Friends of Burde Street Ponds Society

Newsletter Issue #1

November 10, 2026

Welcome to Friends of Burde Street Ponds Society's first newsletter! We hope you are as excited and revved up to save our beloved Burde Street Ponds property as we are!

We are grateful for the 60 or so attendees at the Town Hall on October 9th! So sorry that the sound system was problematic but we think that you got the gist of the presentation! Thank you! Thank you also to the candidates for mayor and council that attended, and those that spoke. We felt the discussions were encouraging and positive and some excellent suggestions were put forth.

A LOT of work is being done behind the scenes, with our Directors and volunteers putting in hours and hours of time doing much needed research, filling out applications to potential partners, attending meetings, engaging in public speaking, creating promotional material and so much more.

A special shout out to the volunteers, photographers, videographers, strategists, researchers, and overall enthusiasts for helping us out. We'd like to acknowledge Nancy Wilmot of The Scoop, Samantha Taekema, Lorelei Andrews, Gerald Cuccio, Theresa Szymanis, Dave Jarrett, Ashley-Anne Marie, Robbins & Company (CPA) and FH & P Lawyers (LLP) for their time and due diligence! (Sorry if your name was missed, but trust you are valued for your help.)

Be sure to submit your photos to saveburdeponds@gmail.com!

In each Newsletter we hope to share photos of the the animals and birds that live of the property at 3333 Burde Street! There are species at risk living there, such as painted turtles and red-legged frogs…We feel there will be humans at risk if this land isn't protected from development! It is definitely a sanctuary for a busy mind.

Thank you to Dave Jarrett for these photos:
UR - Painted turtles, LL Barred Owl, LR - Red-legged Frog







How to donate to Friends of Burde Street Ponds Society

Through BC Nature: We are now a Federated Club of BC Nature! What does that mean for our community of supporters? It means that BC Nature will accept donations on our behalf and, once the funds clear, they will **issue tax receipts** to you and redirect the funds to the Society.
There are a few special requirements to do this, so please be very careful to follow the guidelines below when sending in a donation to them. Here's how to donate through BC Nature:

- **By cheque payable to BC Nature *WITH A NOTE*** to ensure the donation goes to our society. CRA also wants the project the money is for specified. So the note should say the **"Donation is for Friends of Burde Ponds Society for the Burde Street Ponds Project." Mail** cheques to BC Nature, 1620 Mt. Seymour Road, North Vancouver, BC V7G 2R9. **(Be sure to add the note!)**

- **E-transfer:** manager@bcnature.ca They have direct deposit. **Again, remember to add the note in the message box to insure the donation goes to Friends of Burde Street Ponds Society and the CRA is able to see the project it went to if doing an audit.**

Other ways to donate - email us at saveburdeponds@gmail.com for more information.

- Restricted Donation and Conditional Refund Agreement (Tax receipt if paid through BC Nature)
- Pledges (shows your intent to donate, and dollar amount, near completion of the land sale)
- Sponsorships: share your logo on our webpage
- Zeffy: https://www.zeffy.com/en-CA/donation-form/donate-to-change-lives-26946 (no tax receipt.)
- GoFundMe: https://gofund.me/b859c2b9e (no tax receipt)
- E-transer: saveburdeponds@gmail.com (no tax receipt.)
- Cheque: Friends of Burde Street Ponds Society, 3044 Nixon St., Port Alberni, BC V9Y 8S2 (no tax receipt.)

If You Love the Burde Street Beaver Ponds - Action Is Needed!

Article by — Theresa Szymanis

Two documents – the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Master Plan (PRCMP) will be used to create a list of capital projects to be funded by the City's Development Cost Charge Reserves.

Despite the final OCP survey showing clearly that foremost, Port Alberni residents want to see protection of natural areas, on August 24 the Park & Open Space land use designation of the 2007 Official Community Plan was stripped from the Burde Street beaver ponds in favour of full-on Residential subdivision. This happened during adoption of the new OCP, with no public discussion. No further public process is required, just the Subdivision Approving Officer's seal, to develop in this sensitive ecosystem.

Now, the first of the City's Master Plans, the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Master Plan is being finalized for adoption. It is one of many plans to be presented on Wednesday, November 18, 6-8 p.m., at the City Open House at Echo Center. According to Let's Connect, "All of our parks, trails, natural areas, and City recreation buildings, as well as our recreational and cultural programs" are covered in this plan.

Again, the ecological jewel, the Burde Street beaver ponds, is not once mentioned in the Draft PRCMP!! We need to change this!

Parkland reserves can be used only for parkland acquisition and development that bear a relationship to the new construction that paid the fee. Project lists must be first adopted by City Council and then approved by the BC Inspector of Municipalities before money can be spent. The parkland account stood at $287,254 as of December 31, 2025.

THE TIME IS NOW to design and dedicate a natural park that adequately protects the wetlands, migration corridors and trails between and around the beaver ponds. No fences; no privatization of this asset. Port Alberni taxpayers have funded the Upper Burde Street infrastructure. It's time for the developers of Upper Burde to give back to the community!
Let your city representatives know that you want to see a dedicated natural park at the Burde Street beaver ponds, added to City plans and policies. Demand that responsible planning and financial strategies are enacted to protect this sensitive ecosystem forever.

How to Connect:
Connect with your City Open House November 18, 2026 at Echo Community Centre, 4255 Wallace Street (6-8 p.m.)
Send a letter or email to City Council via corp_serv@portalberni.ca with the title of Burde Street Parkland Protection
Attend a Committee of the Whole (November 16 at 6:00 p.m.); or City Council (November 23 at 2:00 p.m.) meeting and speak up.

Meet the Friends of Burde Street Ponds Directors

- Sandy McRuer, President, is a long-time resident of Port Alberni and a former professional forester. He is an avid outdoorsman, a birder and naturalist.

- Daryl Henderson, Vice-President, is a biologist with a PhD in genetics. He has a longstanding interest in bird conservation and served on the boards of the Whooping Crane Conservation Association and the North American Crane Working Group. He is the production editor (volunteer) for *British Columbia Birds*, a publication of the BC Field Ornithologists.

- Penny Hall, Secretary-Treasurer, is a former bookkeeper, legal secretary, business administrator and a published photographer. She has a profound love of the outdoors and is an avid birder and nature photographer.

- Jennifer Haddock, B.Sc., has worked as an environmental consultant for over 20 years. She has a profound love for nature, animals, birding, hiking and possesses a strong passion for conservation.

For more information, visit www.saveburdeponds.ca or email us at saveburdeponds@gmail.com.

If you no longer wish to receive FoBSP's Newsletter please drop us a line to saveburdeponds@gmail.com with the words "Opt out" and you will be removed from our mailing list. Thank you.

"Unity is strength… when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved." — *Mattie Stepanek*