



2026 Fall Gathering and Annual General Meeting **“Passing the Torch: Lessons for the Next Chapter of Restoration and Stewardship”**

October 15 & 16, 2026
Prestige Lakeside Resort, Nelson, BC

About the Fall Gathering

The Kootenay Conservation Program Fall Gathering serves as one of the primary opportunities to connect and reconnect KCP partners from across the region. In collaboration with Selkirk College, this year’s event will be focused on the theme of *“Passing the Torch: Lessons for the Next Chapter of Restoration and Stewardship”*. This year’s Fall Gathering is designed to honour the legacy and capture the extensive knowledge of senior restoration and stewardship practitioners in the region. As many of these experts approach retirement, this series provides a timely platform for intergenerational knowledge exchange — ensuring that decades of applied research, field experience, and collaborative learning are effectively transferred to the next generation. Presenters will reflect on key lessons from their careers in conservation, emphasizing important insights that can and should inform future conservation efforts.

About the Annual General Meeting

We will take advantage of this opportunity to also have an AGM for KCP partners.

About Kootenay Conservation Program

Kootenay Conservation Program (KCP) is a broad partnership of more than 95 land and water conservation and stewardship groups, First Nations, other government agencies, agricultural producers, and educational institutions working throughout the East and West Kootenays. KCP’s vision is to have connected habitats and landscapes in the Kootenays that sustain biodiversity and naturally functioning ecosystems that, in turn, support community well-being. The partnership seeks to cooperatively conserve the biological diversity and naturally functioning ecosystems of the region through land conservation and stewardship while sharing knowledge and expertise, building financial support, and promoting collaboration. The KCP service area is in the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Ktunaxa, Secwépemc, Sinixt, and Syilx Okanagan peoples who have stewarded this land, water and all living things since time immemorial, and whose values and cultures continue to inspire and guide stewardship of this region.

KCP BOARD

Derek Petersen – Parks Canada (Chair)

Ian Adams – Rocky Mountain Naturalists

Dr. Suzanne Bayley – Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners

Chris Bosman – The Nature Trust of BC

Dave DeRosa (Interim) – Okanagan Nation Alliance

Rick Hoar – East Kootenay Wildlife Association

Adrian Leslie – Nature Conservancy of Canada

Braydi Rice – Shuswap Band

Ivy Whitehorne – Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service

KCP TEAM

Juliet Craig – Program Director

Megan Jamison – Communications Coordinator

Erin Bates – Program Assistant

PROGRAM SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS



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AGENDA
 2026 Fall Gathering and Annual General Meeting
"Passing the Torch: Lessons for the Next Chapter of Conservation Practitioners"

Thursday, October 15, 2026
 Prestige Lakeside Resort, Nelson, BC

9 - 10 am	KCP Annual General Meeting (open to everyone)
10:15 – 10:30 am	Arrive and register
10:30 to 10:45	Welcome remarks and setting the stage: Derek Petersen - KCP Board Chair Juliet Craig – KCP Program Director
10:45 to 11:15 am	Looking to the Future: Youth Priorities <i>Goal of session: To learn from the next generation of stewardship practitioners (10 mins each)</i> • What early career stewardship practitioners need to know (Doris Hausleitner, Selkirk College) • Top 5 conservation priorities from a student perspective (5 Selkirk College students @ 2 min each) Followed by Q&A session
11:15 to 12:10 pm	Conservation: Lessons Learned <i>Goal of session: To share lessons learned and provide a road map for future conservation initiatives in the Kootenays (15 mins each)</i> • Kootenay Connect Priority Places: What we learned and the conservation impact we've made (Marcy Mahr, Kootenay Connect; formerly KCP) • Conservation Priorities by Biogeoclimatic Zones (Greg Utzig Kutenai Nature Investigations) Followed by Q&A session
12:10 – 1 pm	Lunch & Mix and Mingle
1:00 to 1:40 pm	Restoration: Lessons Learned <i>Goal of session: To share lessons learned in restoration to consider for future projects (15 mins each)</i> • Stream and riparian restoration (Gerry Nellestijn, Salmo Watershed Streamkeepers) • Wetland restoration (Suzanne Bayley, Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners) Followed by Q&A session
1:40 to 1:55 pm	Financing Projects through Local Conservation Funds: Lessons Learned

	<i>Goal of session: To learn about potential expansion of Local Conservation Funds (10 mins)</i> • Financing conservation work: Local Conservation Fund market research polling (Josh Neill, Mustel Research Group) – REMOTE • <i>Followed by Q & A session</i>
1:55 pm	Break & Photo (and meld into 2 sections of ballroom)
2:15 to 3:45 pm	Conservation Café <i>Goal of Session: Facilitated session to capture knowledge and expertise on conservation priorities.</i>
3:45 to 4 pm	Wrap Up
4:00 to 4:05	Selkirk Students departing
4:05 to 4:15 pm	A Photographic Journey of Kootenay Connect Priority Places
4:15 to 4:30 pm	KCP Conservation Leadership Awards
4:30 to 5:30 pm	Happy Hour (Complimentary Appies and Cash Bar)

Friday, October 16, 2026

*Field Tour (must have pre-registered) *Bag lunch provided at Millenium Park**

8:30 am	Meet outside Prestige Lakeside Resort (or option to carpool from Slocan Valley junction) • Wear weather-appropriate clothing and clean, weed-seed-free footwear for walking • Bring your own water bottle • Be prepared to carpool
8:45 - 9:30 am	Drive to Waterloo Eddy Regional Park
9:30 – 11:45 am	Waterloo Eddy : Learn more about restoration of Waterloo Eddy Regional Park, including: • Upland dry forest and riparian restoration (Lindy Lin and Alyssia Dobie, Okanagan Nation Alliance) • Traditional values (Elliot Tonasket, Okanagan Nation Alliance) • Waterloo Eddy Park management (Cary Gaynor or Geneviève Bergeron, RDCK) • Invasive plant control (Laurie Frankcom, CKISS)
11:45 to 1:00 pm	Lunch at Millenium Park (TBD)
1:00 - 1:15 pm	Drive to Genelle or Norns Creek Fan (10 min drive)
1:15 – 2:45 pm	Norns Creek Fan: Learn about the salmon reintroduction initiative including: • Chinook salmon reintroduction (James Baxter, Sinixt Confederacy) • Sockeye salmon reintroduction (Patrick Zubick, Okanagan Nation Alliance)
2:45 - 3:30 pm	Wrap up and return to Prestige Lakeside Resort (45 min drive)
3:30 pm	Adjourn – Prestige Lakeside Resort