



# Realizing a vision for conservation through collaboration

**ANNUAL REPORT** | 2016-2017  
Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program

## Special ALERT

Help keep Okanagan water zebra and quagga mussel free! Help spread the message. Have “the talk” with neighbours, friends and family.



If you know someone who boats, fishes and travels in and out of the valley with their boat or other water recreational equipment, ask them what they're doing to help prevent the spread. Make sure they follow the “Clean, Drain, Dry” protocol and are stopping at watercraft inspection stations.



Invasive zebra and quagga mussels are a huge threat to your investment and enjoyment of your property. The mussels litter waterfront with sharp, smelly shells that cut feet. They create toxic algae blooms, putting drinking water at risk. And, they encrust boats, docks, retaining walls and any other hard surface left in the water. Learn more at [www.DontMoveAMussel.ca](http://www.DontMoveAMussel.ca)

### MANDATE

To facilitate conservation and stewardship efforts on public and private lands, set conservation objectives, and generate the support needed to maintain this effort.

### VISION

The Okanagan region is an area rich in natural diversity that provides valuable habitat for a unique and diverse array of plants and animals, many of which are rare in Canada. Healthy ecosystems and habitat networks are valued and conserved by decision-makers and citizens as the basis for health, livelihoods, livable communities, and economic development.



### Who are we?

The Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program is a partnership of government, academic, and environmental organizations that acknowledge the unique ecosystems of the Okanagan, and that the protection of these natural assets is a shared responsibility. The OCCP is guided by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from Partner organizations and has a contract Program Manager and Projects Coordinator.

### What do we do?

The OCCP facilitates a collaborative approach to biodiversity conservation in the North and Central Okanagan. Our current focus is ensuring follow through on the goals and recommendations in *A Biodiversity Conservation Strategy in the Okanagan Region*. We create action teams, which are groups of Partners and members of the community working together on specific projects to meet biodiversity conservation goals.

The OCCP would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations for their financial support:

This project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada.

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*Bobolinks breed in small populations throughout BC's Southern Interior in moist hayfields in the valley bottoms. Much of the Bobolink's habitat is privately owned, so landowners are encouraged to assist with the continued survival of this bird by delaying hay-cutting until after the bird's nesting season in mid-July.*

# OCCP Achievements for 2016-2017







## Message from the Program Manager

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It's been another exciting year for the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program, with 16 major Partner projects underway or completed. These projects were diverse and included; land use planning and policy initiatives to protect ecosystems surrounding our large lakes, providing planning tools for land use decision makers such as sensitive habitat inventories and mapping projects, providing research for a wildlife corridors, and developing a workshop to promote best practices in environmental planning. These projects support the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region, and are only a few of the highlights from 2016/17.

It has been energizing to work with the Partners, and to see the growth of the Action Team management framework, where Partners and community members have come together to identify and work on specific projects. This collaborative model continues to prove itself effective in supporting conservation programming by building partnerships that share resources and expertise for delivering initiatives that protect the region's biodiversity.

The Projects and Actions Teams are helping to increase the capacity of the Partners to realize their individual goals for conservation, and is contributing to the larger vision of ensuring the Okanagan remains as area rich in natural diversity, where healthy ecosystems and habitat networks are valued and conserved by decision-makers and citizens.

The momentum of the OCCP continues to build, as organizations join the program, new Action Teams are created, and the financial support remains strong. We look forward to a successful 2017/18!

Program Manager  
Scott Boswell





Tanis Gieselman  
Projects Coordinator



Valentina Rvigimba  
UBC Coop Student

## Message from the Projects Coordinator

### Projects Coordinator

During the past two years we have observed a great need of support for local and regional conservation initiatives, particularly for collaborating across jurisdictional boundaries, education and outreach, and enhancing monitoring and enforcement. OCCP Partners and associates have identified over 120 projects in need of support. They also identified five major interrelated priorities to focus work upon:

1. enhancing, protecting and connecting sensitive habitats
2. protecting water quality, quantity, and watershed health
3. mitigating climate change
4. supporting environmental mapping, education, and environmental outreach
5. enhancing environmental policy and use of environmental best practices

