

The Nature
Conservancy 
Canada Program

Our Impact

2023

OUR PRINCIPLES

Our vision is for a sustainable Canada where nature is the foundation of human well-being, prosperity and opportunity for future generations.

Resilient Lands and Waters: From forest to sea, we work at an unprecedented scale, irrespective of borders and designed to endure, for the future of people and nature.

Indigenous-led Conservation: We put Indigenous rights at the heart of conservation, creating new pathways for reconciliation and investing in Indigenous leadership and priorities.

Climate Change: We advance Natural Climate Solutions in Canada—science-based approaches to protecting, managing and restoring nature to mitigate climate change.

Policy and Practice: We bring together communities, industries and governments to set a new course that supports nature, bolsters economies and respects culture and values.

Global Impact: As a program we bring global innovation and investment to Canada and amplify Canadian leadership to tackle world challenges.

PHOTOGRAPHY

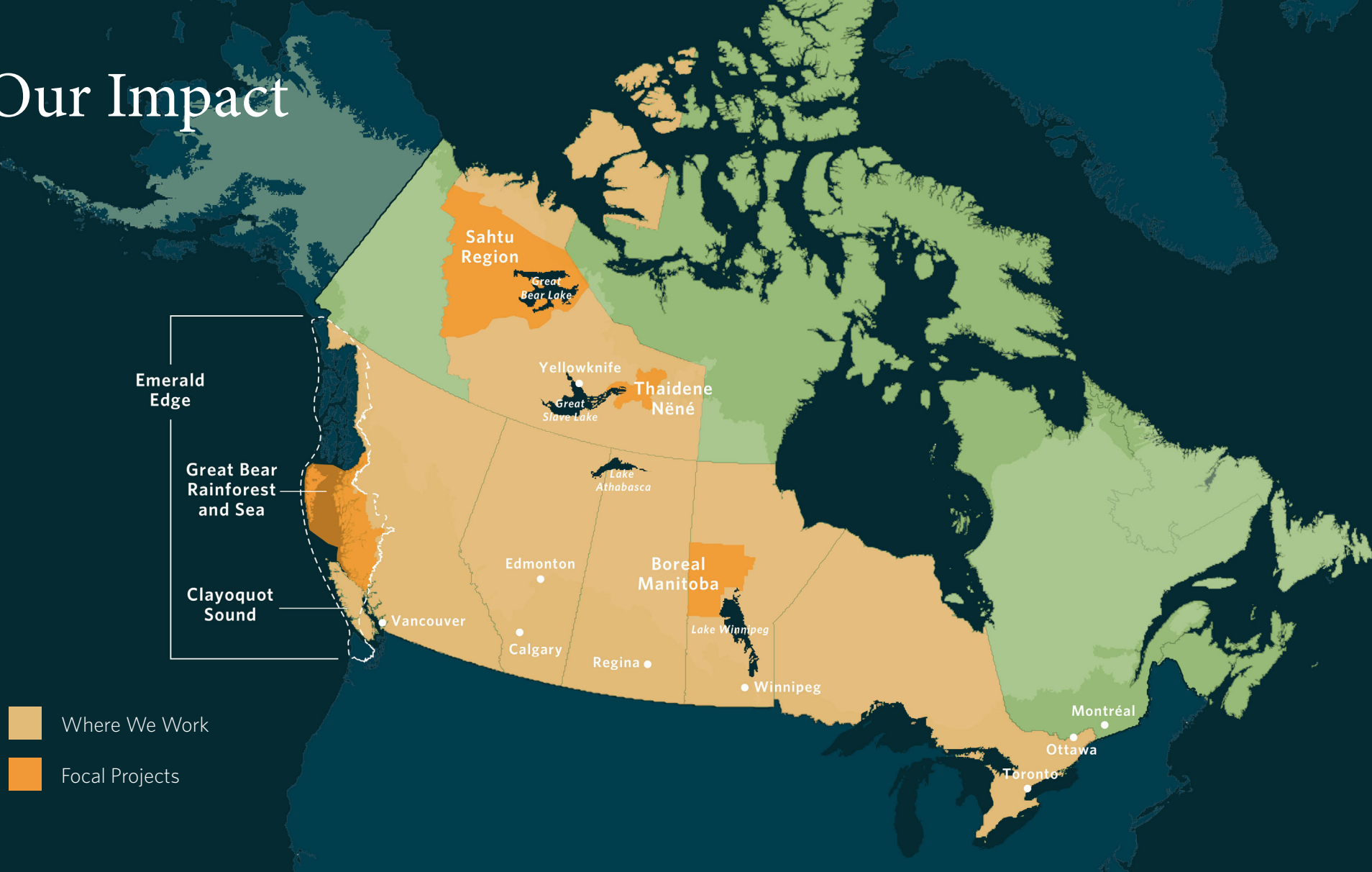
In fall 2023, we partnered with the Nanwakolas Council to photograph and promote the essential work of Indigenous Guardians in monitoring and managing forest and marine environments.

