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# ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2022 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Supporters of Metro Vancouver Regional Parks,

As we reflect on the past year, we are deeply grateful for the support of our donors, volunteers, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks employees, the Regional Parks Board, and the Board of Directors in supporting the Foundation's work to protect our environment and connect people with nature in Regional Parks. Together, we have worked tirelessly to protect our natural spaces and create meaningful experiences our community.

The contributions of donors and volunteers have been instrumental in maintaining the delicate balance of the ecosystems in our parks. From wetland restoration to native flora planting and wildfire recovery efforts; every step of the way, your dedication has made a tangible difference in the health and vitality of our parks. From the cheers of families watching their loved one cross the finish line at Seek the Peak to the awe of a child releasing a salmon at Goodbye Chums, and the tireless efforts of our volunteers at Ecoblitz, together we are building a community that connects with our natural world.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our donors, whose generosity enables us to expand our initiatives, ensuring that Metro Vancouver Regional Parks remain accessible, vibrant, and integral to our collective identity. Likewise, our volunteers, employees, Regional Parks Board, and Board of Directors deserve recognition for their unwavering dedication and hard work in stewarding our parks.

Thank you. Your support inspires us all to work towards a sustainable future.

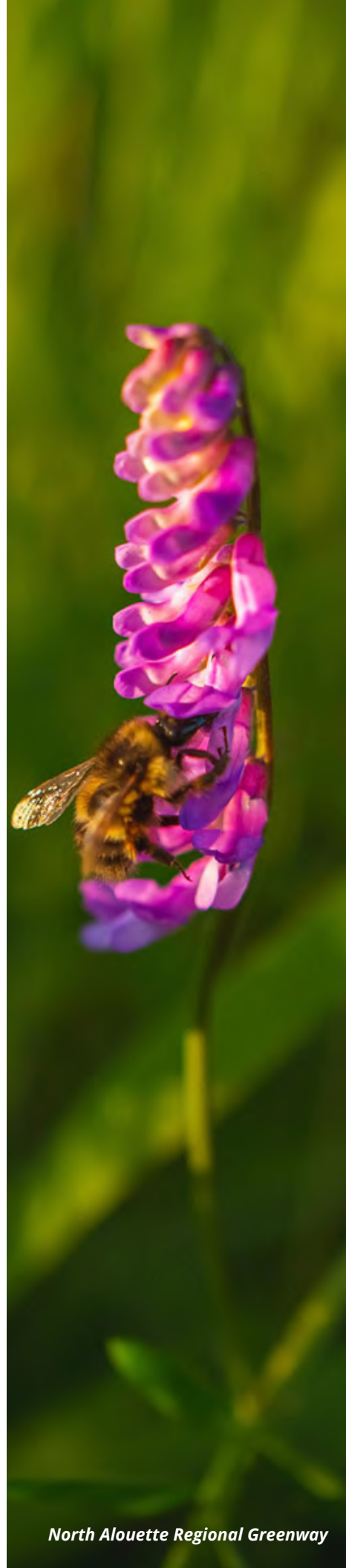
With heartfelt gratitude,



**SARAH MARSH**  
President



**JANET ANTONIO**  
Executive Director





## MESSAGE FROM METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL PARKS

As Chair of the Regional Parks Committee, it is my pleasure to be appointed as a Metro Vancouver liaison to the Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation – Board of Directors.

As the region's population grows, and the challenges of climate change and social inequity intensify, people need parks and the natural areas they protect more than ever. As visitation to regional parks continues to grow, balancing the protection of nature while providing access to nature for regional residents is a significant challenge.

We are grateful to share this responsibility with the Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation. Through our unique partnership, the Foundation's operating and administrative costs are minimized, maximizing the impact of each donation received. Together, we work to make our regional parks the best they can be, for now and for future generations. Funding we receive from the Foundation supports Metro Vancouver Regional Parks in our role to protect natural areas and connect people to nature. Funds are leveraged to provide public programs, conduct stewardship activities, support volunteers, acquire land and design and develop capital projects that enhance the park services we provide for the region.

