



SUMMER 2024

News from CCCS

THE CARIBOO CHILCOTIN CONSERVATION SOCIETY'S BIENNIAL NEWSLETTER



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Photo: Forest Fridays are back -- and SO fun!

staying MINDFUL

A message from our Board President,
Amber Gregg



Earth Challenge Instruction Day - Grade 7s learn about mindful water use at the City's pump station

Hello CCCS members!

As we enjoy the summer months, I imagine many of you are reading this while on vacation, traveling, camping, or amidst activities like paddling, cycling, or hiking. I've also been enjoying these activities and they often prompt me to reflect on making mindful choices daily.

Recently, I took my paddleboard down to Scout Island for some paddling and wildlife watching. It's a simple activity—no motor, no engine—just me out there paddling. However, when I think about everything involved, it starts to add up.

I have an inflatable board, made of heavy plastic, which isn't environmentally friendly to manufacture. I wonder how much of it is slowly deteriorating into the environment. When I first bought the board, I would inflate and deflate it during each trip with a manual pump. The ease and convenience of an electric pump appealed to me, but the first time I used it at Scout Island, I was immediately aware of its impact. To keep it running, I had to keep my car running as well. Idling a car for ten minutes in the parking lot of a nature sanctuary did not leave me with good feelings.

I now use roof racks I bought last year to avoid inflating and deflating the board each trip, which saves energy and extends its life. The trip to Scout Island from my house is short, just a few minutes. While I feel better knowing I work from home and don't drive daily, I still have concerns.

I am likely preaching to the choir, but if it weren't for my involvement with CCCS, I might not consider these factors as deeply. I'll still go out for a paddle and appreciate the scenery and wildlife, but being part of an organization that educates on sustainability keeps me mindful of my environmental impact and encourages me to minimize it whenever possible, not just when it comes to paddling, but in all the activities in my daily life!

Amber

The 2024 Water Wise Earth Challenge instruction included a tour of the City pump stations for each group as well as water testing at the creek; City staff kindly accommodated our request for nine tours over five days.





Fully Booked & Rave Reviews

Water Wise Update
By Jenny Howell

Happy Summer everyone! I waved off my last class from the Community Forest at the end of June after a very successful season. We had twenty seven field trips this May and June; nineteen to the Community Forest, six to the City pump stations (and sometimes sewage plant), two to the River Valley, two storm drain painting and one to Borland Creek. (The math is confusing as some trips started at the pump stations and then went up to the Community Forest rather than the sewage plant).

The Community Forest funds an assistant, so I was able to hire one of four available instructors for those days; pulling from the pool of retired teachers that also help out at Gavin Lake.

Our days up there are a combination of Water Wise, forest education and fort building; I think my favourite comment this year was from a grade 1 student who said 'I am having the best day of my entire life!'



Three happy field-trippers

I am not able to meet demand anymore for field trips and turned away at least 10 teachers this year, so will likely start offering them to schools in alternate years to give a broader range of kids the opportunity to go; quite a few of the students this year have been on field trips with me before.

It seems so long ago, but the year started with 11 class sessions back in January at 150 Mile and Maranatha. Then nine classes came to Gavin Lake for snow science, (with no snow). I gave up measuring the snowpack when we got below 10 cm, but then the snow reappeared somewhat for the last few classes.

We got to talk lots about El Niño and climate change impacts on snowpack, the neutral period predicted in the spring and the hope for the La Niña predicted this summer to avoid a summer of fires. So far that all seems to be playing out as hoped for; I hope at least some kids remember our discussions as it plays out in real time!



"I am having the best day of my entire life!"

– Grade 1 student on a field trip with Jenny



There was a snowmobile course running at Gavin at the same time with all the snowmobiles sitting on the grass in a circle around the instructor. Mike ended up teaching archery rather than taking classes skiing this year. If La Niña strengthens into the fall as predicted, we will hopefully have the snow and cold back next winter.

In between classes I worked on and completed the four Species at Risk signs for the UBC Alex Fraser Research Forest on Bighorn Sheep, Fishers, Cavity Nesters and Badgers. These will be used on a trail at their property with play structures associated with each sign.