Cover: Guardians from the Tlowitsis First Nation carry out kelp monitoring in their territory, off the coast of Vancouver Island.

This page: Krissy Brown, the Acting Manager of the Guardian Watchmen program for the K'ómoks First Nation, fixes a wire used for salmon monitoring in the Tsolum River, B.C.



Our Impact



- Where We Work
- Focal Projects

BUILDING RESILIENCE

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS STEWARDSHIP, CLIMATE ACTION AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

PAGE 5

FORGING RELATIONSHIPS

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS TO ACCELERATE NATURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

PAGE 8

MARINE PARTNERSHIPS

SUPPORTING CO-GOVERNANCE AND STEWARDSHIP OF THE GREAT BEAR SEA

PAGE 11

WORKING TOWARDS RIGHT RELATIONS

LISTENING, LEARNING AND EVOLVING ACROSS OUR ORGANIZATION

PAGE 15

YOUR GENEROSITY

TRANSFORMATIVE SUPPORT FOR NATURE AND PEOPLE

PAGE 18

We acknowledge that we work within Indigenous territories across the land currently known as Canada.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



One year ago, in February 2023, we celebrated a historic milestone. On a stage in Vancouver, at the 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress, First Nations leaders and the Governments of Canada and British Columbia endorsed a proposed network of marine protected areas in the Great Bear Sea, a globally rare marine ecosystem that covers two-thirds of our Pacific coast, from Vancouver Island to the Alaska border.

Bearing witness to that announcement, I knew what it took to get there. The announcement reflected more than a decade of science and collaboration across governments, as well as engagement with industries, communities and many others. The Nature Conservancy's Canada Program, along with Nature United our Canadian affiliate, has supported nearly every step in that process, building on our 20-year legacy in this region. We have brought our strengths—from science, to financing expertise, to fundraising and communications resourcing to networking—to help chart the course for world-leading marine co-governance and vibrant coastal economies.

When our team talks about our work, we often use the word “scale.” What do we mean by that? There's the scale of the geographies (like the Great Bear Sea), the scale of our investment (long term) and scale of our partnerships (local, regional, national). But perhaps most significant is how we scale what we learn working with partners and communities to develop integrated solutions for people and ecosystems.

One example of that scale started in the Great Bear Rainforest, where 20 years ago we supported partners in protecting this vital ecosystem while expanding and diversifying the regional economy. Today, we are a founding member of the Enduring Earth Partnership, a unique collaborative that will protect 500 million hectares and mobilize nearly \$4 billion in new funding—using the model developed in the Great Bear Rainforest. The partnership is supporting the Indigenous-led Great Bear Sea initiative, as well as financing large-scale conservation in Mongolia, Gabon and other countries.

As you read through this year's report, you'll see different scales reflected in every story, from supporting Indigenous-led “salmon parks” (page 6), to advancing national and provincial policies for sustainable farming practices (page 9), to our journey in advancing right relations with Indigenous Peoples (page 15).

Our vision for the future—and how we get there—matters at every scale. Thank you for your commitment to Canada and a world where people and nature are united, and ecosystems, communities and economies thrive.

Hadley Archer
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CANADA PROGRAM OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Headshots © Nature United

Celebrating A Leader and Friend

We are deeply grateful for the contributions of Arlin Hackman, who is stepping down this year from our Board of Directors following three terms of service, with our Canadian affiliate, Nature United.

Since joining our Board in 2015—which included a term as Board Chair—Arlin has defined what it means to be a volunteer. His experience, wisdom and passion are infused in our organizational culture. As a donor and a leader, including as a member of our Legacy Club (along with his wife, Judith), Arlin has made an impact that will continue to advance our mission for many years to come.



