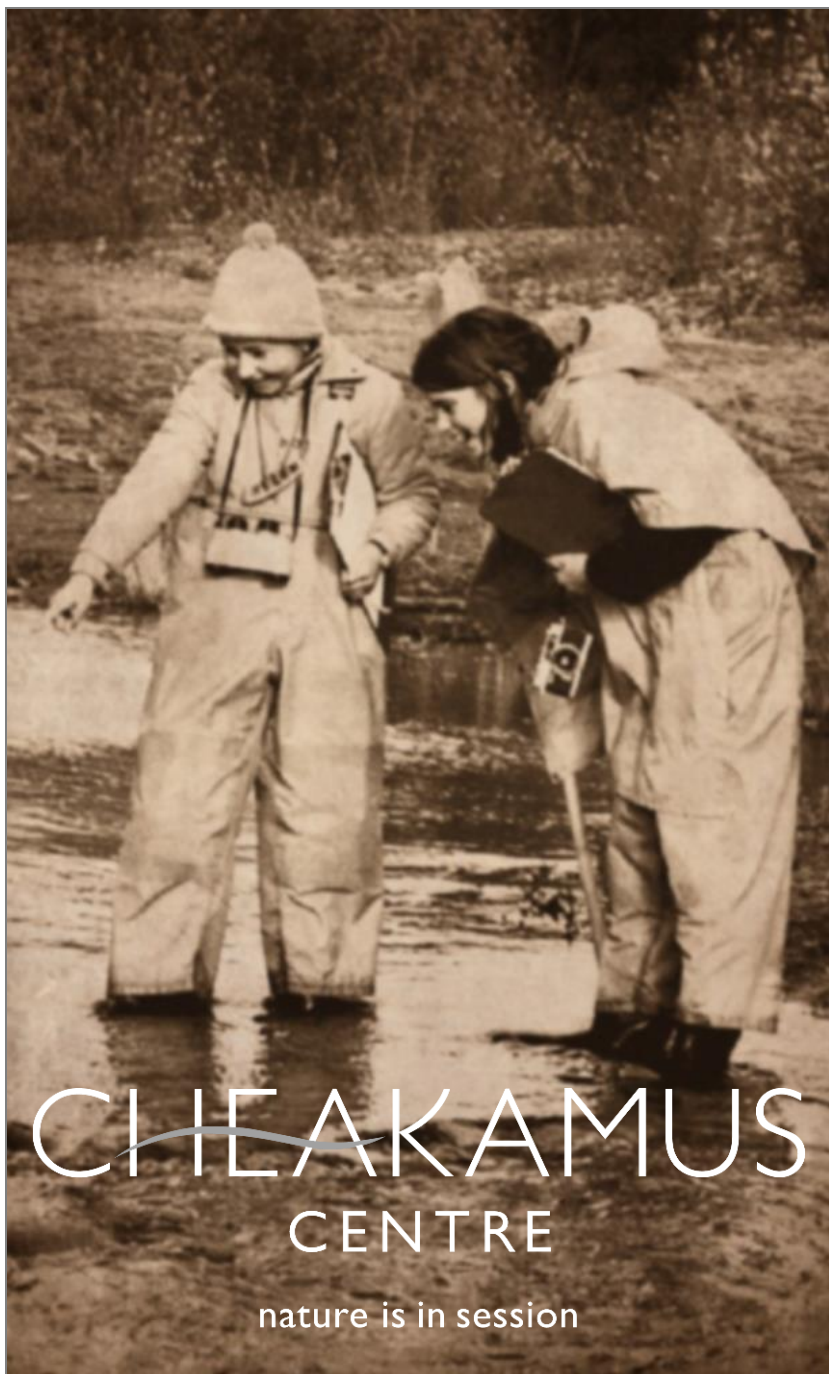


# CHEAKAMUS CENTRE

Community Report Fiscal Year | 2019

**50** YEARS STRONG





## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS STRONG

It is remarkable to see how far we have come in fifty years, and as we look back, we have a lot to be thankful for.