After Snow Science, we were right into the new version of Earth Challenge. All nine grade 7 classes participated and we expanded the instruction portion considerably. The classes came to Scout Island where four of the instructors had their sessions; half a day with each group of kids. Then each class also went to the dump for the Waste part of the instruction.

The topics stayed the same; Water, Waste, Air, Ecosystems and Invasives. With the longer instruction time, students participated in just two of the options but were able to explore them in more depth. For the water session we included a tour of the City pump stations for each group as well as water testing at the creek; City staff kindly accommodated our request for nine tours over five days.

For the Earth Challenge day itself, we had UBC and DFO join our five previous instructors and students rotated through six of the seven available rotations as well as the traditional quiz which the teachers ran themselves in their classrooms. Feedback for the new format was very positive, so we are likely to run it in much the same way next year.

This new version asks for a lot of preparation and teaching time from our partners, and we are very grateful to Erin Hitchcock (Air Quality), Emma Nikkel (Invasives) and Martin Kruus (Scout Island) for the enthusiasm and energy they all brought with them.

Left: Snow Science in a La Niña year
Right: DFO station on Earth Challenge Day



I think I probably say it every newsletter, but here it is again; having the local environmental non-profits work so well together is such an asset for our community and students as we can all support and amplify each other's programs.

UBC (Mark Gill and Courtenay Patenaude) and DFO (Tyler Thibeault and Spencer Neufeld) also added so much with their Earth Challenge rotations. Earth Challenge was April 22nd, which brought us right to field trip season in May.

The summary of numbers for Water Wise sessions for the 2023/24 school year is 99 classes/field trips reaching 1738 students and adults.

Thanks to all our CCCS contractors for another good school year; to Dani for jumping in and learning the office ropes so quickly and to Amber for taking on the CCCS presidency. I hope everyone gets some down time over the summer with some warmer, but smoke-free days!

Jenny

The Community Forest Field Trips are always a big hit





Forest Fridays are Back!

Forest Fridays Update
By Amandah Cullum

I am very excited that, with the support of CCCS funding partners (and with special recognition to the Williams Lake Community Forest for their ongoing support), Forest Fridays resumed this April after spring break.

I'm known to the families as "Teacher Amandah". As an Early Childhood Educator, I knew that research has shown time and again that children who are connected with

their families, environment, peers, and nature are more likely to build deep social relationships and a sense of belonging as well as a natural sense of wonder, curiosity, and interest in the world around them.

This sets them up for successful community relationships and a strong sense of conservation.

Just a few of the many children and families that took part in Forest Fridays this spring



So, several years ago, I created Forest Fridays for children ages 0-9, along with their caregivers, to engage, learn, and connect through nature and play. I am so happy the program has been resumed under the CCCS programming umbrella.

I, along with an amazing group of children and families, pride ourselves on creating a safe, warm, and inclusive environment where all participants have the opportunity to feel heard, supported, and encouraged to feel awe and wonder for ourselves, others, and our earth!

Future conservationists, or maybe they already are...

The Forest Friday crew have visited local nature sanctuaries such as the Williams Lake Community Forest, Scout Island, the Dairy Fields and local parks discovering all that nature has to offer our senses and leaving our beautiful community spaces just a little bit better than we found them.

If you know a family that is interested in participating, please encourage them to join us every second Friday for our Forest Friday adventures! They can join the Facebook group - Cariboo Chilcotin Conservation Society's Forest Fridays - to sign up and stay informed of schedules and locations.

Amandah





Little Hands in the Ground

Waste Wise Update
By Oliver Berger

Spring has sprung, and pretty early this year, only to be followed by cooler weather and then finally some rain. All in all it still got a lot of people out and about gardening, being outside and going to events.

I spent May at the Farmers' Market every week talking to folks about compost of course and showcasing all of our fully packed and educational trifold brochures. We chatted about Water Wise solutions for the garden and drought hardy plants giving us a great opportunity to dive into our Xeriscape and Plant information which is due for some updating. Public feedback was great and we hope to keep updating as times change.