Building Resilience in Forests and Communities

“What happens at the top of the mountain has a direct impact on the estuary. When you have a healthy forest, healthy river, healthy water, you have healthy salmon, healthy people.”

— Archie Little, House Speaker and Councilor, Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation





In Nuu-chah-nulth territory on Vancouver Island’s west coast, ha’wiih (hereditary leaders) of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation are designating Salmon Parks to restore key watersheds central to salmon spawning. The management plans for these Salmon Parks include actions to protect and regenerate surrounding forests. And healthy forests support healthy rivers—with shade-cooled waters and a variety of habitats that allow fish to rest, spawn and hide from predators. Recent work by Mowachaht/Muchalaht Nation shows that 90 percent of salmon productivity in the region will benefit from protecting a small fraction of local watersheds.

This year, we worked in partnership with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation to advance their protection goals. Our projects included an economic cost-benefit analysis and a carbon feasibility study that will provide critical data to support Indigenous-led management plans.

Shifting forest management approaches from resource extraction to one that is grounded in ecosystem health and long-term community prosperity is crucial in British Columbia (B.C.) and across Canada. In particular, increasing investments in improving forest management and old growth conservation—while supporting Indigenous leadership in the decision-making—are key to making this shift a lasting and beneficial reality. When led by Indigenous Nations, improved forest management creates stronger cultural, social, environmental and economic outcomes for local communities across Canada.

Throughout the year, we provided technical support to First Nations across B.C. to advance land use and forest management changes in their territories.

In practice, this can look like funding scientific research, supporting community-led land use planning efforts and mobilizing a team of experts to provide necessary legal and strategic support for creating new protected areas. We are also focused on promoting policy and financing mechanisms that enable Nations to meet their land management visions, while ensuring that the forestry sector and other interest groups are part of the solution. Many communities have linked this work to other values, ranging from biodiversity to water resilience, and food security to local economies. Not only does this approach benefit local communities and provinces, but also the whole of Canada and our planet, contributing to the global fight against climate change.



READ [Nature United Applauds B.C. Commitments](#)



WATCH [The Value of Managing for Carbon in Forests](#)



EXPLORE [The Emerald Edge: A Culture of Conservation](#)

WORK AT A GLANCE

Our Northwest Territories Lead Tracey Williams supported partners who are developing an online mapping system that integrates Indigenous Knowledge and science. This tool is currently being piloted by communities working to create a plan that captures their shared values for people, caribou and the landscape that is Nió Nę Peņę (Trails of the Mountain Caribou) located in the transboundary area of the western Mackenzie Mountains.



Our Manitoba Team hosted two gatherings for representatives involved with forest management planning for the largest forest tenure in North America. These gatherings helped build connections and identify shared priorities between First Nations in the region that could benefit from future collaboration.

Our Indigenous Youth On-the-Land Support Lead Zahra Remtulla (pictured) continued building relationships with partners in the Northwest Territories to support cultural and land-based learning for their youth. As we have seen with Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation's management of the Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area, strong youth programs enhance stewardship capacity and sustain Indigenous leadership.

Our Communications Team helped launch a new 360° video experience at the 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Montréal that transported viewers to the largest temperate coastal rainforest in the world—on North America's Pacific coast—to hear about the important connections between Indigenous stewardship and Natural Climate Solutions.

Our forestry experts, Ronnie Drever and Laura Smith (pictured), shared insights on Canada's extreme wildfires and the role of Natural Climate Solutions in ecosystem resilience. They provided science-based answers to questions such as, "Are wildfires more frequent and severe than ever before?" and, "How could changes in fire management contribute to community and economic resilience?"

Forging Strategic Partnerships for Nature

“With just seven years to 2030, it is critical to ramp up support for Indigenous, farming, and forestry communities advancing solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss. Smart investments in Natural Climate Solutions are a critical way to accelerate the shift to a clean economy.”

— Amanda Reed, Strategic Partnerships Director



IMPACT STORIES: PARTNERSHIP

With agricultural lands representing 48 percent of the emission reductions made possible by Natural Climate Solutions in Canada by 2030, advancing the uptake of innovative and sustainable farming practices is a key priority for our team. Sustainable practices such as nutrient management, diversified crop rotations, and keeping grasslands intact can be deployed over millions of acres while generating positive return on investment for farmers and improving soil health and productivity, farm resiliency, air and water quality and increasing biodiversity.

