

YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM

TEN YEAR REVIEW

For the Period of July 1, 2004 to August 31, 2014

Completed on June 15, 2015



Youth working with Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards to install a fish counting fence

The Youth and Ecological Restoration Program helps vulnerable youth build healthy community relationships with both the human and natural worlds. Through restoring local watersheds with community members, the youth gain a sense of worth, belonging and place.

TEN YEAR REVIEW PREPARED BY:

WENDY KOTILLA

4327 MINTO ROAD

COURTENAY, BC

V9N 9P7

250-336-8487

wkotilla@shaw.ca

www.youthecology.ca

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Youth and Ecological Restoration Program (YER) ten year review covers the period from July 1, 2004 to August 31, 2014, as well as some prior history that contributed to the creation of the program. It also documents the development of the second phase, an advanced program for phase one graduates. YER has five main goals: Building Healthy Community Relationships; Gaining Valued Work Experience; Improving Ecological Knowledge; Increasing Personal and Social Skills; and Enhancing Communication Skills.

YER was created to bring vulnerable youth together with the natural and human communities in the Comox Valley; and to interconnect the disciplines of ecological restoration and restorative justice. Now spanning ten solid years of this important work, it is time to review what has been learned and experienced by the youth and our community. As creator and coordinator of YER, I have been extremely honoured to engage two hundred and fifty young spirits with the ecology and people of this place, and frequently been humbled by the lessons they have taught me.

This is a testimony of YER from concept to initiation to implementation to accomplishment. YER has been strategically and thoroughly documented in the form of two letters of intent, the original proposal, twelve reports, a conference paper, many newspaper articles and a website. I draw on these and other resources to tell a story that is akin to birthing a child and watching as they stumble, fall, grow and blossom.

It has been a journey where I have observed our young generation learn to value themselves as part of our community. I have also seen community members acknowledge, respect and support the youth for their contributions to forests, streams, rivers and watersheds in the Comox Valley. YER is a collective achievement for the youth and our community, as we unite to restore our relationships with each other and the ecosystems of the Earth that sustain us.

2. YER HISTORY

YER started with a vision of bringing vulnerable youth outside to know the Pacific Northwest rainforest, as experienced in my own childhood. It also entailed a transmission of practical and scientific wisdom I had gained as a commercial fisherman, salmon enhancement volunteer, and fisheries and forestry research technician; combined with my formal education in ecological restoration and conflict resolution. This YER history is drawn from my own recollection and introspection of events; from documentation in the form of proposals, reports and articles; and insights from people who have been connected with the program.

Creating a Successful Model

The original idea for YER was sent as a letter of inquiry to the Community Futures Strathcona, Community Initiatives Committee in April 2002. It had the support of several prominent youth and environmental organizations in the Comox Valley. Community Futures said it was a good idea, but I should seek funding elsewhere.

In January 2004, the letter of intent was submitted to Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children (QAF) for the Vancouver Island Strategic Investment Initiatives Fund. When invited to submit a proposal, I consulted with community members experienced with youth and environmental initiatives in the Comox Valley. Rediscovery International was used as a model for YER due to their good methods of connecting youth with themselves, elders and nature. Reaching out for support and advice was instrumental in developing a sound proposal that was accepted by QAF.

The proposal outlined a vision of combining Comox Valley youth and environmental groups for their mutual benefit. It gave details that included the youth being provided with transportation, lunch and any job-related equipment. Youth would complete the twenty hour program with a public presentation, and be rewarded with a certificate, letter of reference, and either fifty dollars or completion of community service hours. It discussed surveying youth, families, community members and partnering groups for feedback on the program effectiveness.

The first referral came from John Howard Society; next three from Comox Valley Community Justice Centre; and then from Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Sandwick Alternate School. The inaugural audience for a presentation was Kiwanis Lodge and the youth spoke with ownership and pride about their accomplished work. Witnessing this first presentation I could see its incredible significance for youth increasing their self confidence.

YER has now been sustained for over ten years and the original model has been so effective that it has never been altered. Longevity of the program within the Comox Valley community is an indicator of its success.

Program Funding

Early on I realized that YER was proving to be an incredibly viable and successful program and approached QAF with an extension, but they declined. So I went to the office of Comox Valley MLA, Stan Hagen, who was then the BC Minister of Children and Family Development.

Negotiations with QAF, MCFD and the Comox Valley MLA office established a QAF Bridge Funding period from September 2005 to March 2006. In the following two years, YER received MCFD provincial grants, after which funds have come directly through MCFD Courtenay office. Four years of one year contracts were obtained and then three two year contracts, which will now carry YER to the end of March 2017.

YER, Phase II was originally funded in 2007 by the Vancouver Foundation, Robert and Florence Filberg Fund, via the Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee. The funds sponsored: YERII start up: long term evaluation of Phase I benefits on youth participants; updating the YER brochure; and development of the YER website. YERII has continued through MCFD with the partnerships for matching funds to support a professional biologist contributed by Comox Valley Regional District, Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards, Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society, Comox Valley Environmental Council and UNIFOR Local 3019 (Table 1g).

3. YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Vulnerable youth often have difficulty with self confidence and achieving success due to family situations, acquaintance choices, and accumulated histories of abuse, drug addiction and lack of support in their lives. They cry out for attention and help through personal and social behaviours that push people away and contribute to a negative self image. YER was designed to encourage youth to broaden their sense of healthy relationships with themselves, the natural world and the human community.

From 2004 to 2014, two hundred and fifty youth have participated in YER; since 2007 twenty-eight youth have been involved with YERII (Table 1a). Completion rates for YERI are ninety-five per cent and one hundred percent for YERII (Table 1b). These scores seem to be due to youth being given support and respect, trust and acceptance, opportunities for success, positive work experiences, and being honoured for their individual talents and abilities.

At the end of YERI or YERII, youth present what they have learned to an audience, transforming them into teachers of ecology within our community. This is so very powerful for young people with low self esteem, elevating their sense of pride in themselves at a core place within and allowing their spirits to know incredible worth in the world. It is a precious thing to witness!

YERI

Youth Referrals

YER referrals mainly come from ten groups (Appendix B), with 122 youth from the Comox Valley School District and two from outside the community (Table 1c). The majority of school referrals were from the alternate programs at Glacier View, Lake Trail and Nala'atsi, which is where youth who are not fitting into mainstream school programs are placed, and some came from other schools (Table 1c). MCFD referred 73, and were from probation services, mental health and other departments within the agency (Table 1c). Comox Valley Community Justice Centre referred 32 and John Howard Society sent 17 youth to YER (Table 1c). The two agencies outside the Comox Valley were BC Childrens Hospital in Vancouver and the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children in Victoria (Table 1c). All youth referred to YER experience difficulty with personal and social behaviours that have ranged from anxiety to extreme violence.