Established in 1969, Cheakamus Centre resides on the unceded traditional territory of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation. It has always been a place of learning for the Ch'iyákmesh people. For millennia they have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site. Today, this place continues to inspire and educate thousands of people year-round, transforming countless lives through time spent in nature.

As we reflect on our activities and achievements, it is our absolute pleasure to thank our students, teachers, staff, volunteers, visitors and donors for their continued participation, commitment, and generosity. We are so grateful for the steadfast support and investment of the Board of Education of School District No. 44.

We hope you enjoy this 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year in review that highlights our accomplishments and the impact of our work. We've had an incredible journey so far!





“ What started as a desire for teachers to use the out-of-doors as a learning tool has become a critical experience for the youth of today in their quest for knowledge about and care for the environment.

~ Don “Kiwi” Robertson, founding director of the North Vancouver Outdoor School



## Our Vision

To be a dynamic centre of excellence for environmental and indigenous cultural education, and a welcoming place for learning, gathering and sharing in nature.

## Our Mission

To create a hub of authentic, meaningful experiences that connect people to the natural world, and inspire sustainable values and behaviours.

## Our Mandate

To support the Board of Education in demonstrating leadership in environmental and indigenous cultural education and sustainability practices in the delivery of our programs, and in the management of our site and facilities.





A photograph of a narrow, paved path winding through a dense, lush green forest. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a bright, hazy glow in the center of the path. The trees are tall and covered in moss, and the undergrowth is thick with various green plants and ferns. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

