



WINTER 2020

NEWS FROM CCCS

THE CARIBOO CHILCOTIN CONSERVATION
SOCIETY'S BIANNUAL NEWSLETTER



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a unique year in
CONSERVATION
A message from our Board President,
Bill Lloyd



Happy solstice everyone! This past year has challenged us all in many ways and C.C.C.S. has been no exception, however I would like to take this opportunity to explore some of the more positive consequences of Covid-19. How fortunate have most of us been to live in this era? Compared to previous generations the majority have not given a second thought to food security or personal safety. We have however focused the majority of our energy on creation of personal wealth and comfort but it has come at a price. I personally think that this pandemic has forced a lot of people to re-examine their global footprint and realize this lifestyle the majority lead is not sustainable.

This applies to elected officials of all stripes and is a refreshing change. We can only hope it becomes an ongoing trend. This message of slowing life down and refocusing our attention to helping our fellow man will go a long way in our efforts to combat climate change.

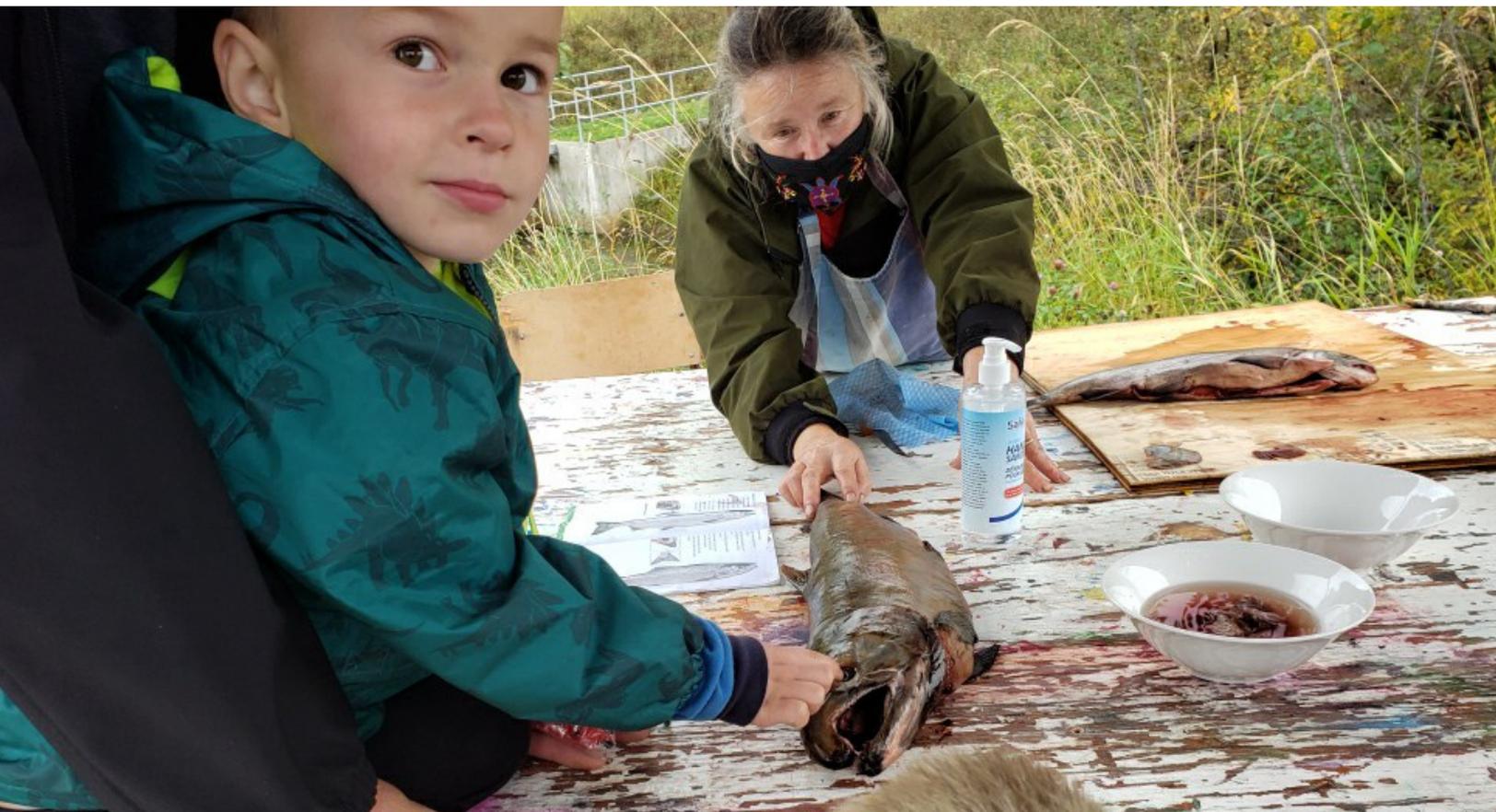
Air and water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions have all been drastically reduced due to our reduced activity. Society does not change overnight but I think we can all see a shift in priorities happening that is for the better.