Youth Organization Interconnections

To determine how youth may be connected with various youth agencies in the Comox Valley a short questionnaire was created to ask where they obtained services other than the referral places. This was initiated in 2006 and 205 youth have been interviewed about these interconnections (Table 1d). For example, 73 of 250 youth were referred by MCFD (Table 1c), yet 145 of 205 are connected with MCFD (Table 1d). As expected, 202 of 205 were involved with School District #71, with lower numbers associated with The Linc, John Howard Society, Comox Valley Community Justice Centre and Comox Valley Boys and Girls Club (Table 1d).

In the past couple of years more youth service agencies have been added to the questionnaire to gain a broader perspective on how youth are accessing these services. This can be viewed in annual reports posted on the YER website at <http://youthecology.ca/category/annual-reports/>. Since 2010, inquiries have also been made about youth use of school and private counseling treatments, and it was found that 49 out of 98 youth have accessed counseling in those four years alone (Table 1d). Even though these questions were not asked of all the 250 youth involved with YER over the ten year period, this reflects associations between agencies that serve Comox Valley vulnerable youth and demonstrates most of them are involved with MCFD.

Ecological Restoration Organizations

For the YER twenty hour work experience and training program, youth work with four ecological restoration organizations to gain a range of experiences at different locations with a diversity of community members. Youth participants have worked with a total of 30 groups that represent local environmental organizations; private businesses; service clubs; conservation associations; educational alliances; and regional, provincial and federal government agencies (Table 1e; Appendix B). Five of the ecological organizations have consistently provided placements to engage youth with volunteers to restore and preserve native species and natural habitat.

Of the 250 youth those that have been involved with these 5 ecological groups are: 206 with Oyster River Enhancement Society; 192 with Tsolum River Restoration Society; 181 with Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards; 138 with Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society; and 112 with Morrison Creek Streamkeepers (Table 1e). The remaining 25 groups have provided projects for between 1 and 41 youth participants (Table 1e). These experiences introduce youth to elements of our community of which they were not previously aware, broadening their sense of place.

Community Presentation Locations

All youth are required to give a presentation to complete YERI, and 239 out of 250 participants have accomplished this public speaking aspect of the program (Table 1f). Presentations have been given to 93 different groups (Appendix B). When youth start YER they are given the option of talking with an audience of their choice. After the work experience, we go for lunch at Tim Horton's, where I assist the youth to review their learning and organize their speaking notes.

Out of 239 youth who completed YER, 121 presented for school groups, with most at Glacier View Secondary Centre and Comox Valley elementary schools (Table 1f). Youth spoke to 43 youth agencies, of which MCFD received the most at 19 (Table 1f). Presentations were also given to: 26 seniors groups; 14 daycares and pre-schools; 14 environmental organizations; and 21 to a variety of other groups (Table 1f). Youth are supported to push through or overcome their anxiety of public speaking with amazing benefits to their self esteem.

YERII

Graduate Opportunities

The second phase of the program was developed for youth as a succession of the life skills, work experience and ecological knowledge they acquired in YERI. Two YERI graduates, work with the YER coordinator and a biologist to conduct ecological inventories, fish population studies, and other environmental and conservation research projects (Table 1g). The biologist takes care of the science and I address any challenging behaviours that arise during our work together.

The objective of YERII is for youth to learn the values of cooperation and teamwork, while focusing on a meaningful ecological project, and then conclude with guiding a public tour. From 2007 to 2014, twenty-eight youth participated in fifteen YERII projects (Table 1g) with 100% completion (Table 1b). We are fortunate to have had continuity and commitment of professional biologist, Ian Moul, who has worked with YERII youth on nine projects over the past four years.

Project Partnerships

Partnerships are created with organizations that fund most of the fees for the biologist, who guides the data collection methods in engaging, practical and comprehensible techniques for the youth. YER has been supported by six local organizations that have come forward with research project funds matching the MCFD YERII support. These research projects encourage personal and social development for vulnerable youth and the partnering organization is provided with a science based professional report. The Comox Valley community also gains from enhancing our ecological knowledge and supporting youth to be involved with positive activities.

The six partnering groups are: Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards had five projects; Comox Valley Regional District had four; Comox Valley Project Watershed Society and Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society had two each; and Oyster River Enhancement Society and Tsolum River Restoration Society both had one (Table 1g). The first six projects (2007 to 2008) were funded by the Vancouver Foundation (Table 1g). These proved to be very successful that MCFD has funded YERII since 2011. YER will strive to maintain partnerships with these groups and seek opportunities to create new ones.

Public Tours

The public tours are the crowning jewel of the YERII projects. We work together to collect scientific data for three days, and ensure the youth are well versed in the ecological and human history of the project site. On the fourth day the biologist and I help the youth to organize their acquired knowledge and set up stops within the study place where the audience can be instructed. On the fifth day we come early to practice the tour a couple of times before people arrive. Extra

preparation is needed for YERII tours because they require advanced communication skills from the youth. Tours are advertised to attract larger audience numbers.

The youth shine as their individual personality and expertise is conveyed to attendees. On tour completion, youth are rewarded with a YER hoodie and certificate, letter of reference and fifty dollars. The YERII tour numbers have increased over recent years; in 2014 a total of 80 people attended three YERII tours (Table 1g). These tours are increasingly recognized for representing a unique combination of youth and ecological work. Community residents come out to learn about local ecology from the youth, as well as to support these youth moving forward with their lives.

5. RELATIONSHIPS

The heart of YER is relationships: the supportive one-on-one relationships youth build with the YER Coordinator; the mentoring relationships youth create with community members, who are mostly elders; and the nurturing relationships youth establish with the natural world. All three of these relationships benefit vulnerable youth in our community. Being supported, mentored and nurtured through relationships with the broader human and ecological communities helps these youth feel valued and loved. To make this kind of investment with youth who are struggling to feel a sense of worth validates them and strengthens our whole community. We all win!

One-on-one Relationships

The primary relationship that YER youth participants develop is one-on-one with me. Creating the individual assistance helps youth feel supported throughout the twenty hour program. I pick them up at home, which is the first time we actually meet, although I do speak with them on the phone to set up their schedule. Initially, they seem to wonder how this is all going to work out, but I try to make them as comfortable as possible with this preliminary encounter.

