

# **YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROJECT**

## **FINAL REPORT**

For the Period of July 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005  
Completed on October 15, 2005

PROJECT FUNDED BY:

**QUEEN ALEXANDRA FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN  
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES INVESTMENT FUND  
CHILD WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Youth and Ecological Restoration Project (YER) was provided with a Queen Alexandra Foundation (QAF), Strategic Initiatives Investment Fund grant to cover program costs for one year beginning in July 2004. YER engages youth at risk in ecological restoration activities in the Comox Valley, and requires participants to conclude the twenty-hour program with a public presentation to a community group. The program began with nine project partnerships between Comox Valley youth and environmental organizations and has now expanded to twenty.

Clear boundaries and expectations about a commitment to completing the program were established at the first meeting with each youth. Twenty-six out of thirty youth finished the program in the first year of operation – an eighty-six percent completion rate. This is a very high level of success for youth at risk who often struggle to accomplish goals. After the public presentation, their feelings of empowerment and positive personal identity soared even higher when they were publicly honoured for their success.

Youth participants became acquainted with parts of the Comox Valley community that they did not know existed. Each of the thirty youth worked with a variety of local environmental organizations, and interacted with an average of thirty-seven community members. YER introduced them to ecological restoration activities that were a constructive use of their time, and instilled positive values and social competencies.

Community members also had an opportunity to meet youth who are struggling to fit into our society. Doors and minds were opened for both youth and community members as they learned to view each other from a more positive perspective. It was a powerful experience to observe attitude and awareness changes as community members and youth participants worked together and supported each other as equals.

In terms of building community capacity, the high attendance at the YER year-end celebration was an indicator of its support in the Comox Valley community. Comments from the environmental organization representatives indicated that most of their retirement age members welcomed the opportunity to involve youth and share their knowledge. The youth organization representatives explained the benefits of uniting youth and adults to restore human and environmental relationships in our community. The RCMP spokesperson stated that YER takes a proactive and preventative approach that will last for generations.

In recognition of the unique and innovative quality of this program, funding has been secured to ensure that the program operates until March 31, 2007. The Honourable Stan Hagen, Comox Valley Member of the Legislative Assembly and BC Minister of Children and Family

Development, has provided \$30,000, and the QAF has contributed bridged funding of \$15,000. With financial support in place, YER will continue to provide this meaningful and valuable community service.

YER has been successful in promoting, supporting and achieving improved relationships between youth at risk, their families, support workers and the Comox Valley community. But community is not just about human relationships; it is also about our relationships with the natural world in the places where we live. YER involves taking responsibility for our relationships with each other, with our communities, and as stewards of the Earth.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Youth and Ecological Restoration Project (YER) is a program that involves youth at risk in ecological restoration activities in the Comox Valley. The final report describes YER achievements for the period of July 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005. The project was selected for funding by the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children (QAF), Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) under the Vancouver Island Strategic Investment Initiatives Fund (SIIF). SIIF supplied a one-time contribution for unique and innovative projects that supported strategic investments in child, youth, family, and community services on Vancouver Island. YER has been successful in promoting, supporting and achieving improved relationships between youth, their families, support workers and the Comox Valley community.

As with any pilot project, YER went through a variety of phases and experiences as it progressed from accepted proposal to implementation to completion. All YER activities were conducted by myself (Wendy Kotilla), the SIIF grant recipient and author of this final report. My qualifications include a Restoration of Natural Systems Diploma with University of Victoria, Faculty of Social Sciences; Negotiation and Mediation Certificates from the Justice Institute of BC; and twenty years combined experience with restorative justice and ecological restoration.

## **2. ACTION STEPS**

During the proposal preparation process YER developed project partnerships with five youth organizations and four environmental organizations. Once funding was in place coordination activities began with contacting the youth organizations for referrals. The environmental organizations were then contacted for work experience and training opportunities. At the time of the initial connect a commitment for YER completion was given by the coordinator and requested from the youth.