I realize that I am waxing a trifle philosophical here but don't forget reading further is optional. How does this all impact CCCS you ask? Well I think it all helps to sell our message but to be fair our message sells itself these days thanks to the dedicated work of our staff over the last years. I believe our funders now realize how much money water conservation and waste reduction save the taxpayer we don't have to spend as much time defending that premise as we have in the past. The one local issue that comes to mind here is the ongoing work in the river valley. I am of the opinion that this is all the result of climate change and there is no doubt it will be a continuing problem. If we examine the millions we have spent to protect the sewer discharge infrastructure perhaps the money would be better spent on secondary and tertiary sewage treatment. Another negative impact that deserves our attention is the big increase in medical waste and single use plastics. The winter months will give us an opportunity to discuss how we can hopefully move forward on improving some of these issues.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate our waste wise coordinator Oliver Berger and his partner for presenting us with a new member. If you notice a wee girl playing in the Potato House compost pile this spring it just means that life is unfolding as it should.

Remember if we all work on reducing our own footprint the bigger picture will change with us. Enjoy the winter everyone.

CCCS Board President
Bill Lloyd



WATER WISE UPDATE

By Jenny Howell

Looking back through June's newsletter when we were all still a bit newer at this pandemic-thing, we actually weren't too far off with predictions for the fall. At that stage, we were still not sure how school would play out, so to have successfully had kids in classes for months is a big achievement for BC, with minimal Covid exposures and outbreaks. We had talked about running day programs at Gavin, and that is what actually played out. Fifteen classes came through and it felt great to have kids running around in the woods again. My 'Wood Wide Web' module went over well; this module talks about the role trees play in the water cycle, and then discusses tree communication through fungal mycelia. We had small groups this year; one class at a time rather than two, so we had enough microscopes that kids could see the fungal mycelia with minimal sharing. This still involved considerable disinfecting between kids, but it was well worth it to see the amazement on kids' faces when they see what is actually in the soil.

There is a predictable moment when they look back at the soil without the microscope and then go back to the eye pieces as their brains try to make sense of the effect of magnification. The next part of this module involves going over to the old growth forest on the south side of the lake and playing games passing messages between trees; ideal for maintaining space between us all and breathing in the healthy forest terpenes!

Kim Zalay taught 'the perfect stream', a long time module that has stood the test of time. Kids learn about what trout need to survive and end up constructing a model river for them using blue plywood (the river), with rocks and branches for the riparian edge and to create pools and shade. She also discusses food chains and aquatic insect health with relation to water quality, tying in to everything Water Wise and my Wood Wide Web discussion of transpiration and the role forests play in watershed health.



The Gavin programs finished at the end of October, which is when I would usually head back into classrooms. Instead I pulled together a new 'outside' Water Wise module, which I called the "Water Wise Olympics". This divides the class into four groups and we have games and quizzes that earn each team points until we have a Water Wise gold medal team at the end. I ran three of these classes at Cataline school which has a great outdoor classroom already set up in their forest. My first class were grade 2s, but I didn't anticipate how upset some would get about not winning points for their teams at that age, (to the point of tears for a couple of kids). So then I tried it with a grade 5 class, which was way better; kids egging each other on, friendly rivalry and teasing between teams and I think they actually learned quite a bit too. I am still learning about what works with these larger groups outside; and to accommodate factors you don't have to consider with inside classes (such as early afternoon in the sunshine is so much more effective than at the end of the day when the kids are getting cold). I did have several more classes booked, but when we were advised to reduce contacts at the same time as Covid appeared for the first time in the high school, it made sense to postpone until this second wave settles a bit.

In the meantime, I have been working on several other projects. I updated the regular water report I do that keeps track of city water use also considering weather, industrial use and population. The last three years average 28% less water use that the average of 2002-2006, so that is even better than we were doing previously. Please contact me if you want the full report; the weather patterns are quite interesting to look at with such huge swings between wet and dry years evident now compared to even just 12-14 years ago. We are working on adding a 'Sharing the Forest' sign to our Forest and Water trail with the Community Forest. I have been talking to teachers a bit about the Earth Challenge, but will focus more on that in the New Year. It will have to be a virtual version again with options for projects again. This takes considerable teacher time, so it will depend on whether they feel it is something they want to take on with all the other school challenges this year. We have ordered another three binocular microscopes for teaching the CCCS modules at Gavin, exactly the same as the last three that the Pacific Salmon Foundation funded.



