

## Realizing a Vision for Conservation through Collaboration



**Water Stewardship Council  
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**Scott Boswell, MEdes  
Program Manager**

Hi I am happy to have this opportunity to provide an update on OCCP projects and activities that support biodiversity conservation and environmental planning in the Central and North Okanagan.

This presentation will provide an organizational over view, and highlight a few collaborative conservation projects

## Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program



OCCP is a **partnership** of 38 organizations who have agreed to work together to meet the challenges to maintain and enhance the natural environment in the Okanagan.

For those of you who might not know us,

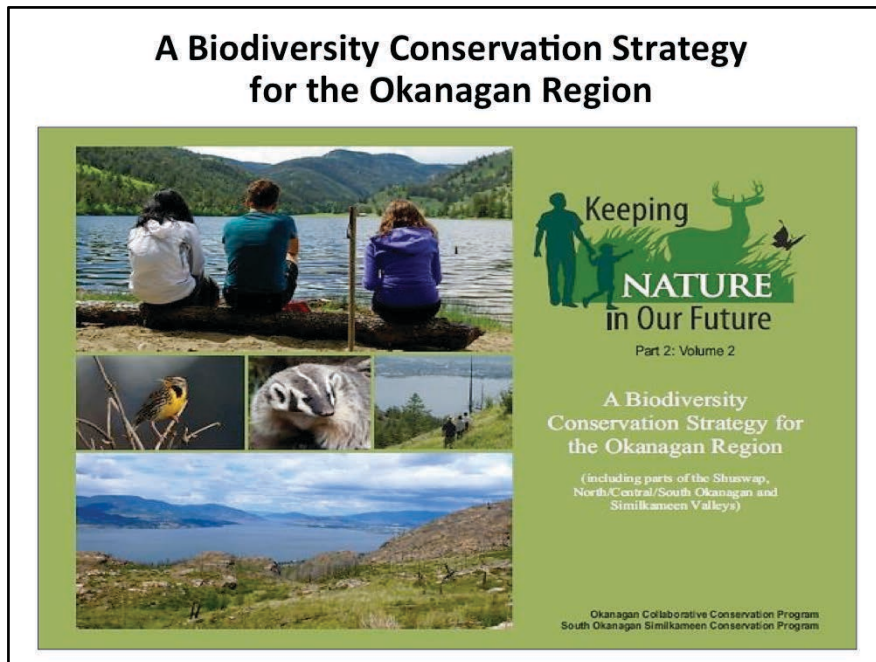
The Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program is a partnership of 38 organizations that include

- Municipalities and Regional Districts
- Environmental NGOs such as Allan Brooks Nature Centre, the North Okanagan Naturalist Club and Ducks unlimited
- It includes Senior government agencies such as Environment Canada, and FLNRO
- and Key Stakeholders such as the BC wildlife federation, and the Grassland Conservation Council of BC

9 years ago the partners signed a Statement of Cooperation that acknowledges

the importance of the of regions natural ecosystems, and that it is a shared responsibility to protect Since then the partners have been working independently and through collaborative projects with t to maintain and enhance biodiversity conservation.

## A Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region



The Partnership's Guiding Document is the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region. The Strategy provides a “big-picture view of the region and a framework for conservation actions with 96 recommendations.

The strategy was created through a collaboration of 80 organizations from all three regional districts in the Okanagan.

### **The Strategy basically identifies**

**Why** we should conserve and restore natural areas

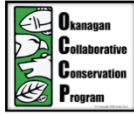
**Which** Natural areas should be protected and restored,

**who** can contribute

**How** and **when** can we take actions

The Strategy also provides environmental mapping to help land use decision-makers identify environmental sensitive areas for planning and protection.

Copies of the Strategy are available on the OCCP website.



## OCCP Strategic Plan 2015-2019

### **GOAL #1**

Promote a collaborative approach to conservation and restoration of natural areas.

### **GOAL #2**

Support Outreach and Education for Biodiversity Conservation

### **GOAL #3**

Ensure decision-makers and citizens have the information and tools needed to protect and restore ecosystems.

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All of the partnership's activities and projects meet the goals of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and the 3 overarching goals of OCCP's strategic plan which are:

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OCCP assists our partners to implement the Strategy by supporting a variety of projects that work across jurisdictions and land tenures to facilitate projects in environmental mapping, habitat restoration and environmental education and outreach.

OCCP also supports the partners by securing funding and resources, coordinating amongst partners and associates, and acting as a repository of conservation information.

## OCCP Steering Committee



**Jing Nui** | Environmental Planning Assistant, City of Vernon

**Aaron Deans** | Executive Director, Allan Brooks Nature Centre

**Angela Camano** | RPBio, Fortis BC

**Paul Dupuis** | Planner, District of Lake Country

**Danika Dudnik** | Environment and Land Use Planner, RDCO

**Keith Pinkoski** | Parks Manager, RDNO

**Lora Neild** | Ecosystems Branch, FLNRO

**Alyson Skinner** | Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society

The OCCP Steering Committee provides oversight on all OCCP activity.

We also reach out to all our partners through face-to-face meetings and we conducted an online survey to identify our partners' priorities and look for ways to form financial partnerships to help partners achieve their goals.

Tanis and are resource people to the partnership and their conservation initiatives.

## Action Team Model



Partners and stakeholders come together to complete specific projects with defined timelines and budgets

OCCP is structured on an Action Team model where partners and stakeholders come together to complete specific projects in a defined timeline.

This year OCCP facilitated 7 Action Teams and participated in 16 major conservation projects with our Partners

The Action Teams projects focused on

- Habitat Connectivity
- Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping
- Boat Impact Study
- Conservation Outreach
- Environmental Education
- BSC Communications

The action team model is very effective partly because partners to come together for concentrated periods of time meet project deliverables and then go back to their other full time job.





