

*WORKING DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
January 2024*



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027

BC'S VOICE FOR NATURE

BC Nature's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan is based on the importance of continuing to connect British Columbians to nature so they can better appreciate this province's extraordinary ecosystems and biodiversity, and understand that human well-being is directly related to ecosystem health. Our programs focus on conservation, education and public engagement. Our actions centre on speaking up, taking action, educating the younger generation, strengthening our Federation and governing the society professionally.

Nature urgently needs our help. Scientists and others have documented the loss of wildlife habitat, the acceleration of climate change and the rapid collapse of species. A number of British Columbia's ecosystems are critically imperiled, while more than 1900 species and subspecies are at risk. In addition, British Columbia has a global role in the preservation of a number of ecosystems, as well as close to a hundred plant and animal species.

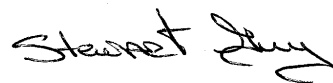
Exposure to nature is good for us. It improves our physical and emotional health and contributes to healthy child development. Therefore access to nature for all is vital, thus our recognition that equity, anti-racism and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples are crucial to safeguarding nature. We see the need for a cultural response to nature that centres around a healthy environment, diverse and functioning ecosystems, and informed action.

With your help, BC Nature is committed to being a leader in making a positive difference.



Nancy Flood
President

January 2024



Stewart Guy
Executive Director





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WHO WE ARE

A COLLECTIVE VOICE

Since 1969 we have been BC's collective voice for nature conservation. We function as a federation of natural history clubs and organizations throughout British Columbia representing over 6000 members. Our members provide the eyes, ears and feet on the ground for nature in this province. Our network of naturalists shares their research, commitment and knowledge of BC's wild spaces and species – inspiring others to get involved.

Through education, practical conservation projects and community engagement we encourage people of all ages to explore nature and get involved in outdoor activities – from birdwatching, botanizing, searching for mushrooms or insects, to hiking or just being outside exploring.

We believe these activities foster awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural environment which leads to healthier communities and, hopefully, to a deeper personal involvement.

OUR PURPOSES¹

BC Nature's Constitution lists these four equally important purposes:

- **To provide naturalists and nature clubs of BC with a collective voice on conservation and environmental issues.**
- **To foster an awareness, appreciation and understanding of our natural environment, that it may be wisely used and maintained for future generations.**
- **To encourage the formation and cooperation of nature clubs throughout BC.**
- **To provide a means of communication among naturalists in BC.**

¹ The two minor edits, the addition of collective in bullet one and the change in bullet four from between to among, necessitate a Constitution change and thus a vote by the membership at the May 2024 AGM.

OUR BELIEFS

We believe that to safeguard our environment and the larger natural world, we must be inclusive and must foster reconciliation with the Indigenous Peoples of British Columbia. We believe in, and are committed to racial justice, equity for all, and inclusiveness of all diversity and abilities in our activities².

OUR PRINCIPLES

Our actions will be guided by the following principles:

- **Science, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and a passion for nature guide our activities.**
- **Species have an intrinsic right to exist, unconnected to human needs.**
- **Indigenous reconciliation and respect for equity, diversity and inclusion is an essential aspect of our understanding of, and caring for, the environment.**
- **Collaboration - providing a collective voice - is a more effective approach than working alone.**
- **The human species is interdependent with all other species and the planet's biosphere.**
- **Functioning natural ecosystems are essential for a healthy future.**
- **Human well-being is directly related to ecosystem health.**





VISION Knowing nature and keeping it worth knowing².

MISSION To connect the people of British Columbia to nature, so they can better know and appreciate its wonders, and to encourage them to be a strong voice and active champions for nature conservation.

² PLEASE NOTE: The Board is recommending this change in wording for the Vision. The current vision is: "Know Nature and Keep it Worth Knowing."

GOALS

To fulfill our purposes and achieve our mission we will strive to achieve these four goals:

CONSERVATION: Speaking Up and Taking Action to Protect Nature

Promote effective action on conservation policy and environmental issues in British Columbia, in particular the climate emergency, loss of biodiversity, endangered habitats and threatened species.

EDUCATION: Telling the Story of Nature

Promote a sense of wonder and foster an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural environment, based on science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, so that people learn how to treat nature respectfully and help maintain it for future generations.

