



President's Report September 2012

This has been an important year for NCES where we continued and expanded our popular environmental programming, we hired Hailey Ross as our coordinator, and we strengthened our governing structures.

To review:

The North Columbia Environmental Society's goals:

- Community-wide environmental sustainable living is encouraged and facilitated.
- Be a voice for the environment.
- Act to protect and enhance local ecosystems.
- Sustain a strong, respected organization.

Board of Directors, Elected September 2011:

Laura Stovel, President

Sarah Newton,** Past President

Jane McNab, Secretary

Alice Weber,**** Director of Fundraising

Laura Gallagher,* Vice-President

Jody Lownds, Treasurer

Hailey Ross,*** Director of Communications

There was a fair amount of shuffling of roles on this board as we worked hard to find the right positions for board members.

* Laura Gallagher stepped down from the board to focus on other life priorities.

** Sarah Newton became vice-president.

*** Hailey Ross was hired as our coordinator so she stepped off the board.

**** Alice Weber became Director of Memberships

The following directors were nominated to fill vacant director positions:

Erin Wilkins, initially Director of Memberships, now Fundraising, nominated in November.

Federico Osorio, Director of Communications, nominated in March.

Rowland Bell, Director of Conservation, nominated July 2012.

Members

109 members (that's double last year's sum) (two honorary, four business, one NGO, one government, 19 families, 82 individuals). A big thank you to our directors of membership, Erin Wilkins and Alice Weber, for their efforts.

Committees

Local Food Initiatives Committee and Conservation Committee

Sub-Committees

Under the umbrella of the Conservation Committee: Independent Power Projects, Revelstoke Mountain Resort (not active), Shelter Bay, Water Usage, Mountain Caribou.

Meetings

This year we shifted from separate monthly membership and board meetings to monthly board meetings in which members are welcome to attend. The only exceptions are our rare in-camera meetings (which typically deal with board organization or hiring). We also have our AGM.

Major Shifts or Changes

This year we made great progress in increasing NCES's governance capacity and balancing out the work load among the board members. Following up on work done under Hailey Ross's presidency in 2010-11, we allocated roles and responsibilities for directors. These job descriptions are attached in Appendix I.

Also, following work from 2010-11, board members usually agree to sit for alternating two-year terms so there is always continuity on the board. (There are exceptions to this – for example, Jane McNab, an experienced board member, kindly agreed to give us one year on the board.) This board work and our strategic planning sessions were generously facilitated by Cindy Pierce.

A major achievement has involved hiring our part-time coordinator, Hailey Ross, in March. Hailey had a proven track-record as a contractor with NCES even before she was president. She stepped off the board before applying. As NCES expands its activities and capacity to respond to environmental issues, having a coordinator has greatly improved our effectiveness. Although this was initially a six-month contract, we plan to continue employing a coordinator and are gradually consolidating most contracts into this one position.

Another big change was the decision to become more active in conservation work and education and to combine conservation activities under one umbrella: the conservation committee. To reflect the importance of this work, we created the position of Director of Conservation, filled in July by nominee Rowland Bell. The Director of Conservation will coordinate, or be the board link with, the conservation committee.

Major Achievements / Events

Environmental Education Projects funded by the CBT (\$10,000)

SD 19 schools: Farm-to-Table project. Contractors Hailey Ross and Claire Siebert carried out this three-part program, designed for grades four to six, with four classes at Mountain View, Mount Begbie and Columbia Park elementary schools. The program provided students with an overview of climate change, explored the ways in which food choices relate to climate change, inspired positive action by providing alternative choices and information, and aimed to empower students to make informed choices about their role in the face of climate change. The program involved both classroom presentations and supermarket tours. Feedback from teachers, students and partners (Coopers Foods, Southside & Mountain Goodness Natural Foods) were all very positive.

ClimArt:

More than 140 people attended this event, which used creativity to raise awareness of climate change. ClimArt was organized by contractors Hailey Ross and Claire Siebert. The event featured five films, including two by local children; three slide shows; and 19 multi-media art submissions. One of the slide shows was by Greg Hill, who skied 2 million vertical feet in 2010. He noted his carbon footprint in getting to his ski destinations and challenged himself to reduce that (see Revel Pedal below). The Friends of Mount Revelstoke also had an art activity at the event. The event attracted a great mix of regular NCES supporters, plus artists and a large number of mountain sports enthusiasts. The event was covered or mentioned by four media outlets. February 23.

Earth Week:

For the three *elementary schools*, NCES conducted an **Earth Day colouring and pledge contest**. We presented the contest winners eco-friendly prizes at the school's Earth Day assemblies at which point two short films were shown. One such film, made by a local youth of 9 years old, focused on climate change adaptation in the Revelstoke area.

In the *high school*, we set up a very popular **button-making table** in partnership with Parks Canada. Students made their own earth-themed buttons which they wore during their own Earth Week activities.