Throughout the program I work beside the youth doing the same jobs. This creates a balanced partnership bond where neither of us is above or below the other. I guide the youth with how to operate in a safe manner for themselves and others. We work with a variety of tools from shovels and rakes to water quality monitoring and fish sampling equipment. To instill good work ethics of commitment and responsibility, I give reminder phone calls for work dates and ensure their caregivers are involved with any communications. I hold them accountable for their behaviour, actions and words. The youth are also required to sign a work experience and training contract.

Part of my role with YER is to provide emotional support with whatever may be happening for youth when they are involved in the program. There is a spectrum of issues in their lives and some examples are: suicide attempts, anxiety, isolation, abandonment, self mutilation, drug and alcohol addiction, criminal activity, sexual and physical abuse, mental illness, developmental disabilities, and other anti-social behaviours. I can best help by offering empathy and compassion for anything and everything that arises during our time together. Sometimes just listening with a sympathetic ear is the greatest and only support.

Mentoring Relationships

Volunteers are the foundation of Comox Valley environmental organizations and inadvertently provide mentoring relationships for YER youth as their elders. These people are committed to making a better world for themselves and others, and tell the youth a lifetime example of stories and experiences. They work together cooperatively to protect and restore natural ecosystem functions for species whose very survival requires healthy habitats. Whether their focus is birds, plants or fish, they all have a common goal. It is this combination that serves the youth so well, which is transferred and taught to them through active engagement with group activities.

When YER started I witnessed suspicion from elders to the youth and from youth to the elders. These youth have had many reasons to distrust older people as authority figures and people who abandoned and mistreated them. Some elders have had been wronged by “juvenile delinquents” that stole from and vandalized their homes, threatened their security and were disrespectful towards them. At times I have had to mediate their differences to assist youth and elders with finding common ground, but it usually doesn’t take long for the walls to collapse. Now I more often see a mutual respect and admiration from both sides as they learn, grow and work together.

Ecological Relationships

The core lesson of ecology is that we are all connected, which youth discover through observing the interconnections of the natural world. As salmon live in rivers and depend on trees for food and shelter, youth also learn about life conditions and cycles. They become more caring and respectful towards others from feeding a baby bird or handling a juvenile salmon. Working with and being responsible for the life of other species invites more sensitivity and gentleness. It is amazing to watch the soft side of a tough kid make an appearance when they are involved with ecological restoration events.

Sometimes we sit in the forest and talk surrounded by the healing powers of the natural world. Whole practises have been created in ecotherapy, nature therapy or ecophysiology to reduce stress, anxiety and depression. I see this working with the youth as they calm down, have less attitude, and their fears and anger dissipate. One youth couldn’t believe I listened to him for a whole hour while we were sitting beside a creek. Nurturing the physical and emotional safety and wellbeing of vulnerable youth is the essence of YER and of the utmost priority.

Ecology is the educator, as youth learn what and who they share this land with. They come to understand how human activities have altered and damaged the land and its inhabitants. The youth absorb this knowledge as they spend time in the rivers, creeks, forests and watersheds of the Comox Valley. As they feel compassion and gratitude for the land, they feel these same qualities within themselves. YER youth learn the value of clean soil, water and air as something bigger than themselves and vital to sustaining life. Doing ecological restoration with volunteers permits youth to see how intrinsically connected they are with natural and human communities. By healing and restoring ecological relationships, youth are healing and restoring relationships with themselves, their families and community.

Community Support

From the very beginning YER has had incredibly strong community support. The Comox Valley community has intensely stood with and backed YER every step along the way. This program belongs to our community; these youth are our youth and they deserve all of this support and more. While I cannot name and count everyone and everything that has contributed to YER success, I can attempt to list some of the activities that have been beneficial and received with much gratitude. A partial record includes: support letters; funding assistance; work placements; presentation locations; and providing equipment. Not to be undervalued are those individuals that have taken the time to have thoughtful and supportive discussions with the YER Coordinator.

The above list is important, but the most essential aspect is the direct support that community members, environmental professionals and presentation spectators give while sharing time with the youth. I watch as these people mentor and nurture youth participants, accepting them almost like their own kids. The youth feel that and comment on it because some of them have not known this kind of support in their lives. This is where the community support really matters!

4. EVALUATION AND GOALS

Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children (QAF), the original funder for YER, required that a process be established to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. An Evaluation Guide was created as a method of analyzing progress and outcomes from the youth, family, youth worker and community levels (Appendix A). A formal questionnaire was developed for youth in 2004 and for their parents or caregivers in 2011; for youth workers and community members there has been an informal evaluation process based on contacts, interactions and observations.

Five goals were established to guide the expected learning and each youth was interviewed. A questionnaire was developed to examine youth perspectives and feedback at three stages during their YER involvement; preliminary, post work and post presentation questions. There was also debriefing done at the end of each work day to determine what they liked best, least, and what they learned. The youth comments were documented and analyzed to ascertain their learning within each of the five goals. YERI and YERII youth questions resemble each other.

Inquiries are made from the youth's parents and caregivers to obtain the perspective of those who are closest to them. A questionnaire was designed to seek an understanding of their views on the ecological work, public speaking and any behavioural changes they may have observed. Themes from analysis of their comments revealed increases in youth confidence, sense of belonging, work ethics, communication skills, ecological values, and motivation for each work day preparedness.

In June 2014, YER had a ten year celebration where several speakers reflected on the significance of this work for the youth and our community. Quotes are presented from some of those speakers that illustrate community support.

Five Goals and YERI Youth Quotes

The best way to illustrate the effectiveness of YER is through the voices of the youth participants. Youth quotes for YERI were selected to demonstrate the significance and extent of learning that occurred within the five goals.

GOAL # 1: BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Cooperation, Support and Compassion; Positive Role Models and Mentoring; Increased Community Capacity and Caring

- “I appreciate what you are doing for the young people in this community because it bridges the gap between the elder generation and it passes a common knowledge of the world. It gives youth an understanding of how their actions affect everything around them.” (*YERI Participant #96*)
- “This program helped me to be a citizen, helped me to work with the community. It was a good experience for me. I loved helping the community and it's something I'll never forget. I hope I can give the knowledge to other people.” (*YERI Participant #136*)
- “Every place I went I felt valued. Everyone I've met through the different organizations and societies were very welcoming and supportive. Everyone was very nice and I felt I wasn't treated just as some kid tagging along. I felt people were taking me seriously and this has been a wonderful experience; I definitely think I have learned a lot.” (*YERI Participant #214*)
- “Another cool part of going to the fish hatchery was working with all the old guys that give their time to the fish. It's like a clan of salmon grandpas. They were very sweet and funny and easy to be around. I have a lot of respect for those guys and I know they appreciated my help. It feels good to be part of something big, the community and the ecosystem.” (*YERI Participant #237*)