Linking the youth participants with the ecological restoration activities meant communicating with their families or caregivers and organizing transportation to and from the work site. Lunch and transportation costs were both budgeted as part of the project. Completion of the twenty-hour program required that each youth make an oral presentation about their work experiences to a community group. The location for the presentation had to be arranged soon after a youth started the program to avoid a delay in YER completion.

YER involved an intense level of communicating with youth, their families or caregivers, youth organizations, environmental organizations and other community groups. While this meant an enormous coordination effort for each youth participant, it also engaged and benefited all of the groups and individuals associated with the program. Connections were developed and bridges built between community groups that would not have happened otherwise. The result was an increase in community capacity for everyone.

### **3. PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

The nine original YER partnerships that were established with Comox Valley youth and environmental organizations continue to be involved with and contribute to the project. The five youth organization partnerships have remained the same, and the environmental organizations that provide work experience and training opportunities have increased from four to fifteen. The locations where youth have done their community presentations have increased from eight reported in the YER Mid-Term Report to sixteen at the end of the first year of operation.

#### **Youth Organization Partnerships**

YER has had thirty youth referred from four youth organizations (Table 1) and continues to work in partnership with Comox Valley Youth Resource Society. They have provided a venue for YER youth to prepare and present their work experience speeches, and for the YER celebration event at the end of the first year of the program. Youth partnerships include:

- John Howard Society
- Comox Valley Community Justice Centre
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- School District #71 Alternate Programs:
  - Sandwick Alternate School; Senior Alternate School;
  - Nala'atsi Program; Contract Tutoring
- Comox Valley Youth Resource Society

Out of the thirty youth that have participated in YER, seventeen have some connection with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and six were directly referred by them (Table 1). Fifteen of the thirty youth were doing mandatory community service hours and were either referred from John Howard Society or Comox Valley Community Justice Centre (Table 1). Nine of the youth were involved with School District #71 Alternate Programs (Table 1) and were referred by those programs. Each of the thirty youth who participated gained skills and knowledge from being involved with YER (Table 2).

#### **Environmental Organization Partnerships**

YER environmental organization partnerships increased from the original four to fifteen at the end of the first year of operation (Table 1). The environmental organization list includes groups where the youth participants conducted ecological restoration work, attended public meetings, or were involved with education events. The environmental organization partnerships are:

- Millard/Piercy Watershed Stewards
- Oyster River Enhancement Society
- Tsolum River Restoration Society
- Hart Watershed Society
- Morrison Creek Streamkeepers
- Comox Valley Naturalists

- Comox Valley Land Trust
- Comox Valley Watershed Assembly
- Perseverance Creek Streamkeepers
- Sunrise Rotary Club
- Georgia Strait Alliance
- Courtenay Fish and Game Club
- Comox Valley Project Watershed Society
- Natural Journeys Society
- Fanny Bay Enhancement Society

Each of the thirty youth worked with an average of four environmental organizations (Table 1). The ecological restoration work activities were attended by a large number of community members with an average interaction of thirty-seven community members for each youth participant (Table 1). This provided the youth with a significant diversity of work experiences, as well as an opportunity for connections with community members, environmental organizations and watersheds within the Comox Valley.

### **Community Presentations**

Completion of YER required doing an oral presentation for a group that was either selected by the youth or suggested by the YER coordinator. Community presentations were given for the following sixteen groups:

- John Howard Society
- Comox Valley Youth Resource Society
- Courtenay Kiwanis Club
- Comox Valley Community Justice Centre
- Comox Valley Project Watershed Society
- Comox Valley Watershed Assembly
- St. Joseph Hospital Adolescent Support Group
- Sandwick Alternate School
- Puntledge Park Elementary School
- Brooklyn Elementary Grade 5
- Courtenay Elementary Grade 5/6
- Ecole Aspen Park Middle School
- Senior Alternate School
- Contract Tutoring Program
- Nala'atsi Program
- Roseberry Pre-School

Twenty-six out of the thirty youth made a community presentation for YER completion (Table 1). These presentations were made at sixteen different locations and attended by an average of seventeen community members per youth participant (Table 1). Through the presentations the youth learned valuable public speaking skills, and returned some of the knowledge and experience they gained back to the community members who attended the presentations. On completion of the presentation their contributions were honoured by publicly presenting them with a YER certificate and crest, and a letter of reference acknowledging their work experience. There was also a \$50.00 honorarium awarded to the fifteen youth participants who were not doing mandatory community service hours.