Clean Bin Event: This 3-hour evening event in the United Church basement focused on the themes Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. The event, attended by 98 people, featured the film *The Clean Bin Project*, along with speakers, music by Matt Potter, several visual displays on recycling and creative reuse of waste, and a slide presentation showing creative ways to reuse garbage produced by Lori Anderson. In the second part of the evening, Carmen Fennell of CSRD spoke about upcoming initiatives with waste management, Brett Renaud of BRESCO spoke about the newly implemented street-side recycling program and Steven Hui spoke about the Community Foundation's initiatives to reduce waste. As NCES, with \$100 donation from the school district, bought the full viewing rights to the film for the community, the film can now be borrowed and shown in schools and in the general public. The film will be housed in a school library. The film event and the Clean Bin Challenge was the subject of at least five newspaper articles and two on-line videos. 15 volunteers and our NCES coordinator helped organize this event. April 25.

Clean Bin Challenge: 13 households signed up for this challenge which aimed to see who could produce the least garbage – excluding recycling - in one month. The results were publicly weighed at the Chickadee Nature Festival on May 26. The winning couple produced only an astounding one ounce of garbage each in the month! Three newspaper outlets covered this event and one, Stoke FM, actively participated in the challenge.

Chickadee Nature Festival: Plant and identify an indigenous plant

A diverse collection of native seedlings were collected and propagated for distribution at the festival. Descriptive and imaginative cards accompanied each plant describing their biological, mythical and aesthetic qualities. The goal here was to help blur the lines between domestic and wild spaces by encouraging residents to plant native plants in their back yards. This activity also aimed to help increase residents' familiarity with native plant species and their biological attributes. May 26. Contracted organizer, Claire Sieber.

Revel Pedal and Great Bike Give-Away: One key component of climate change education falls into the realm of transportation. Since the NCES already facilitates The Great Commuter Bike Give Away - a successful program which refurbishes abandoned bicycles and distributes them to people in need - we decided to build on the active transportation theme for this event by showcasing the successes and potential of active transportation in Revelstoke. Also, the City of Revelstoke's proposed active transportation trail network was in need of public comment - the purpose of this event was bring community members to an open house and solicit for feedback in this regard. Finally, this event served as the finale Bike to Work Week event.

Great Bike Give-Away: This year Flowt generously refurbished nine bikes which NCES was able to give away to new riders. Applications were assessed based on economic and social need, the availability of a suitable bike and effort put into the written submission – one of which, a poem, was published in the newspaper. An issue regarding bike storage presents a challenge to the feasibility of this program in the future as the City will no longer store them for us.

Scavenger hunt/Scrabble ride: a bike-accessed scavenger hunt was created for all-ages in which particular nodes identified in the City's active transportation trail network were used. Two routes were created to suite varying age and ability levels. The last stop on the route was the Village Idiot, where participants were encouraged to attend an Open House.

Open house at the Village Idiot Pub: A number of organizations working within the realm of sustainable and/or active transportation were invited to set up information tables at the Village Idiot to promote their causes. The City of Revelstoke's planning department, engineering department, and Enhancement Committee were also there to present the proposed trail networks and bike lane plans and solicit public feedback. Other participating organizations and groups include: Bike to Work Week, Revelstoke Cycling Association (information table and short film), the Skate Park Committee, Skookum, Flowt, La Baguette (gelato bike), the Raging Grannies, The Roller Derby Team, Lou Brown (custom bike trailers). Greg Hill presented slide show in which he reported that, since the ClimArt event, he cycled to all his ski destinations, a remarkable feat in itself!

Approximately 100 people participated in the Scavenger Hunt and around 80 attended the open house; *Volunteer hours contributed*: 45 plus a large donation of time and resources from FLOWT. Contracted organizers: Hailey Ross and Claire Sieber.

Revy Foodies: Food security naturally follows the themes of climate change and sustainable transportation, highlighting how mainstream food systems require transportation that is highly dependent on fossil fuel consumption. To supplement our existing local food initiatives – the community garden, Garden Guru Series and Harvest Palooza – and complement efforts by the City and others to pursue local alternatives to imported food, we decided to invite food system planner Janine de la Salle to address food security in the context of urban planning. The intention of her talk was to bring together disparate food initiatives in Revelstoke. Hailey and Claire organized a luncheon at Benoit's, catered by La Baguette, in which de la Salle met with representatives of community groups and businesses most active in the area of food security. This included city planners and environmental coordinator, Bear Aware, the Food Bank, NCES and LFI Committee, Terra Firma, the School District, among others. NCES organized a public presentation in the evening by de la Salle, attended by around 35 people. A lively discussion followed the presentation, including interest in creating a Food Charter for Revelstoke. Contracted organizers: Hailey Ross and Claire Sieber.

Newspaper articles in the *Times Review*. Sue Davies wrote four newspaper articles on environmental themes for the *Times Review*. Topics included: Reducing environmental impacts of Christmas; Climate Change adaptation; Earth Day; and Greenwashing.

All other NCES Events (non-CBT funded):

Harvest Palooza: a fall food security festival.