Sustainable funding is critical to Metro Vancouver's ability to acquire land, provide infrastructure, and operate and maintain new parkland for visitors to connect to nature. This is why it is so important that Metro Vancouver promotes, supports and collaborates with the Foundation to align strategic funding priorities.

Sincerely,



**JOHN MCEWEN**  
Chair, Regional Parks Committee



## PARK PARTNERS

The Foundation collaborates with local Park Partners and Park Associations who play a vital role in our initiatives, consistently demonstrating their significance as a crucial element and major contributors in the regional parks system. Their support takes various forms, increasing the impact of every dollar we raise. With unshakeable passion for their local parklands, these volunteers are the driving force behind the realization of projects and programs in regional parks, year after year.

- Derby Reach Brae Island Park Association
- Pacific Spirit Park Society
- Burnaby Lake Park Association
- Minnekhada Park Association
- Colony Farm Park Association
- CTS Youth Society
- Vancouver Avian Research Centre
- Kanaka Education & Environmental Partnership Society (KEEPS)
- Bowen Island Horse Owners & Riders Association
- Stream of Dreams
- North Fraser Métis Association
- Delta Heritage Air Park
- Langley Field Naturalists

## COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

The Foundation is deeply grateful for the generosity of our donors, whose tremendous support in 2023 has enabled us to realize park protection, projects, and programs. Their contributions have played a pivotal role in ensuring that regional parks, vital to the community, remain vibrant, accessible, and restored. The success of our endeavours is attributed to the numerous organizations and individuals who have chosen to invest in the green spaces of Metro Vancouver. As we reflect on another year, we are touched by a community that recognizes the importance of preserving natural areas, and extend our gratitude to those who believe in our cause.





# APPROVED GRANTS

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation funds numerous park projects, spanning from saplings and seedlings to the nurturing of flourishing forests. With a significant allocation of grant funds returning to regional parks this year, here are some of the exciting projects we successfully realized in 2023.



## WILDFIRE RECOVERY

After a devastating wildfire that took place in October 2022 at Minnekhada Regional Park, the path to recovery has begun. 359 native plants were carefully chosen for restoration, including Big Leaf Maple, Dull Oregon Grape, Sword Fern, Salal, Deer Fern, and Red Huckleberry. In addition to direct recovery efforts, Minnekhada Park Association introduced a new initiative called "Trail Hoppers," which focuses on protecting native Western Toad populations.