# OUR CORE VALUES

Discovery  
Openness | Team Spirit  
Community | Responsibility | Stewardship



LEARN SHARE GROW



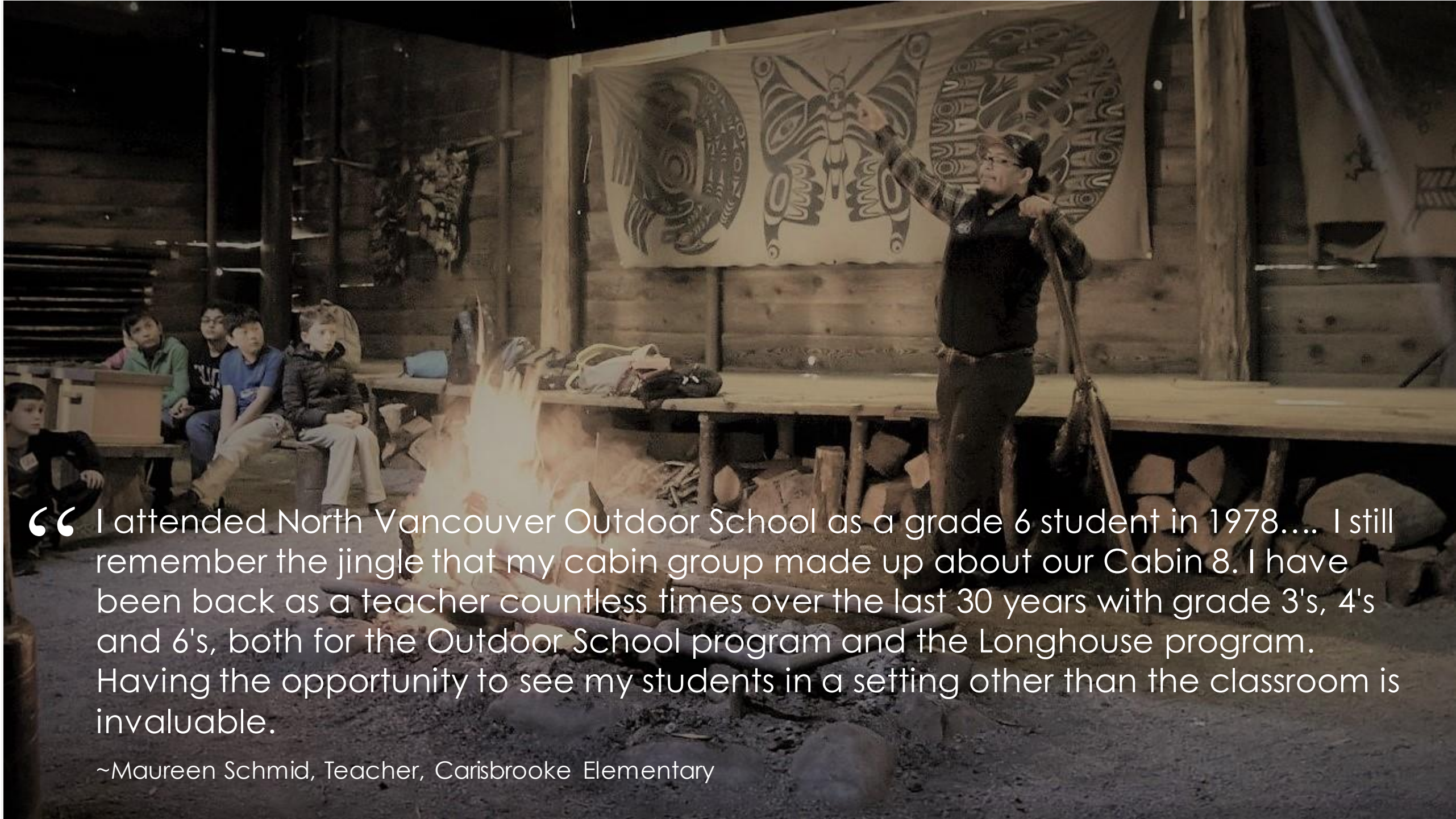




PACIFIC SALMON					
SALMONID ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM					
FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA					
AGE IN DAYS	EGGS	EYED EGGS	ALEVINS	FRY	WATER TEMP 10° C
	1	22	45	100	

LEARN





“ I attended North Vancouver Outdoor School as a grade 6 student in 1978.... I still remember the jingle that my cabin group made up about our Cabin 8. I have been back as a teacher countless times over the last 30 years with grade 3's, 4's and 6's, both for the Outdoor School program and the Longhouse program. Having the opportunity to see my students in a setting other than the classroom is invaluable.

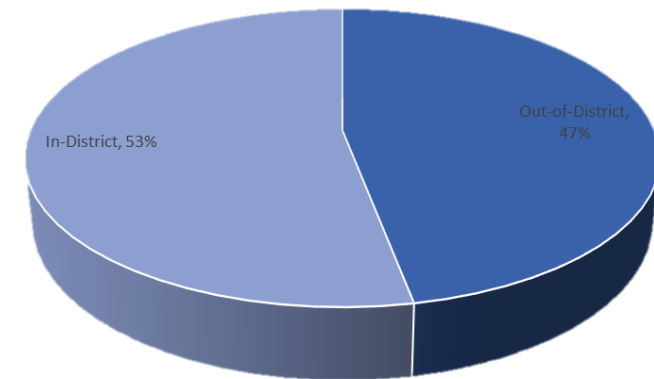
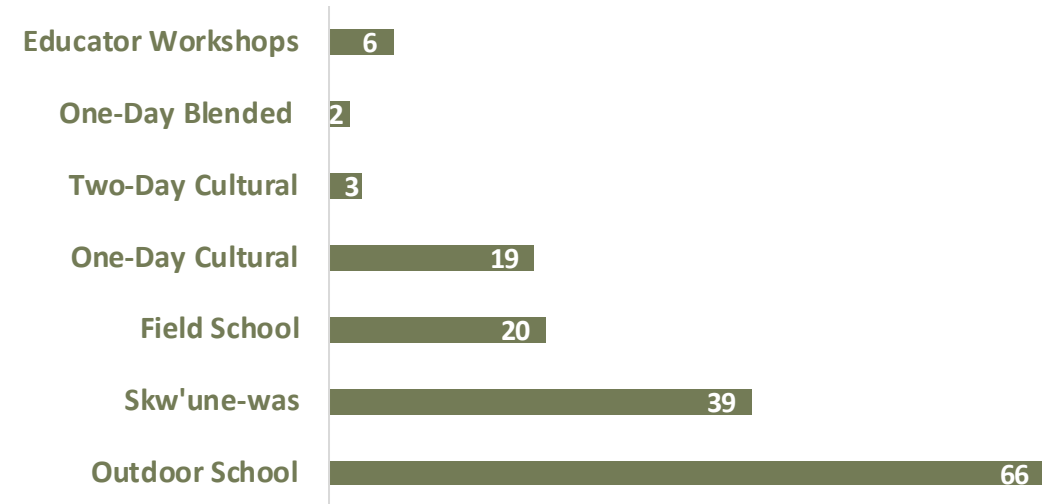
~Maureen Schmid, Teacher, Carisbrooke Elementary