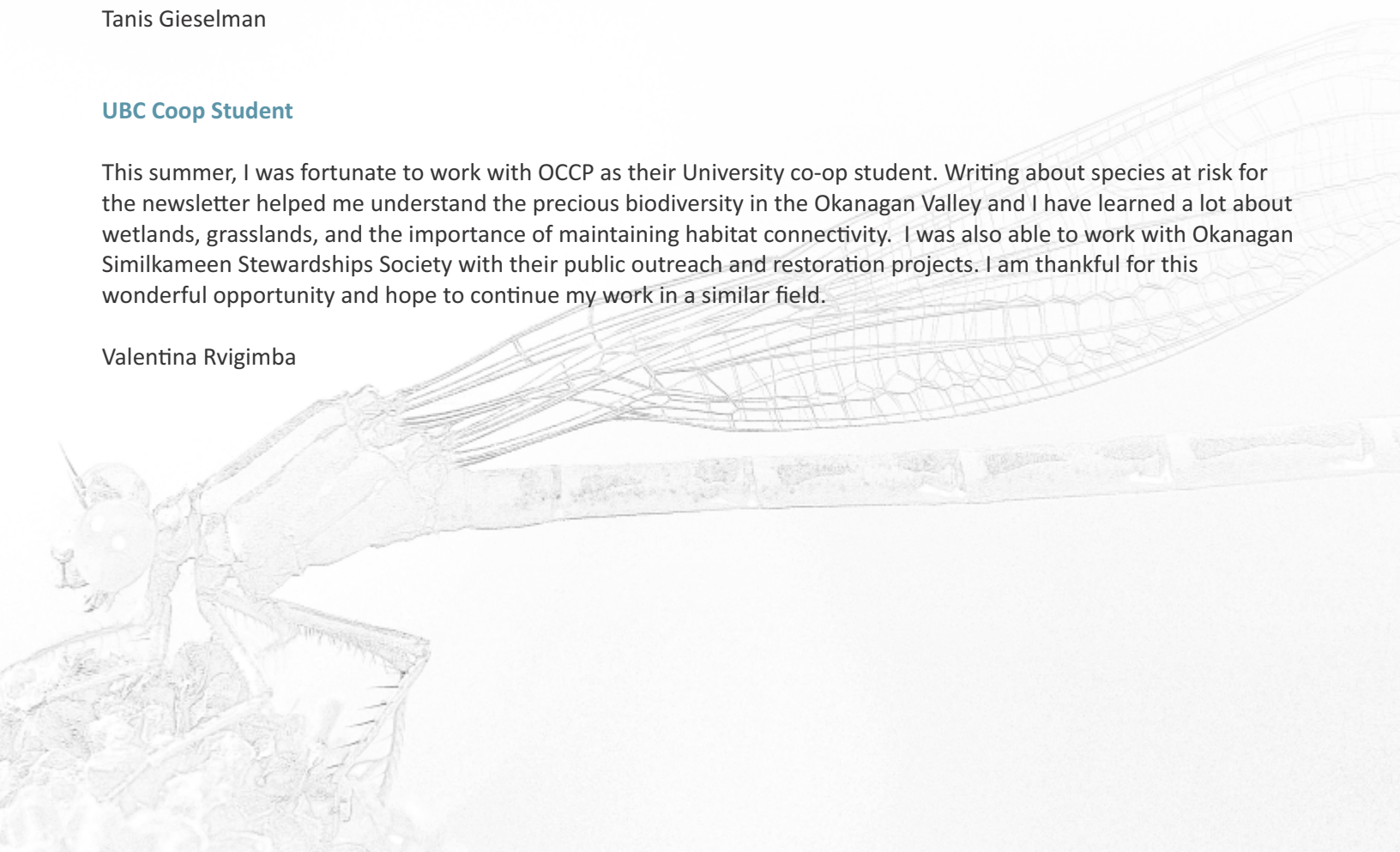
This year OCCP was able to coordinate 16 major projects, and support a number of other Partner initiatives. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to be involved with such important and impactful work, and I look forward to supporting our Partners in their conservation work over the coming year.

Tanis Gieselman

### UBC Coop Student

This summer, I was fortunate to work with OCCP as their University co-op student. Writing about species at risk for the newsletter helped me understand the precious biodiversity in the Okanagan Valley and I have learned a lot about wetlands, grasslands, and the importance of maintaining habitat connectivity. I was also able to work with Okanagan Similkameen Stewardships Society with their public outreach and restoration projects. I am thankful for this wonderful opportunity and hope to continue my work in a similar field.

Valentina Rvigimba





## 2016-17 Steering Committee

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**Margaret Bakelaar** | Environmental/Land Use Planner, Regional District of Central Okanagan  
**Aaron Deans** | Executive Director, Allan Brooks Nature Centre Society  
**Paul Dupuis** | Planner, District of Lake Country  
**Jing Nui** | Environmental Planning Assistant, City of Vernon  
**Keith Pinkoski** | Parks Manager, Regional District of North Okanagan  
**Alyson Skinner** | Executive Director, Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society  
**Danika Dudnik** | Environmental and Land Use Planner, Regional District of Central Okanagan  
**Angela Cormano** | RPFBio, Fortis BC

## Program Partners

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*There are currently 38 official Partner organizations with the OCCP who have signed a statement of cooperation agreeing to work together for environmental conservation. The OCCP also works with the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program on larger scale projects.*

### New Partners for 2016/17

Southern Interior Land Trust  
 Okanagan Xeriscape Association

### Partners

Allan Brooks Nature Centre  
 Bishop Wild Bird Sanctuary  
 BC Ministry of Environment  
 Central Okanagan Land Trust  
 Central Okanagan Naturalists Club  
 Central Okanagan Regional Parks  
 City of Kelowna  
 City of Vernon  
 City of West Kelowna  
 Community Mapping Network  
 Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
 District of Lake Country  
 District of Coldstream  
 District of Peachland  
 Ducks Unlimited of Canada  
 Environment and Climate Change Canada  
 Fresh Outlook Foundation  
 Friends of Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park  
 Grasslands Conservation Council

Institute of Biodiversity Resiliency and Environmental Services - UBCO  
 Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia  
 Okanagan Basin Water Board  
 Okanagan College  
 Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society  
 North Okanagan Parks & Natural Area Trust  
 North Okanagan Naturalists Club  
 Regional District of the Central Okanagan  
 Regional District of the North Okanagan  
 Sciences Opportunities for Kids  
 Society for the Protection of Kalamalka Lake  
 Sustainable Environmental Network Society  
 The Land Conservancy of BC  
 The Nature Conservancy of Canada, BC Region  
 Village of Lumby  
 Vernon in Transition