GOAL # 2: GAINING VALUED WORK EXPERIENCE

Data Collection Methods; Working with Tools; Worksite Safety; Job Variety; Good Work Ethics

- “Skills and experience I gained that can add to my job resume are: teamwork, communication skills, knowing that I will do the best I can no matter how hard it is going to be and not giving up.” (*YERI Participant #48*)
- “But it was not all fun and games counting fish, safety always comes first on the river; the strong current and deep water posed a hazard and reminded me to always be mindful of my surroundings and always to operate in a safe manner.” (*YERI Participant #104*)
- “The variety was good, it was all different things, and some things were harder. Some of it was hard to do and some things I didn’t really want to, but it was good I did. The thing where I scooped the fish out of the water. When I pushed myself to do things, I learned it was good.” (*YERI Participant #120*)
- “This program helps kids learn more about their community. You work with experienced people and learn to do more hands on work rather than sitting inside a classroom. It’s definitely more of hands on experience to work outside with people that have a lot of experience doing it. It’s better than sitting inside and looking at stuff and saying this is what you do, when you actually get to go out and do it yourself.” (*YERI Participant #213*)

GOAL # 3: IMPROVING ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Ecosystem Cycles and Interconnections; Identification Techniques for Plants, Animals and Fish; Understanding Environmental Impacts

- “We all live in a watershed; a watershed is a river surrounded by mountains; the rain falls from the mountains and drains into the river. A watershed is like our community, we help each other out to survive; there are lots of things you can do in the community to help. We’re helping watersheds and watersheds are helping us to survive.” (*YERI Participant #169*)
- “The copper mine in the upper part of the watershed at Mt. Washington was the reason for it to become the most endangered river in BC. Over the past ten years the river has become healthier with the help of the Tsolum River Restoration Society. The rotary screw trap helps to monitor the health of the river and the numbers of fish.” (*YERI Participant #186*)
- “Salmon are important to our ecosystem because if you take them away it affects everything around them. For example, the animals that eat the salmon would need to find something else to eat. When salmon die they bring ocean nutrients into the rivers because they spend most of their lives in the ocean.” (*YERI Participant #208*)
- “We were watching the foraging behaviours of the Great Blue Herons and where they started to hunt for food. We were using a cellmaster spotter scope with a 64 x 112 power scope. We stood at the Royston Wrecks and watched the whole bay for the herons and documented where they were every 20 minutes. We would record how they move or stay in a place. As we were there we saw purple martins mating in the air, eagles feeding their kids in a nest, and then the sea otter was eating by the shipwrecks.” (*YERI Participant #228*)

GOAL # 4: INCREASING PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS

Meaningful Participation and Empowerment; Commitment, Respect and Responsibility; Patience and Endurance; Accomplishment, Self-confidence and Success

- “I learned responsibility, how to be responsible when you do something that you say you are going to do and you do it right and you are responsible for your actions, you are responsible for what you do.” (*YERI Participant #73*)
- “I found this experience rewarding in the sense that I feel I have been helpful and gained confidence and also can do anything I set my mind to. I feel like a leader in my community.” (*YERI Participant #122*)

- “I learned cooperation, listening, patience. I gained a little bit more of that. Work experience, understanding, getting involved in more things. Keep up the good work and have a smile on your face – have a positive attitude and thought. It made me feel better about how useful I am, less doubtful because it inspired me to think I can do more instead of just sitting around.” (*YERI Participant #203*)
- “It was good, I like the good vibes and how happy everyone was. It felt like I definitely did something good today. I learned more today than I did any other day in school and my brain doesn’t hurt.” (*YERI Participant #215*)

GOAL # 5: ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Public Speaking and Leadership; Active Listening and Engagement; Interpersonal Relationships

- “It is a relaxed way of learning. It feels tingly sometimes when you learn something after and you find out what it means and is cool. It was actually a good discussion learning, a good way of learning. You asked me something and reviewed it a bit later – it is a more patient and gentler way.” (*YERI Participant #35*)
- “It was empowering; it was awesome; it was epic. The way they reacted, they listened, they learned, and they weren’t completely and utterly rambunctious. I’m not deathly afraid to talk in front of anybody anymore.” (*YERI Participant #140*)
- “It feels pretty good to finish the program. It was a good experience. I feel kind of smart because I completed it. I never knew I could actually speak in front of people because that was the first real presentation I did. I feel confident in myself when I was speaking and when I was done the presentation I felt confident afterwards.” (*YERI Participant #158*)
- “Yeah, definitely, I think that it is something you feel good about because you are giving back to your community and it feels good. The presentation gives you confidence because when a group of people respond in a positive way it gives you courage and confidence.” (*YERI Participant #184*)

YERII Youth Comments

Similar questions are asked of youth in YERII in order to document what they are learning and how it has worked for them. The YERII numbering is presented as: the YERII number is listed first and the YERI number is the second number. The YERII quotes were chosen to generally reflect the youth’s experiences.

- “Working with different people and learning different things about collecting data and different fish and being a leader instead of a follower. Pretty cool having lots of people listen to you and blow them out of the water. Some of those big words I said on the tour, like impressing people and helping people, it helps them learn about the environment. I guess I impressed myself by how I remember all the stuff.” (*YERII Participant #6-103*)
- “We did quite a bit of work and raised awareness of the place, so I feel like we have done some good. At points there were a couple that said, be calm, speak up. The people on that tour were supporting me as much as you and Ian, everybody was supporting me; it was amazing. If I can deal with thirty people listening to me, I can deal with one. It definitely raised my confidence.” (*YERII Participant #18-183*)
- “I felt good and it helped me in a way I can’t explain because it’s really hard to. It’s really hard for me to work with people. It’s hard to work as a group. It sort of made me stronger. It made it easier for me to work in a group, the decisions and stuff that we all agreed on. Decision making and being included, it makes me feel better about myself.” (*YERII Participant #21-223*)
- “It was cool, an incredible learning experience. I didn’t know I would be so involved. I learned a lot more than I expected about the ecosystem. The chain reaction in what happens,

like the eelgrass and the heron, their relationship. Looking at things from a non-biased perspective and questioning yourself.” (YERII Participant #24-247)

Parent and Caregiver Observations

Parents and caregivers are the people that best know the youth who are involved with YER. They are often good observers of the program, and any behavioural improvements or changes that may occur for youth. Their comments are listed for YERI and YERII.

