



Southern Interior Land Trust

November 2, 2022

News Release

Bourguiba Spring Purchased for Conservation

Wildlife on the hot, dry, sunny lower slopes of Anarchist Mountain in the South Okanagan will now have year-round access to drinking water, in perpetuity.

The Southern Interior Land Trust has succeeded in purchasing the 16.6-hectare (41-acre) Bourguiba Spring property on Highway 3, three kilometres southeast of Osoyoos.

Achieving this goal in just a few months is due to the support of a variety of donors, including the South Okanagan Conservation Fund, the Wild Sheep Society of BC, the BC Conservation Foundation, the Okanagan-Similkameen Parks Society, the BC Parks Foundation, the Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, part of Canada's Nature Fund, and dozens of non-profits, companies and individuals who donated what they could. Please go to <https://siltrust.ca/bourguiba-spring-property-acquired/> for a list of donors.

Lot 16, the Bourguiba Spring property, is a steep, south-facing grassland with rock outcroppings above a ravine that protects a groundwater spring—the source of Bourguiba Creek, which flows into Haynes Creek, a tributary of Osoyoos Lake.

Its steep slopes of sagebrush, bunchgrass, and scattered pines are home to California bighorn sheep, provide spring range for mule deer, and habitat for many species-at-risk, such as badger (endangered), rattlesnake (threatened), screech owl (threatened), and half-moon hairstreak butterfly (endangered).

Conservation of this habitat provides protection of valuable undeveloped land for wildlife, as well as offering opportunities for the public to enjoy birding, hiking and other outdoor activities in a natural setting with panoramic views.

SILT President Judie Steeves commented, “This is a beautiful piece of natural Okanagan landscape, where the aroma of sage and pinesap remind me of my childhood growing up in this valley. I’ve been sad to see so many of these natural features paved and built over in my lifetime and it’s very rewarding for me personally to



Southern Interior Land Trust

participate in conserving a site where delicate mariposa lilies bend in the breeze, and I can hear the meadowlark's melody.”

She thanked everyone who pulled together to help SILT purchase the property in such a short timeframe.

“The twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss are two sides of the same coin, and we must tackle them together. By working with partners such as The Southern Interior Land Trust and generous donors, we are helping to protect the natural environment in British Columbia and across the country. Protecting lands plays a vital role in helping to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and contributes to the recovery of species at risk. Through programs like the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, the Government of Canada is making progress toward its goal of conserving a quarter of lands and oceans in Canada by 2025, working toward 30 percent of each by 2030.”

– *The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change*

“The Wild Sheep Society of BC is incredibly grateful to support this important land purchase which will help sustain wild sheep on the Okanagan landscape. We are thankful SILT has offered us this opportunity to be part of another land acquisition and support BC's wild sheep.”

– *Kyle Stelter, Chief Executive Officer, Wild Sheep Society of BC*

"The Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society takes great pride in contributing to SILT's acquisition of Lot 16 near Osoyoos. We feel that the lot, with its spring and diverse plant and animal life, provides much needed large animal connectivity and protection for larger wildlife in the area. We hope that, as a model of cooperation, Lot 16 is only an initial project of this sort in the southern interior.

– *Ian Graham, President, OSPS*

Lot 16 is just one of many properties SILT owns, or which SILT has helped acquire for other conservation organizations in the Southern Interior of B.C.

With the support of the public and their donations, SILT can continue to be responsive and available to conserve other important habitats as they come available. Go to SILT's website for more information or to donate: siltrust.ca/donate.



Southern Interior Land Trust

About:

SILT is a registered not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to conserving land for wildlife and other living things. In particular, SILT has worked for more than 30 years with a focus on creating a legacy of important gems of habitat as stepping-stones that allow wildlife to move through landscapes impacted by human development or activities.

– For media enquiries: SILT Executive Director Al Peatt: 250-328-4699

The Government of Canada's Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP) is a unique public-private partnership to support new protected and conserved areas by securing private lands and private interests in lands. The program is managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Federal funds invested in the program are matched with contributions raised by NCC and its partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the country's land trust community.

Le Programme de conservation du patrimoine naturel (PCPN) du Gouvernement du Canada est un partenariat public-privé unique destiné à appuyer la création de nouvelles aires protégées et conservées grâce à l'acquisition de terres privées ou de droits sur ces dernières. Le programme est administré par Conservation de la nature Canada (CNC). Les fonds investis par le gouvernement fédéral dans le programme sont bonifiés par des contributions de contrepartie amassées par CNC et ses partenaires, Canards Illimités Canada et la communauté des organismes de conservation du Canada.