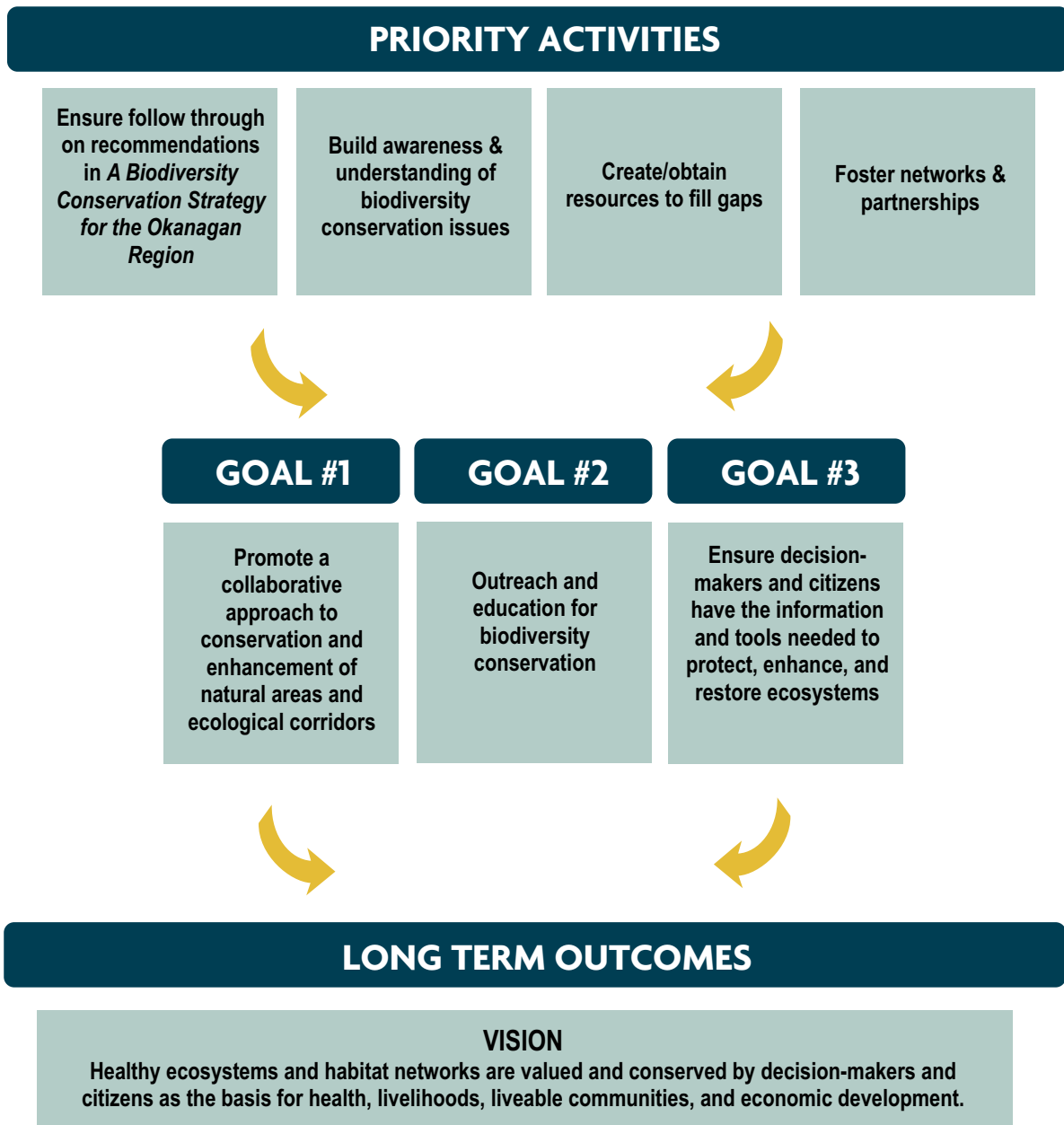
### Past Partners

Lake Magazine - UBCO  
 Outdoor Discoveries  
 Centre for Social, Spatial & Economic Justice - UBCO  
 Lake Country Environmental Society  
 Lake Country Ecological Society & Okanagan Partnership



## Priorities & Goals

In 2015, the OCCP developed its Strategic Plan for 2015-2019 to ensure follow-up on the recommendations in *A Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region* (the Strategy) in the North and Central Okanagan. The strategic plan identifies priority activities to meet the goals and vision outlined in the Strategy.



# GOAL #1

Promote a collaborative approach to conservation and enhancement of natural areas and ecological corridors.

- Okanagan Mountain Park to Kalamalka Lake Ecological Corridor
- Travelling Gallery Exhibits & Community Stewardship Events
- Enhancing Native Plant Conservation and Accessibility
- Participation in Partner Working Groups

## Outreach and education

### Okanagan Mountain Park to Kalamalka Lake Ecological Corridor

This initiative supports and expands upon the Regional District of the Central Okanagan (RDCO) initiative to plan for ecosystem connectivity in the Central Okanagan. The RDCO initiated this plan in 2014 with OCCP, and Dr. Lael Parrott with the Complex Environmental Systems Lab at UBC Okanagan. Since the initial mapping of corridor networks throughout the valley was finished, OCCP has coordinated a multi-agency Action Team to incorporate the recommendations from local environmental professionals to the proposed path of one priority pilot corridor. The Okanagan Mountain to Kalamalka Lake Ecological Corridor is a regional scale corridor that is intended to connect two major provincial parks, and the regional and local parks and corridors in between. Phase 2 of this project tasks the team to work with various governments and landowners to develop a list of actions, and begin enhancing protection of corridors across the RDCO and adjoining areas. See the OCCP website Current Projects page for more information.

Ecological corridors are the interconnected network of habitat and migration corridors that sustain all life. Maintaining ecosystem connectivity is essential for species survival, movement, and genetic diversity, as well as for the ecosystem functions which support essential food, air, and water systems for people. In the Okanagan Valley, we are facing our final opportunity to keep connectivity in the low elevation ecosystems, which are the most important for biodiversity, and most threatened. The fast rate of development in the Okanagan is paving over, and fragmenting the low elevation areas bit by bit, and cutting off the remaining pathways for wildlife movement.



*Connectivity Corridor Workshop*



*Section of the proposed ecological corridor*

## Travelling Exhibits & Community Stewardship Events

This two-year outreach and education initiative started as a collaboration between the Allan Brooks Nature Centre, the Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society, and OCCP. The goal was to raise awareness about our local ecosystems and the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region, and to engage community members in habitat restoration. As the project developed, many other partners joined the initiative, and the partnership developed two travelling public outreach exhibits, and coordinated six community stewardship events to restore natural habitat. OCCP also supported partners in developing additional travelling exhibits and stewardship events. Combined, the exhibits and events encouraged over 74,000 people in the Okanagan region to work toward “Keeping Nature In our Future”.