Governments have important roles to play in setting ambitions for sustainability and providing supports for people and communities who are leading change. That's why we work with governments alongside other partners to translate our collective knowledge and expertise into policy solutions that scale and accelerate our impact and drive progress towards the Canada Program's dual biodiversity and climate goals. Grounding our approach in science, we learn from our work across multiple jurisdictions and apply best practices and test innovative tools to advance conservation in Canada.

This year, we worked with the Government of Canada to accelerate agricultural Natural Climate Solutions through Nature United's role on the Sustainable Agriculture Strategy Advisory Committee. This initiative supports the government in developing a 25-year roadmap for increasing nature- and climate-smart agriculture across Canada. The goal of this work is to help encourage the uptake of new regenerative agriculture practices by farmers, support peer-to-peer learning, improve data collection and data sharing, and fund new market-based initiatives at scale.

This is one example of how we engage with governments and corporations to advance sustainable policies and practices. We are known for our innovative and practical approaches to supporting Indigenous-led conservation and natural resource management, and for our peer-reviewed scientific work on Natural Climate Solutions in Canada.



READ [Nature United's Recommendations for the Federal Budget 2023](#)



WATCH [Farming for Strong Markets and a Sustainable Future](#)



EXPLORE [Indigenous Chefs Highlight Biodiversity Goals with Nature and Food](#)

Agricultural Pathways, Rooted in Knowledge

On western Canada's vast prairies, there is a strong bond between Indigenous Peoples and the land, water, and sky. It's where Indigenous Knowledge and community interests intersect with modern agriculture. Here, you'll find the only Indigenous-led Living Lab in Canada: The Bridge to Land Water and Sky. This year, we supported this important initiative, focusing on helping Indigenous communities overcome hurdles in the agriculture sector while integrating community values and Traditional Knowledge. Our goal? To create innovative, climate-resistant and globally impactful pathways to a sustainable agricultural industry.

Collaborative Pathways, Established Relationships

Because successful solutions for climate change and biodiversity loss require robust collaboration, we focus on bringing together communities, industries and governments to set a new course that supports nature, bolsters economies and respects culture and values. In practice, this can look like advocating for Indigenous-led conservation and Natural Climate Solutions in global climate and biodiversity policy frameworks that set the course for action at home; advocating for funding and incentives to accelerate implementation; leading collaborative research initiatives to provide decision-makers with knowledge; and working with companies to transform their business practices.

Over the last year, we have continued to deepen partnerships in this space and we are excited to see how initiatives that incentivize net-zero and nature-positive practices can drive proof-of-concept, scalable solutions that balance productivity and profitability with climate, ecosystem and food system resilience.

Our team at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Montreal in December 2022.
© Nature United

