Peter & Anneke Van Kerkoerle was completed next to the commemorative garden near the nursery path. Deryck Cowling and his son David Cowling led the volunteer effort, which included generous donations of materials and professionally skilled volunteer time. Although not a Nursery project, the Nursery was glad to reimburse the NALT Board for the full cost of materials to supplement those donated, approximately \$1,000.

NALT hired assessment and mitigation of hazardous trees on the Parnassian Woods property. That work was completed in 2021. With clear and safe trails and repaired bridges, the Nursery offered limited native plant related classes and interpretive trail walks.

Significant Numbers

Balance of funds going into 2022 - \$17,485

Balance of funds going into 2023 - \$16,147

Revenue for 2022 - \$15,791

Nursery In-kind donations to community projects - \$300

Annual administration fee paid to NALT Operations - \$2,533

Value of plants and seeds inventory at year-end - \$27,661

Volunteer hours logged for 2022 - 1,718

Number of plant varieties for sale - 100

Number of seed varieties for sale - 50



Trends

For the first time in many years, the Nursery did not show an increase in annual revenue. Causes included snow leading to December closure, hence lower sale of Christmas trees and seeds; inflationary increases in costs of products including bailed soil, seed labels, etc.; fewer community events due to pandemic; decreased RDN WaterSmart seed and plant orders due to fewer community event opportunities. (Remedial efforts were planned and initiated, and 2023 revenues are positive even though the snow is still unpredictable.)

There was increased e-mail and telephone communication with potential customers, including requests for information regarding native plants, processes, and landscaping.

We continue to experience community interest in pollinators and suitable plants.

We continue to receive referrals from local nurseries that carry few or no native plants, and we continue to make referrals to other native plant nurseries when we cannot fill a request.

In 2022 the highest number of sales was for shrubs and herbaceous forbs, more than for trees and ferns. Bulb plants were in increased demand, particularly pink and white fawn lilies, chocolate lilies, camas.

Seed sales continued vigorously year-round. The nursery enhanced a mail order native seed business, begun in 2020. Native seeds are collected locally and processed by volunteers.

Plans for 2023

- Continue the current scope and size of the nursery operation.
- Continue operations under public health guidelines and NALT Nursery protocols in order to keep the nursery safely open to volunteers and the public as post COVID reentry continues.
- With trails and bridges good in working order, continue organized interpretive walks on Parnassian Woods trails. Resume educational offerings regarding plants and processes.
- The Nursery committee determined that plant prices would increase in 2023 to \$5 for small plants, \$10 for 1 gallon size pots, \$15 for 2 and 3 gallon size pot, and \$20 for 5 gallon size pots. Seed packets remain at \$4, no change.

The nursery committee thanks everyone for your support, offered in so many ways. We welcome you to visit the Nursery at the Parnassian Woods and at community events.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Fisher, Nursery Coordinator



STEWARDSHIP
MANAGER
REPORT
2022

2022 was a year where some really interesting new stewardship projects were launched at NALT. Partnerships with other environmental organizations, municipal, regional, and provincial governments were enhanced or maintained and, as usual, volunteer commitment and interest formed the backbone for so many of these ongoing and new projects. Here is a list of some of the stewardship work carried out in 2022.

Lake Monitoring at Diver and Long Lake

On February 22, a public presentation was held at the Bowen Park community center with invited speaker Dr. Eric Demers. At this presentation Dr. Demers gave a short introduction to limnology (the study of lakes and other bodies of fresh water) and provided an informal analysis of the data collected by our group the previous year. The presentation was well attended, and sparked conversations about stewardship at other lakes besides Diver and Long Lake in our area.

Volunteers continued monitoring both lakes for the 12 monitoring sessions from April to September in the second year of a three-year project.

BC Community Bat Program & Acoustic Surveys

As the regional coordinator for the BC Community Bat Program, I worked with a small team of volunteers to carry out various sorts of outreach, responded to reports and concerns submitted by the public about bat activity, and carried out bat counts at known roosts in our region. Outreach included a partnership with the Nanaimo Art Gallery during the Summer Night Market, and a presentation to classes at Nanoose Elementary about bats in their area.

