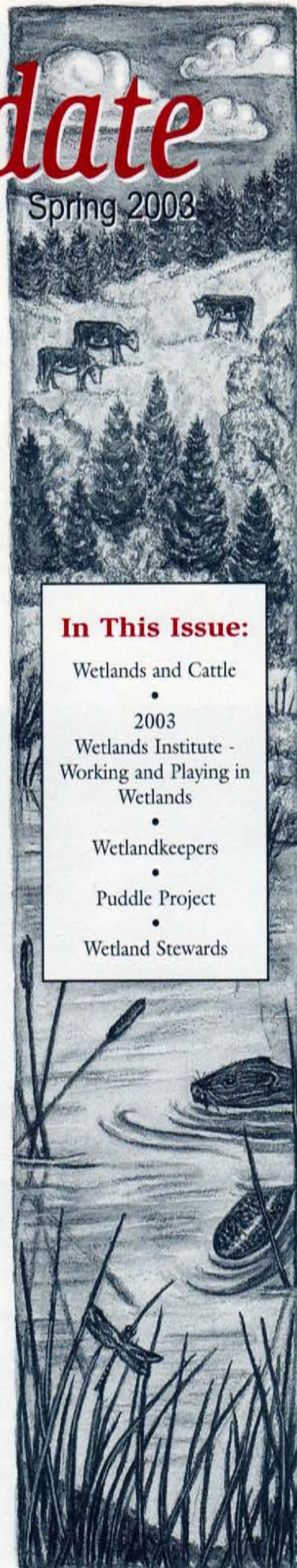
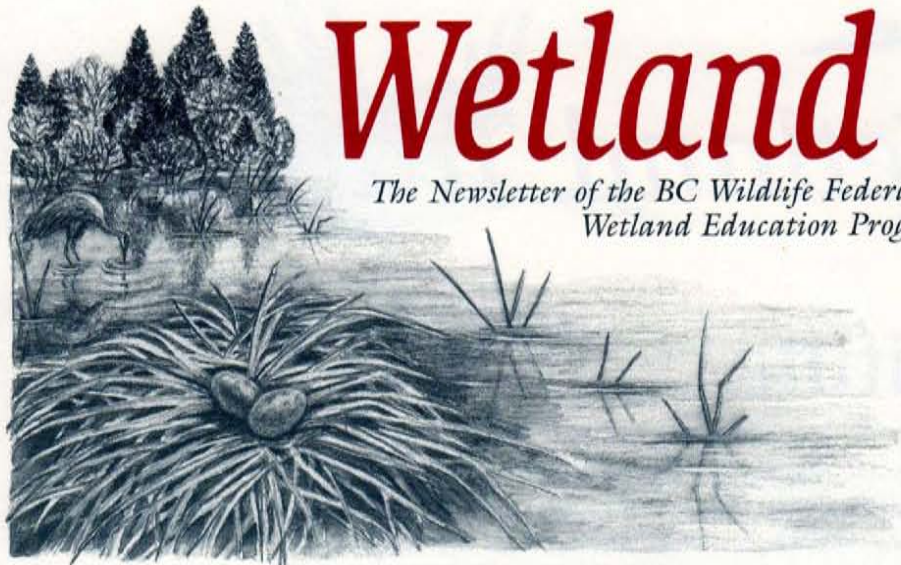


Wetland Update

The Newsletter of the BC Wildlife Federation
Wetland Education Program

Spring 2008



Wetlands and Cattle

Wetlands nurture what may become the most valuable natural resource of the 21st Century - water. Clean, reliable water is a topic of conversation and concern in most households in British Columbia. The quality and quantity of our water is critical for human consumption and vital to our agricultural and ranching communities. "Overall healthy wetlands create a more stable, sustainable and diverse agricultural economy".¹

Crops and cattle are dependent on clean, reliable water and often this water is provided by wetlands. Wetlands filter nutrients such as phosphorous, nitrogen, as well as pesticides and heavy metals. Wetlands capture and store water after rainfalls and snowmelt and slowly release this water during dry periods, thus playing a crucial part in the maintenance of groundwater and surface water supplies. These supplies irrigate crops and water cattle.

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Advances in off-site cattle watering such as nose-pumps, solar powered pumps and gravity-fed troughs provide new alternatives to the use of wetlands for livestock watering. Where these methods have been cost effective to implement, both cattle and wetland health improves. Off-site watering is not the only option available to manage cattle utilization of wetlands. Other options that have proved as effective include controlled grazing intensity, controlled timing of grazing, providing a graveled single access point ("keyhole fencing"), and rest rotation grazing.