These are excellent microscopes for kids; simple and easy to use, but with incredibly good resolution and clarity. That brings us up to eight CCCS microscopes now, (four for each module), which will be better when we are back to groups of 8-12 again. Lastly, I am writing my regular Tribune articles, with no end of topics to potentially cover. We are getting a good response to our increased media presence, from Oliver and Mary's Trash Talking Tuesday videos to our newspaper articles, which Amber also covers sometimes for variety. I quite regularly get comments on them from people around Williams Lake who say they look forward to our articles and videos each week.

As we hear so many stories of people struggling through these times, I think all of us at CCCS are very appreciative for what we have working within this organization. A flexible staff and Board that gets along well, with the common goal to continue to deliver our programs as effectively as we can, whatever gets thrown at us. It sounds like we have many more months ahead before we will be able to fully get back to our old selves, but I am hopeful that a version of spring field trips will be possible; maybe even some smaller, outside and distanced summer events and that by next September, we will be back to normal. In the meantime, we'll have tidied up some much-needed admin tasks, developed some new skills and modules and found new avenues to educate on local conservation issues.

Jenny Howell
Water Wise Instructor



WASTE WISE UPDATE

by Oliver Berger

The latter half of the summer continued to be a busy time for Waste Wise, as we continued much of our waste education to online learning platforms. Trashtalk Tuesdays continue each week: we have posted 36 videos in the last 6 months! Covering as many waste education topics as we can think of: landfill tours, textile recycling, visits to a repurpose museum in Fort St John, fall garden prep, local sustainable business interviews, and just tons more. Somehow, each week, the Waste Wise team manages to think of another waste reduction and conservation strategy!

It continues to be a challenge to get into the classrooms but Waste Wise has been able to host a few tours and educational presentations. We have hosted dump tours and a zero-waste workshop for the Elders College in September,

We have been able to be a bit more active in the community, while maintaining safe protocols. In the later summer months, we assisted the CRD with distributing backyard composters to residents throughout the Cariboo. We visited Esketemc Community to assist with their new recycling pick up program, training the truck drivers and staff on what items are recyclable in our district. We hosted another FREE your THINGS weekend event in August in preparation for back to school. The people of Williams Lake are truly enjoying this idea and we have had hints from 100 Mile and Quesnel about setting one up there in the future! We hosted a composting workshop at the Potato House, showcasing the many different styles of composting and how to achieve excellent results.

And for those who may not have seen them, we also have a regular column in the local Williams Lake Tribune, titled Down to Earth. The Tribune kindly prints columns for us about once per month. You can find them all by going to the Tribune's website, and typing Down to Earth in the search bar!



GRANTS & FUNDING UPDATE

City of Williams Lake: The first of our two Fee for Services assists us in the running of the Water Wise program in the schools and community of Williams Lake. This funding (\$38,600) assures the continuity of the education program which engages all ages in water conservation and provides tools for easy ways to save water. The second is for our city-based Waste Wise program, an education program focused on reduce, reuse, recycle and rethink (\$24,500). We renewed this contract for a three-year term (2020-2022) for both of these programs at the beginning of this year.

Cariboo Regional District: We also renewed our Regional Waste Wise Fee-for-Service contract (\$40,465) for two years (2020-2022). In addition to all of our regular Waste Wise work, this contract allows us wages and kilometres to travel around the region with our classroom Waste Wise Program and to conduct more food waste education and compost coaching.

Community Gaming Grant: Our annual Community Gaming application (\$25,000) was approved for our Watershed Health program – which includes Water Wise classes for regional schools and other watershed education – and our Sustainable Life Education program – which includes our Outdoor Education modules plus community waste reduction programs such as Bikes for All, Skates for All, Veggies for All, Earth Friendly Holiday Event and more!

Fisheries and Oceans Canada: We received \$5,500 in funding from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). This fund supports many of our Water Wise initiatives including Classroom Education, Xeriscape Gardening, Shoreline Awareness, Storm Drain Awareness, and many others!



Cariboo Chilcotin Conservation Society

Memberships & Donations

102-197 Second Ave N
Williams Lake, BC V2G1Z5

Our organization runs by the power of thousands of volunteer hours, memberships, and donations. Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm!

For an annual membership or donation, please fill out the form below and either mail or drop off to the CCCS office. If a membership is not right for you, please consider passing it along to a friend or making a one-time donation instead!

You can now sign up for a membership or donation online!



Circle Membership Type:

Individual: \$15.00 Family*: \$20.00 Senior/Student: \$5.00 Group/Business: \$30.00

*If you checked "family" membership, how many people in your family? _____
(If left blank, we will assume your membership covers 4 people.)

Donations:
\$20.00 _____ \$35.00 _____
\$50.00 _____ \$100 _____ Other amount _____

Name: _____

Contact (for Business only)

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Note: CCCS memberships begin June 1st and run to May 31st. Midterm membership fees will be adjusted accordingly. Membership fees and donations can be made via cash, cheque (made payable to the Cariboo Chilcotin Conservation Society), or online right here.