Events have begun, therefore the single-use waste begins to flow as well. Mary and I have set up small stations for day events like the Child Development Centre 50 year anniversary and large scale events like the Williams Lake First Nation Father's Day Pow Wow. Support has been amazing from the public and I can positively say every year we see improvements on how they use our stations and engage with our educational tactics.

We still see a lot of waste, however it is nice to be able to divert most to recycling. We are taking on the task of trying to gauge some diversion numbers with a tracker sheet I have developed so we can really get into the nitty gritty numbers side of things!

Our zero waste stations offer education and engagement opportunities



I reached out to all the schools this year to assist me in my other gardening projects in town at the Potato House Project and The Food Policy Council Memory Garden. Both places need a little extra love and I thought it would be nice for the kids to get outside and get their hands into the ground and learn a few things. We have tackled weeds, pulled invasive plants, turned compost piles and got many plants into the ground.

Gardening teaches a lot about our soil, soil health, water saving and retention techniques and most importantly where our food comes from. A solid sustainability win for the kids which came from the Elementary schools as well as the Food and Nutrition class from the high school.

A fun add-on this Spring was taking the Potato House worms on tour with the Strong Start outdoor Shipwrecked pirate themed day event for toddlers. The kids would hand

scoop the 'marooned' worms from a bucket back into their 'Apartment Ship' (worm tower) to 'save them'.

It got their hands into the soil and also intrigued by other bugs and critters out and about. We hope to engage more with the toddlers at other upcoming events. While the young ones are distracted, the parents would peruse through our brochure collection and inevitably ask me about other Water Wise or Waste Wise related things.

See you all out and about during the summer and at any event we make it to. Thank you for your support as always and dedication to our society.

Oliver

Oliver had lots of help with gardening projects this year!





Pumpin' Tires & Takin' Names

Waste Wise Update
By Mary Forbes

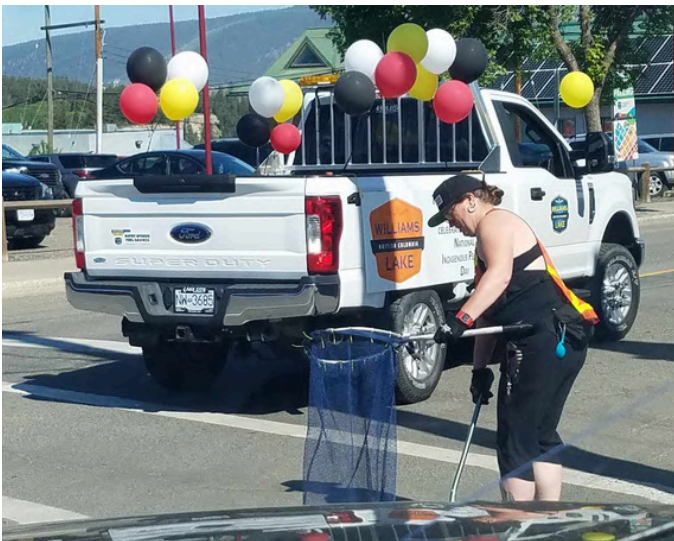
As summer rides in, so too does bike recycling. Bikes for All were invited once again to support the Tsilhqot'in bike (and horse) ride into the stampede by both Yunese'tin and Tl'etinqox in partnership and support from Red Shreds and Glen Edwards Alexis Creek RCMP.

Yuni has Mary and Mark Sevard out early for an epic 18 hour day the week before the ride. Tl'etinqox brings in Mary and Glen at 7am on the morning of the ride to fix bikes until noon and then they ride. This is the first year for Tl'etinqox with bike recycling and it was well received, so much so that Tsi Del Del is interested in having us out next year as well.

My heart is full watching our bikes being loved and ridden in such an inspiring journey. Each night of the first three nights Mary and Glen provide hours of repairs for riders whose bikes are needing some love.

It blew my mind when on the first camp night, after riding all day uphill on a bmx, a customer brought in a bike saying it was "sluggish", only to discover the entire crank bearings were gone and had been ridden metal on metal for some time. Luckily I had the parts and keep this bike riding on.

