

WHO WE ARE

Established as a non-profit organization in August, 2008, we became a registered Charity in the spring, 2010.

We have a board of five directors:

Janet Southcott - President
Lesley Thorsell - Vice-President
Gord Kennedy - Treasurer
Rob Southcott - Secretary
Ted Crossley - Director at large

We have four committees:

Membership
Fundraising
Public Engagement
Land

MISSION

Protection of natural, agricultural, historic, and scenic lands in our region through the use of conservation covenants, land acquisition and education.

VISION

People living within a healthy diverse region where respect for the natural world is paramount.

Our first covenant

February was a celebratory month for Malaspina Land Conservancy Society. Our organization is now the holder of a conservation covenant covering part of a residential property within the City of Powell River.

Martin Rossander was a long-time supporter of preservation and conservation of nature. He lived strong ideals with a reputation of being well ahead of his time.

When he died in August 2012, he left a request in his will that a portion of his estate be preserved in-perpetuity.

“We are delighted to be able to manage the covenant on his Fernwood Avenue property here in town,” said Janet Southcott. “Martin was an ardent supporter of MLCS since its creation and it seems natural that it is a covenant over part of his estate which is the first official interest in land for our organization.”

This legally binding agreement will remain on the title of the property and restrict usage of the treed part of the one-acre residential lot. Management of the covenant is a job for MLCS volunteers and involves ensuring the restrictions are abided to and hosting a regular cleanup party.



Registration of a conservation covenant over part of Martin Rossander's estate marks the first official interest in land for Malaspina Land Conservancy Society. *Photo courtesy of Aaron Mazurek.*

A win-win opportunity

Malaspina Land Conservancy continues to be an active member of the Land Trust Alliance of BC.

LTABC is a networking and educational hub for land conservancies throughout the province.

Recently, board members attended a conference, hosted by LTABC, to learn more about conservation covenants. Management of covenants is a large part

of what a conservancy does, but management is only part of the responsibility.

The first step with any property is to develop a baseline inventory, a record using photographs and identification of plants and animals found on the lot.

Then, periodically, the photographs are updated and a review of species found on the land is maintained.

For the past two years, MLCS *Page 2 over..*

Visitors share information and support

A gathering of like-minded organizations took place recently both on Cortes Island and here in Powell River. In November 2013, Janet and Rob Southcott sailed over to Cortes and attended an inaugural meeting of the northern Gulf Island conservancies. The meeting's intent was to share information, resources, knowledge and collaborate with one another.

Land conservancies are not really reinventing the wheel. While there are various avenues a conservancy can take, such as natural land conservation, historic or cultural property preservation or low-income housing designation, it is rare a conservancy is stepping far into the unknown. With over 30 conservancies in BC and over 100 across Canada, most steps have been taken before.

Hosted at Linnea Farm, a unique property owned as a cooperative and managed as a working farm, the 30 participants were toured around various examples of conservation found on Cortes.

MLCS hosted the second meeting here in Powell River. In early June 2014 representatives from Cortes and Campbell River crossed the Strait and shared knowledge about many topics including recent work with a timber company. As it is likely MLCS will be working with the same company in the near future the information was invaluable.

As a field trip, the group took a guided tour of Stillwater Bluffs, a property dear to the hearts of many residents in the Powell River area.

What is a land conservancy?

Sharing responsibility

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has been managing the covenant over a large area of private land on Texada Island, on behalf of The Land Conservancy (TLC).

"Having the opportunity to work with TLC has been an ideal training ground for our conservancy," said Janet. "And, we have had the added pleasure of developing a strong relationship with the landowner, who is fully involved with the preservation of his land."

Assistance with management of the covenant on Texada will continue for as long as TLC requires the extra volunteer help. In the meantime, an exploration of the property is being organized for current members and directors of MLCS.

A land conservancy is a non-profit, charitable organization committed to the long-term protection of natural and/or cultural heritage. A land conservancy may own land itself, or it may enter into conservation covenants with property owners to protect or restore natural or heritage features on the owner's land. Land trusts also engage in stewardship, restoration and management of lands. Land trust and land conservancy are often used interchangeably.

Bioblitz anyone?

A 12-hour or 24-hour intensive cataloguing of an area of land can be lots of fun!

This is a bioblitz. It is a gathering of many groups of people with diverse knowledge to enable the recording and tracking of current activity on a piece of property.

Such an event has been successfully held various years on Cortes Island, and we think one can be held here...actually two: one on Stillwater Bluffs and one on Valentine Mountain. Interested? Get in touch!

How to get in touch...

If you wish to become a member, are looking for more information, or have land to conserve through purchase or conservation covenant, please contact us.

Send mail to Malaspina Land Conservancy Society
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