### The Allan Brooks Nature Centre (ABNC) Nature Trailer

A travelling public outreach exhibit was created by retrofitting a trailer with interactive displays focused on local conservation issues and information on grasslands, wetlands, and habitat connectivity. The Nature Trailer displays were designed to be a walk-through experience of interactive activities to educate and engage the general public about the Okanagan ecosystems, water conservation, and habitat connectivity. This year the trailer added a series of wetland-themed activities that can be included in the trailer for customizing the activities for water-related events. The Nature Trailer appeared in the spring at 5 schools and 29 classes, reaching 692 students in two months. Throughout the summer and fall the Nature Trailer appeared at a variety of public events throughout the valley, and at events held at Allan Brooks Nature Centre.



*Allan Brooks Nature Trailer*

### "How Do We Get from Here to There"

The museum gallery displays were designed to showcase the importance that habitat connectivity plays in maintaining the unique biodiversity in the Okanagan, and inform the public about local conservation strategies and activities for maintaining habitat connectivity, and ways to get involved. This year the exhibit appeared at the Osoyoos Desert Centre, the Downtown Kelowna Branch of Okanagan Regional Library, the Okanagan Heritage Museum in Kelowna, the District of Lake Country Municipal Hall foyer, and a number of events throughout the valley.



*How Do We Get From Here to There - Gallery Exhibit*

### "Right of Way" and "Keeping Connectivity in Our Future"

#### Digital Interactive Exhibits

This year, through collaborations with the Centre for Culture and Technology at UBCO, and Border Free Bees, OCCP was able to support work on a digital interactive 3D installation for the "Social Life of Water" exhibit at the Okanagan Heritage Museum, and the exhibition of "How Do We Get from Here to There" in the Penticton Museum. The work included a 3D Okanagan watershed wildlife installation that highlights local conservation initiatives for local species, a digital interactive exhibit highlighting issues for connectivity from the point of view of a bee, an artistic felted-hassock bee flower calendar, bee costumes, and native seeds and resources for visitors to take home and plant a bee friendly garden.



*3D Interactive Pollinator Garden*

### Community Stewardship Events

The Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society led the partnership in hosting six community stewardship events over two years. These events were held throughout the valley, and they engaged 187 community members in restoring wetland and grassland ecosystems. Volunteers planted 1450 native plants, and 30lbs of native grass seed during this year's three events, which were hosted at Brent's Grist Mill Park Pollinator Art Pasture in Kelowna, Okanagan Landing Elementary in Vernon, and Riverside Marsh in Penticton.



*Jessica Hobden from Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society teaching volunteers how to identify invasive species in the Public Art Pollinator Pasture at Brent's Grist Mill Heritage Site.*



### Enhancing Native Plant Conservation and Accessibility

OCCP supported several local initiatives to enhance the availability of native Okanagan grassland seed and plants for use in restoration and private landscaping by partnering with SeedsCo Community Conservation. This pilot conservation program worked with several housing development projects in Kelowna to “Bring Conservation to the Construction Zone” by salvaging native grassland species from the development sites before grading begins. Seeds and plant materials are used in public and private planting. This initiative's operations raise funds to archive native seeds from development sites into gene banks for long-term conservation of this region's unique genetic diversity. To date, OCCP supported partner projects to the initiative has: Collected seed samples of native grassland species from three sites totaling almost 500 acres. Provided technical support, native seeds, and supplies for community planting initiatives, including the Summerland Ornamental Gardens native grassland project, the Kelowna Nectar Trail and the Osoyoos Desert Centre Earth Day planting workshops, several with the Public Art Pollinator Pasture project and stewardship events at Brent's Grist Mill Heritage site, and an invasive species control experiment at the Bald Range grassland in the Lambley Creek watershed. Provided a much-needed source of locally native species for nurseries, reclamation projects, private landscaping, stewardship projects, seeds of traditional-use plants to several First Nations gardens, and a conservation collection of Antelope Brush to the Edinburgh Botanical Gardens. Conducted 7 presentations to over 400 people at public events on the importance of Okanagan biodiversity, habitat fragmentation ecology, and gardening with native species to support wild pollinators.



*Workshop participants making native grassland seed-bombs at the Kelowna Nectar Trail public workshop.*



## Participation in Partner Working Groups

### Species and Ecosystems at Risk - Local Government Working Group (SEAR-LGWG) Symposium

OCCP participated on the organization committee for "Conservation Without Borders: Working Together on Species and Ecosystems At Risk Initiatives", a symposium for the Species and Ecosystems At Risk Local Government Working Group (SEAR-LGWG). The symposium was held January 31 and February 1 in Victoria, and brought together local governments from all over BC to hear updates on species-at-risk initiatives, work together on developing a Provincial Species and Ecosystems At Risk Charter, and learn about opportunities to collaborate to enhance protection of sensitive species through local government policy and tax-incentive programs. OCCP assisted with inviting speakers, the awards nomination process, coordinating volunteers to develop an activity to introduce participants to rare species throughout the province, and presenting at the symposium.



*City of Kelowna and RDOS win inaugural awards for the Mission Creek Restoration Project and the South Okanagan Conservation Fund.*

### Charter of Sustainability for Regional Tourism and Biosphere Designation.

TOTA is working to develop a regional Charter of Sustainability and is seeking a Biosphere Designation from the Responsible Tourism Institute in Spain – this designation would be the first of its kind in North America, and would make the Thompson-Okanagan region one of 20 destinations in the world to reach this category. Through the process TOTA has been working in consultation with stakeholders throughout the region, including OCCP and SOSCP, and drawing from International best practices in countries such as New Zealand and France. OCCP, SOSCP, UBC and the Province (conservation policy) have been working with Green Steps Solutions Inc. to assist with the Sustainability Charter and the Biosphere Designation. The designations standards are based on the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals which implement the guidelines and recommendations of the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

The Responsible Tourism Institute created and developed the Responsible Tourism System (RTS), recognized under the BIOSPHERE RESPONSIBLE TOURISM seal. This distinction emerged as the answer to establish the criteria for achieving a sustainable behaviour in the international tourist businesses. Currently the RTI maintains a Memorandum of Understanding with UNESCO, is affiliated to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and is a member of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).