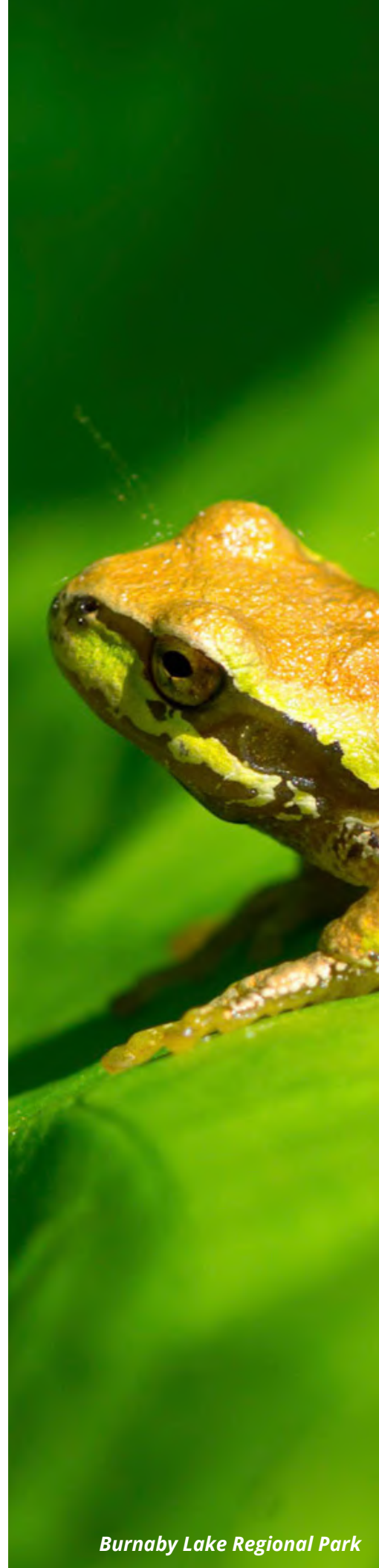
## ENHANCING TRAILS

At Pacific Spirit Regional Park, healthy trails results in healthy communities. This project, focused on removing invasive blackberry and replanting with native species suitable for growth under a powerline, not only aims to increase biodiversity and restore ecosystem health but also ensures park users will benefit from improved trail conditions. As we enhance the environment, we're creating a more enjoyable and sustainable experience for all who traverse these trails.



## ACADIA FOREST RESTORATION

In Pacific Spirit Regional Park, funding was approved to replant an area of declining alder forest with native trees as well as controlling invasive species found at the site, and monitoring previously restored areas to determine future actions needed.



# APPROVED GRANTS

These grants are only made possible because of the vision and generosity of our donors. Grants provide volunteer park associations and other groups of regional park supporters with the financial support they need to help protect and preserve our regional parks.



## TRAIL SAFETY EDUCATION

The "Slow and Say Hello" trail safety initiative aims to promote safety and coexistence among equestrians, bicyclists, and other trail users sharing narrow paths. The Foundation has provided essential resources and educational materials to encourage courteous trail behaviour. By advocating for slowing down, communication, and mutual respect, this project will create a safer and more inclusive regional park experience.



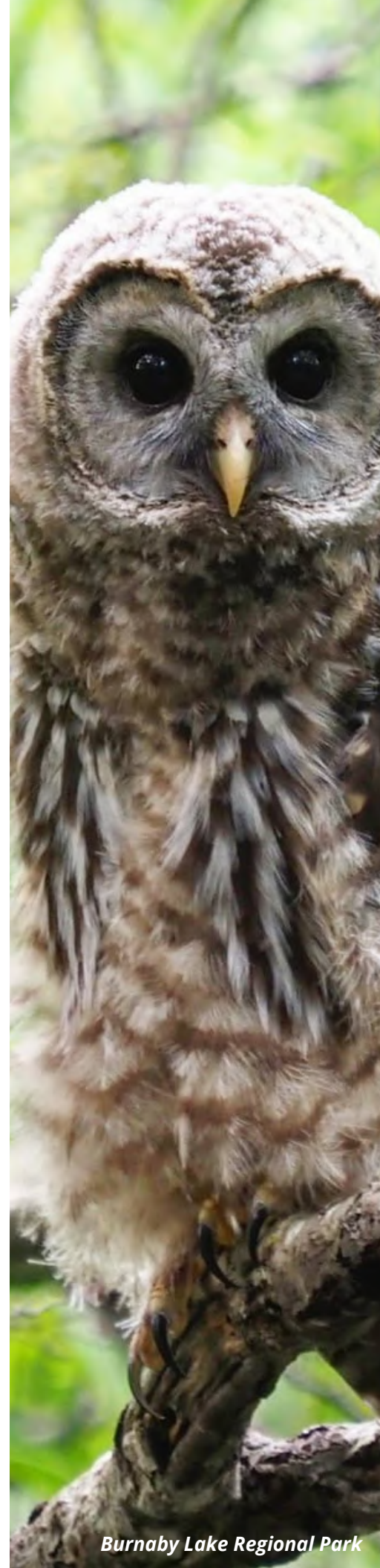
## INSECT SAMPLING

Flying insects are a critical foundation of the food web, which includes birds and bats as the top predators. This is especially true in the local context of natural areas such as Iona Beach Regional Park. Swallows and swifts feed on flying insects that they catch on the wing. Sadly, we know that aerial insectivores are declining rapidly throughout North America. This project will assess the abundance of flying insects at two sites, as well as examine the use of the park by Tree Swallows to inform habitat management and park design.