The Rotary Pancake Breakfast was an epic success, with very keen rotarians learning and participating. We received excellent feedback and made a very popular Trash Talk Tuesday. Trying to fit the parade into the pancake breakfast was more than we bargained for and next year we plan to make a trailer float so people can walk up and recycle themselves instead of us chasing them with a net. Mary is just getting too old...



Left: Mary and her net
Right: Just a few happy Bikes 4 All recipients



The Aboriginal Day Parade and day in the park on June 21st was fantastic and very well attended. Canada day in the park was much more mellow but we did get to connect with the Recycle BC traveling education van and booth staff who were very "slap chop".

The Vancouver bike shop Ride On has donated 307 bikes to Bikes for All, most of which have already found homes! Farmers' markets, GoByBike Week, the Stampede bike ride and general interest in the program has kept us pumpin' tires and takin' names. We are also becoming a source for rare bike parts for local shops which is an interesting development. Currently there are over 500 bikes in Mary's backyard but will be down to a manageable 100 or so by winter.

WLFN Father's Day Powwow was another success, demonstrating staff ownership and kindness to Mary and Oliver with great volunteers and providing us a golf cart for our personal use. Chief Willie Sellars messaged Mary to mention he cannot unsee the garbage at other events now that his is so well managed. Willie has shared our contact info with Kamloops Powwow organizers. Ooeee, that would be a huge job!

Cariboo Foundry invited bike recycling to their parking lot for an end of school year party and the high school bike club with Deena Bowman joining in to pull parts of downhill mountain bikes with cracked frames. Along with Oliver, Denise Duchane, Bill James and other keen volunteers it was another phenomenal success.

Mary

Mary's Earth Challenge Day Waste Station -- Blindfold Recycling Quiz





Environmental Heroes 2024!

By Vanessa Moberg

You may remember our post last year about Wilber Saunders' litter-picking heroics. He filled seven buckets with the cigarette butts he gathered from the streets of Williams Lake in just one year! That's why we gave him the title of CCCS's 2023 Litter-Picking Superhero.

Inspired by Wilber, we put a call out on social media asking people to nominate more Cariboo Chilcotin Environmental Heroes – and we were not disappointed.

We announced the 2024 heroes on social media on Earth Day, and we gave them all a small token of our appreciation. The class received an order of “fancy cookies” and the rest of the nominees were given a coffee shop gift card as well as a Next General Mercantile + Refillery gift card (kindly donated by Dani!).

We express deep gratitude to these people and the many other local heroes who are making a difference in their communities!



And the winners are...

Ms. Riley's Grade 5/6 Class at Cataline Elementary

This entire class of heroes has taken over all the recycling and composting at Cataline. They started by making posters and presenting to the other classes. Now, every week, they collect 3 large bags of recycling sorted into hard plastics, soft plastics, and refundables, as well as cardboard, paper, and compost. Way to go, friends! Big thanks to teacher Ms. Riley for doing weekly drop-offs at the transfer station and to custodian Ms. Jenny for all her help.



YOUTH HEROES



Misty Schulz

As a mechanic, Misty brings old vehicles to life. She also turns used cooking fat into soap. She sews to repair things and to make people gifts. She also adopts unwanted, runty, and deformed farm animals to eat her compost. Throwing things away is just not in Misty's DNA.

MOST CREATIVE HERO



Pat & Annie Gallant

Other than the obvious such as concrete, drywall, and insulation, Pat scavenged most of the supplies needed to build their home. He's visited every Habitat for Humanity outlet on the Lower Mainland and made all the decor from recycled materials. Pat also took apart their old house and 90% was recycled by a friend into another building. The living room is framed by 200-year-old cedar telephone poles which BC Tel was discarding – Pat milled, sanded, and sealed them.



