

Backgrounder

CRD
Making a difference...together

2013 EcoStar Award Winners

Land Stewardship Non-Profit: Mayne Island Conservancy Society

Through educational initiatives, the cultivation of native plant species and removal of invasive species, Mayne Island Conservancy Society has been promoting and undertaking conservation efforts to preserve the biodiversity on Mayne Island for over the past decade. In 2011, the Society launched a successful two-year stewardship program encouraging Mayne Island residents to sign voluntary land stewardship agreements and to participate in the walk-about program, which provides guided walks of resident properties to point out ecological features of their land. The Conservancy Society has a relatively large membership base, with 250 members from an 1100-resident population base. In addition to their education efforts, the group has planted over 1800 tree seedlings and have cultivated over 2700 plants from 32 different species for planting in the 2013-14 planting season.

Waste Reduction: Monk Office

As the largest, locally owned office products dealer in BC, Monk Office is leading the way in improving the sustainability of their operations and reducing their carbon footprint within their industry and community. Since 2006, Monk Office has been demonstrating their commitment to waste reduction by the implementation of many green initiatives, some of which include reducing and reusing packaging in their shipping and receiving, providing new employees with a green orientation and supply kit and donating school supplies to needy schools in the Capital Region. In the past six years, Monk Office has reduced their waste from 5000 trash cans full of garbage per year to only 600, resulting in 98% waste reduction.

Waste Reduction Non-Profit: Lansdowne Middle School's Eco Action Team

The Eco Action Team is a group of grade 6 and 7 students from Lansdowne Middle School who are dedicated to educating fellow students and teachers about waste reduction and proper recycling techniques. From conducting surprise garbage audits, to promoting Litter-Less lunches, to presenting at school assemblies and classroom visits, the Eco Action team has approached the waste problem at

their school with creativity and enthusiasm. One way that they have encouraged classrooms to use their compost bins is by teaching students how to make origami newspaper liners that reduce the mess created by composting organics. The efforts of the Eco Action team have resulted in a 75% reduction in garbage.

Integrated Watershed Management: Reliable Controls

Founded in 1986, Reliable Controls is a local Victoria company that manufactures building controls that can be accessed and controlled online. When needing to expand their headquarters, Reliable Controls wanted their new LEED™ Platinum targeted building to maximize the watershed management features of the natural, surrounding landscape. To preserve and enhance these features, they constructed rain gardens, rain planters, swales, green roofs, cisterns, and trees, all of which require no energy to operate. Prior to redevelopment, the site's storm water drained into the Esquimalt Harbour via the municipal storm drain system, without treatment or detention. Currently, more than 90% of the precipitation is captured and reused for irrigation and flushing toilets, as well as for managing pollution loads and diverting runoff from the adjacent street surfaces.

Integrated Watershed Management Non-Profit: St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church

The St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church has been part of the Sooke Community since 1926, where they have recently completed an eco-conscious build of their new church. As the new church is located on Nott Brook watershed, St. Rose has made it a priority to conserve and protect elements of the property that contribute to the natural functioning of the watershed. Between preserving as much of the site's mature trees and vegetative canopy, to building approximately 100 square metres of rain gardens, the project designers were able to ensure that rain water is captured and stored so it can be slowly infiltrated back into the natural landscape, instead of draining directly into the stream. The project demonstrates that it is possible to create a building that is ecologically sensitive and enhances or minimizes disruption to the ecosystem of which it is a part.

Climate Action: Big Wheel Burger

As Canada's first carbon neutral fast food restaurant, Big Wheel Burger is well on their way to creating an eco-movement in the dining industry in the Capital Region and beyond. Big Wheel Burger has prioritized sustainability at every stage of development and operation – their restaurant is

built from recycled and low-impact materials, their food is locally sourced, and their zero-waste philosophy means that everything that goes on the customer's tray is compostable. They have also launched successful community initiatives to inspire and educate other local restaurants on reducing their carbon footprints, including Annual Climate Action Week and the creation of a sustainability guide that outlines best-practices for operating a sustainable restaurant. In their first year of operation, Big Wheel Burger consumed 70% less water and 35% less electricity than the average fast food restaurant of similar size.

Climate Action Non Profit: Island Pathways

Island Pathways was founded in 1988 to promote and accommodate non-motorized outdoor transportation and recreation opportunities on Salt Spring Island. Their organization works to educate the public on cycling benefits and to provide proper cycling infrastructure in rural settings, such as trail systems, for the safety of cyclists, drivers and pedestrians. In 2012, they hosted Velo Village, a three-day event, which included BC's first ever bicycle-only ferry, a 14 km fun ride, a rural cycling conference and an international auction of art made from spare bicycle parts, which raised over \$20,000 to provide bicycles to African communities. With the help of over a hundred volunteers and numerous businesses and organizations, Velo Village was a community-run event that demonstrated the role of cycling in reducing the impact of carbon emissions resulting from transportation activities and in enhancing our environment.

Youth Leader: Emma Kinakin

Emma Kinakin, a recent graduate of Reynolds High School, has left an impressive legacy at her school, inspiring fellow students and teachers alike to pursue environmental and community projects that make the world a greener place. An impressive, well-rounded youth leader, Emma has taken initiative in leading several programs, including the Sierra Club BC Students for Environmental Advocacy and Awareness, organizing the Reynolds High School Eco-Fair and winning a grant for her school by creating a video submission for the BC Green Games. Much of Emma's work has been around food security, for which she's established a program supporting local organic farms, raised chickens for local communities and coordinated a sustainable salad bar program at her school.

Community Leader: Brett Soberg

Brett Soberg is a leading environmental steward of our regional coastal ecosystem. With many local marine species at risk from climate change, pollution and overfishing, Brett has embarked on a mission to protect our marine environment and enhance community action through ecotourism, education and mentoring. His passion for the environment led him to found the

Victoria Sustainable Tourism Alliance (ViSTA) and Eagle Wing Tours, a carbon-neutral ecotourism company, and to initiate Victoria's World Oceans Day celebration at Fisherman's Wharf. Brett is an outstanding community leader, whose impact includes over \$12,000 raised for marine conservation organizations through 1% for the planet, 900 pounds of waste removed from the beach around the inner harbour during his last beach clean day and over 10,000 passengers educated through his whale-watching company.