**"The number one reason international tourists visit British Columbia is for wildlife viewing" ~ TOTA**

### Map Our Marshes Wetland Identifications Training

Summer is usually when the Okanagan becomes especially aware about water conservation. One often overlooked aspect of water conservation is the vital wetland ecosystems. In July, OCCP partners and associates took part in the BC Wildlife Federation's Map Our Marshes workshop in partnership with the En'owkin Centre Penticton. This workshop aimed to teach environmental professionals how to inventory the locations and characteristics of wetlands so they can be better protected.



*With the loss of wetlands, Painted Turtles are now listed as a species of special concern.*

# GOAL #2

Outreach and education for biodiversity conservation.

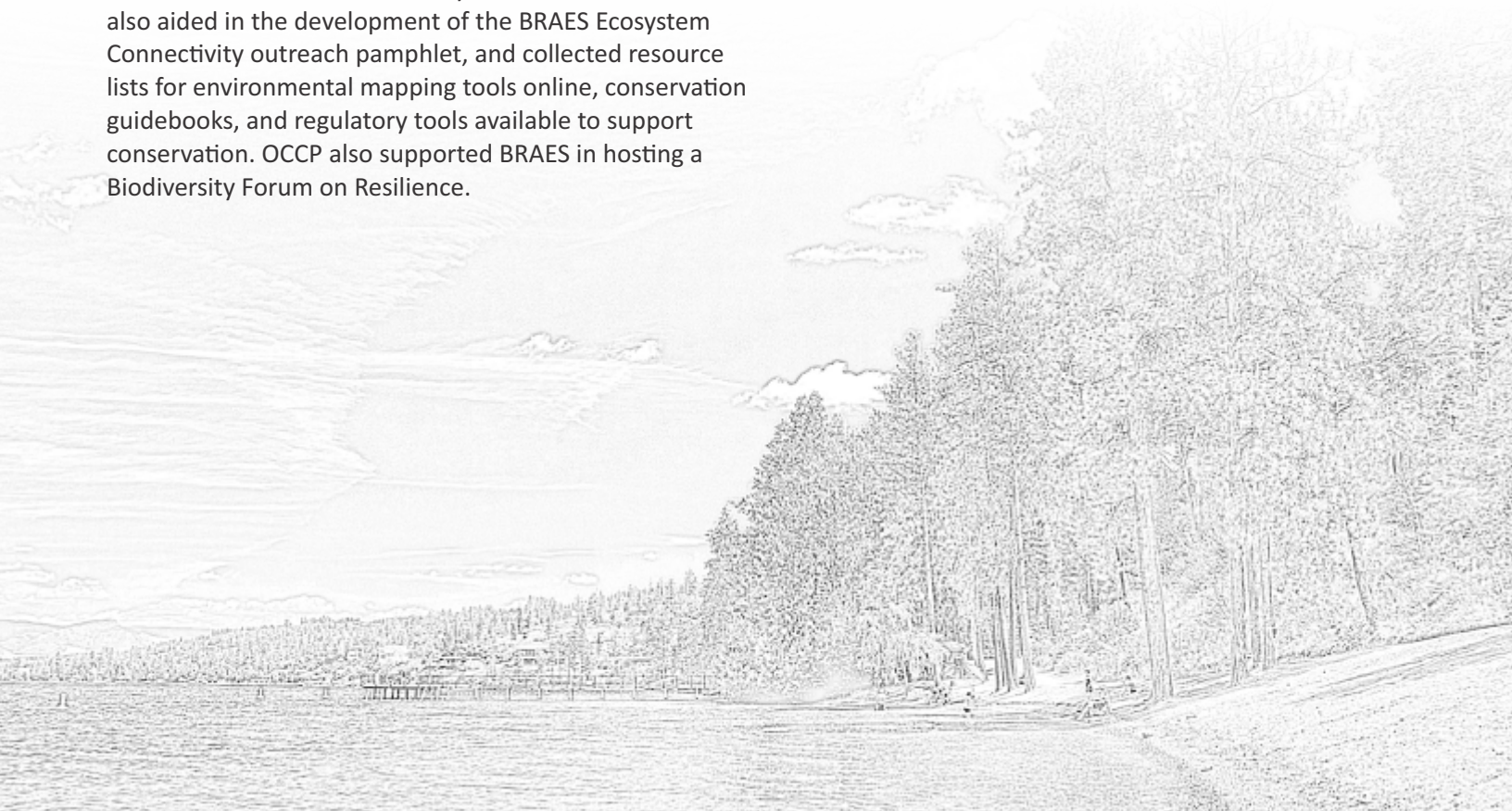
- Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Communication
- Planning for the Environment Workshop
- Outdoor Education in Schools
- Okanagan Habitat Atlas

## Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Communications

The Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) communications encompass newsletters, social media, delegations to local and regional governments, presentations at community events and to special interest groups. We took the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) on the road this year to reach new audiences, share resources, and identify opportunities to make an impact in conservation of our local biodiversity. OCCP conducted nine BSC presentations that reached 800 people that included elected officials, researchers and students. The presentations outlined the main resources available in the BCS, OCCPs activities, Okanagan environmental issues, and asked the audiences to identify ways to get more involved with conservation of biodiversity in their own areas. OCCP also aided in the development of the BRAES Ecosystem Connectivity outreach pamphlet, and collected resource lists for environmental mapping tools online, conservation guidebooks, and regulatory tools available to support conservation. OCCP also supported BRAES in hosting a Biodiversity Forum on Resilience.