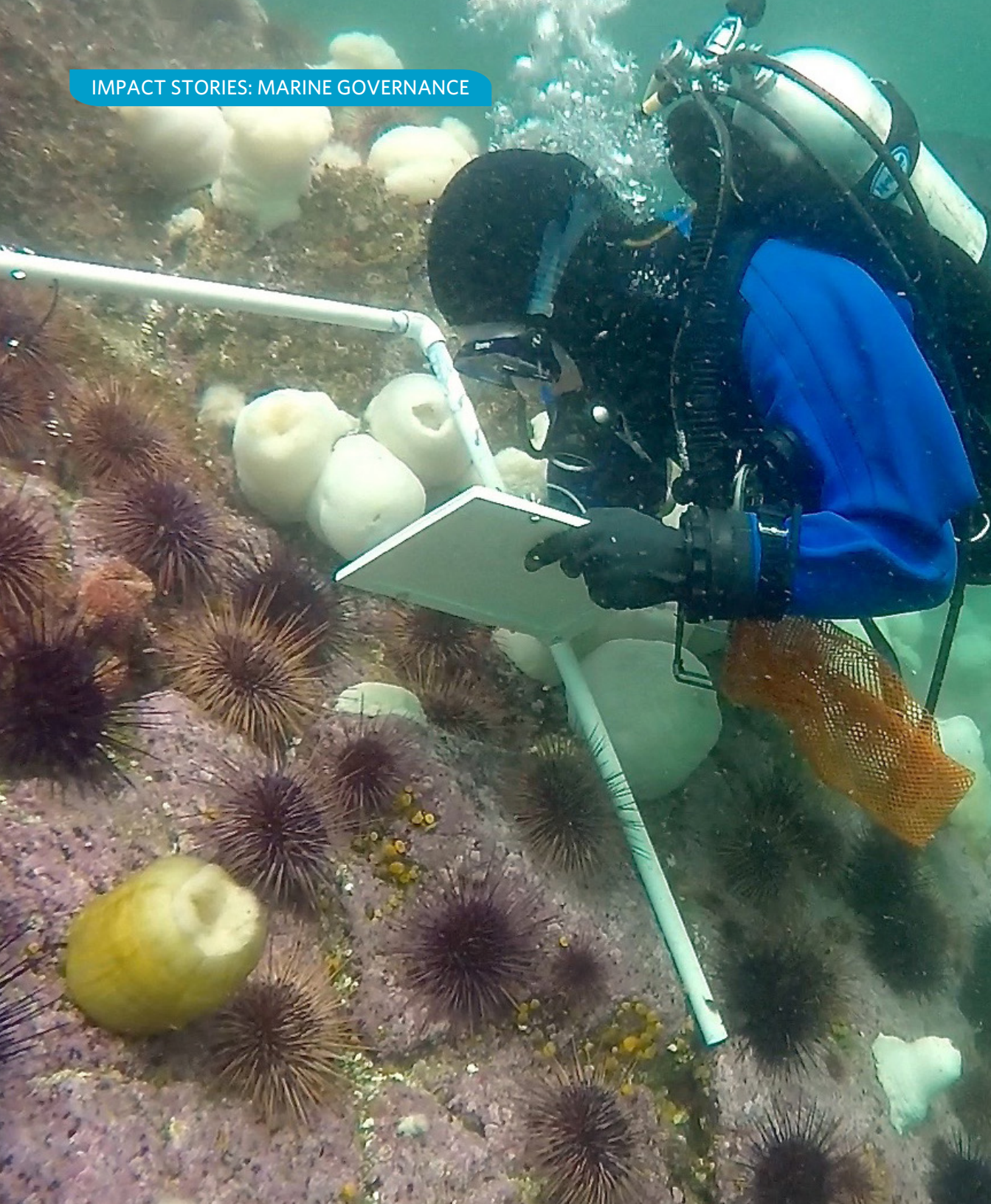


Deep Collaboration for the Great Bear Sea

“We have stewarded our lands for over 14,000 years. All our work is guided by the vision and the deep ecological knowledge of our communities. Through our long experience, we know that self-determined finance and collaboration are also key to achieving long-term outcomes.”

— Marilyn Slett, Chief Councillor, Heiltsuk First Nation, President, Coastal First Nations





After a decade of planning, collaboration and stakeholder engagement, a blueprint for a network of marine protected areas across the Great Bear Sea was unveiled in February 2023. This Marine Protected Area Network Action Plan has been endorsed by 17 First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia, marking an important step towards protecting a globally rare and productive ecosystem. As a long-term partner in the region, we were proud to support all governance partners in achieving this milestone.

Building on nearly two decades of collaboration, we have become an active partner in advancing the Indigenous-led protection and sustainable management of the Great Bear Sea—among the planet’s most biodiverse marine regions—home to wild salmon strongholds, ancient glass sponge reefs, and recovering sea otter and whale populations.

The Great Bear Sea Marine Protected Area Network will integrate science and Indigenous Knowledge.
© Jenn Burt/Nature United

BIORÉGION DU PLATEAU NORD



The Marine Protected Area Network Announcement

At IMPAC5, a global marine conference in Vancouver, partners from Indigenous Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia announced an action plan for protecting the Great Bear Sea. This announcement fortifies the ecosystem protection and sustainable economic development achieved by the Great Bear Rainforest Agreements in 2006 and 2007, across more than six million hectares of one of the world’s largest coastal temperate ecosystems. It also builds on collaborative marine planning led by First Nations and the B.C. government through the Marine Plan Partnership (MaPP).