### **Future Partnerships to Sustain Funding**

QAF provided YER funds for one year through SIIF. Under the SIIF Trust Agreement QAF was bound to “one time only” funding.

The YER Mid-Term Report was completed in March 2005, providing evidence that it was operating in a responsible and accountable manner, and achieving successful results with Comox Valley youth at risk. Eleven letters of support from Comox Valley community organizations further confirmed YER successes. At a June 2005 meeting, an information package with the YER Mid-Term report and the letters of support was delivered to the Honourable Stan Hagen, Comox Valley Member of Legislated Assembly and British Columbia Minister of Children and Family Development (MCFD). After consulting with ministry personnel, Mr. Hagen secured MCFD funds of \$30,000.00 for the fiscal year of April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007. With this YER future funding in place QAF was able to provide bridged funding of \$15,000.00 to extend the program until March 31, 2006.

With YER funds secured until March 31, 2007, the program will continue to provide this meaningful and valuable service to the Comox Valley community. This extension will also allow time to establish the future partnerships necessary to obtain longer term funding.

## **4. PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES**

QAF required that an evaluation plan (Appendix A) be established soon after the SIIF grant was in place. This evaluation plan has been invaluable as a guide for progress and outcomes. Expected outcomes were determined at individual, family, youth worker and community levels. These included a youth skill increase, improved family participation, additional referrals from youth workers, enhanced community ecological awareness, and more interactions between youth and community members (Table 1 and 2).

Data was collected from all of the thirty youth participants about what they had learned. An interview protocol was developed and organized into three general categories: preliminary questions, post work experience and presentation questions. The interview questions required periodic revision as the youth provided feedback to the questions through their responses to them. Files were developed for each of the youth participants which include a daily debrief for each day that work is conducted, interview question answers, coordinator observations and notes from their community presentations. YER participants were assigned a number in the data collection files to protect their anonymity.

The five main goals (Table 2) established to illustrate youth learning are: building healthy community relationships, gaining valuable work experience, improving knowledge of ecological restoration, increasing social skill development and enhancing communication skills. Each of these goals was further divided into three subcategories (Table 2) and youth quotes are given in the text to illustrate the knowledge and experience they gained. By engaging in a thorough analysis, it is hoped that YER can improve its contribution to the Comox Valley community.

### **Building Healthy Community Relationships**

YER was designed to have a high level of interaction with Comox Valley community members, and achieved an average interaction of thirty-seven community members for each of the thirty

youth participants (Table 1). The intention was to have the youth participants learn a diversity of skills and knowledge, as well as experience positive attributes from a variety of people in our community. In addition, through working cooperatively with volunteers, the youth discovered what it felt like to work with other people who are contributing their time towards improving environmental health. They also experienced role modeling and mentoring through association with positive community members. This resulted in a greater sense of belonging and an increased awareness of community capacity in the Comox Valley for the youth.

Working Cooperatively With Others – 90% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *It feels good to work with others, making a difference in the world for salmon by working together for something greater than ourselves as individuals.* (Participant #13)
- *There are cool people in this world actually working together still. I don't normally see people working together.* (Participant #16)
- *It was impressive to see how fast a large number of people can get the job done. It was good to work with everybody and there was a lot of teamwork.* (Participant #19)

Role Models and Mentoring – 87% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *People were nice and had a positive attitude. It was nice to be around people with a positive attitude.* (Participant #25)
- *Oyster River Enhancement Society is a birthplace that brings life to the world. It is a place for fish to mate and we can help them.* (Participant #20)
- *It was good; everybody was cheerful and on the ball about what they were doing. Nobody is mean or interrupts their work but just goes along with what they are doing.* (Participant #26)

Increased Community Capacity – 93% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *Helping the environment is good; somebody needs to do it because it makes our community a better place. I learned that lots of people want to make the environment better.* (Participant #7)
- *It's also a great chance to meet and become connected to positive, caring members of our community. It was great to have access to caring members of the community.* (Participant #17)
- *Every time we went out we met different people and learned to do different things. I got to experience different things, in different areas of our community with different people.* (Participant #29)

### **Gaining Valuable Work Experience**

YER is a work experience and training program that can be used as an employment entry for youth who have no previous experience. Youth gain practical and transferable skills through YER that add to and build a resume. The letter of reference and certificate that youth are awarded on YER completion are concrete items that can be part of a job application process. Some of the learning included methods of scientific data collection, and how to work with hand tools through a variety of job experiences.