HOME-OWNER HEROES

Heather Burke

Heather is well known in her community for picking up litter along roadsides and ditches during walks in the Bouchie Lake area in Quesnel. She also does highway cleanups. She spends her spare time in nature with her family, and cleans up litter when kayaking with her daughter. She started the Waste Free Living North Cariboo Facebook group and the Quesnel Trash Trackers Instagram profile where she promotes litter walking as a way to improve personal wellbeing, make a positive environmental impact, and lead by example. Heather strongly believes that every little bit helps.



COMMUNITY HERO

Judith Favelle

Even with arthritis in her knee, Judith picks up garbage from Fox Mountain, as she says "just for the fresh air and a little exercise". She actually reinforced her litter pick buggy with upcycled blinds! And even though she doesn't drink coffee, Judith sure picks up a lot of coffee cups.



LITTER PICK HERO

Tiffany Doering

Tiffany is the Co-Owner of Cariboo Art Beat where she is the Queen of Reuse. When she paints or runs workshops, she reuses all the leftover paint along with the washable cloths and aprons. For water jars, she uses the glass jars from her Mint and Lime lunches. She also uses plastic ice cream/yogurt lids as paint palettes because they can be reused or recycled once the paint is peeled off. At home, Tiffany is also a recycling aficionado and reuses material in her decor.



ARTS COMMUNITY HERO

Angie Delainey

As a Williams Lake City Counsellor, second term SD27 Trustee, former Cariboo Regional District Director, and recycler extraordinaire, Angie is an important political advocate for waste reduction and other environmental issues at multiple levels of government. With the talent of being able to talk to “anyone, anywhere, at anytime” no doubt Angie has held many Waste Wise conversations around the recycling bins.



**PUBLIC
SERVANT
HERO**

Wilber Saunders

In just one year, Wilber picked up seven(!) buckets of cigarette butts from around Williams Lake. Cigarette butts remain one of the most littered items in Canada. They are filled with toxic chemicals, contain plastic in the filters, can start fires, can harm animals that ingest them, and pollute our waterways. Oliver mailed all these butts off to be recycled under the Bucks for Butts program in collaboration with BrainGarden and Pocket Ashtray, which also helps raise funds towards education about cigarette waste. As soon as we received these butts from Wilber, he started filling more buckets!



**2023
HERO**



A Few Recycling Reminders

Waste Wise Update
By Vanessa Moberg

Although many single-use party supplies are now included in the provincial recycling program, plastic “grass” (found in things like Easter baskets) are NOT. Long stringy materials like this get tangled up in the machinery. Cardboard or paper “grass”, however IS accepted.

And speaking of shredded paper, it may no longer be placed inside a plastic bag, but it must still be “contained” using a paper bag or box. In the past, some jurisdictions allowed shredded paper in clear plastic bags while others required paper bags or boxes,

but this has recently been standardized to paper bags or boxes only province-wide! For this, you can use things you were going to recycle anyway like your empty cereal boxes or any paper bag or box that will keep the shredded paper from blowing away. This requirement is in effect for both curbside pick-up and transfer station drop-off.

And here’s some good news for gardeners! If you can’t reuse them, your plastic garden pots and seedling trays are considered “containers” under the residential packaging program in BC, so they are accepted in the containers bin at the transfer station or in your curbside blue bin.

As always, consult the applicable municipal or regional guidelines or check out RCBC’s Recyclepedia at rcbc.ca/recyclepedia/ or call the hotline at 1-800-667-4321.

Extra! Extra!

THE EARTH RECYCLES!

A tree falls in the forest, and it is completely reused

Fallen logs provide a surface and habitat for species, such as mosses and orchids. In time seedlings germinate on the log and are provided with food and protection from the decaying log and mosses.

These 'nurse logs' help protect new seedlings from pathogens (disease causing organisms) on the forest floor.

Mosses (sepsyúlecw) are non-flowering plants which produce spores and have stems and leaves, but they do not have true roots. They can hold liquids up to twenty times their weight, reducing run-off.

Mosses were used widely by First Nations and settlers as first aid dressings, insulation and filling for mattresses and pillows.

Ecologically, mosses break down exposed substrata, such as wood, rock and soil which releases nutrients for the plants that come after them, like the seedlings on the nurse log.