ENGAGEMENT: Strengthening Our Federation

Encourage the formation of and provide ongoing support for natural history clubs and organizations throughout BC, and provide a means of communication among those clubs and organizations, their members, supporters and the public.

GOVERNANCE: Managing the Organization

Operationalize BC Nature's strategic plan and govern the organization in a fiscally responsible and professional manner on behalf of the membership.



GOAL 1 CONSERVATION: Speaking Up and Taking Action to Protect Nature

OBJECTIVE: Promote effective action on conservation policy and environmental issues in British Columbia, in particular the climate emergency, loss of biodiversity, endangered habitats and threatened species.

OUTCOMES - HOW WE WILL GET THERE:

- **Establish and assist with the management of IBAs/KBAs³.**
 - Meaningfully engage with IBAs/KBAs each year through caretaker annual reports, field surveys, and First Nation involvement.
 - Identify new areas for nomination.
 - Raise funding to support the program.
- **Implement the Municipal Protected Areas Program.**
 - Make regular new contacts with local governments.
 - Assess and submit protected areas for local governments.
 - Provide webinars and presentations to clubs, decision makers and collaborators, especially with those clubs that currently collaborate with local governments.
 - Work with external conservation agencies, as appropriate.
 - Apply for aligned grants to support the program.
- **Support the advocacy work of the Conservation Committee.**
 - Provide advice on public statements and review correspondence, as required.
 - Bring important conservation matters to the Committee for consideration.
 - Research and investigate conservation matters, including those raised by member clubs
- **Provide opportunities for Indigenous collaboration.**
 - Respectfully support Indigenous interest in advancing Indigenous Protected and Conservation Areas (IPCAs).
- **Facilitate funding for the clubs to support local conservation projects.**
 - Support the annual club grants administered by the BC Naturalists' Foundation.
 - By working with BC Naturalists' Foundation, increase the amount of funding available for club projects.
- **Support BC Nature's development and fundraising plan.**
 - Track annual volunteer hours on BC Nature and club conservation projects.
- **Work with BC Parks, the Friends of Ecological Reserves, and other groups to restore the integrity and public profile of BC's Ecological Reserves system.**

³ IBA: Important Bird and Biodiversity Area KBA: Key Biodiversity Area



GOAL 2

EDUCATION: Telling the Story of Nature

OBJECTIVE: Promote a sense of wonder and foster an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural environment, based on science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, so that people learn how to treat nature respectfully and help maintain it for future generations.

OUTCOMES - HOW WE WILL GET THERE:

- Produce and distribute *BCnature* magazine four times a year.
- Award the student scholarships and grant the science fair awards annually.
 - By Spring 2027:
 - Develop a database of contacts to promote and advertise our awards and scholarships with the goal of, at least, doubling the number of annual applicants.
 - Double the funding available for both the scholarships and the awards.
- By May 2024, finalize an agreement with NatureKids BC that describes their role in the local clubs' nature education and mentorship programs for children and families.
- Explore new ways to assist the clubs in delivering nature education programs for children and families.
 - By May 2025:
 - Establish a baseline of the number of clubs offering educational programs, and the number of participants in each.
 - Determine a mechanism for better promoting the production of educational support materials by and for the clubs, and facilitate the sharing of those materials among the clubs.

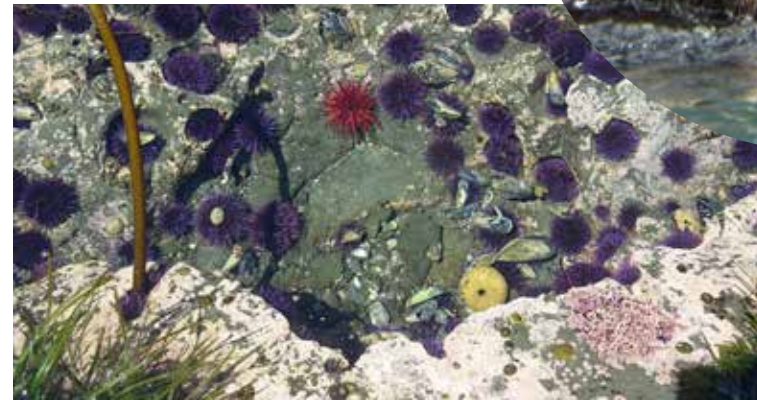


GOAL 3 ENGAGEMENT: Strengthening our Federation

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the formation of and provide ongoing support for natural history clubs and organizations throughout BC, and provide a means of communication among those clubs and organizations, their members, supporters and the public.