YERI Parent and Caregiver Comments

- He was proud of himself and I was proud of him and I learned more about the program and how it can benefit the kids we have today. It builds community; I think that’s huge. I think that kids have a sense of community and how community supports them. How important it is to have other adults in their lives that they can trust and look up to. I learned that this work makes a huge difference to the kids, the community and the environment, and they are building their value system. (YERI Participant #199)
- For those that are silently angry and holding everything in there is silent pain and he found a place that he could release that and let the wholeness of life in. One word – serenity. It’s meant a lot to him. The silent anger and pain that he holds inside contradicts who he is and the serenity that I witnessed when he came home from your program is an indication of how desperately needed this type of program is for youth like that. He kept coming home saying we needed to be there to keep this for future generations. (YERI Participant #203)
- I was very impressed. Mostly because of the one-on-one interaction for him and that there was a woman running it. He never would have gone if you were a man. Because when you came to pick him up you walked into the house and said “let’s go”. It was good knowledge and he had never completed a presentation that he enjoyed doing. He’s got a great work ethic now, he wants to volunteer in the community, to gain experience and have a good resume. (YERI Participant #223)
- The only thing I can say is I was impressed with the enthusiasm and him coming home in a good mood. He spoke highly of you. The way you were interacting with him, you didn’t treat him like a child. Your eagerness to explain and talk to him on his level, it was just amazing. You actually talked to him like he was a human being and not a child. Anybody that can get this kind of enthusiasm out of him, then kudos to that person. Thank you so much for what you did for my son. (YERI Participant #228)

YERII Parent and Caregiver Comments

- “I wish there were more programs like it. It gave him a sense of accomplishment to do the tour; I think it boosted his self esteem. It gives him an opportunity; it makes him feel good about himself. Its people like you who make this world a better place for people like him.” (YERII Participant #11-145)
- “I think that it is a good thing for sure. Most kids are in concrete and they don’t get to go outside in the woods. It’s hard to fathom what is out there beyond computer and technology. There’s fish in the water and wildlife out there, but for kids to get out there and experience it and see what kind of footprint we are leaving. I think its really good experience for any kid to see that kind of thing.” (YERII Participant #16-170)
- “I think that he came out of his shell even more than the first one and that was reflected in the way he took charge showing us through the forest. I witnessed his respect for the water, the creatures he was involved with and the outdoors. What he reflected at the end was awareness of the great outdoors. They were in their glory sharing the outdoors in a very respectful way. They also had a real connection with those that were there with the program. I saw teamwork

and cooperation, very visible. It gave him a peaceful mind and state. This is all part of learning, but he did it with joy. He had a joyful journey.” (YERII Participant #20-203)

- “I was very excited for him, very pleased that he could move through his anxiety over it. Any time he’s taken different programs he usually quits the first day, but all the other programs were men. Because it was outdoors and you didn’t fall for his stuff and you could see his anxiety start. You saw it before it happened. For years nobody saw it or understood it and it went unnoticed. You talked to him on his level to see what was going on in his head instead of pushing him forward in what he was doing. Everybody in his life is in a hurry and we don’t have time to stop and understand what is going on with him. These new kids don’t understand that; we need to slow down for them.” (YERII Participant #21-223)

YER Ten Year Celebration

On July 1, 2014, YER celebrated ten years of service for vulnerable youth and their families in the Comox Valley. A community event to commemorate this milestone was held at the Zocalo Café in Courtenay on June 25th. Snacks and a celebratory cake were provided. The 45 attendees represented youth and environmental groups, past youth participants, youth caregivers and other people who have been associated with YER during its ten year history. There was one invited speaker and then an open microphone period in which eight people spoke about their memories and experiences with the program. A condensed version of the speeches is presented here.

Doug Hillian – Invited Speaker – MCFD, Director of Practice/North Island, Vancouver Island Youth Justice Director; City of Courtenay, Councilor

Wendy had this incredible determination and this dogged persistence and she stuck with it and when you look at the presentation she made tonight the results are absolutely incredible. Wendy has a tremendous heart for the outdoors and for environments of all the living things in our wonderful world and she also has a tremendous heart for our young people and for providing an opportunity for them. And the vision she had in this program of bringing those two things together and what I think is a tremendously unique aspect of this program.

It gives an opportunity for our young people to work hand in hand with the elders of the community, with people who have demonstrated a lifetime of care and responsibility for our natural systems. They have so much wisdom and such a fine example to impart and these are transformative experiences for the young people who have been involved, make no doubt about that. You saw the testimonies there in the video.

I would really like to see this program replicated in other parts of the province. I’ve always had a firm belief that in BC we have this tremendous wilderness and we don’t make enough use of it as a teacher and a laboratory place for our young people where they can learn stewardship and all the lessons that the natural world has to offer. It’s a winning formula that you’ve developed and part of the reason we haven’t been able to replicate this elsewhere is because you’re so incredibly unique and it really is the unique qualities that you bring that makes this program happen.

So I just want to give you a tremendous thank you from the ministry and the government of British Columbia. I am also privileged to be a representative of the city of Courtenay and bring you greetings and gratitude from the city. Thank you so, so much for the tremendous work that you’re done. Congratulations on all the accomplishments of ten years and the difference that you are making every day. I wish you all the best for at least another ten years. Thank you, Wendy.

Kerri Lowey – North Island College, Human Services Department, Instructor

Through my teaching at the college we do work in community development and I often talk about your program and think it is such an inspiration, so for ten years I've been inspired by the work that you are doing. It's a really good example of what could be done just by starting with a proposal and real passion for this area of work. Thank you so much for that and I would love to see something like this start across the country. I think it would be a model for a lot of other places. It's been an honour and you're been a real mentor to me. Thank you Wendy.

Peter Birch – MCFD, Courtenay Office, Team Leader (retired)

It was always a real highlight for me, being able to come and watch the graduates and I know some of them weren't all that keen. I used to sometimes go and get the occasional coffee at Tim Horton's. I would notice a graduate coming up next because there was Wendy, and this boy with a deer in the headlight look or a girl with saucer look in her eyes. Wendy would be coaching and encouraging and just getting them through it. Then they would come and it was really kind of touching, there was this young person standing there, quite nervous usually, and still able to talk and tell us how your program changed them and made a difference in their life. It was just quite moving actually, always looked forward to that. The first ten years flew by pretty fast and let's do another one, eh? Thanks a lot Wendy; it's been a real pleasure.

Dr. Betty Donaldson – University of Calgary, Faculty of Education (retired)

It is by far the best and most effective program that I know of for the amount of money that is invested in it and the human hours that I have ever seen. But we are so restricted by the boundaries we've created for ourselves it's really hard to become ecologically healthy. It's taken Wendy to help us understand how we can do that because she has the eyes to see how to put together a way of restoring justice to individuals and ignite some of the ecological damage in our community. Wendy, you are a leader in our community. Thank you and I wish you could be cloned and I would like your program to be more widely known. There are people here that could help make that happen.