Be like Planet Earth: reduce, reuse, recycle, and rot (compost)!

Land Acknowledgement

We are very grateful for the wisdom of the Secwépemc, T̓silhqot'in, Dakelh, and Nuxalk nations leading us to better stewardship of this beautiful region. We are honoured to work with them in this pursuit, and we acknowledge that much of this work takes place on their traditional unceded territories.



Grants & Funding Update

By Daniella Gastaldello

City of Williams Lake:

The City of Williams Lake provides two fees-for-service: one for our Water Wise program, and one for our Waste Wise program. The first allows us to run the Water Wise program in the schools and community of Williams Lake. This funding (\$42,000) assures the continuity of the education program which engages all ages in water conservation and provides educational tools for easy ways to save water. The second is for our city-based Waste Wise program (\$35,000), which is our education program focused on the 5 R's: reduce, reuse, recycle, rethink and rot. We have been working with the City since 2021 to include regular audits of the Recycling program in the City of Williams Lake, for an additional fee. We are on year two, of our three-year contract, for both the Water Wise and Waste Wise program funding.

Cariboo Regional District:

Our CRD fee-for-service is also a three-year contract (\$40,465), with a 2-year option to renew. In June 2022, we were direct awarded the contract with the same terms. The three-year term is June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2025, and the two-year option to renew is June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2027. In addition to all of our regular Waste Wise work, this contract allows us wages and kilometres to travel around the region with our classroom Waste Wise Program, to conduct more food waste education and compost coaching, and doing Recycling Audits in the 108.

Community Gaming Grant:

Our annual Community Gaming application (\$25,000) was approved last year in August (funding December 2023–November 2024) for our Watershed Health program – which includes Water Wise classes for regional schools and other watershed education – and our Sustainable Life Education program – which includes our Outdoor Education modules plus community waste reduction programs such as Bikes for All, Skates for All, Veggies for All, Earth Friendly Holiday Event and more! Our Community Gaming Grant report has been sent in and the application for this year's funding is underway.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada:

Last year we received \$4,000 in funding (down from \$5,500 previously) from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The grant application for this new fiscal year has been completed and sent in and we are currently waiting for approval from DFO. This fund supports many of our Water Wise initiatives including Classroom Education, Xeriscape Gardening, Shoreline Awareness, Storm Drain Awareness, and many others!

Williams Lake Community Forest:

The Williams Lake Community Forest funding (\$14,700.00) funds our Water Wise education program and WL Community Forest Water Wise education program in the WL Community Forest (funds on average 19 field trips each school year), covers our wages, admin and project expenses, as well as allows us to hire additional educators to split classes into smaller groups, therefore improving the educational quality of the field trip. The WL Community Forest is also funding the busing of students, which saves approximately \$2000 from our travel budget, and is funding our newest Water Wise program: Forest Fridays, which launched in April of this year!



Cariboo Chilcotin Conservation Society

Memberships & Donations

102-197 Second Ave N
Williams Lake, BC V2G1Z5

Our organization runs by the power of thousands of volunteer hours, memberships, and donations.

Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm!

For an annual membership or donation, please follow the instructions below. If a membership is not right for you, please consider passing it along to a friend or making a one-time donation instead!

Three ways to join our membership!

1. MAIL - Please print off, fill out, and mail this form with your payment to the above address.
2. IN-PERSON - You can drop into the CCCS office to fill out the form and make payment in person.
3. ONLINE - We've gone all tech-wiz! Click here to sign up for a membership or make a donation online!



**SIGN UP OR
DONATE ONLINE**

Circle Membership Type:

Individual: \$15.00 Family*: \$20.00 Senior/Student: \$5.00 Group/Business: \$30.00

*If you checked "family" membership, how many people in your family? _____
(If left blank, we will assume your membership covers 4 people.)

Donations: \$20.00 _____ \$35.00 _____ \$50.00 _____ \$100 _____ Other amount _____

Name: _____

Contact (for Business only): _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Note: Membership fees and donations can be made via cash, cheque (made payable to the Cariboo Chilcotin Conservation Society), or online right [here](#).