Data Collection Methods – 87% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *People volunteered to clean up beaches for the Canadian Shoreline Cleanup. After we picked up the garbage, we had to write down what we found on a data sheet that is entered into a national database.* (Participant #8)
- *I liked the best taking the water temperature, dissolved oxygen and water levels with the*

*dissolved oxygen meter. Everything needs to be in the right order for scientific data collection. (Participant #26)*

- *I liked the best taking pictures and writing down the data to get an idea of how it's done. The Urban Salmon Habitat Program is recording data to describe stream habitat. (Participant #27)*

Working With Tools – 90% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *When we were planting we dug a hole below the soil line, took the soil out of the hole, mixed in with fertilizer, put the plant in, stomped on it a bit and left an indentation to hold water and then watered it. (Participant #20)*
- *We removed broom which is an invasive plant species and used a tool called a broom puller. My favourite part of day one was using the broom puller. (Participant #22)*
- *Hart Watershed Society has developed a position of power over time by getting to know Hart Creek and establishing knowledge and experience. They are stewards – caretakers – speak for the land. Hands on, practical knowledge is what they know and you can't teach that in university. (Participant #28)*

Job Variety – 83% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *YER is a good program and gives the experience of going out and doing different things and not the same thing every day. (Participant #8)*
- *I got the experience of working with a lot of different kinds of people in all sorts of different work environments. (Participant # 18)*
- *I thought this program helped me because I got to try different things and see how I liked them. (Participant #22)*

### **Improving Knowledge of Ecological Restoration**

YER is a program that improves knowledge of ecological restoration through youth interaction with community members who are volunteering for local environmental organizations. Youth participants learned about ecosystem cycles and interconnections, identification techniques, and how human activities can result in impacts to the environment.

Ecosystem Cycles and Interconnections – 97% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *Our ecosystem is a very important thing; everything that we eat is connected to other things like the flies and the bugs that eat the dead salmon end up getting eaten by the fry that they lay. (Participant #11)*
- *It is an interesting circle, we are part of the environment, we keep fish numbers up and fish keep us fed. It is the circle of life. (Participant #18)*
- *What I learned during this experience was the cycle which the trees help the fish providing shade and how the bears take the fish to the forest and provide the trees with nutrients that they need to grow. And that's the way the salmon connect the ocean to the land. (Participant # 29)*

Identification Techniques for Plants, Animals and Fish – 97% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *We walked through the greenbelt identifying different kinds of trees and shrubs, and some other plants. (Participant #6)*
- *I saw more salmon smolts and fry, so figured out how to identify them. Coho and chum fry, coho smolts, sculpins, lamprey, stickleback – are different looking, very cool fish. (Participant #23)*



- *We had to identify fish mostly chum, coho and chinook fry, coho smolts, and sculpins. Smoltification is like puberty for fish. (Participant #25)*

Environmental Impacts – 93% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *There are different things that have caused declines in salmon stocks such as climate warming, pollution, over fishing, logging and urban development. (Participant #14)*
- *The health of the natural world is pretty bad, the way people are treating it and overusing everything they can. (Participant #22)*
- *The copper mine on Mt. Washington leaked the copper levels into the Tsoolum River and made it unsustainable for fish to survive. Damage like mining or logging cause such a negative effect on our rivers. (Participant #24)*

### **Increasing Social Skill Development**

Youth gain knowledge of social skills through exposure to people and places where the skills can be put into practice. YER youth participants learned to feel good about themselves through meaningful participation in the ecological restoration activities. They learned about commitment and responsibility by coming to work, and through realizing the value of future stewardship ethics and caring for the land. Completing the YER program taught them about accomplishing goals.