I would like to moment to acknowledge and thank all of our supporters that help to make collaboration possible.

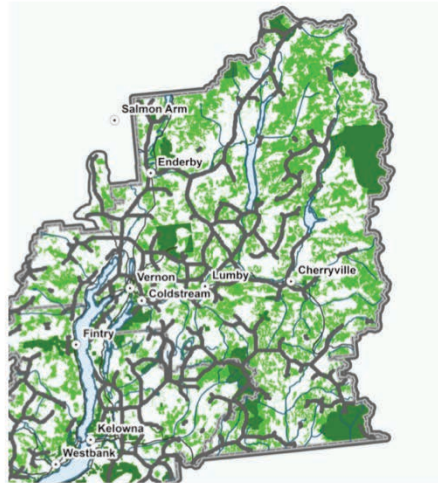
Regional and local governments provide seed funding that allow OCCP to leverage that money with other levels of government and foundations

Last year OCCP secured \$ 311, 000 from government grants and foundations.

Half of this money was used for coordination and communication activities for the partnership and the other half on direct project costs for biodiversity conservation.

In addition to the \$300,000 the partners collectivity secured over approximately \$600,000 to support biodiversity conservation projects in the Central and North Okanagan

## Okanagan Mountain Park to Kalamalka Lake Park Ecological Corridor



Planning for Ecosystem Connectivity

One of our Actions Teams is Planning for Ecosystem Connectivity in the Central Okanagan is a collaboration between the Regional District, Dr. Lael Parrott's research group at UBCO, and OCCP. Over the last 2 years representative from local and provincial government, First Nations, and environmental NGOs have been prioritizing and planning for ecological corridors.

Currently OCCP is working with the District of Lake Country to include a section of the 61km corridor connecting Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park and Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park into their Official Community Plan.

We are also working with local governments and landowners to develop a list of actions,

To protection of corridors across the RDCO and adjoining areas.

See the OCCP website Current Projects page for more information.



## Environmental Education and Outreach



### Goals of the Outreach

- To showcase the importance that habitat connectivity plays in maintaining biodiversity in the Okanagan
- To inform the public about local conservation strategies and activities for maintaining habitat connectivity

OCCP has also assisted with outreach about the importance of local grasslands in partnership with the Allan Brooks Nature Centre, and the Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society.

This year over 70,000 people viewed the exhibits that appeared at the Osoyoos Desert Centre, the Downtown Kelowna Branch of Okanagan Regional Library, the Okanagan Heritage Museum in Kelowna, the District of Lake Country Municipal Hall foyer, and a number of events throughout the valley.

And OCCP develops a comprehensive newsletters each month that promotes our partners projects and activities in biodiversity conservation

## Environmental Education and Outreach



Students Without  
Borders Academy



Planning for the Environment:  
*How can planning enhance  
environmental protection?*

The OCCP worked with Students Without Borders Academy and the Sierra Club to help establish a program of mentorship and outdoor experience in environmental science.

We had 50 delegates attend the Planning for the Environment workshop:

The Goals of the workshop included

- Demonstrate how local and regional planning can advance environmental protection.
- Highlight the connectivity planning mapping and objectives, and the tools available to implement corridor protection.
- Provide best practices for implementing environmental protection into local government planning for other environmentally sensitive areas like riparian areas and wetlands.
- Identify challenges and opportunities in environmental protection.

## Providing Resources for Environmental Planning and Biodiversity Conservation



OCCP also assists its partners in providing resources to the public regarding ways to maintain and enhance natural areas.

**Ensuring decision makers have the information and tools needed to protect and restore ecosystems.**



Sensitive Habitat Inventory on Mapping - Mission Creek

Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory - West Kelowna

Boating Impact Study for Kalamalka and Wood Lake

We also ensure decision makers have the information they need for protecting ecosystems we developed partnerships to conduct and last we facilitated action teams for

## Foreshore Inventory and Mapping of Okanagan Lake



4.1 km loss of natural area from 2009 -16

165 new retaining walls



9 new marinas

A total of 987 gryones

OCCP also coordinated the Okanagan Lake Foreshore Inventory and Mapping project. That report identified a loss of 4.1 km of natural areas around the Lake from 2009 to 2016. The report also identified 165 new retaining walls that cover approximately 1.5km of shoreline, and that 4 km of lake bed had also been disturbed.

The good news is that the report identified 41% of the shoreline is still in its natural state, and if we take action now, we can prevent further loss, and perhaps even begin to restore the areas along the lakeshore.

## **FIM Outreach Project Deliverables and Time Lines**

The outreach materials include:

- A **Resource Guide Summary** for Lakeshore Landowners - A pamphlet will be mailed to lakeshore landowners.
- **Online Resource Guide.** A comprehensive source of information on best practices for living on the lakeshore.
- **Information sheets and environmental checklists** – (possible distribution, mailed with utility bills – member municipalities)

**Restoration Sites** 2018-19 – Demonstration of best practices for life on the lakeshore, and educational signage at two shoreline restoration sites.

So we have development a relatively new Action Team to develop outreach materials

That will include

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OCCP has contracted a writer and a graphic designer to assist in developing the the resource materials which include:

Prior to developing the materials we will conduct a focus group of lakeshore land owners and, and gather input from the RDCO's Environmental Advisory Committee for the outreach materials.



## **Objectives of the FIM Outreach Material**

To increase the awareness for:

- 1. The natural areas around Okanagan lake**
- 2. Proper procedures for development and obtaining permitting**
- 3. Best practices for living on the lakeshore**

The outreach materials aim to make sure that each and every lakeshore landowner knows:

- the importance of natural areas.
- Proper procedures for development and obtaining permitting
- Best practices for living on the lakeshore