

channels

news from the outdoor school
fall 2008

Chan·nels n.pl. 1. the beds of a stream or river 2. means of communication or expression
3. pathways or directions of thought or action <new channels of exploration>

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Welcome

to the inaugural edition of *Channels* – a newsletter for friends of the Outdoor School. Through our seasonal newsletters, we will highlight our activities – and our shared accomplishments – and keep you up to date on the progress of the North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre and campus revitalization project at our Outdoor School, near Squamish, B.C.

After four decades of providing exceptional hands-on learning experiences in nature's outdoor classroom, we are excited to be moving along with our vision of creating a provincial Centre of Excellence for environmental stewardship and sustainability. We look forward to keeping you informed as we continue to make our way towards completing the first phase of our campus revitalization - the opening of the new environmental learning centre in early 2010. Read ahead to discover what we're up to!



Taking Shape: The North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre

In the spring of 2007, the North Shore Credit Union Foundation announced it had chosen the Outdoor School to be the recipient of their \$1 million Legacy Fund. Targeted to support the development of the North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre, the award will greatly assist in financing the design and construction of a sustainably-designed environmental education facility.

Larry McFarland Architects Ltd., a Vancouver-based team that specializes in sustainable design, was contracted to provide architectural services for the design and construction of the education centre, and to develop a site masterplan for the revitalization of the entire campus.

While the plans must still proceed through further approvals, we're pleased to share the general concept and current artist's rendering of the future North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre. Ecological principles influence everything from start to finish. The sustainable components and systems of infrastructure and buildings are designed such that they become an integral part of the learning experience. The goal for the facility is that it will attain a sustainability target of "living

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building” as put forth by the Cascadia Green Building Council, having zero net carbon consumption and zero net energy use. “Our goal is to have the facility model the values of environmental stewardship,” says John Lewis, North Vancouver School District Superintendent. “We asked the architects to design a building that responded to the ecology of the site, including the cycles of the river, the eagles and the salmon as well as the rainforest setting. We’re very pleased with what they’ve done.”

With the site master plan well underway and the rezoning application nearing completion, the next steps toward opening the North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre in early 2010 will be the development plan and building permit applications, further community consultation in the host community, and seeking like-minded partners wishing to participate in this unique, leading edge, eco-sustainable project.

A warm welcome to our new Advisory Committee

The newly formed Outdoor School Advisory Committee is an exceptional group of educators and community leaders that support environmental education and community stewardship, the cornerstones of the teachings at the Outdoor School.



We are very pleased to introduce our leadership team that will help guide the campus revitalization and the new provincial focus of the Outdoor School:

John Lewis, Advisory Committee Chair

Superintendent of Schools & Chief Executive Officer
North Vancouver School District

Sekyu Siyam (Chief Ian Campbell)

Hereditary Chief of the Squamish Nations

Dr. Bruce Carleton

Professor, Faculties of Medicine and Pharmaceutical
Sciences, University of British Columbia

Dr. Paul Kariya

Past Executive Director, Pacific Salmon Foundation

Don B. Kayne

Vice-President, Wood Products Marketing & Sales,
Canfor Corporation

Dr. Richard Kool

Professor, Environmental Education & Communication,
Royal Roads University

Dr. Milt McClaren

Emeritus Professor, Simon Fraser University; Adjunct
Professor, Royal Roads University

Larry Murray

Education Consultant, Larry Murray & Associates

Bob Peart

Professional Biologist/Founding Director,
The Kesho Trust

Ralph Shaw

Past Director/Founder,
McQueen Lake Environmental School

Doug Smith

Vice President, Corporate Affairs,
North Shore Credit Union

Tom Swann

Associate Regional Vice President &
Director of Securement
Nature Conservatory of Canada

Bev Van Ruyven

Executive Vice-President, Customer Care and
Conservation, BC Hydro

Justin Webb

Vice President, Olympic Services, Bell Canada

Dr. David Zandvliet

Associate Professor, Faculty of Education,
Simon Fraser University

A Visit from the Deputy Minister of Education

Deputy Minister of Education James Gorman visited the Outdoor School on August 27th 2008, accompanied by Sherri Mohoruk, Superintendent, Liaison. The campus tour and meeting was initiated by John Lewis, North Vancouver School District Superintendent, and included a visit to the fish hatchery and farm, a first-hand look at two of the on-site BC Hydro partnership projects related to spawning habitat restoration in the Cheakamus River, and a interpretive walk through the ancient cedars trail to the Coast Salish Big House.