Meaningful Participation – 97% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *It was different than normal people who sometimes make us feel stupid. The supervisor didn't make us feel like we were doing a bad job. The planning stage made us feel useful and was cool because we thought of the ideas. (Participants #2, 3, 4)*
- *Overall I feel really great about taking part in this program because it has left me with a variety of positive feelings. It has been a huge boost to my integrity. It gives you a good sense of meaning, contributing your own effort towards the well-being of the Earth. (Participant #17)*
- *I liked the most learning, contributing and helping the environment. Contributing to community and being part of something bigger and being knowledgeable about environmental work. (Participant #27)*

Commitment and Responsibility – 93% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *We talked about stewardship and taking care of the land. It's so important that we take care of the environment or we're going to lose it. (Participant #19)*
- *Getting up in the morning sucks, but you have to do it. You can goof around and laugh on your job, but you have to do your work. (Participant #26)*
- *Sticking to the job even when I want to quit early because of exhaustion and wanting to take long breaks picking huckleberries. (Participant #29)*

Accomplishing Goals – 87% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *People came and congratulated me after I finished the program. (Participant #10)*
- *It was nice to do something for the community and give back and have a chance to redeem myself. The honourarium, letter of reference, certificate and the crest were all incentives for completing the program. (Participant #14)*
- *The program is an experience I believe everyone should partake in. (Participant # 23)*

### **Enhancing Communication Skills**

Good communication skills are important to be able to present ourselves to potential employers and to get along with other people in our community. Youth participants gained public speaking skills by doing their presentation to a community group that listened to them. The youth acknowledged active listening by saying what they had learned from community members, and from their observations on how people listened to each other. Working together with a group of people improves interpersonal relationship skills.

Public Speaking – 87% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *Reviewing our YER experience and writing it down for the presentation helped us to remember it better. The group that we did the presentation for learned more about the environment and about the way youth look at things. (Participant #3, 4)*
- *The presentation felt good and the kids will know what we are doing in the Comox Valley environment. I didn't think they would listen, but they did. (Participant #12)*
- *The presentation is a vital part of the program; it shares knowledge and experiences. Excellent, satisfying and rewarding to share benefits and experiences with other potential young people for YER. (Participant #17)*

Active Listening – 93% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *People can have different opinions, but we need to listen to each other, go around our differences, find things to agree on and then work together. (Participant #13)*
- *It was fun to talk to people and hear their different points of view and to see how well everybody works together. (Participant #19)*
- *I learned a lot, enjoyed meeting new people, learning things from them and seeing them share their knowledge. It was all really informative. (Participant #27)*

Interpersonal Relationships – 93% of Youth Participants (Table 2)

- *Millard Park is everyman's land, nobody owns this. People might think they own it, like the government, but everything and everybody is welcome. (Participant #20)*
- *It was good to meet people and was all right to work with them. It felt pretty good – like waking up good after a long rest – peaceful, relaxed, clear and open to learning new experiences. (Participant #25)*
- *Working together you can make friends while doing something and form closer relationships. (Participant #26)*

## 6. KEY LESSONS AND LEARNING

### Original YER Goals

The original YER goals were established at the time the proposal for QAF funding was written in March 2004. In reviewing these goals to determine how realistic they were, it is remarkable to see how close they are to the actual program outcomes. The original goals are listed here:

- Build youth future employment skills in ecological restoration and scientific research.
- Enhance youth cooperative working, conflict resolution, leadership and social skill development.
- Support youth cross-cultural experiences and sense of belonging in our community.
- Motivate youth to take responsibility for the environment and develop future land stewardship ethics.

- Raise community awareness and positive perspectives of youth and their issues.
- Provide youth with inspiration and positive role models through association with community volunteers.
- Create youth problem solving, communication, analytical, and strategic thinking skills.

Fulfillment of these goals was realized by consulting with the youth and environmental organizations, and community members throughout the first year of the program. The youth participant files provided documentation that was analyzed to establish a summary of the original goals (Table 2).