## COMMUNITY ACCESS TO NATURE

A huge part of the neighbouring communities to Tynehead Regional Park in Surrey include immigrants and New Canadians. This pilot program gives participants the opportunity to practice English with a Park Interpreter and other community members on nature walks that focus on teaching them nature vocabulary and knowledge. Participants benefit from improved English skills and a greater appreciation for local flora, fauna and Regional Parks.





# CTS YOUTH SOCIETY

CTS Youth Society is a non-profit outdoor youth program, completely free for every participant. The Foundation is proud to support this program year after year, as we believe every youth deserves the opportunity to attend summer camp, regardless of their circumstances.

In 2023, our donors helped CTS Youth Society:

- Host over 500+ youth at summer camp
- Log 3,895 volunteer hours in regional parks
- Connect local youth to nature, their community and each other
- Fuel campers with free, healthy meals as well as the supplies and training they need to safely explore the beauty of the regional parks
- Nurture a community garden that provided youth with a true farm-to-table hands-on experience throughout the summer.
- Continue programming such as "Mishkoopitum" Indigenous-led summer camps

In 2023, the CTS Youth Society camps emerged as an unequivocal success, showcasing both their indispensability and the immense impact they had on the community. With a remarkable tally of 20 camp sessions, including 13 Overnight and 7 Day Camps, the camps provided transformative experiences for 584 registrations aged 12-18, with 97% full on average. The demand for these programs was overwhelming, with every session waitlisted (200+), selling out in just 11 hours. This unprecedented success is a testament to the camps' necessity in fostering youth development, community engagement, and connecting people with nature.

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*"I could talk about this forever, but to cut it short [CTS Youth Society] made me appreciate nature so much more, and discover how amazing a simple walk in the park can feel. Now, visiting Regional Parks has become my go-to method of removing stress."*

**-ANONYMOUS PEER LEADER & CTS PARTICIPANT**







# SEEK THE PEAK



## SEEK THE PEAK

Grouse Mountain's Seek the Peak event raised \$30,000 for Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation. More than 700 participants raised funds to support critical initiatives such as trail maintenance, conservation projects, habitat restoration and community programming.

The challenging 15km course starts on the beach at Ambleside Park in West Vancouver, winds its way through North Vancouver, then heads up the legendary Grouse Grind to The Peak of Vancouver. With an awe-inspiring 1,400m climb, Seek the Peak is the ultimate test of stamina and overall mental toughness.

We are so grateful for the unwavering support from our partners at Grouse Mountain who have been instrumental in making this event a resounding success. Their dedication to preserving our environment and promoting outdoor activities is commendable.

Here's to all the runners, hikers, and nature enthusiasts who laced up their boots, embraced the challenge, and joined hands in safeguarding Metro Vancouver's regional parks. Their enthusiasm and commitment to making a difference left us humbled and energized to keep pushing forward. Together, we will create a greener, healthier, and more sustainable future for all.

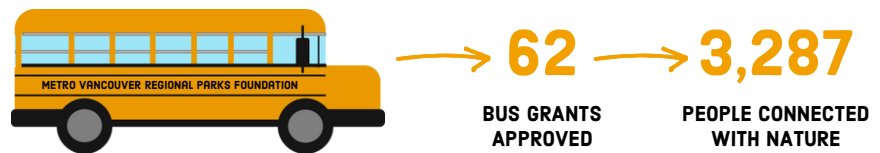




## BUS GRANT PROGRAM

Our Bus Grant Program connects youth, students, seniors, immigrants, newcomers to Canada, and other individuals with financial barriers to the beautiful outdoor spaces within Metro Vancouver Regional Parks. Recognizing the many barriers that can make it challenging for community members to access nature, the Foundation works to provide transportation for people to explore new places, learn new skills, build their confidence in the outdoors, and connect with others in the nature that surrounds their community.

With your help, in 2023 we connected even more groups to the beauty of nature found in regional parks. One \$500 donation makes the dream of a chartered bus a reality. Your donation can and has made a difference.