Vicky Luckman – John Howard Society, Executive Director

Thank you to Wendy and to the program on behalf of John Howard Society; on behalf of the community; and on behalf of all of the youth that you've worked with. I appreciate the program and yourself. The hard work of how you make hard work look like fun and rewarding for yourself. I congratulate you on ten years and to thank you for connecting our youth, mainly with nature and with the elders of our community as well. Because I think that's been a wonderful spin off that kids get to enjoy and learn about a relationship with nature and with the elders in the community. So thank you very much and good luck.

Tina Lewis – Former Foster Parent

You're always talking about your dreams; you're always talking about your hopes for the kids. You're always right there pushing them along and gently showing them how to do it. It's just really heartwarming to hear of one of your students coming back to you and telling you what a huge inspiration you are to them. The way they embrace you and love you for it and what it is you've shown them and the path that you've gone down today. It truly is something that we all want for our kids. About the nature around us and what we as people do to nature. You gotta take them out of the interference that our kids are brought up with the technology. You get them out there and you get them feeling, you get them to hear the silence and you get them to be able to touch and feel. It's because of people like you that it helps to keep it real.

6. SUMMARY

The Youth and Ecological Restoration Program (YER) is based on three core relationships with youth: on-on-one with the YER coordinator; mentoring from community elders and volunteers; and engagement with the natural world. The model created in 2004 has been so successful it has not been altered. For ten years, YER has involved vulnerable youth with community members to conduct ecological restoration projects in Comox Valley watersheds. British Columbia, Ministry of Children and Family Development has been the main funder.

YER phase one involves youth in twenty hours of work experience and training with four local environmental groups, and for completion they do a public presentation for another group. In YER phase two, two youth work together with the coordinator and a biologist, and at the end youth lead a guided tour of the project site. Two hundred and fifty youth participated in YERI for a 95% completion; twenty eight youth finished YERII with 100% completion (Table 1a and 1b).

One of the strengths of the program has been in building partnerships with regional, provincial and federal groups. There have been ten groups referring youth to the program; thirty groups providing ecological restoration work projects; and ninety-three places have been available for audiences to listen to the youth presentations (Appendix B). This collection of group support permits the youth to see the community strength that stands with them.

Youth's sense of ecology and humanity is expanded, giving them a sense of being a part of something bigger than themselves. This dynamic combination of relationships with the natural and human communities addresses the needs of vulnerable youth in a sensitive, tranquil and unobtrusive way. Each day of YER training, the natural world encircles the youth, providing a broad perspective of teachings on ecology and life.

Youth learn a sense of worth, belonging and place. They feel honoured, valued and respected by conducting ecological restoration work with community volunteers and elders. Through equality in work situations and relationships, youth achieve a sense of empowerment and accomplishment. It changes them by making a difference in their lives and helping them to know they can make a difference in the world. YER builds community and transforms youth from learners to leaders

**TABLE 1: YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
YOUTH PARTICIPANT SUMMARY TABLE FOR JULY 1, 2004 TO AUGUST 31, 2014.**

YER for Comox Valley vulnerable youth funded by Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). YERI had 250 participants since 2004; and YERII had 28 participants since 2007.

Table 1a: YER COMPLETION

YERI initial program is 20 hours and has operated since 2004.

	YOUTH TOTALS
Total YERI Complete	239
Total YERI Incomplete	11
TOTAL YERI	250

YERII advanced program is 25 hours and started in 2007.

Total YERII Complete	28
TOTAL YERII	28

Table 1b: YERI and YERII COMPLETION RATES

YERI: Total number of 250 youth participants; 239 completed the 20 hour program	239
YERII: Total number of 28 youth participants; 28 completed the 25 hour program	28
TOTAL COMPLETION RATES: YERI 95% AND YERII 100%	

Table 1c: YOUTH ORGANIZATION REFERRALS

YERI is a prerequisite for YERII, so only YERI referrals are recorded in this table.

	YOUTH TOTALS
Comox Valley School District 71	122
Glacier View Secondary Centre: 85	
Nala'atsi Aboriginal Alternate Education Program: 15	
Lake Trail Middle School: 14	
Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School: 4	
G. P. Vanier Secondary School: 2	
Cumberland Junior Secondary School: 2	
Ministry of Children and Family Development	73
CV Community Justice Centre	32
John Howard Society	17
BC Children's Hospital	1
Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health	1
Community Living BC	1
Comox Valley Family Services Association	1
Comox Valley Youth Resource Society	1
Private Counselling Services	1
TOTAL 10 YOUTH REFERRAL ORGANIZATIONS	250

**TABLE 1 (Cont.): YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
YOUTH PARTICIPANT SUMMARY TABLE FOR JULY 1, 2004 TO AUGUST 31, 2014.**

Table 1d: YOUTH ORGANIZATION INTERCONNECTIONS

Youth participants are interconnected with other Comox Valley youth services.

Documentation of interconnections began in 2006 for 205 youth (#45 to 250).

Youth were asked if they had connections with other community youth groups.

The first six listed were documented since 2006; the remainder were added later.

Comox Valley School District 71	202
Ministry of Children and Family Development	145
The Linc	96
John Howard Society	65
Comox Valley Community Justice Centre	39
Comox Valley Boys and Girls Club	38
School Counselling Services	27
Private Counselling Services	22
Comox Valley Family Services	15
Wachiay Friendship Centre	15
Comox Valley Youth Resource Society	8
Vancouver Island Health Authority	4
Comox Valley Transition Society	2
RCMP Victims Assistance	1
TOTAL 205 YOUTH INTERVIEWED FOR INTERCONNECTIONS	

**TABLE 1 (Cont.): YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
YOUTH PARTICIPANT SUMMARY TABLE FOR JULY 1, 2004 TO AUGUST 31, 2014.**

Table 1e: ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION ORGANIZATIONS YERI PROJECTS 2004 - 2014	YOUTH TOTALS
Oyster River Enhancement Society	206
Tsolum River Restoration Society	192
Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards	181
Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society	138
Morrison Creek Streamkeepers	112
Fanny Bay Enhancement Society	41
Comox Valley Project Watershed Society	22
Hart Watershed Society	19
Comox Valley Land Trust	14
Comox Valley Nature	13
Courtenay & District Fish and Game Protective Association	13
Streamside Native Plants	10
Comox Valley Regional District	7
Department of Fisheries and Oceans	6
Comox Valley Watershed Assembly	5
Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team	4
World Community Development Education Society	4
Brooklyn Creek Watershed Society	3
Cumberland Community Forestry Society	3
BC Hydro, Bridge Coastal	3
Perseverance Creek Streamkeepers	2
Georgia Strait Alliance	2
Ministry of Transportation	1
Ministry of Environment, Environmental Protection	1
Comox Valley Environmental Council	1
Comox Valley Sustainability Network	1
Comox Lake Water Survey	1
Comox Valley Water Watch	1
Natural Journeys Society	1
Sunrise Rotary Club	1
YER CONDUCTED ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION WORK WITH 30 GROUPS	

