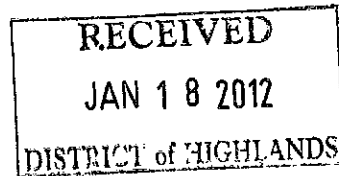


Mayor and Council  
District of Highlands  
1980 Millstream Lake Road  
Victoria, B.C.  
V9B 6H1  
January 13, 2012



Dear Mayor and Council:

The Highlands Stewardship Foundation ( HSF) supports the application under the Grant in Aid program submitted by Goldstream Nature House staff for environmental education programs.

Several years ago the Provincial Government terminated funding support for the educational component at the Nature House and contracted out the operation and maintenance of the buildings to RLC Park Services. While the company does an excellent job of maintaining the property, there are no funds available to support the educational program, hence the provision of educational services is totally dependent upon, at times, sporadic private donations to keep the doors open. Whether we grew up as kids and attended the school program ourselves, or had our children and grandchildren attend, it is a program that has undoubtedly touched all our lives.

This educational program offers us a glimpse, not just of the salmon cycle, but also provides us with a metaphor to follow in our present journey as we conceptualize the true meaning of sustainability. As we become aware of the need to become more sustainable within the Highlands, we can look to the teachings of the Goldstream Nature Centre as providing future generations with a model where all resources within the watershed are born of the past, live, and are recycled into the future, a cycle that has been self sustaining for thousands of years.

The connection to this nature centre at a young age creates a bond that lasts for life, a bond that makes us aware of our impact upon the natural environment, whether it is dwindling returns, catastrophic fuel spills or our impact upon the land. To deny future generations participation in these programs jeopardizes remaining invaluable links our youth have with their local environment.

HSF would encourage council to give this application serious consideration for a Grant in Aid , and take the first step as leaders within the Capital Region to set a benchmark for other municipalities to match and surpass to protect what the Highlands considers so valuable for the greater capital region.

On behalf of HSF thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Lee".

Warren Lee, Chair  
Highlands Stewardship Foundation