



REEL EARTH DAY CHALLENGE

2023
Final Report



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SUMMARY

In 2023, the third annual REEL Earth Day Challenge encouraged local film crews, productions, sponsors and other industry stakeholders to raise funds to be donated to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation, a registered charity supporting Metro Vancouver Regional Parks.

REEL Earth Day is a chance for B.C. film productions, who have consistently filmed in the regional parks over the years, to give back to those parks where they work, live and play.

Industry sponsors contributed to the top teams' daily challenge totals, and the production that raised the most funds overall is recognized as the winner. **In 2023, team "Reginald the Vampire" took home the first place trophy,** with a grand total of \$36,822 raised.

REEL Earth Day is presented by Creative BC's Reel Green™ program and industry partners, and Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation.

This year, **\$100,051 was raised by REEL Earth Day to support Metro Vancouver Regional Parks.** These funds were used to advance five transformational park projects across the Metro Vancouver region. Since 2021, the event has raised over \$373,000 to build biodiverse, inclusive park spaces, and a more sustainable world.

While the bulk of project work is scheduled for later in the year, this report will summarize the planned projects and updates for the Summer 2023 season.

It is important to note that restoration is not an event, but a process that may take years to complete in order to restore the health and resiliency of parklands.

2023 RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Project Name	Area Restored	New Area Protected	Trees Planted	Bushes + other plants planted	Volume Invasive Species Removed	# Volunteers # Volunteer Hours
Homes for Raptors	7000 m ²	n/a	795	500	n/a	• 188 Volunteers • 378.5 Hours
Support Youth Mental Health	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a ³	n/a	• n/a
Restore Endangered Coastal Ecosystems	2300m ²	n/a	n/a	264	2.5m ³	• 46 Volunteers • 92 Hours
Indigenous Summer Camps for Youth	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	• 8 Volunteers • 48 Hours
Enhance Wildlife Habitat	800 m ²	n/a	50	615	n/a	• 79 Volunteers • 155 Hours
Total: All Projects	10,100 m²	n/a	845	1,379	2.5 m³	• 321 Volunteers • 673.5 Hours





PROJECT 1: HOMES FOR RAPTORS

Campbell Valley Regional Park

With extreme heat becoming more common and intense, the REEL Earth Day Challenge will help plant trees and shrubs in Campbell Valley Regional Park. This will provide shade for people and animals, while also creating vital habitats for hawks and other raptors.

This project will ensure the the planting of hedgerows and buffer zones with native species, which will not only increase biodiversity but also enhance the natural beauty of the walking trails. The hedgerows will also improve riparian areas and add perching trees, providing ideal habitat for raptors and enhancing the overall ecosystem of the park.

Latest Project Update:

Portions of the farm field were reforested and larger areas will be managed as old field (grassland) habitat to support a variety of raptors, including barn owls which are at-risk. Farming equipment was used to mow and then harrow the ground to decompact it and break up the sod for planting. Small trees and seedlings were planted along the forest edge extending into the field. Soil was also placed along a ditch line running north/south to widen out the existing hedgerow with tree species that will support song birds.

A new section of the Campbell Valley Perimeter Trail going around the perimeter of the field was completed in 2023 as well. These vegetated areas along the trail will offer biodiversity, visual interest, habitat for raptors and other species as well as shade for park visitors.

A total of 795 trees, and 500 shrubs were planted. Additional deciduous stakes of cottonwood, red-osier dogwood and willow will be added to the planting to add species diversity and fill in areas of the plantings that are wetter and less suited to conifers.



PROJECT 2: SUPPORT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Various Regional Parks

Research shows that spending time in nature can have a positive impact on mental health by lowering anxiety, improving mood, boosting creativity, reducing stress, and more. Fraser Health has an average of 500 youth admitted annually for psychiatric needs, a number that has increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Depression and anxiety are two of the major health conditions affecting the youth.

The Challenge has funded a pilot program that aims to develop and deliver in-park programs for out-patient youth in the Fraser Health Psychiatric Unit, providing a safe and supportive environment for them to engage with nature. By offering these programs, we are improving the mental health and wellness of these youth and promoting the understanding of the healing power of nature.

Latest Project Update:

Park Interpreters worked to develop and deliver in-park Wellness Walks for out-patients with the Fraser Health pediatric psychiatry unit. Initial meetings with Fraser Health and program development began in April. In addition, two staff members completed Mental Health First Aid training.

The program launched in August, with two cohorts from Fraser Health participating. Each cohort will participate in its own 'Wellness Walk' over the course of the next 6 months, across multiple parks in the Regional Parks system. In total 26 youth will spend a combined 300 hours in nature.

Thanks to cost-saving measures, we are now able to extend the youth mental health program into a second cohort scheduled for the Spring 2024, proudly funded by the REEL Earth Day Challenge.

PROJECT 3: NEW LIFE FOR RARE ECOSYSTEMS



Iona Beach Regional Park

Climate change is happening at an alarming rate, and as a result, we are seeing increased storm surges and king tides that threaten the delicate balance of our coastal ecosystems.

Last year, an unprecedented storm surge and king tide caused severe damage to the beach, threatening this rare and delicate habitat. With \$25,000 generously pledged from MBS Equipment Co., we helped restore and protect endangered coastal dune ecosystems located near the mouth of the Fraser River in Iona Beach Regional Park. This project made a significant difference in preserving the natural beauty and balance of this unique coastal ecosystem and improving this ecosystem's overall resiliency.