## TALES FROM THE TRAILS

*Getting my students outside to experience nature and connect to their environment is important in building their environmental stewardship. This program allows us to get outside for a whole day, to a [regional] park that includes many different areas (pond, grass field, beach, trails and water) to explore, discover and connect with. Thank you!"*

*-Sarah Baxter, Elementary School Teacher*

*"The highlight was walking bare foot on the beach. As seniors, we haven't done that for many, many years."*

*- Amy Yu, Minoru Seniors Centre*

## THE LYDIA CERRANO ALBERT CHILD CARE SUPPORT FUND

In 2022, the Lydia Cerrano Albert Child Care Support Fund, managed by the Vancouver Foundation, generously provided \$25,000 to support children in Metro Vancouver. Part of this contribution aids community organizations and schools in providing nature experiences to children who encounter financial obstacles. Cerrano's donation has enabled hundreds of children in Metro Vancouver to explore the beauty of regional parks, enhancing their education and nurturing a greater love for nature.



# MINNEKHADA WILDFIRE: A YEAR OF RECOVERY

Over one year has passed since the devastating fire that swept through Minnehada Regional Park on October 1, 2022. The road to recovery has been challenging, but with your support, we've made incredible progress. Here's an update on the restoration efforts and how your donations were used:

## Planting for Renewal

With funding from MVRP Foundation, Minnehada Park Association procured 359 native plants for five planting sites. Each plant was meticulously chosen to match the local ecosystem, including Big Leaf Maple, Dull Oregon Grape, Sword Fern, Salal, Deer Fern, and Red Huckleberry. The goal was not to intervene in nature's course, but to support the areas near trails, where clearings were needed for fire crews. Your donations made this possible.

## Volunteers at the Heart

In October 2023, volunteers led by Minnehada Park Association's dedicated Coordinator, Esmeralda, embarked on a challenging journey. They worked tirelessly to plant in steep terrain and ensure a better future for Minnehada Regional Park. Their efforts, along with Metro Vancouver's support, have been invaluable.

## Beyond Recovery

In addition to direct recovery efforts, matched donation funding has enabled a fire recovery photo monitoring pilot project, enhanced pop-up nature tables, and a new initiative called "Trail Hoppers."

## Trail Hoppers

This project focuses on native Western Toad populations at Minnehada Regional Park. Every year, Western Toads make a treacherous journey from the hills to the marsh, laying thousands of eggs. Your support helps ensure their safety in the face of natural predators and human impacts. As of October 2023, Trail Hoppers has hosted eight events, with 72 volunteer hours, and an average group size of three to four. This will build a safer environment for the toads that inhabit Minnehada Regional Park.

## Celebrating the Heroes Who Restored Minnehada Regional Park

We extend our deepest gratitude to all the incredible individuals and organizations who played a pivotal role in helping Minnehada Regional Park recover from the devastating fire. Our donors, volunteers, partners and community have brought hope, renewal, and resilience to Minnehada Regional Park. We are forever grateful for your commitment to the regional park's recovery. Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for being part of this incredible journey of restoration.

*Photos courtesy of Steve Smith at Minnehada Park Association.*





# REEL EARTH DAY CHALLENGE

In 2023, the third annual REEL Earth Day Challenge was presented by Creative BC's Reel Green™ program and Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation.

The challenge raises funds for the Foundation to protect and preserve Metro Vancouver's regional parks, where many of B.C. productions are filmed. The REEL Earth Day Challenge encourages crews, productions, sponsors, and other industry stakeholders to raise funds in the days leading up to Earth Day, April 22nd. Industry sponsors contribute to the top teams' daily challenge totals, and the production that raises the most funds overall is declared the winner.

Team "Reginald the Vampire," lead by Team Captain Brett Davies, took home the first-place trophy for the 2023 season. Thank you to all participants, donors, and industry supporters who took part in the challenge. Together we raised an astonishing \$100,051 and made five transformative park projects a reality.



## SPONSOR DOLLARS IN ACTION:

Last year, MBS Equipment Co. pledged \$25,000 to support the "Restore Endangered Coastal Ecosystems" project at Iona Beach Regional Park through the REEL Earth Day Challenge. This initiative was crucial for safeguarding coastal dune ecosystems threatened by climate change impacts such as storm surges and king tides. This generous donation will significantly contribute to revitalizing a rare ecosystem and fostering a more sustainable and biodiverse world for future generations.