This year, we worked to ensure the enabling conditions exist—through activities like providing technical capacity and mapping expertise, supporting robust management planning, conducting research supporting the Indigenous-led Great Bear Sea Project Finance for Permanence and engaging with provincial and federal governments. We also published:

- New science on **best practices for Marine Protected Area (MPA) monitoring**, which will help inform forthcoming work to design the monitoring program for a network of new protected areas in the Great Bear Sea.
- **A Fisheries Financing Pilot Case Study**, which compiled key findings from the design and structure of a debt-financed fisheries deal to help purchase fishing quota and licenses for First Nation fishers.

Looking ahead, we are excited to see how a suite of recent announcements made by the Federal government and Province of B.C. will help to finance Indigenous-led conservation and safeguard biodiversity—which are integral to addressing the dual biodiversity and climate change crises. Taken collectively, these announcements reflect momentum in the right direction and highlight the importance of collaboration between federal, provincial and Indigenous governments to reach Canada and B.C.’s nature and climate targets.



READ [Best Practices and Procedures for MPA Monitoring](#)



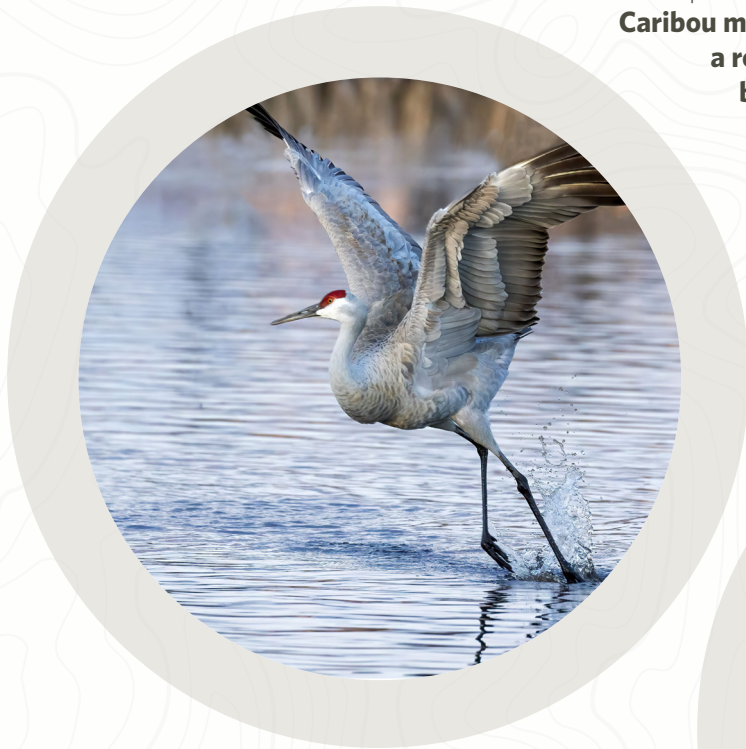
WATCH [The Case for Investing in Indigenous Guardians Programs](#)



EXPLORE [Fisheries Financing Pilot Case Study](#)

Barren-ground caribou are a cultural keystone species—meaning they play a crucial role in northern communities and ecosystems. That is one reason we are partnering with First Nations communities such as the Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation and Sahtúot'ine (Sahtú Dene) to create and implement caribou management plans.

Caribou management planning provides a roadmap for conservation that balances the needs of caribou with the needs of Indigenous and local communities using the best available knowledge.



The primary driver of habitat loss in Canada is land use changes. Better protection and improved management of grasslands, agricultural lands and forests helps to store greenhouse gases and also benefits biodiversity including hundreds of native species and critical flyways that serve millions of migratory birds, including the Sandhill Crane.

This is one example of the far-reaching impact of the Natural Climate Solutions we are committed to mobilizing across Canada.



Stretching for hundreds of acres across the seafloor and reaching the height of a six-story building, fragile glass sponge reefs filter large amounts of water, sequester carbon and provide shelter for marine life including rockfish and shrimp. Protecting critical ecosystems is one reason we are supporting the Indigenous-led Great Bear Sea Project Finance for Permanence. **This conservation financing mechanism will work to provide large-scale and sustainable funding for Indigenous stewardship of vital marine ecosystems.**

Our Journey Toward Understanding and Commitment

“Our work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples is guided by respect and trust, community leadership and reciprocity. Our commitment to working in right relations with Indigenous Peoples means that we will continue to listen, learn and evolve at every level of our organization to meaningfully advance this priority over the long term.”