### **YER Celebration**

On July 14, 2005 an event was organized to celebrate the successful completion of YER. This event was very well attended and supported by the Comox Valley community. In terms of building community capacity it was one of the most important and effective accomplishments of the program. The YER celebration was attended by approximately thirty people who represented a broad spectrum of the Comox Valley community. The high attendance was a tribute to how effective YER has been at raising awareness in the community. Coffee, soft drinks and muffins were offered to people after the event to allow time for them to socialize.

Prior to the celebration a press release was printed in the Comox Valley Record, an email notice was circulated, each of the thirty youth participants were phoned and many other individuals were notified either by telephone or word of mouth. The YER coordinator presented information about the program and its positive impacts on both the youth and our community. One of the youth did her presentation at the celebration and explained to the audience how she had learned about commitment and sticking to a job even when she wanted to quit.

Community members in attendance were given an opportunity to tell others about how YER had benefited their organizations and our community. Comments from the environmental organization representatives indicated that most of their members are retirement age and they welcomed the opportunity to involve youth and share their knowledge with them. The youth organization representatives explained the benefits of uniting youth and adults to restore human and environmental relationships in our community. They also said that the program was a point of access for youth to gain employment by giving them a concrete reference letter. The RCMP spokesperson stated that YER takes a proactive and preventative approach that will last for generations.

### **Promotion, Success, and Support**

Promotion of YER has been instrumental for engaging youth, involving community members, and raising community awareness of the program. This was achieved through articles in local newspapers and the YER celebration. A segment was also aired on the local Shaw Cable TV station about YER funding being received from Comox Valley MLA Stan Hagen's Ministry of Children and Family Development and Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children. The YER coordinator also consulted with community members, and attended youth and environmental organization meetings to obtain feedback and give updates on YER progress.

Evidence of success for youth and youth organizations includes the number of youth being referred to and completing the program (Table 1), and the knowledge and skills youth have gained from the program (Table 2). At the community level, indicators of success are the number

of environmental organization referrals and the total community member interactions with YER youth (Table 1). The number of presentations that youth made to community groups for program completion (Table 1) serves as an indicator of success at both the youth and community levels. The presentations have also contributed to what youth learned from the program (Table 2). YER has been successful in matching the youths' need to be meaningfully involved in our community with the environmental organizations' need for maintaining and improving the health of our natural ecosystems.

YER has had strong support from the Comox Valley community since before the original SIIF proposal was written early in 2004. Many of the organizations that wrote the first letters of support also wrote letters acknowledging YER near the end of the first year of operation in 2005. Those eleven letters of support spoke of the contributions the program has made to improve the social and ecological health of our community. Through bringing together youth and community members YER has contributed to a greater capacity in the community to support youth and their families.

## 7. BUDGET UPDATE

The final budget for the YER project was slightly more than the \$30,000.00 funded by QAF for a total of \$30,483.44 (Table 3). The following expense items have variances from the proposed budget of \$30,000.00:

- **Professional fees** are slightly higher than the original budget, as were the in kind contributions.
- **Honouraria** for youth participants was lower due to fewer numbers attending YER than predicted. Also, the youth doing community service hours could not receive an honourarium.
- **Capital/equipment** costs are lower than anticipated. Some personal equipment has been used, and equipment has been provided by the environmental organizations as in kind contributions.
- **Administration** expenses were more than the proposed budget. The time required for report writing exceeded what could be charged to the project, so it was considered an in kind contribution.

- **Transportation** costs are higher than expected, due to greater distances in travel and the original \$.40/km rate being increased to the present government rate of \$.42/km.
- **Insurance** rates are less, as liability insurance coverage was acquired by joining the Pacific Streamkeepers Federation and accessing the low rates available to their membership.

## 8. CONCLUSION

YER is contributing to capacity building in the Comox Valley community. The project brings together youth at risk and community members, who would not normally interact with each other, to work cooperatively on ecological restoration activities.

Interviews with each of the thirty youth participants indicate changes in their knowledge, behaviour, and thinking. Community members also had changes in their behaviour and attitudes about youth and their issues. Feedback from both groups is that they benefit from the exchange of knowledge, and are able to support each other as productive co-workers.

