



North Okanagan Naturalists' Club: ***North Okanagan Watershed Stewards Program***

VISION

A thriving network of healthy, resilient streams that sustain vibrant ecosystems, support community well-being, and inspire lifelong stewardship.

We envision a community where people and waterways are deeply connected—where residents understand their local streams, participate in their care, and celebrate the life they support. Through collaborative science, hands-on restoration, and inclusive partnerships, we strive to protect and enhance freshwater habitats so that fish, wildlife, and future generations can flourish.

MISSION:

To protect, restore, and monitor our local streams through community-based science, hands-on stewardship, and collaborative partnerships.

We work to enhance freshwater habitats, support healthy fish and wildlife populations, and deepen public understanding of watershed health. By engaging volunteers, sharing knowledge, and fostering respectful relationships with Indigenous communities, landowners, and local organizations, we strive to ensure our watersheds remain resilient and vibrant for generations to come.

GOALS:

1. Collaborate with Indigenous Nations, Local, Regional, Provincial and Federal Governments, and Partners

- Work respectfully with the Syilx/Okanagan Nation and local communities to support Indigenous knowledge and leadership in watershed stewardship.
- Coordinate with municipalities, regional districts, conservation organizations, and landowners to align restoration and monitoring efforts.
- Share data and insights to support evidence-based planning and policy.

2. Monitor and Understand Local Watershed Health

- Conduct regular Streamkeepers protocol surveys on key creeks such as BX Creek, Vernon Creek, Coldstream Creek, and smaller tributaries.
- Track water quality, flow patterns, riparian condition, and fish presence to build long-term datasets that inform local decision-making.
- Identify emerging threats such as low flows, sedimentation, invasive species, and climate-driven hydrological changes.

3. Strengthen Community Stewardship and Education

- Offer training for volunteers, schools, and community groups to build local capacity for watershed care.
- Share accessible information about stream health, water conservation, and climate impacts in the Okanagan context.
- Create opportunities for residents to connect with their local creeks through guided walks, monitoring days, and citizen-science events.

4. Restore and Enhance Aquatic and Riparian Habitat

- Support projects that improve fish passage, stabilize eroding banks, and enhance spawning and rearing habitat for salmon, kokanee, rainbow trout, and other native species.
- Remove invasive plants and replant native species to strengthen riparian resilience.
- Participate in clean-ups and debris removal to maintain safe, functioning waterways.

5. Advocate for Healthy, Resilient Watersheds

- Promote land-use practices that protect water quality, natural hydrology, and biodiversity.
- Provide science-informed input into local planning processes, development proposals, and environmental assessments.
- Encourage water conservation and climate adaptation strategies that reflect the region's increasing drought pressures.

6. Build a Sustainable, Community-Driven Program

- i. Maintain transparent communication, and reliable volunteer support systems.
- ii. Pursue diverse funding sources to sustain long-term monitoring and restoration work.
- iii. Develop clear protocols for safety, data collection, and project management to ensure consistency and credibility.