— Claire Hutton, Indigenous Stewardship Director



IMPACT STORIES: OUR JOURNEY

We know that transparency builds trust and supports the deep learning that informs action and adaptation. In this spirit, we publicly launched our Indigenous Right Relations Strategy and Action Plan in summer 2023.

To critically evaluate our progress, we worked with an Indigenous-led consultancy, Reciprocal Consulting, in 2021 to assess our organizational progress in advancing right relations and how our actions were continuing to perpetuate colonialism. Our team and the Board of Directors worked together to process the findings over the past two years, focusing on priorities and raising honest questions about how to expand this work—ultimately informing our Indigenous Right Relations Strategy and Action Plan. This has been hard work, requiring deep reflection across our team.

We have a critical role in reconciling relationships between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. We seek to understand past wrongs and co-create new pathways to conservation and social justice. As our team continues to grow, we remain committed to this journey and we accept our responsibility to share what we've learned and support the learning of others. In practice, this can look like ensuring right relations work is incorporated into all parts of our organization, shifting power to Indigenous leadership in our partnerships and meaningfully tracking and measuring our efforts.



ACTION MATTERS

In collaboration with the Conservation Through Reconciliation Partnership and more than a dozen other Canadian ENGOs, Nature United, our Canadian affiliate, co-led the development of ***Balancing the Narrative: Communications Guidelines for Indigenous-led Conservation***. These guidelines were developed to spark conversation, learning and transformation through:

- Shifting the dominant narrative
- Building understanding of Indigenous-led conservation among the Canadian public
- Building capacity within Indigenous conservation leadership
- Advancing reconciliation and ethical partnerships
- Dispelling harmful stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples
- Reimagining communications in the environmental conservation sector

Their development stems from a collaborative effort grounded in relationships, respect, responsibility and reciprocity. The guidelines signify our collective commitment to promoting Indigenous-led conservation and were crafted through the joint vision and dedication of the Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership's Communications Learning Circle.



EXPLORE [Balancing the Narrative Guidelines](#)



Our team has continued to grow in line with our impact. In May 2023, we gathered on the traditional territories of the Tla-o-qui-aht and Ahousaht First Nations of the Nuu-chah-nulth Peoples, in Clayoquot Sound, on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. This weeklong gathering reignited our passion and commitment to our conservation goals, fostering a renewed sense of hope for an abundant future. **From the entire Canada team, we invite you to join us on this journey.**



WATCH [Sharing Power to Heal Our World](#)



EXPLORE [The Circle on Philanthropy](#)



READ [Message from our Executive Director](#)

Thank You for Investing in People and Nature



Thank you for choosing nature. Your support has been instrumental to ensuring that nature—thriving and full of life—is the foundation of strong communities, a prosperous economy and a future worth passing on to the next generation.

Because of you, we are advancing powerful solutions where people and nature intersect. Your support is mobilizing Natural Climate Solutions, stemming biodiversity loss and advancing protection in partnership with Indigenous Peoples across Canada. We couldn't do this important work without you. Our special thanks go to the supporters listed below who made outright gifts or pledges to support our work in fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023).

\$1,000,000+

- Anonymous*
- Jennifer P. Speers*

\$500,000-\$999,999

- David L. Deisley and Janet E. Deisley*
- Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation*

\$100,000-\$499,000

- Donner Canadian Foundation
- Debra Ann Cervenka*
- Echo Foundation
- Enterprise Mobility Foundation*
- The Houssian Foundation
- Peter Gilgan Foundation
- Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia

\$10,000-\$99,999

- Dr. Anne M. Hubbard*
- Kimberly-Clark Foundation*
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- Susan Thomsen
- Unstoppable Conversations
- Michael van Aanhout

* Gifts made to The Nature Conservancy to support work in Canada

Cedar Frank, a Guardian from the K'ómoks First Nation, gives thanks after harvesting a salmon in the Puntledge River, B.C. © Josh Neufeld



The Legacy Club is our way of recognizing those supporters who have chosen to make a gift in their will or estate plan. We are so grateful for your commitment to supporting nature for generations to come.