# Environmental & Indigenous Cultural Education Programs and Impact

- Delivered 155 school and adult programs
- Reached 6418 students from 86 schools
- Delivered 6 experiential workshops to 210 adults
- Provided Skw'une-was orientation sessions at longhouse to 185 parents and 15 teachers
- Over 200 teachers and 287 parents/chaperone volunteers participated in school programs
- 53% of program participants were from the North Vancouver School District (NVSD)
- 100% of NVSD elementary schools participated in at least one of the in-district school programs
- Awarded \$9700 from the North Vancouver Outdoor School Alumni Society bursary fund to support 91 students

## Total Programs: 155





“All the stations were so informative and fun! I felt like a kid again (in a very good way). I felt that a positive glow from this experience enveloped me for the next several days. More workshops please!”

~ Kim Minkus, Capilano University Faculty





# Diversity and Inclusion

We recognize and value diversity as it contributes to the rich educational and community-based learning experiences that are central to our vision. We support and accommodate all students in order to provide for the greatest opportunities for success.

Adaptations and supports for students with diverse needs include:

- Flexible stays, overnight supports for caregivers, pre-site visits, coordination with partner groups (i.e. Vancouver Coastal Health) and effective communication and pre-trip planning
- Site and facilities built and maintained with accessibility in mind to provide excellent access to buildings and outdoor learning spaces
- Activities designed to enable students to engage to the best of their ability in a wide range of learning experiences
- Ongoing staff training in social-emotional supports, student transitions and diversity, and developing awareness of complex learning needs
- Meal service is nutritional and student-centred, with a comprehensive food restriction and allergy response plan in place





“Thank you SO much for the wonderful support of our very diverse and emotional group! I really appreciate the compassion and attitude of everyone involved.

Can't wait to come back!”

~ Anya Riback Grade 4/5 Teacher



# Youth Leadership Program and Impact

- Twenty ODS Alumni assisted staff in training 204 high school counsellors over three intensive counsellor training workshops – 4,284 volunteer hours
- Filled 336 youth volunteer placements to support the Outdoor School program – 17,829 volunteer hours
- Retained 79% of high school counsellor trainees who volunteered during FY2017, and/or signed up for fall 2018







“As soon as I could become a counsellor I signed up, and the rest was history.

Cheakamus Centre has been such a big part of my life for the last decade or more. It was where I found a lot of my friends in the earlier years, but ultimately where I found out who I was in the end....

It was my year there as the Senior Counsellor where I decided that I needed to become a teacher.”

Genevieve Bailey, TIOC  
North Vancouver School District



# Career Internships and Impact

Cheakamus Centre hosted six internships that allowed young adults and early-career professionals to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

- 3 Environmental Education Leadership Interns developed leadership and interpersonal skills in the field with the environmental and leadership programs
- 2 Community Field Experience teacher candidates brought new ideas and energy across programs, and expanded their concept of potential learning sites while participating in spring practicums
- 1 Head Counsellor Intern gained valuable experience in facilitating outdoor education programs, and developing strong leadership skills through direct supervision and mentorship of counsellors and youth