As YER progressed through its first year of operation there were increases in program referrals from local youth and environmental organizations. Community acceptance of YER was apparent at the year-end celebration, which was attended by approximately thirty people who gathered to acknowledge the project successes and benefits to the Comox Valley community.

Documenting these changes at the individual and community level can lead to a greater community capacity to support families, and contribute to the knowledge base needed for building and sustaining healthy communities.

<b>TABLE 1: YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROJECT (YER)</b>	
<b>YOUTH PARTICIPANT SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 2004 TO JULY 31, 2005.</b>	
YER was funded by the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, Victoria, British Columbia.	
Comox Valley youth at risk were involved in a 20-hour ecological restoration work experience program.	
Community presentations by the youth were required for completion of the 20-hour program.	
The total number of youth participants involved was 30: 8 girls and 22 boys; ages 13 to 18.	
All YER participants were given a number to protect their anonymity.	

<b>YER COMPLETION</b>	<b>YOUTH PARTICIPANTS</b>
<b>YER completion required finishing 20 hours and giving a community presentation.</b>	
Total Complete: Participant # 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 (520 Hours)	26
Total Incomplete: Participant # 1, 2, 21, 30 (25 hours)	4
<b>TOTAL 545 WORK EXPERIENCE HOURS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>YOUTH ORGANIZATION REFERRALS</b>	
School District #71 Alternate Programs: Participant # 9, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 25, 26	9
John Howard Society: Participant # 1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 18	7
Comox Valley Community Justice Centre: Participant # 2, 3, 4, 16, 23, 24, 27, 28	8
Ministry of Children and Family Development: Participant # 5, 15, 21, 22, 29, 30	6
<b>TOTAL 4 YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION (ER) WORK</b>	
<b>ER work events were attended by approximately 1127 community members.</b>	
<b>The average interaction per 30 youth participants was 37 community members.</b>	
<b>Each youth participant worked with an average of 4 environmental organizations.</b>	
Millard/Piercy Watershed Stewards: Participant # 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	26
Oyster River Enhancement Society: Participant # 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29	20
Tsolum River Restoration Society: Participant # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 17, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	16
Hart Watershed Society: Participant # 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	12
Morrison Creek Streamkeepers: Participant # 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 23	9
Comox Valley Naturalists: Participant # 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 20, 22	7
Comox Valley Land Trust: Participant # 10, 11, 15, 16	4
Comox Valley Watershed Assembly: Participant # 7, 15, 16	3
Perseverance Creek Streamkeepers: Participant # 5, 7	2
Comox Valley Project Watershed Society: Participant # 27	1
Natural Journeys Society: Participant # 21	1
Courtenay Fish and Game Club: Participant # 24	1
Georgia Strait Alliance: Participant # 7	1
Sunrise Rotary Club: Participant # 8	1
Fanny Bay Enhancement Society: Participant # 14	1
<b>TOTAL 15 ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>TABLE 1 (Continued): YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROJECT (YER)</b>	
<b>YOUTH PARTICIPANT SUMMARY TABLE FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 2004 TO JULY 31, 2005.</b>	
YER was funded by the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, Victoria, British Columbia.	