NALT also launched a special partnership with Scott Wilson, a wildlife research biologist with Environment Climate Change Canada. We selected a series of locations in the region to set out acoustic recorders during the summer months. The NALT team set out and collected the recorders and Scott analyzed the recordings to give us our first round of baseline data regarding which species are found in that area. From this data we had Campbell Geospatial create a great map, which is now hosted on our website. As we collect more data, we will add to the map.

Stream stewardship: Cat Stream & Walley Creek

NALT is always interested in supporting community-based stewardship initiatives at any local creeks and streams. In 2022 both Cat Stream and Walley Creek completed habitat restoration projects. These projects included hundreds of hours of volunteer effort. We were also able to get local schools involved, which is an excellent opportunity for young people to get to know their local streams and creeks better and take part in ecological restoration. NALT is especially grateful to Adam Laforest, Ian Knipe and Michael Geselbracht of the Cat Stream Stewards, and Nina Evans and Alex King of Walley Creek Streamkeepers for their continued dedication to protecting and restoring urban streams.



photo credit - Nick Longo

Pollinator Paradise Project

While this project had been brewing since 2021, we were finally ready to launch in spring of 2022! The objective of the project is to persuade people to think of their gardens not just as a place to grow beautiful flowers or a source of food for their families, but also as habitat for our native pollinators. With just a few small changes made, many gardens can become a paradise for pollinators!

This project includes a special NALT Pollinator Project website - naltpollinatorproject.ca, that holds a toolkit for creating a pollinator paradise, as well as a link where you can add your garden to our map that tracks pollinator habitat. Adding your garden to our map and having it certified as a pollinator paradise makes you eligible for a free garden sign, created by artist and entomologist Genevieve van der Voort.

Events related to this project were a garden tour in May 2022 of two local pollinator gardens, a field day at Lotus Pinnatus Park with local pollinator conservation advocate Ted Leischner, and a seed starting workshop held in the fall with botany professor Caroline Josefsson.



poster artwork - Genevieve van der Voort

NALT also secured funding for a pollinator meadow restoration project at Linley Valley near Cottle lake. Volunteers from VIU, Departure Bay Elementary and Central Vancouver Island Multicultural society, as well as a stalwart team of NALT volunteers got almost 1600 pots of Goldenrod, Yarrow, Buttercup, Gumweed, Fireweed, and numerous other species into the soil. NALT will continue to maintain and monitor this site, as it is a bit of an experiment in terms of method for meadow restoration.

Garry Oak Ecosystems: Bowen Meadow monitoring

In Spring of 2022 NALT partnered with the City of Nanaimo Parks, Recreation and Culture department to find ways to enhance the existing Garry Oak meadow within Bowen Park. A first step was to add large boulders to prevent trucks and ATVs from riding through the meadow. Excellent signage was created using photos submitted by Lynda Stevens to educate the public about the different flowering plants that grow in the meadow. Bimonthly monitoring was done with Julie Devereux to ID all the species growing in the meadow and identify when they were blooming and when they had set seed. In addition, the city agreed to not mow the meadow so we could monitor if any later blooming species were suffering from the previous practice of mowing after the first flush of flowers had bloomed. This allowed later blooming flowers such as Menzies larkspur, Fool's Onion, Nodding Onion, Columbia Lily and Yampah to all have a chance to show us their stuff. This project will continue in future years, as we learn more about meadow enhancement and restoration practices from professional restoration ecologists.



photo credit - Lynda Stevens

Salamanders in the City Monitoring Project

Do you live on a property adjacent to moist woodland or streams and wetlands? If so, you might have salamanders on your property! This project emerged out of our successful salamander monitoring project at two local parks in partnership with public schools and the City of Nanaimo Parks, Recreation and Culture department. Biologist Elke Wind proposed that we utilize the same cover board protocol across the region on private property to find out more about salamander habitat and salamander species presence. If you are interested in participating, please send me an email at stewardship@nalt.bc.ca



photo credit - Geoff Mumford

Nanaimo's Western Painted Turtle Ambassador Program

In 2022 NALT continued our visual surveys to identify new sites where Western Painted Turtles might be present in our region, though no new sites were found. This is partly because the spring basking period was particularly cool and cloudy, which are not ideal conditions for surveying. Additionally, NALT found new nesting habitat at Diver Lake and connected with property owners at Cathers Lake interested in turtle stewardship. We were also getting observations from local residents about Buttertubs turtles, and how quickly the nests there were getting predated. In partnership with the City of Nanaimo, Nature Trust of BC and the provincial ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, NALT applied for an Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (HCTF) Enhancement grant to carry out an array of habitat enhancement and data collection activities, including volunteers as a central aspect to the project. More on this next year!



photo credit - Warren Cronan

Goals for Future Stewardship.