Wetlands are also valuable to cattle producers due to their abundant vegetation. The sedges and grasses around wetlands are very productive, palatable and produce abundant high quality forage. However, unregulated livestock access usually means the productive riparian vegetation is virtually eliminated. If managed wisely, wetland vegetation provides excellent grazing for livestock.

In This Issue:

Wetlands and Cattle

•
2003

Wetlands Institute -
Working and Playing in
Wetlands

•
Wetlandkeepers

•
Puddle Project

•
Wetland Stewards

¹ The Economic, Social and Environmental Value of Wetlands, Cows and Fish Fact Sheet, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Program, printed 01/02.





2003 Wetland Training

Wetlands Institute

Attend the 2003 Wetlands Institute: Working and Playing in Wetlands in 100-Mile House, BC July 20-26, 2003. Institute field studies will demonstrate ways to “work and play” in wetlands and still maintain their natural functions. Participants will practice best management practices for cattle grazing, logging, urbanization and recreation. Learn vegetation, species of significance, and soils mapping techniques as well as aquatic insect, bird, and water quality inventory and monitoring. Participants will be selected according to their chance of successfully building and implementing a plan for a wetland education, conservation or restoration project in their own community. If you are interested in attending please call (250) 354-1088 or email wetlands@netidea.com

Thank you to the 2002 Institute funders: Ducks Unlimited Canada, Columbia Basin Trust, BC Hydro, Canadian Wildlife Service, and the Golden District Rod & Gun Club.



Wetland Institute participants identify a specimen

Puddle Project

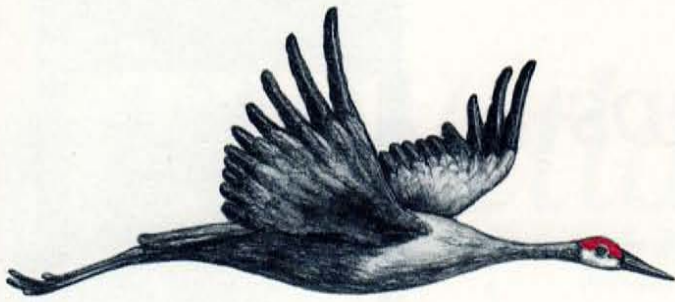
Piloted on Vancouver Island in April 2002, the Puddle Project trained 28 members of the Nanaimo & District Fish and Game Protective Association and local Streamkeepers groups in:

- wetland ecology
- use of global positioning systems (GPS)
- access of local land-use planning processes

“Everyone learned something, even our DFO employee,” commented Bil Derby, President of the Nanaimo club.

BC Wildlife Federation and naturalist clubs have expressed an interest in receiving this training. If your club is interested in receiving this training please call (250) 354-1088 or email wetlands@netidea.com





Wetlandkeepers

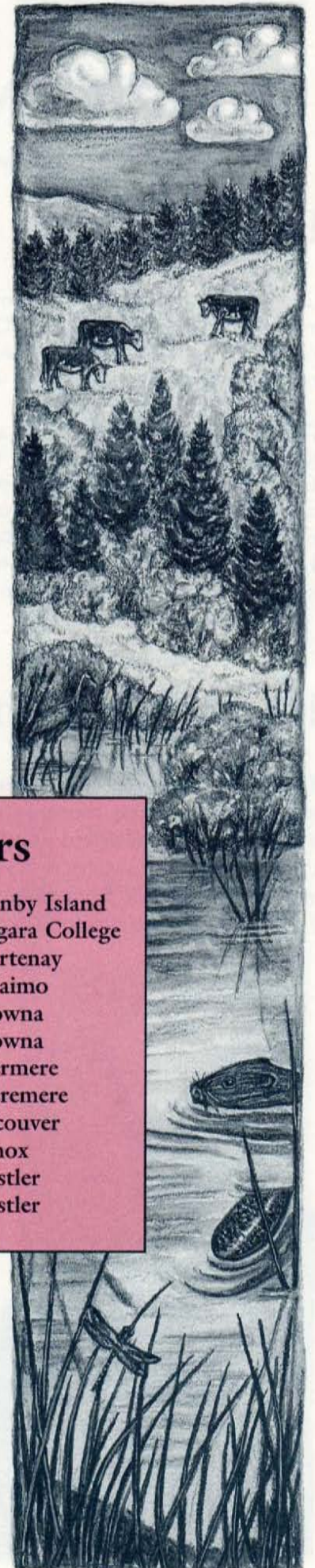
Wetlandkeepers (WK), a two and one-half day workshop, offers individuals who want to get more involved in wetland stewardship an opportunity for hands-on practice of the skills outlined in *The Wetlandkeepers Handbook*. During the course, participants visit a local wetland to map its boundary, conduct plant and bird inventories, take water quality measurements, and sample soils. Laws and rights regarding wetlands in BC are also highlighted. Successful participants receive a Wetlandkeepers Certificate.

