

EcoStar 2010 Award Winners

Water Stewardship Winner: Mary Cooper (Mayne Island Integrated Water Systems Society)

Mary Cooper is an active educator on Mayne Island in respect to water conservation and raising awareness of water use within the southern Gulf Islands. Mary's vision extended to all the Gulf Islands and to the various governments who were responsible for water conservation and protective legislation. Her goal is, "an educated, caring public that is proactive about protecting water resources in the Gulf Islands" and her method is to: "facilitate, educate and lobby." Mary brought together small water system operators, created public workshops, technical workshops for operators, created a substantial website, and strategically placed signage for further educational opportunities. Through her various educational pieces, Mary has taken many steps to ensure property owners and visitors know the importance of conserving water. With Mary's active dedication, the Gulf Islands turn a healthy brown all summer long in order to conserve water.

Land Stewardship Winner: Tsawout Lands Advisory Committee

The Cordova Shore Conservation Partnership is a First Nation-led interagency project for cultural and ecological restoration of coastal ecosystems. The project focuses on the terrestrial and near shore marine ecosystems including TIXEN (Cordova Spit), Island View Beach, Saanichton Bay, Cowichan Head, and addresses lands owned by the Tsawout First Nation, District of Central Saanich, CRD, and private landowners. Started in 2006, the partnership's goal is to protect, restore, and celebrate the unique ecological and cultural values of the area. The dune system and wetlands constitute a very unusual ecosystem and are home to many rare plants and animals. The partnership serves as a model for collaborative stewardship and is helping to inform conservation and restoration of sand dune ecosystems in other parts of the region and province. An additional key outcome has been the effective education of the youth. The Tsawout Lands Advisory Committee for 4 years has demonstrated consistent leadership in developing and implementing a multijurisdictional program for cultural and ecological restoration at Cordova Shore. The program implemented is being viewed across Canada as a model for government to government partnerships in land stewardship and environmental conservation.

Climate Action Winner: Truffles Group Inc.

Locally owned and operated Truffles Group Inc includes the following hospitality businesses Canoe Brewpub Marina Restaurant, Victoria Butterfly Gardens, Truffles Catering, Habitat at Royal Roads and Cascadia Liquor Stores and all are taking the active steps to decrease their carbon footprint within our community. The objective Truffles Group Inc (TGI) Sustainability Committee is to develop policy across all TGI businesses that will neutralize the impact on the environment. TGI is committed to sourcing locally made products in order to reduce carbon emissions and energy use. Through recycling, and composting Truffles Group has seen massive reductions in landfill waste volumes (95% reduction in landfill waste in 2009 at the Truffles Catering Kitchen and 312 cubic yards of organic material since 2008 has been diverted from the landfill and converted into soil used by local farmers). Choosing local, organic suppliers means a reduction in transportation and emissions. The goal of TGI is to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of purchasing decisions by buying goods and services from vendors who share and support the same commitment to the environment.

Climate Action Non-Profit Winner: Cindy Moyer

Cindy Moyer has been the driving force behind Climate Action West Shore (CAWS), a West Shore Chamber of Commerce Committee that brings together municipalities, businesses, schools, community organizations and individuals to find ways to take on climate action within the West Shore. The primary mission of CAWS is to educate and promote the actions needed to prepare our communities for climate change. CAWS acts as the glue for many initiatives including: Beyond Blue Box Recycling, Earth Hour, West Shore Earth Day Celebration, and The Emily Carr Community Festival of the Arts and Ecology. Through CAWS, Cindy has created a community of people who share ideas. By working together and feeding off ideas, Cindy is leading the way to create effective change within surrounding communities.

Waste Reduction Non-Profit Winner: Fairfield Gonzales Community Association

For eleven years, the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association (FGCA) has operated a flourishing community-based plastics recycling program for local residents that has recycled over 200 three-ton truckloads of plastics with five neighborhood locations. Accepting more than just hard plastics items, the FGCA accepts Styrofoam, gable-top cartons, tetrapaks, foam products, foil bags as well as batteries and electronics. The success of the FGCA has helped spawn similar projects and now ten locations are available which all help divert dozens of truckloads of plastics per month. The commitment from hundreds of volunteers has motivated others to involve themselves and provide valuable education on the 3R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle with the emphasis on Reduce.

Waste Reduction Winner: Archipelago Marine Research Ltd.

Founded in 1979, Archipelago Marine Research specialized in fish monitoring, but also marine environmental assessment. The Archipelago Sustainability Initiative (ASI) was formed in 2003 in order to address the growing concerns about the waste stream generated by Archipelago employees. The goal of ASI is to provide Archipelago with a holistic, cyclical view of the business model that embodies a truly sustainable and socially responsible business operation. Since 2008 Archipelago has diverted from the landfill 12 dumpsters of Styrofoam, 10 dumpsters of soft plastics, 2 dumpsters of flattened cartons, 11 lbs of foil wrappers, 300 lbs of batteries, 4,800 lbs of compostable materials over 4 years, and 947 lbs of waste and recyclables collected as part of the TD Shoreline Cleanup. The vision by 2012 for Archipelago is to have a zero waste environment.

Integrated Watershed Management Winner: District of Central Saanich

The District of Central Saanich is the first municipality on Vancouver Island to create an ISMP, following guidelines and recommendations of the BC Storm water Planning Guidebook. The District has used innovative design approaches and best management practices (BMP) in the ISMP to reach the goal of restoring the dispersal of rainwater flows to near predevelopment areas. The reduction will substantially reduce the extent of damage caused by erosion, extreme variability of flows, degradation of water quality and required conveyance works. Started in 2007, the project included public open houses, extensive research and implementation of both short and long term strategies.

The new ISMP uses holistic, innovative and cost-effective methods to capture excess rainfall. The benefits of increased rainfall capture include reducing peak flows in creeks, reducing runoff volumes and increasing summer water flow in creeks. The District of Central Saanich understands the importance of watershed management and that is an essential component of maintaining and preserving our ecosystem.

Community Environmental Leader Winner: Debra Morse

Debra Morse, the visionary for the Organics Islands Festival and Sustainability Expo created this festival for businesses to show good environmental practices to a larger audience. Since 2005, over 400 organizations and 100 sponsors have demonstrated ongoing commitment and support. In 2009 almost 5000 attendees and 150 exhibitors were part of the festival highlighting sustainable initiatives, products and services. The festival has demonstrated first class leadership logistically, and as an example of proper environmental practices with its commitment to zero waste, sustainable power generated onsite, and sustainable bus transport for attendees. A true leader and advocate for environmental sustainability, Debra Morse continues to push forward ensuring more people have the ability to learn and become educated on sustainability movement.

Youth Leader – Caleigh Inman

Caleigh Inman, a Grade 12 student at Victoria High School is an active member of the Sierra Club's BC's Sustainable High School project since fall 2008. Her active commitment and contributions have positioned her in the Youth Steering Committee, the true heart of the project. The project focuses on leadership training, climate change sustainability initiatives and youth mentorships. Caleigh has taken the next steps of involvement and created a vibrant school community both at Vic High and Central Middle school, inspiring many through her passion for environmental and social justice. A trainer, motivator and leader for youth throughout the region with her zero-waste train-the-trainer project is visionary in its youth-led youth engagement model. With Caleigh's zero waste train-the-trainer program she has helped divert almost 90% of waste at Central Middle School. Caleigh's passion for the environment is inspiring to her schoolmates and teachers.