Latest Project Update:

Timing:

- Log Cleanup: August - September 2023
- Invasives removal and beach planting: Oct 2023

Results to Date:

- Removed fourteen 100 yd³ bins of logs and sent for beneficial reuse= 1400 yd³
- Removed logs from a coastal sand dune area of approximately 2300 m² = 0.23 ha
- Volunteers planted 120 dune grass (*Elymus mollis*) and 144 coastal strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*) during EcoBlitz events
- The areas was seeded with *Carex macrocephala* (large headed sedge), *Gaillardia aristata* (blanket flower), and *Lathyrus japonicus* (Beach pea)
- Removed 146 kg invasives (Himalayan blackberry and Scotch broom) with the help of volunteers
- A total of 46 volunteers participated and contributed 92 hours of service



PROJECT 4: INDIGENOUS-LED SUMMER CAMPS FOR YOUTH

📍 Tynehead & Capilano River Regional Parks

Mishkoopitum Youth Summer Camps make a remarkable impact, providing an opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth to learn about Métis and First Nations culture, leadership, and environmental stewardship. Through programming created and presented by Indigenous community representatives, youth have acquired knowledge from diverse worldviews and cultures, learned valuable skills, and had a ton of fun in nature.

With the overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants, CTS Youth Society built on this momentum and created a new tradition of summer camps for youth. This year, we connected even more young people with their natural environment and each other.

🔄 Latest Project Update:

Mishkoopitum Summer Camps saw another season of exceptional success. Attracting an impressive cumulative total of 44 enthusiastic youth participants, alongside a staggering waitlist of over 50 youth, this project demonstrates the significant interest and demand for educational programs that promote Indigenous culture and learning.

Not only did these camps offer young participants a space to immerse themselves in free outdoor activities, but they also guided them on a captivating exploration of Indigenous and Métis culture and traditions. This encompassed experiences such as mastering the techniques of cedar weaving and dot art, savoring delicious fry bread and berry soup, and being enthralled by the captivating stories shared by our local Métis knowledge keepers.

Stream of Dreams Murals Society and the North Fraser Métis Association contributed to fostering an impactful cultural exchange for all participants. These achievements underscore the meaningful impact that Mishkoopitum Summer Camps have had on our community, fostering cultural awareness, knowledge sharing, and a deeper connection to Indigenous heritage.



PROJECT 5: ENHANCE WILDLIFE HABITAT

Tynehead Regional Park

Addressing the alarming global decline in biodiversity, this project aims to contribute to its preservation. With REEL Earth Day funding, we can now transform a former farming field into diverse habitats for pollinators, birds, and other wildlife at Tynehead Regional Park.

Buffer plantings of native trees and greenery between a Tynehead Regional Park trail and a major highway will contribute to a diverse habitat and enhance living conditions for the vast array of wildlife that calls this park home. This project will ensure a greener, cleaner, and quieter environment for the wildlife, promoting healthy ecosystems and preserving biodiversity for generations to come.

Latest Project Update:

T800m² of buffer vegetation between the popular eastern perimeter trail and the busy 176 Street in Surrey have been planted. Immediately adjacent to these plantings is a heritage barn that supports a roosting barn owl and old field grassland habitat. The buffer vegetation will create a greener, cleaner and quieter environment for the wildlife and park visitors.

A total of 50 trees, and 615 shrubs were planted. Four volunteer work parties were conducted with a local elementary and highschoools that included 79 volunteers contributing 155 hours of their time to help lay out the plants, plant and mulch.

2023 SPONSORS

These sponsors donated \$84,000 in support of the REEL Earth Day Challenge projects. Together they represent the commitment of the motion picture industry to implement sustainable practices, benefit our local community and protect the environmental.

In a testament to the profound impact of industry support, MBS Equipment Co. has made a remarkable commitment by pledging a generous \$25,000 donation. This substantial contribution is set to fortify Project #3: "New Life for Rare Ecosystems" at Iona Beach Regional Park, facilitated through the REEL Earth Day Challenge.



WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM





2023 Challenger Teams

A HUGE thank you to the 2023 Production Teams. You made all of these projects possible. It's the individual team members who make this event so wonderful.

It was Team Reginald the Vampire that flew to the top of the leaderboard with their relentless thirst for victory, and their fundraising efforts were nothing short of fang-tastic, with a grand total of \$36,822 raised.

Team Reginald the Vampire now have their names added to the champions plaque on the REEL Earth Day Chairs along Brunette Fraser Regional Greenway, symbolizing their outstanding contributions to environmental storytelling and inspiring visitors to take action for a sustainable planet.

We'd like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all our production teams. Your generosity has created a blockbuster impact, providing vital support to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation and the five amazing projects we've funded this year. With your help, we've made a lasting difference for our parks, wildlife, and local communities.



2023 Donors

In addition to the \$84,000 raised in sponsored donations, we had 187 donors contribute over \$16,000, for a grand total of \$100,051. Thanks to these amazing fundraising efforts, five transformative park projects will be brought to fruition.





**Thank you for
your generosity.**

**Your continued support for
Metro Vancouver Regional
Parks allows us to keep up the
good work (and good news).**

Questions?

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