OUTCOMES - HOW WE WILL GET THERE:

- **Provide support to existing clubs, by assisting in capacity-building with their core activities: governance, projects and communication.**
 - In 2024 produce a Best Practices document, based on the Charting a Course Report, that provides essential information to the clubs and supports the key issues identified in the report.
- **Support the establishment of nature clubs in areas of British Columbia where none exist.**
 - Up to two a year.
- **In 2024, if necessary establish a Membership Task Force that would focus on building the membership of the organization and providing the necessary marketing support to achieve stated goals.**
 - Their first task would be to re-examine BC Nature's membership categories, names and fee structure.
 - Decide whether to recommend the establishment of a permanent Membership Committee or sub-Committee.
- **Promote the welcome and inclusion of Indigenous communities and other under-represented groups into BC Nature.**
 - In 2024 deliver on the recommendations of the Equity Diversity and Inclusion Engagement Report.
- **Facilitate collaboration on conservation and education issues with like-minded groups and individuals throughout BC.**
 - In 2024 develop a strategy with funding, so that BC Nature can proactively act as a conservation and education hub through such actions as webinars and support for on-the-ground projects.



GOAL 4 GOVERNANCE: Managing the Organization

Operationalize BC Nature’s strategic plan and govern the organization in a fiscally responsible and professional manner on behalf of the membership.

OUTCOMES - HOW WE WILL GET THERE:

- **Board and staff review the strategic plan.**
 - Every Fall the Board and Executive Director will provide specific direction for the upcoming year through the development of an operational plan. This plan will review the previous year and establish specific outcomes for the upcoming year for each of the four goals. These outcomes will provide direction to the Board and will be incorporated into the staff work plans.
 - As well, every Fall the Board will renew and update the strategic plan as required.
- **In 2024, the Board will establish a Finance and Development Committee to oversee BC Nature’s finances and to ensure the on-going viability of the organization.**
 - Each Spring, the Board will approve an Annual Budget that includes a Business and Development Plan committed to meeting the needs of the organization on such critical matters as communication, donations, appeals and bequests.
 - Throughout the year, review and approve quarterly and annual financial reports.
- **By 2027, review Board size and determine a selection process for new Board members that represents BC’s geography and includes an emphasis on diversity among people in British Columbia who care about nature.**
- **Provide Board support for the Executive Director to execute the conservation, fundraising, communication, membership and administrative functions.**
 - President approval and review of annual performance plan.
 - Conduct regular Board and Committee meetings, at which staff/contractors provide updates on their ongoing activities for discussion and feedback.
- **Establish and maintain an effective Human Resources Committee to address equity, diversity and inclusion; as well as ensuring a mechanism for addressing situations of harassment and discrimination.**
- **By 2025, establish a BCN Social Enterprise for working with the club nature camps and field trips programs - as well as other fund-generating projects.**
- **Honour the BC Naturalists’ Foundation agreement, by maintaining regular contact with their President.**
- **Provide updates to the BCN’s Policy and Procedures Manual, as required.**





MOVING FORWARD

BC Nature's Strategic Plan for 2024-2027 was developed jointly by the Board and senior staff, with input from the clubs and membership. Responsibility for delivering on this strategy remains a shared responsibility of the Board and senior staff. This plan will be reviewed every Fall by the Board to monitor progress, provide for course correction and consider unforeseen circumstances. An annual summary report will be made available to the membership.

The intent of the strategic plan is to guide decision-making and serve as the blueprint the Board and senior staff will use to develop the annual budget, operational plan and staff work plans. The strategic plan also serves as an important orientation document.

While delivering on the identified priority actions, we will be guided by the following:

- **Managing BC Nature in a fiscally conservative manner.**
- **Focusing on a few actions and doing them well.**
- **Continuing to be of social relevance to the community.**
- **Being a model of environmental stewardship and governance.**



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