

# Cumberland Community Forest Society

## DRAFT 2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan

### **Vision**

The Cumberland Community Forest Society is a passionate, effective and unifying leader;  
championing land conservation and ecological stewardship;  
in support of ecosystem health, drinking water protection, and community climate resilience;  
in the Village of Cumberland, the surrounding region, and beyond.

### **Context**

Since the year 2000 the Cumberland Community Forest Society (CCFS) has been purchasing and protecting privately owned forest lands surrounding the Village of Cumberland in the unceded territory of the K'omoks First Nation. To date the society has completed 5 major land acquisitions totalling over 550 acres of lands. These lands have been protected through Section 219 conservation covenants. The CCFS has a strong history of creative community partnerships and unique engagement strategies to achieve their fundraising and land securement goals. Since 2017, the CCFS has evolved and expanded their activities from fundraising and localized land securement to include environmental stewardship projects, as well as strategic leadership in regional watershed protection, sustainable economic development, and community climate resilience efforts. This ongoing evolution in activities is informing the 2023 - 2028 5 - Year Strategic Plan.

### **We Value...**

Our responsibilities in an interconnected web upon which all life depends  
Right relationships with nature, community and indigenous peoples  
Work that is based in science and informed by community  
Protecting and restoring land and water to the commons  
The sustainability of our efforts and our organization  
Meaningful collaboration, trust, and shared power  
Storytelling, creativity, passion and joy

# Strategic Priorities // ENDS

## **Strategic Priority Area 1: Land Protection**

### **1. Lands with high ecological, hydrological and cultural values are protected**

- a. High value lands are identified in collaboration with conservation partners
- b. High value lands are secured and protected by the most appropriate means
- c. There is an increase in protected lands in and around the Village of Cumberland
- d. New opportunities are welcomed and carefully evaluated
- e. Long view / long game perspective is integrated into priority setting

### **1. Sustainable land governance and management regimes are in place**

- a. New opportunities and approaches are explored, evaluated, developed and implemented
- b. Protected lands are governed in a way that ensures the protection of conservation values
- c. Sustainable management regimes are in place to protect conservation values
- d. Land management practices are evidence-based and consider community values

### **2. Collaboration is active with local and regional government in support of shared land protection goals**

- a. Efficiencies are gained, resulting in more land protected and shared management obligations
- b. Increased connectivity and continuity exists between protected lands
- c. Watershed lands in the Comox Lake Watershed, Trent and Perseverance Sub Basin are protected

### **3. Collaboration is active with community partners to support land protection goals**

- a. Efficiencies are gained, resulting in collaborations toward land protection objectives
- b. Increased connectivity and continuity exists between protected lands
- c. Relationships with recreation sector support ecological health, connectivity, and quality of life
- d. Conservation values are embedded into tourism and economic development planning and action

### **4. Organizational capacity is developed to continue to provide leadership in conservation**

- a. The CCFS supports regional land protection efforts with interdisciplinary capacity
- b. The CCFS has the capacity to develop, hold and monitor covenants
- c. The CCFS facilitates opportunities and events for learning, knowledge sharing and collaboration

## **Strategic Priority Area 2: Ecological Stewardship**

### **1. Protected lands and areas of high ecological value have an effective and unifying stewardship champion**

- a. CCFS is actively engaged in Village Parks Management planning and processes
- b. There is active collaboration with landscape partners in stewardship and management planning and action
- c. Species at risk and species of conservation concern projects are championed.
- d. Stewardship projects are prioritized based on a combination of evidence, risk, strategic opportunity

### **2. The community has a strong stewardship culture with high levels of engagement**

- a. Seasonal stewardship activities are embedded in the culture of community.
- b. Learning opportunities are facilitated throughout the year to build community capacity
- c. Creative approaches to stewardship are at the core of activities
- d. Linkages are made with the education community (pre school, K-9, colleges and beyond)
- e. Indigenous knowledge and traditional ways of knowing are integrated into learning and action

### **3. The CCFS has a well developed organizational capacity to provide stewardship leadership**

- a. Funding is secured for prioritized stewardship projects and restoration initiatives
- b. New project activity aligns with development of organizational capacity and resources
- c. A roster of qualified professionals as resources for planning and management activities is developed

\* Ecological stewardship - refers to the responsible use and protection of the [natural environment](#) through active participation in [conservation](#) efforts and [sustainable](#) practices by individuals, small groups, nonprofit organizations, agencies, and other collective networks. [Aldo Leopold](#) (1887–1949) championed stewardship in [land ethics](#), exploring the ethical implications of "dealing with man's relationship to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it."  
~ Wikipedia

### **Strategic Priority Area 3: Community**

#### **1. The CCFS is deeply engaged with our community.**

- a. Strong relationships are in place with the sport, culture, heritage, science and education sectors
- b. Relationships with local, regional, indigenous, provincial and national levels of government are strong
- c. Opportunities for child, youth and elder engagement are cultivated
- d. Unique partnerships and collaborations are welcomed and celebrated
- e. Communication is active, through multiple media, keeping our broadest community informed
- f. Creative, interdisciplinary and innovative activities and tactics are embraced

#### **2. The CCFS has a robust volunteer program**

- a. Volunteer programs evolves, with active outreach to build volunteer community and succession
- b. Appropriate volunteer policy and management systems are in place.
- c. Volunteers are actively engaged with, communicated with, and recognized
- d. Volunteer professional development opportunities are offered

#### **3. The CCFS has strong donor management policies and systems.**

- a. Donor development is an ongoing activity with high levels of board support
- b. Donor systems ensure timely communications with new donors and supporters
- c. Donor levels and program are defined and donors are recognized appropriately
- d. Donor policy ensures the proper management and protection of donor information

## **Strategic Priority Area 4: Leadership & Legacy**

### **1. The CCFS is recognized as a community leader and conservation champion**

- a. Board and staff actively engage in community events and processes related to conservation issues
- b. Board and staff facilitate, and engage in, professional development to build leadership capacity
- c. The CCFS is seen as a passionate, unifying and effective voice on conservation issues in our community
- d. The CCFS is actively engaged in local and regional community planning processes
- e. The CCFS engaged in provincial and national national land conservancy professional associations.
- f. New leadership and talent in our community is identified and invited to engage

### **2. CCFS board policy ensures the professional management and long term sustainability of the organization**

- a. Board policy development is an active ongoing process
- b. Board policy is transparent and available for community review
- c. Succession plans are in place for board and staff to ensure ongoing sustainability
- d. Operational funding is developed through local government service agreements.