## TOGETHER, WE:

- Created homes for raptors  
*Campbell Valley Regional Park*
- Funded Indigenous summer programs for youth  
*Tynehead & Pacific Spirit Regional Parks*
- Supported mental health in youth  
*Various Regional Parks*
- Restored endangered coastal ecosystems  
*Iona Beach Regional Park*
- Enhanced wildlife habitat  
*Tynehead Regional Park*

35mm FILM



# 2023 AWARDS

## GORDON SMITH YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD

Gordon Smith was an exceptional man, dedicated to serving people and the environment. He was passionate about stream and wetland stewardship and very active in conservation projects in Langley and Delta. To inspire others to follow his path, his friends, family, and colleagues at Metro Vancouver Regional Parks initiated the "Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship Award" fund.

Each year nominations are invited for the Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship (YES) Award, which provides a bursary for youth aged 12-19 who have contributed to environmental stewardship through their volunteer efforts. Recipients must demonstrate leadership in conservation and inspire other young people to get involved in environmental work.

### CAIO CONRADT | 2023 WINNER

*Burnaby Mountain Secondary School*

Caio Conradt's profound dedication to environmental conservation and stewardship rendered him the ideal recipient of the Gordon Smith Young Environmental Steward award. His unwavering commitment to environmental causes, coupled with a genuine love for safeguarding the planet, earned him the prestigious 2023 prize. This recognition reflects not only his passion for the environment but also the tangible impact of his consistent and meaningful actions in the realm of environmental preservation.

## DR M. WOSK ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Dr. M. Wosk Environmental Leadership Award was established by Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation for the development of youth leadership in 2006. The leadership fund is used to engage, train and empower today's youth (age 15-19) with the skills necessary for the future sustainability of our spectacular regional parks.

Participants will have training in ecological issues and environmental preservation as well as the organizational and communication skills necessary to make a profound difference. This year, the Foundation was honoured to reward the hard work and kickstart the future in environmental sustainability for the following recipients:

### CARYL SZETO | 2023 WINNER

*Gleneagle Secondary School*

### CLARA BECKWITH-JAMIESON | 2023 WINNER

*Gleneagle Secondary School*

### LOCHLYN CUTT | 2023 WINNER

*Ecole Dr. Charles Best Secondary*

### ALEXANDRA CHOW | 2023 WINNER

*Eric Hamber Secondary School*





# 2023 EVENTS

## REGIONAL PARKS SNAP & SHARE

In another successful year, we partnered with Metro Vancouver to encourage locals to explore Metro Vancouver's regional parks and greenways through the iNaturalist app. This event leads participants to pay attention to plants and wildlife they may not have noticed before by snapping photos of what they discovered and sharing their photos with the iNaturalist online community. iNaturalist is a great way for park visitors to build their nature knowledge and join a global community of citizen scientists that contribute to biodiversity science. With plenty of fun prizes up for grabs, 5,229 observations were made, 925 species were observed, and 482 identifiers participated.

## ART'S NURSERY SCARECROW STROLL

The Foundation was humbled to be invited back as a beneficiary of this exciting autumnal event, which involved a pumpkin patch, scavenger hunt, and dozens of creepy, cool, and creative scarecrows. Alongside the flowers and food trucks, Art's Nursery invited local businesses and non-profits to showcase their organizations during this popular family-friendly fundraiser in support of charities in the local community.

## GOODBYE CHUMS

We were delighted to attend this annual event once at Kanaka Creek Regional Park that invites families within the community to come out and release salmon fry into the creek where they will start their journey to the sea. As children wandered around Kanaka Creek with their water pails full of hatchery chum fry and released them into the wild, park visitors had a chance to tour the hatchery and take part in fun activities, games, crafts, and entertainment to learn more about the salmon lifecycle.

