

President's Report for the Year 2021 Williams Lake Field Naturalists Annual General Meeting March 25th 2022

The year 2021 was a different year with our activities guided by Covid Rules and Restrictions. It was also a typical year where many dedicated hard-working members of our club and community who were engaged in the outdoors and appreciating our natural world and supporting our club and the ongoing operation of Scout Island Nature Centre.

Significant activities have included the completion of the beautiful, functional wheelchair accessible front entrance of the Scout Island Nature House. It includes a ramp and railing and automatic opening door with Fire Smart building additions. This brought together many talented and hardworking volunteers and donators.

The Scout Island Advisory Committee, made up of Williams Lake Field Naturalist members and City of Williams Lake staff continued to meet every three months to discuss projects and plans for Scout Island, including the Nature Trust of BC and the City of Williams properties.

We are working on the trails and boardwalks, again with dedicated volunteers and generous donors. We were cleaning and repairing what remains of the board walks after the high water flood years. Much time and consideration was given to what is the best way to replace and rebuild the board walks. This will be an ongoing project for a number of years.

The hardworking "Weed Warriors" have removed large areas of unwanted vegetation, especially near the lakeshore. We continued to encourage and work with others to avoid the spread of knapweed from the RC Cotton site to Scout Island (where currently there is no knapweed).

Along with the new ramp, the weed removal, the new trails and development of the kiosk at the new Neku7usem pedestrian bridge; native plants and gardens are being established and new signs designed and put in place.

We sadly said good bye to Bill Gilroy, the past Education Coordinator for Scout Island Nature Centre who moved to Kamloops, and we happily welcomed Martin Kruus as the new Education Coordinator. Martin was formerly an outdoor education program teacher with School District 27.

We are working with members of the Williams Lake First Nation to include more traditional use information at Scout Island. The public survey we conducted to guide the new management plan, identified First Nation traditional use information as a high priority.

Our Newsletter the Muskrat Express was published 5 times this year.

We had an outdoor plant sale and raised \$983. toward the \$1000. yearly bursary for a grade 12 student graduating from Lake City Secondary school. The bursary amount for next year has been increased to \$1500.

Ideas for hikes and outings and field trips were presented but due to Covid restrictions, none were held

The new SINC management plan will be completed in Spring 2022. A final draft has been sent to The Nature Trust of BC, the City of Williams Lake and the Williams Lake First Nation for their review. Members are also welcome to request a copy and provide comments.

Work on a new Williams Lake Field Naturalist website was started in 2021.

Presentations for members and the community occurred via zoom. Connie Haeussler and Leo Rankin did a presentation on birds of Australia, Tim Philpott taught us about fungal ecology and geochemistry, Don Lawrence did one on construction of the new Nature House entrance and on the flooding and construction that occurred on Scout Island. Vanessa Robinson shared scenes of the Chilcotin and alpine plants from some of her hikes. Rob Higgins taught us about social insects and Norm Zirnhelt presented information about Williams Lake water quality. Most presentations were recorded and are available on YouTube.

In December we had our 54th annual Christmas Bird count. We were hoping to include an evening social gathering but needed to cancel the social part.

Our meetings of the board during the year included combinations of in-person and zoom gatherings depending on the restrictions at the time.

All through the year on Scout Island there were many people walking, visiting, sitting on the benches, having picnics, birdwatching and enjoying the outdoors. We continue to be inspired by the people who participate in our club and are members of our community. We want to recognize, acknowledge and thank everyone for their support, dedication and contributions.

Respectfully submitted
Co-President Committee
Don Lawrence, Ordell Steen and Margaret Waring