Comox Valley youth at risk were involved in a 20-hour ecological restoration work experience program.	
Community presentations by the youth were required for completion of the 20-hour program.	
The total number of youth participants involved was 30: 8 girls and 22 boys; ages 13 to 18.	
All YER participants were given a number to protect their anonymity.	
<b>COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS</b>	
	<b>Y</b>
	<b>O</b>
	<b>U</b>
<b>The presentations were attended by approximately 443 community members.</b>	<b>T</b>
	<b>H</b>
	<b>P</b>
	<b>A</b>
	<b>R</b>
	<b>T</b>
	<b>I</b>
	<b>C</b>
	<b>I</b>
	<b>P</b>
	<b>A</b>
	<b>N</b>
	<b>T</b>
	<b>S</b>
<b>The average interaction per 26 youth participants was 17 community members.</b>	
Sandwich Alternate School: Participant # 8, 9, 11, 13, 19, 20, 25, 26	8
Youth Connections Centre: Participant # 5, 6, 29	3
Courtenay Kiwanis Club: Participant # 3, 4	2
Comox Valley Community Justice Centre: Participant # 16	1
John Howard Society: Participant # 18	1
St. Joseph Hospital Adolescent Support Group: Participant # 15	1
Comox Valley Watershed Assembly: Participant # 7	1
Comox Valley Project Watershed Society: Participant # 10	1
Brooklyn Elementary School: Participant # 24	1
Puntledge Park Elementary School: Participant # 12	1
Ecole Aspen Park Middle School: Participant # 14	1
School District # 71 Contract Tutoring: Participant # 22	1
Senior Alternate School: Participant # 17	1
Nala'atsi School Program: Participant # 23	1
Courtenay Elementary School: Participant # 28	1
Roseberry Pre-School: Participant # 27	1
	<b>2</b>
<b>TOTAL 16 COMMUNITY PRESENTATION LOCATIONS</b>	<b>6</b>

<b>TABLE 2: YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROJECT (YER) GOAL SUMMARY TABLE (for the period of JULY 1, 2004 TO AUGUST 31, 2005).</b>	
Funded by the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children in Victoria, BC, thirty Comox Valley youth at risk	
were involved with YER in its first year. Participants were given a number to protect their anonymity and	
interviewed to determine what they had learned. Interview analysis resulted in establishing five goals.	
<b>BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
Working Cooperatively with Others:	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	27
Role Models and Mentoring:	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 20, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	26
Increasing Community Capacity:	
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	28
<b>GAINING VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE</b>	
Data Collection Methods:	
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	26
Working With Tools:	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	27
Job Variety:	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	25
<b>IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE OF ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION</b>	
Ecosystem Cycles and Interconnections:	
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	29
Identification Techniques for Plants, Animals and Fish:	
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	29
Environmental Impacts:	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	28
<b>INCREASING SOCIAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Meaningful Participation:	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	29
Commitment and Responsibility:	



2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	28
Accomplishing Goals:	
3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	26
<b>ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SKILLS</b>	
Public Speaking:	
3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	26
Active Listening:	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	28
Interpersonal Relationships:	
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	28

**Table 3: YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION PROJECT (YER)**

Final report on budget figures and expenditures for the period of July 2004 to August 2005. YER was funded by the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children to work with youth at risk in the Comox Valley community.

<b>EXPENSE ITEM</b>	<b>Estimated Budget Expenditures</b>	<b>Final Budget Expenditures</b>	<b>Estimated In kind Contributions</b>	<b>Final In kind Contributions</b>
Professional fees	\$15,000.00	\$17,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,900.00
Honouraria	\$2,000.00	\$850.00		
Capital/Equipment	\$1,000.00	\$291.32		\$650.00
Administration	\$3,000.00	\$4,000.00		\$2,500.00
Transportation	\$2,000.00	\$2,999.44		
Supplies/Materials	\$2,500.00	\$1,945.31	\$2,500.00	\$1,610.00
Evaluation	\$2,000.00	\$2,500.00		
Other	\$2,500.00	\$897.37		
<b>Total project expenditures</b>	<b>\$30,000.00</b>	<b>\$30,483.44</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>	<b>\$7,660.00</b>

**Appendix  
A: Youth  
and  
Ecological  
Restorati  
on Project  
(YER)  
Evaluatio  
n Table**

The evaluation table was developed as a guide to assess YER progress and outcomes. It was developed in consultation with Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, who funded YER under the Strategic Initiatives Investment

Fund for the period of July 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005.			
	<b>Individual/family level</b>	<b>Youth Worker Level</b>	<b>Community level</b>
<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	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
<b>Activities to Achieve Outcomes</b>	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
<b>Evidence of Progress</b>	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
<b>Evidence will be Obtained From</b>	Youth Youth groups Family members	Youth Workers Service Agencies Government Agencies Schools	Environmental groups Community volunteers Community groups
<b>Method to Obtain Evidence</b>	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