## HERITAGE APPLE DAY

Hosted at Derby Reach Regional Park in October 2023, Heritage Apple Day festival celebrates the unique role of apples, crabapples and orchards from centuries past in the area now known as Fort Langley. The family-friendly outdoor event also highlights interactive and educational displays from local community groups, including presentations from Kwantlen First Nation, the BC Fruit Testers Association, Langley Field Naturalist, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, and more.



# THE FIGURES

## FUNDS

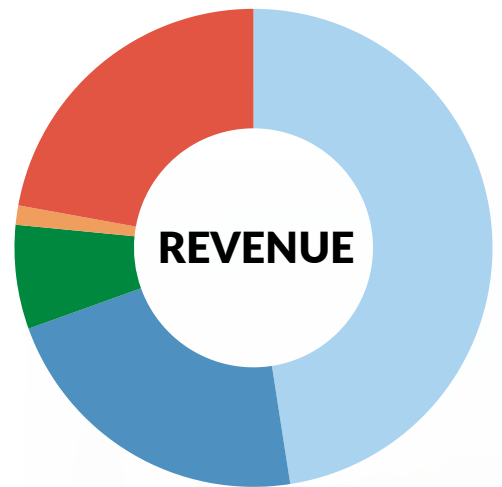
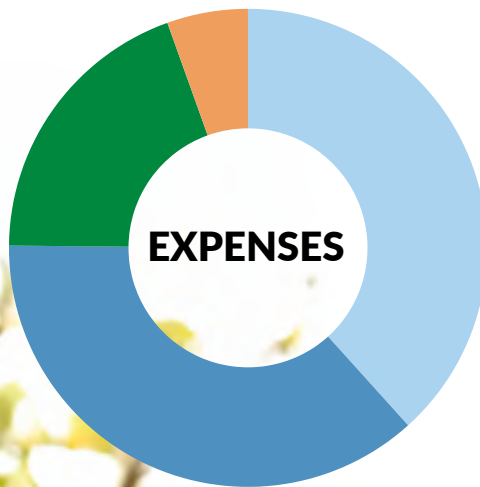
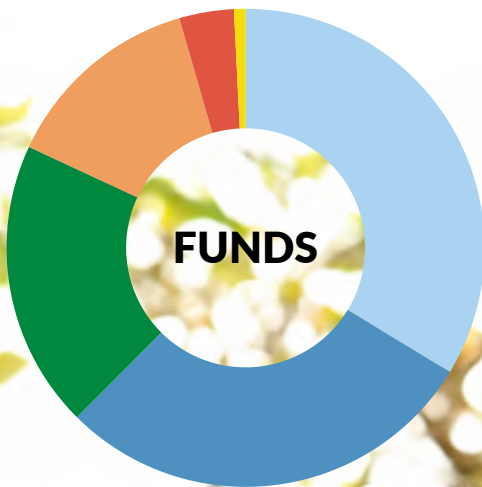
Property	\$666,000
General Funds	\$568,750
Programs & Projects	\$384,984
Endowment	\$268,510
Dr. M. Wosk Fund	\$73,070
Gordon Smith Fund	\$15,411
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,976,725</b>

## EXPENSES

Administration	\$283,794
Projects	\$272,787
Programs & Awards	\$143,476
Communications & Public Relations	\$40,564
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$740,621</b>

## REVENUE

Designated	\$415,636
Government Grants	\$192,063
Commemorative	\$61,495
Income	\$11,397
Undesignated	\$193,673
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$874,264</b>



Financial support from Metro Vancouver helps defray our operating costs, ensuring our donors' gifts can make the biggest possible impact on programs and projects in Regional Parks.



# WILLPOWER LEGACY GIVING

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation is excited to announce our partnership with WillPower, a national public education campaign designed to inspire Canadians to think differently about charitable giving, and empower them to create positive change through their Wills. This partnership provides our donors with a unique opportunity to leave a lasting legacy gift in their will. This collaboration empowers individuals to contribute to the long-term sustainability and enhancement of our regional parks, ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy these natural treasures.

By incorporating WillPower into our mission, we extend an invitation to our community to become stewards of the environment and champions for the preservation of Metro Vancouver's regional parks. This initiative allows individuals to leave behind a legacy that will positively impact the parks they have cherished and the communities that will benefit from their foresight and generosity.