*OCCP BSC outreach at the Seedy Saturday event in Kelowna.*



## Planning for the Environment: How Can Planning Enhance Protection?

This year OCCP facilitated a workshop on planning for environmental protection, its benefits and methods. The 51 participants represented all levels of government, First Nations, professionals, and academics, coming from as far as Kamloops and the Lower Similkameen. Participants heard from Margaret Bakelaar on planning for conservation in the Okanagan Valley; Dr. Lael Parrott on planning for ecosystem connectivity; and Dr. Deborah Curran on environmental law and implementing environmental regulations, just to name a few. Speakers outlined tools, and discussed challenges and opportunities for environmental protection at a local and regional scale from a variety of perspectives. Speakers and participants alike expressed that they got a lot out of the day, and appreciated the opportunity to get together and discuss these topics. A summary workshop report and an exit survey is assisting to inform OCCP's priorities and future projects, a copy of the report is available on the OCCP website.



### Workshop Objectives

- Demonstrate how local and regional planning can advance environmental protection.
- Highlight the connectivity planning mapping and objectives, and the tools available to implement corridor protection.
- Provide best practices for implementing environmental protection into local government planning for other environmentally sensitive areas like riparian areas and wetlands.
- Identify challenges and opportunities in environmental protection.



Although much of the responsibility of protecting environmentally sensitive areas falls on local and regional governments and organizations, there are a variety of opportunities to implement and enhance protective measures.



## Outdoor Education in Schools

### “Our Relationship with Water”

This project builds upon work completed in the fall of 2015 at Okanagan Landing Elementary School (Vernon), where a number of partners, including the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program (OCCP), Buffy Baumbrough, and RDNO came together to create a pollinator habitat garden at the school. Since its installation, the garden has become a well-used outdoor learning space. Other local elementary schools, and district officials, have expressed interest in creating more outdoor learning spaces, and developing outdoor-based curriculum units for a variety of subjects.

The partnership went on to team up with the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) and several other partners to develop resources and materials to help teachers lead outdoor lessons that support the new BC Curriculum plans. The guides will incorporate an “Okanagan perspective” for species at risk, ecosystems, and traditional knowledge. One ProD day event was hosted this year to introduce the resources to local teachers, who will test the guide over the coming year and provide feedback. This team has also developed a guide on “How-to-Build” outdoor learning spaces, which provides a framework and process that schools can use to create outdoor learning spaces (i.e., wetlands, grasslands, pollinator gardens) on their own school grounds.

## Students Without Borders Academy

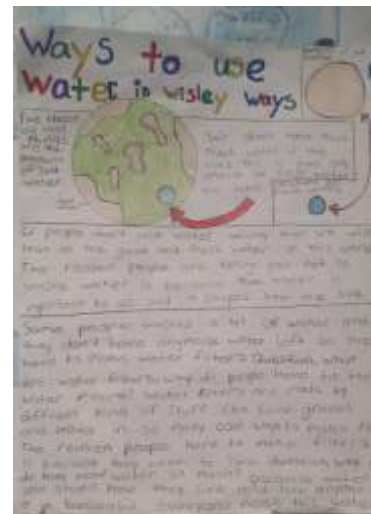
*Project Partners: Sierra Club Okanagan, the Students Without Borders Academy at Kalamalka Secondary School, Allan Brooks Nature Centre*

The OCCP worked with Students Without Borders Academy and the Sierra Club to help establish a program of mentorship and outdoor experience in environmental science.

OCCP coordinated the team in creating six days of learning through five guest speakers and a variety of field experience. The students conducted environmental surveys of some of the local wetlands and riparian areas around their school, looking at birds, invertebrates, plants, soil, and human impacts. They had field training from OCCP, the Allan Brooks Nature Centre, Sierra Club, the BC Wildlife Federation Map Our Marshes program, and from a UBC Okanagan graduate student. The group hopes to raise funds to continue delivering this program in future years, and develop a series of annual field observations into a report that will expand the information available for local governments, and survey the same locations in future years.



*Teachers testing activities from the Outdoor Education Guide at a Pro D Day workshop at Okanagan Landing Elementary.*



*Elementary students design posters on ways to use Water Wisely.*

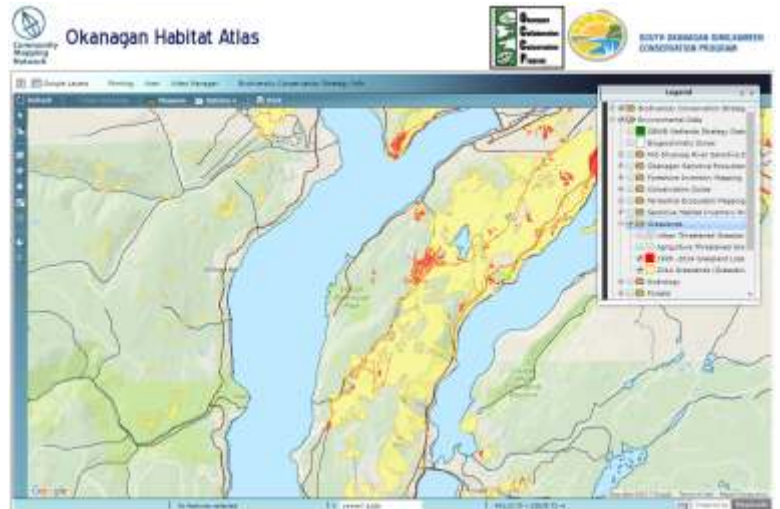


*Students Without Borders is an experiential learning and exchange program for high school students. This Academy consisted of 24 students from 7 high schools in the north Okanagan.*



### Okanagan Habitat Atlas

OCCP collaborated with the Grasslands Conservation Council of BC, OBWB, the BC Wildlife Federation, and the Community Mapping to incorporate grassland and wetland mapping, Foreshore inventory and mapping for Okanagan Lake, and Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping for Mission Creek into the Atlas. This Atlas makes environmental mapping data widely available the public, to aid in policy and land use planning decisions.



*The OCCP website is a hub for environmental information and was updated and rebuilt to ensure users have easy access to the 500+ resources on the website including searchable newsletters, reports and projects updates.*

# GOAL #3

Ensure decision-makers and citizens have the information and tools to protect, enhance and restore ecosystems.