Contractor Hailey Ross organized the second Harvest Palooza celebration. Funding for this event came from the New Horizons grant. The key message of this family-friendly festival-style event was that: Sustainably produced food is local, and Revelstoke has an abundance of resources in this regard. A celebration of local food is also a celebration of local food culture, and this event is all about fostering and celebrating this culture in Revelstoke. The event featured: a large local foods potluck; a largest vegetable contest; agricultural heritage displays from the Revelstoke Museum & Archives; community garden knowledge sharing; garlic planting in the community garden; a seed exchange; awareness of, and donations for, the Food Bank; Bear Aware education, Partners for Others (awareness building for this local charity); a local food taste test (GASP students), an idea mural (Sustainable Food Is ...); a children's craft table, a sprout kit station; and live music. Approximately 120 attended this event located in the basement of the United Church. October 15.

Downtown Community Garden. NCES's Local Foods Initiative Committee continues to manage this garden in conjunction with the Revelstoke United Church. Funding for garden maintenance and a series of garden-related educational programming came from the CBT. Garden co-coordinator Amy Clarke was hired to assist plot holders and ensure food bank donations. We have 18 plot holders, which include a mix of new and returning gardeners. Plot holders include members of the public, and a mix of public and business organizations such as: RSS Special

Education Class, Kid's United Youth Group, and the Modern Bakery. Produce was used by plot holders and donated to the Revelstoke Food Bank continued. May 2010 to present.

Garden Guru Series: Garden and Food Preservation Workshops: Coordinated by Hailey Ross, this workshop series identified local "experts" in gardening and food-preservation techniques to facilitate workshops on these topics. A total of 10 workshops were in this series. The series has been very successful as demonstrated by great attendance, a diverse demographic appeal, community praise, and generous community donations of time and resources.

Midsummer Night's Green: This fundraiser for the Local Food Initiatives Committee organized by volunteers Melissa Hemphill and Kate Walsh. This sold-out event took place at Benoit's wine bar.

NCES newsletter: This quarterly newsletter is written and edited by our wonderful Director of Communications, Federico Osorio.

Current Issues of that the NCES is pursuing:

- Food security of Revelstoke*
 - Sustainable transportation*
 - Climate change adaptation*
 - Waste reduction
 - Endangered Mountain Caribou
 - Independent Power Projects
 - Shelter Bay Development
 - Williamson's Lake watershed quality
- * These were the primary issues addressed in the CBT-funded environmental education project.

Municipal & District involvement (NCES members sit on the following committees)

- City of Revelstoke: Solid Waste Management, Liquid Waste, Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, Advisory Planning Commission, Environmental Advisory Committee.
- Columbia Shuswap Regional District: Advisory Planning Commission.
- Provincial and Regional: Columbia River Drawdown Zone Advisory Committee, Mountain Caribou Project, Wildfire Protection.

Funding Sources:

- \$10,000 from CBT
- Annual membership dues (see financial report)
- Cash donations (i.e., from events) (see financial report)

Thank you to our generous donors and volunteers

NCES is able to organize very successful events because of the generosity of many individuals and groups. Some of the organizations and businesses that support us are:

BA Sausages; La Baguette; Balu Yoga; Benoit's Wine Bar; Big Eddy Pub; Chris Payne Digital Design; the City of Revelstoke; Conversations Coffee House; Coopers Foods; Crescendo; Doris, the *Revelstoke Current*; the Divas & the Dude; Dynamic Massage Works; Eatery on the Green; Flowt Bikes and Skis; Great White North Bar and Grill; Greenslide Cattle Company; the Hillcrest Hotel; Larch Hills Winery; Lou Brown; The Modern Bakeshop; Mount Begbie Brewery; Mountain Goodness Natural Foods; Mountain Labyrinths Resource Consulting; Paramjit's Kitchen; Revelstoke Museum & Archives; Revelstoke RCMP; the *Revelstoke Times Review*; Skookum Cycle and Ski; School District 19; South Side Food Mart; *Stoke FM*; Stoke Roasted Coffee Company; Terra Firma Farms; the United Church; Valhalla; the Village Idiot; Wildflower Wellness; Woolsey Creek Restaurant.

In Kind Donations:

Thanks to NCES contractor efforts and a very giving community, we received approximately \$4000 worth of in-kind donations this year.

Volunteer Hours:

For contracted events, approximately 475 hours were donated from the community towards the running of these associated activities. For all other events, meetings attended, and activities undergone towards meeting NCES goals in the community, at least 1000 hours volunteer hours were contributed. NCES is recognized in the community for its ability to mobilize volunteers for positive environmental efforts.

It is important to recognize the Board of Directors for the hard work and dedication of its members. The NCES board is a working board and directors put in tremendous thought and hard work to ensure that the organization runs smoothly. Each one of them is to be commended for that effort, without which this organization could not run.

Sincerely,

Laura Stovel, President
North Columbia Environmental Society

Revelstoke BC, September 13, 2012