Legacy Club

- Estate of Robert Townsend*
- Estate of Fred Sack*
- Estate of M.J. Rutherford*
- Anonymous (7)*
- Anonymous
- L. Robin Cardozo
- Sue Currie and Ted Miller*
- Elizabeth Ebbinghouse*
- Alana Ferraro and Michael Jones
- Richard Gordon*

- Arlin Hackman and Judith Wright
- Gisela R. Hobman*
- Sydney and Shirley Jones
- Karla Massey*
- Wendy Miller*
- Christina Urban Ramsey*
- Mary Ann Redeker*
- Susan A. Smith*
- Jamie L. Stanley

* Gifts made to The Nature Conservancy to support work in Canada

Your Legacy Has Power

Whatever your stage in life, planned giving can benefit you and your loved ones while making a big difference for nature. Turn your passion for the natural world into an enduring legacy by including The Nature Conservancy's Canada Program in your will or estate plan.

Wills aren't just a legal way to distribute your assets; they can be a powerful tool for change in the world. You may also be able to save on taxes, receive income for life or enjoy other financial benefits—all while helping to keep nature healthy for years to come.

By joining our Legacy Club, you can support our vision for Canada where people and nature thrive.

[Tell us about your legacy](#)

Maximize Your Investment in Nature

In this decisive decade for climate and biodiversity, the McCall MacBain Foundation has challenged us to raise \$20 million over five years to accelerate critical solutions in Canada to scale down emissions and protect nature while bolstering economies and communities.

This challenge will leverage a global network of funders to accelerate Natural Climate Solutions and support Indigenous-led conservation across Canada. It will also support our contributions to Canada's critical 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan goals for climate, people and protection of lands, oceans and freshwater.

Join us in this historic moment as we focus our collective ambition and resources on reversing global temperature rise and biodiversity loss while protecting the ecosystems and communities that support life on Earth.

Every gift that qualifies for this challenge will help unlock a contribution from the Foundation to support climate and conservation outcomes in Canada. Please contact us at canada@tnc.org to learn more about what counts toward the challenge and how you can maximize your investment!



“Our investment in Nature United (TNC’s Canadian affiliate) will achieve large-scale results by bringing together science, community, corporate and philanthropic leadership. I personally hope that our partnership with Nature United inspires other leaders to support their approach in Canada and their global reach.”

— John McCall MacBain, Co-Founder & Chair of the McCall MacBain Foundation

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



One of the most impactful moments last year was gathering leaders in politics, business, philanthropy and the environmental sector in Ottawa for an event about the economic power of Natural Climate Solutions.

On stage, I announced that we have embarked on new research—with the Smart Prosperity Institute—building on our 2021 study, which showed that nature can significantly reduce Canada’s emissions by 2030. Globally, we know that Natural Climate Solutions can generate \$10 trillion in new business and a staggering 395 million jobs by 2030. What does that look like in Canada? Our new research will demonstrate how Natural Climate Solutions can support the leadership and competitiveness of rural and remote communities in Canada’s economic transition.

The event capped off my three-year term as Board Chair of Nature United, TNC’s Canadian affiliate, during which we have expanded to new challenges and geographies, strengthened our policy and corporate engagement and deepened our relationships with diverse leadership. I felt honored to contribute my expertise, and I will remain committed to our progress and ambition in my continued service with our Board of Directors.

Thank you to Caroline Cathcart, who served as Vice-Chair and now steps into the Chair role, and to Michael van Aanhout, who will serve as Vice-Chair. And my gratitude to Arlin Hackman, who has concluded three terms on our Board, and who has always challenged and supported us to achieve the greatest impact for our mission.

We have an exciting year ahead—thank you for your support as we unite partners and drive change for nature and people.

Sasha Jacob
BOARD CHAIR

2023 Board of Directors of Nature United



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Caroline Cathcart
VICE-CHAIR

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The Nature Conservancy (Global)



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Nature United's Board](#)

The Nature Conservancy brings Canadian leadership and opportunities to our global mission.

Building on three decades of conservation in Canada, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is working towards a Canada where people and nature are united, and ecosystems, communities and economies are thriving.

In collaboration with Nature United, our Canadian affiliate, TNC builds partnerships with Indigenous and local communities, governments, industries and other groups to define new pathways towards a sustainable future; to advance reconciliation; and to conserve nature, the foundation of all life on Earth. As one of the most effective and wide-reaching environmental organizations in the world, we bring the best global science, innovation and resources to Canada.

Learn more about our impact

GLOBALLY

5,000+ staff

400+ scientists

70+ countries and territories

100+ marine conservation projects