**TABLE 1 (Cont.): YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
YOUTH PARTICIPANT SUMMARY TABLE FOR JULY 1, 2004 TO AUGUST 31, 2014.**

Table 1f: COMMUNITY PRESENTATION LOCATIONS YERI youth made public presentations for 130 individual groups	YOUTH TOTALS
SCHOOLS	121
Glacier View Secondary Centre: 61	
Elementary: 32	
Nala'atsi: 12	
Middle: 11	
Secondary: 4	
North Island College: 1	
YOUTH AGENCIES	43
Ministry of Children and family Development: 19	
John Howard Society: 4	
The Linc: 4	
Youth and Ecological Restoration Program Celebration: 4	
Youth Connections Centre: 3	
Comox Valley Community Justice Centre: 2	
Scouts Canada: 2	
Youth for Christ: 2	
Youth Unlimited: 1	
Lewis Centre, Day Camp: 1	
Comox Valley Boys and Girls Club: 1	
SENIORS	26
DAYCARES/PRE-SCHOOLS	14
ENVIRONMENTAL	14
OTHER GROUPS	
St Joseph's Hospital: Adolescent Care and Transitional Ward	10
Wachiay Friendship Centre: Elders Lunch and Raven Back Youth group	7
Comox Valley Women's Centre	1
Creekside Commons	1
Eureka Clubhouse	1
Independent	1
A TOTAL 239 OUT OF 250 YOUTH COMPLETED YERI	239

**TABLE 1 (Cont.): YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
YOUTH PARTICIPANT SUMMARY TABLE FOR JULY 1, 2004 TO AUGUST 31, 2014.**

Table 1g: ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION ORGANIZATIONS YERII PROJECTS 2007 - 2014 AND TOUR PARTICPANT NUMBERS	YOUTH TOTALS
2007 Tsolum River Restoration Society, Vanier Garry Oak Forest Ecological Plot: 15	2
2007 Comox Valley Project Watershed, Summer Chinook Radio Telemetry Study: 6	1
2008 Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society, Open House: 250	2
2008 Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards, Salmon Population Estimate: 16	2
2008 Comox Valley Project Watershed, Summer Chinook Radio Telemetry Study: 19	1
2008 Oyster River Enhancement Society, Salmon Enhancement Program: 5	2
2011 Millard/Piercy Watershed Stewards, Ecological Inventory: 15	2
2011 Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards, Salmon Population Estimate: 5	2
2012 Millard/Piercy Watershed Stewards, Ecological Inventory: 9	2
2012 Comox Valley Regional District, Seal Bay Park Ecological Inventory: 29	2
2012 Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards, Salmon Population Estimate: 12	2
2013 Comox Valley Regional District, Millard Creek Headwater Springs: 15	2
2014 Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society, Courtenay Estuary Great Blue Heron: 37	2
2014 Comox Valley Regional District, Wildwood Marsh and Forest Ecological: 28	2
2014 Comox Valley Regional District, Bear Creek Nature Park Ecological Inventory: 15	2
FIFTEEN PARTNERSHIPS FOR YERII PROJECTS; 476 TOUR PARTICIPANTS	28

Appendix A: Youth and Ecological Restoration Program (YER) Evaluation Guide

The evaluation guide was developed in 2004 to assess YER progress and outcomes through:
Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, who funded YER from July 1, 2004 to March 31, 2006.

	Individual/family level	Youth Worker Level	Community level
Expected Outcomes	Public Speaking Skills Ecological Awareness Increased confidence Family participation in activities	More collaboration with youth workers More referrals from agencies Feedback from youth workers and agencies	More awareness of ecological restoration More interactions with youth and community members
Activities to Achieve Outcomes	Restoration projects One on one experiences Field trips to observe work completed Feedback from families Family attendance at presentations	Consultations with youth workers Interactions with youth workers Participation in activities and presentations	Working collaboratively with community volunteers Youth presentations to community groups
Evidence of Progress	Knowledge of ecological restoration Number of youth completing program Certificates completed Restoration projects completed Social skills gained Other knowledge gained	More referrals Number of youth completing the program	More referrals from environmental groups Number of youth completing the program Number of community members interacting with program youth
Evidence will be Obtained From	Youth Youth groups Family members	Youth Workers Service Agencies Government Agencies Schools	Environmental groups Community volunteers Community groups
Method to Obtain Evidence	Youth interviews Family interviews Tracking and monitoring data of youth in program Youth oral presentations Number of completions Journal entries Recording behavioural observations	Youth worker interviews Agency consultations Networking with youth workers Communicating with youth agencies and schools	Networking and communicating with environmental and community groups Interviews with group members

**APPENDIX B: YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (Page 1 of 3)**

YER partnered with one hundred and thirty-three groups July 2004 to August 2014.

Ten groups referred youth clients from July 2004 to August 2014:

- BC Children's Hospital www.bcchildrens.ca
- Comox Valley Community Justice Centre www.cjc-comoxvalley.com
- Comox Valley Family Services Association www.comoxvalleyfamilyservices.com
- Comox Valley School District: Lake Trail Middle School; Mark Isfeld School
- Comox Valley Youth Resource Society
- Glacier View Learning Centre: web.sd71.bc.ca/glacier_view/
Bridgeway; Independent Learning; Key Program; Nalata'atsi; Sandwick; Senior Alternate
- John Howard Society of North Island www.jhsni.bc.ca/
- Ministry of Children and Family Development: www.gov.bc.ca/mcf/
Probation Services; Mental Health; Parent Teen Mediation; Over Twelve
- Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health www.queenalexandra.org
- Wachiay Friendship Centre, Raven Back Youth Group www.wachiay.org

Thirty groups had youth conduct ecological restoration work from July 2004 to August 2014:

- Brooklyn Creek Watershed Society www.bcws.ca
- BC Hydro, Bridge Coastal Fish & Wildlife Restoration Program
- BC Ministry of Environment www.gov.bc.ca/env
- BC Ministry of Environment, Environmental Protection www.gov.bc.ca/env
- BC Ministry of Transportation www.gov.bc.ca/tran
- Comox Valley Environmental Council
- Comox Valley Land Trust www.cvlantrust.org
- Comox Valley Natural History Society www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca
- Comox Valley Project Watershed Society www.projectwatershed.bc.ca
- Comox Valley Regional District www.rdc.bc.ca
- Comox Valley Sustainability Network
- Comox Valley Water Watch
- Comox Valley Watershed Assembly
- Courtenay & District Fish & Game Protective Association www.courtenayfishandgame.org
- Cumberland Community Forestry Society www.cumberlandforest.com
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca
- Fanny Bay Enhancement Society www.fbse.ca
- Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team www.goert.ca
- Georgia Strait Alliance www.georgiastrait.org
- Hart Watershed Society
- Millard/Piercy Watershed Stewards www.millardpiercy.org
- Morrison Creek Streamkeepers www.morrisoncreek.org/
- Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society www.wingtips.org
- Natural Journeys Society
- Oyster River Enhancement Society www.oysterriverenhancement.org/
- Perseverance Creek Streamkeepers
- Streamside Native Plants http://members.shaw.ca/nativeplants/streamside_home.html
- Sunrise Rotary Club www.strathconasunrise.bc.ca
- Tsolum River Restoration Society www.tsolumriver.org/
- World Community Development Education Society www.worldcommunity.ca

**APPENDIX B (cont.): YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (Page 2 of 3)**

YER partnered with one hundred and thirty-three Comox Valley groups July 2004 to August 2014.

Ninety-three community groups had youth presentations from July 2004 to August 2014:

- Airport Elementary School, Grade 1
- Airport Elementary School, Grade 2/3
- Arden Park Elementary School, Kindergarten
- Arden Park Elementary School, Grade 1
- Arden Park Elementary School, Grade 4
- Arden Park Elementary School, Grade 6
- Aspen Park Elementary School, Grade 2
- Aspen Park Elementary School, Grade 3
- Aspen Park Elementary School, Grade 4
- Aspen Park Elementary School, Grade 7
- Berwick Retirement Society www.berwickrc.com/comox
- Brooklyn Elementary, Grade 5
- Casa Loma Seniors Village www.retirementconcepts.com/homes/comox-valley
- Comox Rotary Club www.comoxrotary.bc.ca
- Comox Valley Aboriginal Head Start Program, Pre-School Group
- Comox Valley Boys and Girls Club, Voices Choices Group www.cvboysandgirlsclub.ca
- Comox Valley Community Justice Centre www.cjc-comoxvalley.com
- Comox Valley Land Trust, Annual General Meeting www.cvlandtrust.org
- Comox Valley Land Trust, Board Meeting www.cvlandtrust.org
- Comox Valley Natural History Society www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca
- Comox Valley Senior Peer Counselling
- Comox Valley Project Watershed Society www.projectwatershed.bc.ca
- Comox Valley Regional District, Community Services Branch
- Comox Valley Watershed Assembly
- Comox Valley Women's Resource Society
- Comox Valley Youth for Christ www.comoxvalley.yfccanada.org
- Comox Valley Youth Resource Society
- Courtenay & District Fish & Game Protective Association www.courtenayfishandgame.org
- Courtenay Elementary School, Grade 2/3
- Courtenay Elementary School, Grade 3/4
- Courtenay Elementary School, Grade 5/6
- Cumberland Elementary School, Grade 5/6
- Creekside Commons www.creeksidecommons.ca
- Cumberland Elementary School, Grade 2
- Cumberland Elementary School, Grade 5/6
- Cumberland Junior School
- Cumberland Lodge
- Cumberland Rotary Club www.rotarycc.org
- Earth Day Festival
- Eureka Clubhouse
- Fanny Bay Enhancement Society www.fbse.ca
- Fanny Bay Old Age Pensioners, Seniors Craft Group
- Glacier View Lodge Society www.glacierviewlodge.ca
- Glacier View School, Brideway Program
- Glacier View School, Independent Learning Program
- Glacier View School, Key Program
- Glacier View School, Senior Alternate Program
- Island Early Education Centre, After School Group

**APPENDIX B (cont.): YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (YER)
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (Page 3 of 3)**

YER partnered with one hundred and thirty-three Comox Valley groups July 2004 to August 2014.

Ninety-three community groups had youth presentations July 2004 to August 2014 (cont.):

- John Howard Society, Staff Meeting www.jhsni.bc.ca/
- Kidzone Daycare
- Kiwanis Club of Courtenay www.facebook.com/pages/Kiwanis-Club-of-Courtenay-BC
- Lake Trail Middle School, Grade 8
- Lake Trail Middle School, Grade 9
- Lake Trail Middle School, Pride Program
- Lewis Centre, Youth Program, Day Camp www.courtenay.ca/recreation/programs.aspx
- Lighthouse Early Learning Centre www.cvcdcs.com/
- Linc Youth Centre, Action Committee
- Linc Youth Centre, Staff
- Linc Youth Centre, Youth Council
- Merry Andrew Day Care
- Miracle Beach Elementary School, Grade 1
- Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards
- Ministry of Children and Family Development, Mental Health Team
- Ministry of Children and Family Development, Over Twelve Team
- Ministry of Children and Family Development, Probation Services
- Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society, AGM www.wingtips.org
- Nala'atsi Alternate School
- North Island College, Human Service Worker Program
- North Island College, Human Services Articulation Conference
- Oyster River Enhancement Society www.oysterriverenhancement.org/
- Puddleduck Daycare
- Pumpkin Patch Daycare
- Puntledge Park Elementary School, Grade 4
- Puntledge Park Elementary School, Kindergarten
- Queneesh Elementary School, Earth Day Celebration
- Queneesh Elementary School, Kindergarten to Grade 4
- Roseberry Pre-School
- Royston Elementary School, Grade 7
- St. Josephs Hospital, Adolescent Support Group
- St. Josephs Hospital, Residential Care Facility
- St. Josephs Hospital, Transitional Ward
- Saltwater Waldorf School
- Scouts Canada, First Comox Scout Troup
- Scouts Canada, First Tsolum Cubs Group
- Stevenson Place (Seniors Independent Living) www.novapacific.ca/page131.htm
- Tsolum River Restoration Society www.tsolumriver.org/
- Tiger Too Pre-School
- Vanier Senior Secondary School, Counseling Group
- Vanier Senior Secondary School, Grade 8 English
- Vanier Senior Secondary School, Grade 8 Science
- Wachiay Friendship Centre, Elders Lunch www.wachiay.org
- Wachiay Friendship Centre, Raven Back Youth Group www.wachiay.org
- Youth and Ecological Restoration Program, Annual Community Celebration