- 2016 Foreshore Inventory Mapping (FIM) for Okanagan Lake
- Boating Impact Study for water quality and aquatic habitat of Kalamalka and Wood Lake
- Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory for West Kelowna
- Mission Creek - Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping (SHIM)

## 2016 Foreshore Inventory Mapping (FIM) for Okanagan Lake

In partnership with the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO), the City of Vernon, the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP), and the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB), OCCP assisted in securing funding and coordinating volunteers who contributed over 300 hours for their time with data collection. The Foreshore Inventory and Mapping data was collected 2016 and a report was completed this spring providing a summary of the condition of the 290 km of Okanagan Lake shoreline. This report marks the second time the entire Okanagan Lake shoreline has been catalogued and mapped and provides excellent information for planners and resource managers to assess the rate of change, and determine if existing regulations are effective in protecting ecosystems along the shoreline. It also provides an ongoing measure of the environmental impacts of development over time.



*Kokanee Spawn along the shoreline of Okanagan Lake in the fall.*



*Many animals use the shoreline as a movement corridor.*



*Examples of homes and their shorelines. The more of a vegetation buffer, the better for the ecosystems.*

The 2016 FIM data shows that 59% of the shoreline of Okanagan Lake has already been developed while 41% of the lakefront is in its natural state. Rural and residential land use development has been an important factor in the loss of natural shoreline on Okanagan Lake. Since the initial report in 2011, 4.1 km or 1.42% of the natural Okanagan Lake shoreline was lost or permanently altered. Key changes to the shoreline included the removal of native vegetation; construction of 165 retaining walls that altered 1.45 km of shoreline; 164 new docks; 9 new marinas; more road access and general landscaping. Lakebed materials were also disturbed along 4.1 km of the shoreline. The OCCP is working with a number of Partner to develop a public outreach program to raise awareness of the importance of the ecosystems surrounding Okanagan Lake.

### Boating Impact Study for water quality and aquatic habitat of Kalamalka and Wood Lake

Growth in the Okanagan region and an increase in boating activity has generated an interest and a need for a comprehensive and scientific analysis of the potential impacts of boating activity on water source protection. With this in mind, the Districts of Lake Country and Coldstream, RDNO, RDCO, the Okanagan Similkameen Invasive Species Society, and OCCP collaborated to retain Ecoscape Environmental Ltd. and Larratt Aquatic Consulting Ltd. to undertake study that would investigate the potential threat of boating activity on source water protection for the municipal intakes and aquatic ecosystems on Kalamalka and Wood Lake.

The study was completed over the summer of 2016 and the consultants presented the report the District of Lake Country, the District of Coldstream and the Greater Vernon Advisory Committee (GVAC) in June of 2017. The report presentations noted the main risk of power-boating on water quality is related to either contaminants (pathogens, bacteria, hydrocarbons and metals) released during sediment re-suspension from boat propellers or from chemical spills, most frequently occurring during re-fueling, cleaning, or disposal of waste.

The Districts of Lake Country and Coldstream and GVAC supported the report and the recommendations to focus on a multi-jurisdictional collaborative approach in implementing recommendations of the report, which focus on addressing spills, reducing the re-suspension of sediment, and protecting ecologically productive areas. To achieve these goals the report suggests creating spill management strategies, no wake zones, and public education programs on the issues and solutions to protect water source protection.



*The Partners for this project pooled their resources, and secured an OBWB Water Conservation and Quality Improvement grant to undertake the Boating Impact Study.*

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There are approximately 8000 boats registered in the Greater Vernon area, with a projected increase of 2000 boats in the near future, and an expected increase in demand for boating facilities such as; marinas, docks, boat launches and dry storage facilities.

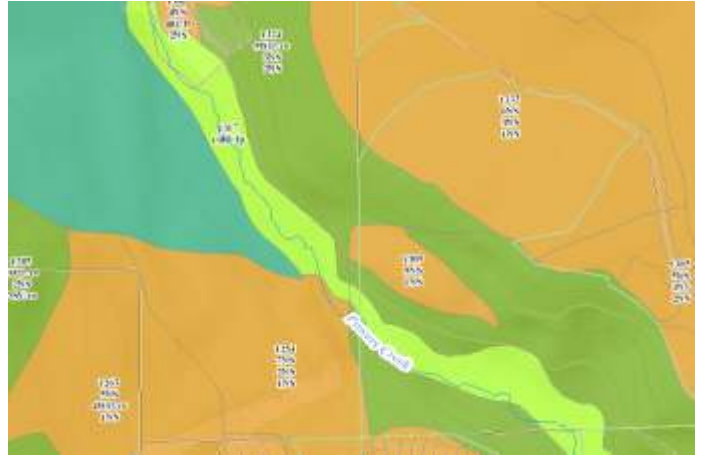


*Western Grebe build floating nest along shorelines, unfortunately their nest can be swamped from large storm waves or by wakes from boats.*



### Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory- West Kelowna

In partnership with the City of West Kelowna and the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO), OCCP secured funding to complete Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping (TEM) and Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) mapping for a proposed Environmental Development Permit Area in the Upper Glenrosa area in West Kelowna. The main objective of SEI's is to provide scientific information on sensitive ecosystems in order to support sustainable land management decisions and encourage conservation and land stewardship.