The Wetland Education Program (WEP) is building a province-wide network of trainers. Trainers teach courses, share their knowledge about regional wetlands and act as mentors in their community. There are currently twelve individuals involved in the network.

To set up a course in your area or if you see that your area does not have WEP Trainer and you have some suggestions call (250) 354-1088 or email wetlands@netidea.com

Sandhill Crane -*Grus canadensis*

The sandhill crane, illustrated throughout this newsletter, is a majestic bird that migrates to wetlands in BC's interior and coast to nest and breed. It is blue listed (species considered vulnerable) in BC and can often be found in wetlands that cattle also depend on for water and forage.



List of Trainers

Moira Greaven *	Hornby Island
Abby Schwarz *	Langara College
Michele Jones *	Courtenay
Chris Zamora	Nanaimo
Jennifer French	Kelowna
Mike Wood	Kelowna
Tanya Begin	Invermere
Jennifer Dubois	Invermere
Patrick McGuinness	Vancouver
Don Chamberlain	Comox
Lisa Helmer	Whistler
Veronica Sommerville	Whistler

*Certified

WETLAND STEWARDS

Ha Ha Creek

Like many ranching, hobby farming, and logging communities the Ha Ha Creek community near Cranbrook, B.C. has been struggling with water shortages. The mission of the Ha Ha Creek Watershed Stewardship Group is to "protect and maintain water resources for all users" in their community.

The Stewardship Group hosted a field study day during the 2002 Wetlands Institute helping them better understand the hydrology of their valley. The group recognizes that the last remaining wetland plays an important water storage function in their valley and that much of their "water budget" lies in groundwater. The Group is interested in hosting a Wetlandkeepers course to inventory vegetation and wildlife that this wetland hosts. Residents hope their collective understanding of this wetland and their watershed will result in informed decisions on water-use for all.

Burns Bog Conservation

The Burns Bog Conservation Society is a non-profit organization educating and raising awareness about Burns Bog's ecosystem in Delta BC. Burns Bog is the only estuarine raised peat bog in a Mediterranean climate in the world, a habitat for rare subarctic species of plants & animals, a carbon sink that traps carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and is threatened by development. The Society gives tours and education programs on Burns Bog.

Four special events are held to promote awareness to the community about this endangered ecosystem:

- International Bog Day
- Jog for the Bog
- Celebrating Women and the Spirit of the Cranes
- The Society's Anniversary Celebration.

If you would like more information see

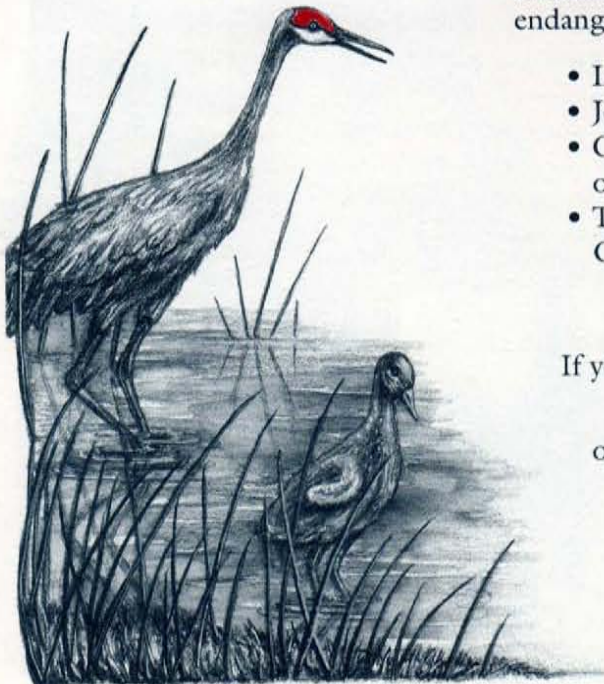
www.burnsbog.org

or contact them directly by calling

(604) 572-0373

or emailing

eliza@burnsbog.org



Published by:

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To order a
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(\$30 +GST)
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Ultralights symbolize the spirit of human giving. They have been used to show sandhill cranes raised in captivity how to migrate from Canada to wintering grounds in the southern US. See...

<http://ulflyingmag.com/archives/sandhillcranes.html>
for more information on this amazing story of hope!

Thank You for Your Donation