During the two-hour site visit, Deputy Minister Gorman was briefed on the school's forty year history of experiential education and youth leadership programming, and the current development plans for the new North Shore Credit Union Environment Learning Centre. In addition to discussing the sustainable design vision for the center, the Deputy Minister was interested in the School District's campus renewal masterplan. The plan includes becoming a demonstration centre for green living, the development of new K-post secondary curricula, expanded research and teaching activities, and the ultimate transformation of the



From left to right:
John Lewis, Superintendent, North Vancouver School District (NVSD); Sandy Shaw, Manager, Community & Business Development (NVSD); Deputy Minister James Gorman; Irene Young, Secretary-Treasurer (NVSD); Sherri Mohoruk, Superintendent, Liaison; Victor Elderton, Outdoor School Principal (NVSD).

Outdoor School into a provincial Centre of Excellence for environmental education and life-long learning.

The Deputy Minister of Education visit is part of the District's ongoing efforts to foster new partnerships and collaborations that promote environmental education, and put into practice the provincial government's healthier schools and green initiatives through revitalized facilities, programs and activities. The School District has also presented the project to the Ministry of Environment; Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources; and the Climate Action Secretariat.

In The News

In September 2008, The North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre and campus revitalization project received full-page coverage in the sustainability page of the Vancouver Board of Trade's Sounding Board. This monthly newspaper reaches some of Vancouver's most influential businesses, as well as federal, provincial and civic elected representatives, business decision-makers, selected boards of trade and chambers of commerce across Canada and B.C. media representatives. The Outdoor School made the local headlines this summer as well, with prominent articles about the Outdoor School appearing in both the *North Shore News* and *The Squamish Chief* newspapers.



Outdoor School a Finalist in 2008 Excellence Awards

On October 23rd, The North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce announced the finalists in its 11th annual Business Excellence Awards. Three finalists in nine award categories were selected from a field of over 80 nominees. Two new categories, **Community Contribution** and **Sustainability**, were added to the awards list for 2008 to reflect the growing importance of a proactive business sector to the broader community. The Outdoor School was a finalist in the new category of Sustainability. The Sustainability award is presented to a local organization that demonstrates leadership and innovation in developing and implementing management practices that achieve improved efficiency and focus on environmental best practices and corporate social responsibility. The award recognizes contributions to environmental sustainability through maintenance and improvement of the air, water, land, and living species that make up the ecosystems within our community.

The Outdoor School project acknowledged for innovative approach



From left to right:

Holcim Awards Acknowledgement prize 2008 North America:
Craig Duffield, Larry McFarland, Ron Kato, with Ray Cole .

Holcim award - Montreal – October 16, 2008 - The North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre project received an acknowledgement prize for minimal impact from the Holcim Awards 2008 North America. Larry McFarland Architects Ltd. were recognized for their sustainable design vision that assures a maximum preservation of the surrounding natural ecological reserve land, while aiming for the building to use net zero energy and have zero carbon emissions. Almost 5000 projects from 90 countries entered the competition sponsored by the Swiss-based Holcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction. The Holcim Awards recognizes and celebrates innovative, future-oriented and tangible sustainable construction projects from around the globe, with the goal to promote sustainable responses from the building and construction industry to technological, environmental, socioeconomic and cultural issues.

Principal of the Outdoor School is named Salmon Hero



The Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program and Rocky Mountaineer Vacations announced Victor Elderton, Principal of the Outdoor School as the Salmon Hero in the area of Education and Engagement. The award is one of four given by the Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program (FSWP) for individuals who have “made a tangible contribution to the preservation, enhancement and improvement of the Fraser River watershed and its populations of Pacific salmon.”

In announcing the award, the FSWP recognized the Outdoor School as “an international benchmark in environmental action education, providing life-changing, hands-on experiences with salmon for everyone from elementary students throughout the province to national and international policy makers and the general public.”

“B.C. wild salmon are a precious resource,” says David Marshall, executive director of the Fraser Basin Council. “We are proud to pay tribute to these Salmon Heroes, some of the truly inspirational people who give so much of themselves to safeguard the health of salmon and watersheds.”

Citizens' Conservation Councils

On September 24, 2008, the provincial government appointed seven regional Citizens' Conservation Councils on Climate Action to help build a network for grassroots climate action across British Columbia. Victor Elderton, Principal of the Outdoor School was selected by Premier Gordon Campbell to serve on the Lower Mainland-Southwest regional council. The Citizens' Conservation Councils on Climate Action will advise government on the best ways to encourage individuals, groups and communities in their regions to learn more about climate change, participate in climate action initiatives, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Upcoming Events

40th Birthday – 2009 marks the 40th birthday of the Outdoor School. Since its inception, the Outdoor School has been challenging learners physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually with its programs and activities, and fostering lifelong environmental stewardship and community leadership. Today, over 5000 children and 6000 adults visit the Outdoor School annually. Your story is part of our history, and we'd love to hear it. As part of our 40th birthday celebration we are collecting stories and photography of outdoor school experiences over the last four decades from students, parents, counselors, teachers, staff, alumni, and visitors. Please get in touch with us if you have an Outdoor School story to share.

For more information on how you can get involved contact:

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