### Mission Creek - Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping (SHIM)

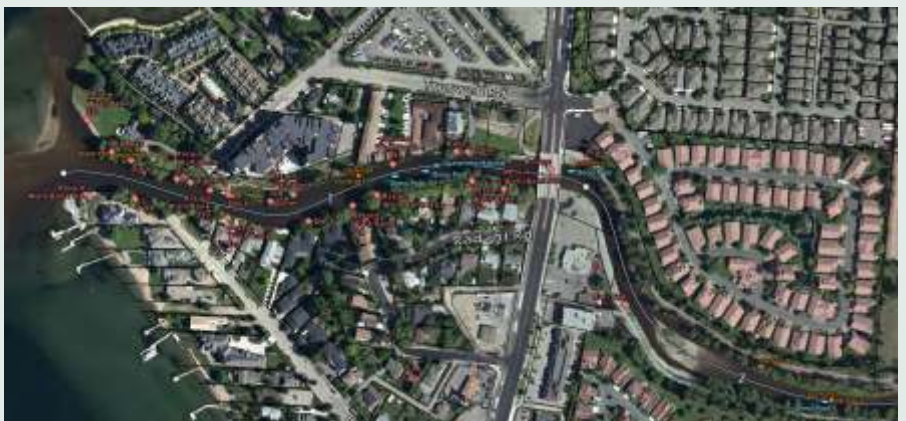
This project was facilitated through collaboration between the OCCP, the Regional District of Central Okanagan, the Okanagan Basin Water Board, and the City of Kelowna. The mapping information collected included GPS and photo survey data for fish spawning areas, wetlands, features and attributes such as retaining walls, bridges and culverts, side channels and tributaries, points of erosion, agricultural runoff, wildlife trees, and fish presence. The SHIM mapping was completed in the spring of 2017 prior to the flooding, making this a valuable tool in assessing the changes that have occurred as a result of the recent flooding.



*Blue Herons nest high in the tree tops of the Black Cottonwoods along Mission Creek.*

Mission Creek provides critical habitat and corridors for fish and wildlife with its spawning, rearing and overwintering and feeding habitats. The creek is home to many species of fish including juvenile salmonids and animals such as deer, elk, turkey vultures, blue herons, as well as aquatic invertebrates and plants all of which function as part of the region's wetland ecosystem. This new mapping has greatly improved the information about the Creek and will assist in strengthen rationale for better protection and restoration of the riparian habitats in the face of continued land development. The SHIM mapping will be used by community planners, environmental organizations and government agencies to guide management and land use decisions for habitat restoration projects and assist in the design of floodplain management plans.

*Sensitive Habitat and Inventory and Mapping was completed for 43 km of Mission Creek.*





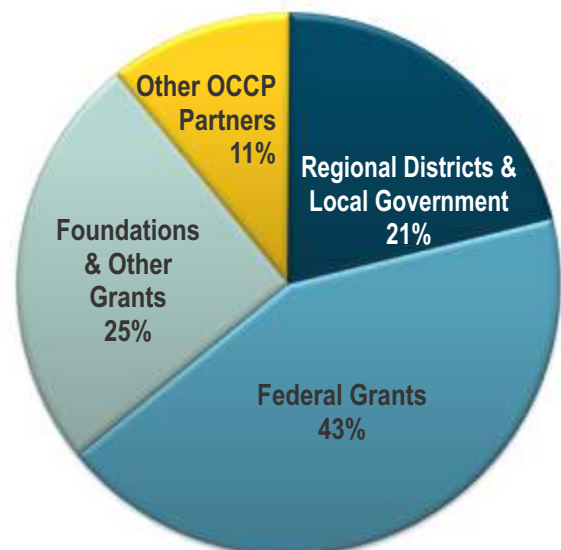
# Financial Overview

The OCCP fiscal year is April 1st to March 31st. During the 2016-2017 fiscal year OCCP secured \$311,602 to support conservation projects in the North and Central Okanagan and the core operations of OCCP. This revenue represents the cash flow managed by OCCP, not the total cost of projects. (For example OCCP may contribute \$10,000 to a project, but the total projects costs may be \$30,000). This revenue does not include in-kind contributions, on which OCCP relies heavily. All the Steering Committee members provide their services in-kind.

Thirty two percent of OCCP's revenue was provided from within the region from OCCP partners including local and regional government, the Okanagan Water Basin Board and the University of British Columbia Okanagan. These local contributions were leveraged to secure funding from Foundations and Federal programs such as Environment and Climate Change Canada – Habitat Stewardship Program, EcoAction Community Program, the Ecosystems Partnership Program and the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia.

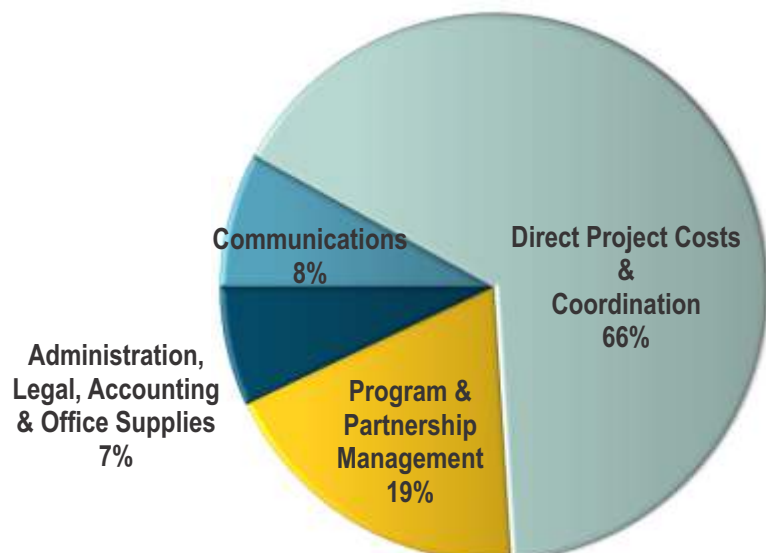
## OCCP Revenue 2016-17

Total Revenue \$311,602



## OCCP Expenses 2016-17

Total Expenses \$311,602



# Looking Forward

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Moving forward, the OCCP will continue to focus on realizing the goals from the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region, primarily by coordinating and facilitating action teams. With increased staff capacity, the OCCP is looking forward to enhance biodiversity conservation in the region by building financial partnership to support more partner projects.

OCCP has over fifty projects that Partners and community members have brought forward to consider for the next year. The OCCP is prioritizing projects that support the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region, and focus on outreach and education, filling information gaps, and stewardship and conservation. OCCP will be facilitating a planning session in February 2018 to update the five-year strategic plan for the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program.

It is an exciting time and important time for biodiversity conservation! Please consider joining the OCCP as a Partner, collaborator, funder, or a volunteer!











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