Learn more at [www.willpower.ca/charities/mvrpfoundation](http://www.willpower.ca/charities/mvrpfoundation)



# LEGACY GIVING

Choosing what legacy you want to leave is a unique opportunity for you to express your values and to make a significant mark upon the future. By making a gift in your will to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation, you are automatically joining a very special group of visionaries - people who care deeply about preserving Metro Vancouver Regional Parks for future generations.

The pristine wild spaces that we have chosen to protect make Metro Vancouver the envy of the world; they are ours to explore, share and protect. Legacy gifts have the added benefit of reducing income tax during your lifetime or through your estate. It is also one of the most important opportunities each of us possesses - the chance to leave our mark on the world.

## GEORGE ROSS

George Ross, who loved trees and parks, was a visionary who generously left a \$2.8-million-dollar bequest for Metro Vancouver Regional Parks. His legacy lives on today in the form of the George Ross Legacy Stewardship Program, a funding program created to help support hands-on citizen stewardship activities by park partners in Metro Vancouver regional parks and greenways. Since 2016, the George Ross Legacy Stewardship Program has granted \$269,237 to stewardship projects in regional parks.





# OUR LEADERSHIP

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## *2023 Volunteer Board*

Sarah Marsh  
**President**

Mark van der Zalm  
**Vice President**

Kevin O'Callaghan  
**Past President**

Lindsey Fryett Jerke  
**Secretary**

Terri Van Sleuwen  
**Treasurer**

Eleanor O'Connor  
**Director at Large**

### **Directors**

Adam Heffey  
Micheal Jerowsky  
Liyang Wan  
Smiely Khurana  
Roy Millen

### **Non Voting Directors**

John McEwen - Mayor of Anmore  
Mark Sager - Mayor of West Vancouver

### **Metro Vancouver Advisors**

Mike Redpath - Director, Regional Parks  
David Leavers - Division Manager, Regional Parks

*Our volunteer Board of Directors are the driving force behind the Foundation. Their love of the regional parks is reflected in their energy, dedication, and expertise on the board. The Foundation is grateful for another year of their voluntary guidance and service.*



**OURS TO EXPLORE.  
OURS TO SHARE.  
OURS TO PROTECT.**



## **METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL PARKS AND GREENWAYS**

Aldergrove Regional Park  
Barnston Island Regional Park  
təmtəmíxʷtən/Belcarra Regional Park  
Blaney Bog Regional Park Reserve  
Boundary Bay Regional Park  
Brae Island Regional Park  
Brunette-Fraser Regional Greenway  
Burnaby Lake Regional Park  
Burns Bog Ecological Conservancy Area  
Campbell Valley Regional Park  
Capilano River Regional Park  
Codd Wetland Ecological Conservancy Area  
Crippen Regional Park  
Deas Island Regional Park  
Delta South Surrey Regional Greenway  
Derby Reach Regional Park

Fraser Islands Regional Park Reserve  
Glen Valley Regional Park  
Grouse Mountain Regional Park  
Iona Beach Regional Park  
Kanaka Creek Regional Park  
Lynn Headwaters Regional Park  
Minnekhada Regional Park  
North Alouette Regional Greenway  
Pacific Spirit Regional Park  
Pitt River Regional Greenway  
Seymour River Regional Greenway  
Surrey Bend Regional Park  
Thwaytes Landing Regional Park  
Tynehead Regional Park  
Widgeon Marsh Regional Park  
Áléxətəm Regional Park  
(formerly Colony Farm Regional Park)



**Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation**  
**[mvrpfoundation.ca](http://mvrpfoundation.ca) | [hello@mvrpfoundation.ca](mailto:hello@mvrpfoundation.ca)**  
**778-900-1053 | 6825 Cariboo Rd Burnaby, BC V3N 4A3**  
**Registered Charity Number: 889353017RR0001**

*Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation is an independent  
registered charity that supports Metro Vancouver Regional Parks.*

**Boundary Bay Regional Park**