It is my intention to provide as many opportunities for engagement and learning to interested members of the public about local species and ecosystems as possible. Keep an eye on our events page for future talks, presentations, and workshops, and consider adding your name to our volunteers list to get involved.

Submitted by Linda Brooymans, Stewardship Manager

SCHOOL WATER STEWARDS COORDINATOR REPORT 2022

I joined NALT as the School Water Stewards Coordinator part way through 2022. My arrival in October lined up with start of our School Water Stewards lesson delivery for the 2022/2023 school year. This year of the School Water Stewards Program (SWS) was a learning experience for me and a chance to bring a fresh perspective to our existing lessons, along with the addition of a few new activities and lessons with the help of my colleagues.



One of our most notable additions to the program this year was an updated Water Quality lesson for the younger grades we work with. This lesson now features a natural filtration activity which was added to the lesson plan by Marni Brown (former NALT contract educator and board member). This hands-on activity has been very successful and has become a great way to connect students to ecosystems that provide natural filtration services such as wetlands and forests.

The other exciting addition to the SWS lesson offerings this year was a Groundwater lesson, developed by Linda Brooymans (NALT Stewardship Coordinator). This lesson allows students to gain a hands-on understanding of how groundwater works. It introduces students to the concepts of aquifers, infiltration, wells, depletion, porosity, and permeability. The lesson has been an especially great option for classes from School District 69, many of whom rely on groundwater as their source of drinking water.



This school year we also made some improvements to our existing lessons. For example, we upgraded the kits used in our Watershed Model Building lesson by using more sustainable materials. Previously this lesson involved using single-use materials including paper and tinfoil to build a watershed model. We replaced those materials with reusable sensory foam and beeswax wraps to create the topography of our watershed models.



The switch has been well received by the students, who have been having a lot of fun with the tactile experience of the sensory foam.

In the 2022/2023 school year we worked with 25 classes from 7 different elementary schools in School District 68, including Syuwéñct, Georgia Avenue, Frank Ney, Hammond Bay, Quarterway, Brechin, and Departure Bay Elementary. In School District 69 we worked with 14 classes from 6 different elementary schools including Nanoose Bay, Arrowview, Errington, CEAP (Collaborative Education Alternative Program), Bowser, and Oceanside Elementary. Amongst these classes we completed a total of 105 School Water Stewards lessons.

We also completed 13 stewardship projects amongst our participant classes. These included a variety of projects such as, invasive species removal, riparian planting, salamander monitoring, In-stream restoration/debris clearing, Western Painted Turtle surveys, bird counts, plant phenology monitoring, and storm drain painting. A few of these projects were new to the program this year, most notably the plant phenology monitoring – which involved a grade 6/7 class monitoring specific plant species two times per week to track the changes in each plant's phenology (growth – noting stages such as budding, leaf buds breaking, growing in leaf size, flower buds, flowers etc.).

Thank you to the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) for their funding of the SWS program this year, including a bussing fund which allowed us to take 8 classes from School District 69 on field trips to local water features that were not within walking distance of their schools. I would also like to thank Melissa Thomlinson from the RDN's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program, for the positive collaboration between our programs such as assisting us with the delivery of our SWS lessons and including us in the delivery of the RDN Field Trips to the Nanaimo and Englishman Watersheds.

Thanks to our contract educators Marni Brown and Harry Tassel for the help delivering lessons that required extra support, and to Linda Brooymans for training me to deliver the lessons and supporting me along the way.

Submitted by Emily Wharin, School Water Stewards Coordinator

The Nanaimo & Area Land Trust
would like to thank the following Project & Program Funders

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City of Nanaimo
Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement Society
Government of Canada
Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation
Mosaic Forest Management
Pacific Salmon Foundation
Province of British Columbia
Public Conservation Assistance Fund
Regional District of Nanaimo

and our many, very generous, members and private donors!