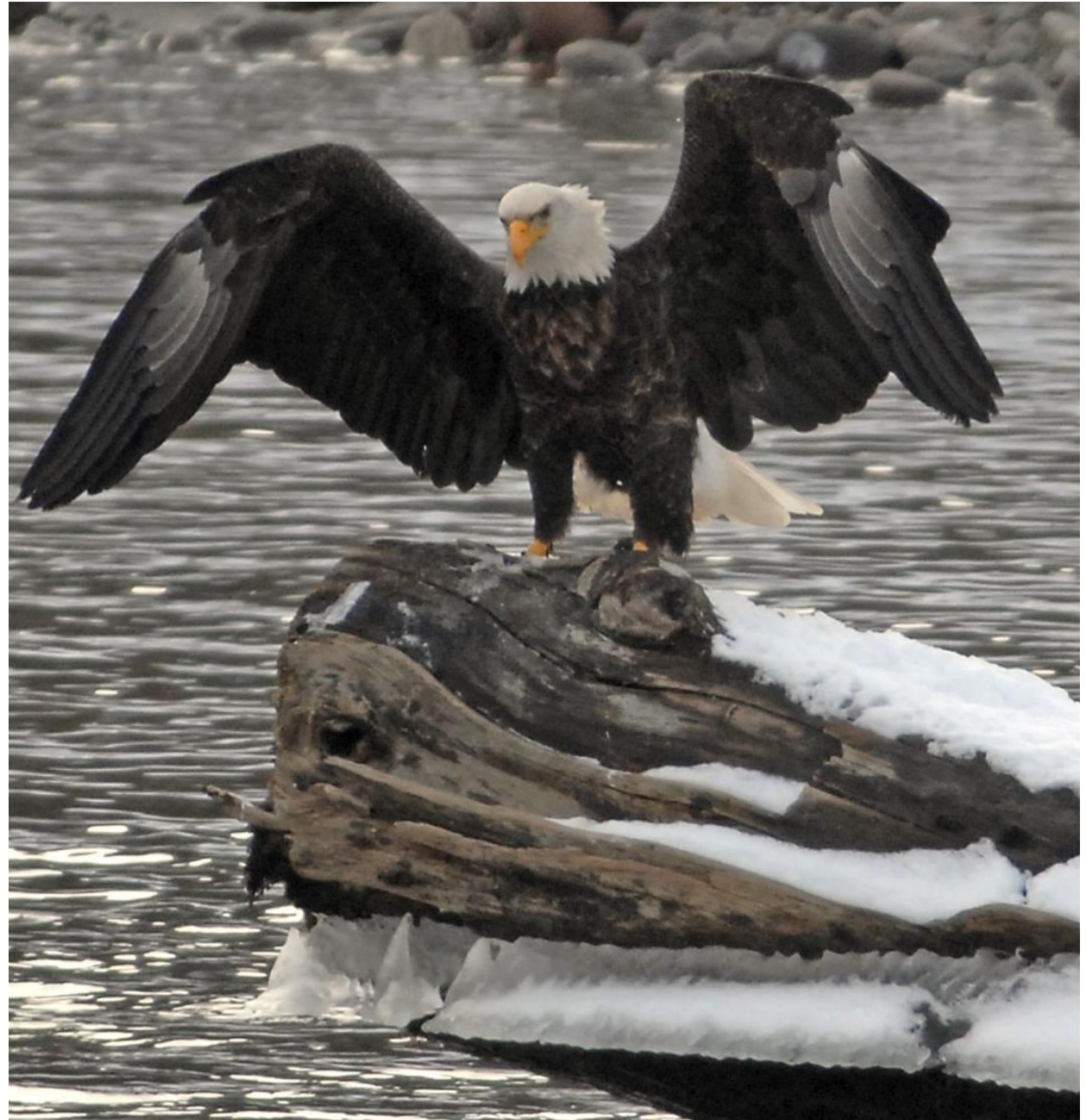


“I have the Outdoor School sewn into the fabric of my being.

In grade six I remember it snowed and we built igloos and snow castles and watched eagles drop salmon on the snow forts. It left an impression on me, so much that I returned as a high school counsellor 10 different times... and in 1997, I became the second senior counsellor for a six-month stint.

I returned again as an intern doing environmental programs. Outdoor school was in my blood.

~Skye “Rainbow” Walks, ODS Alumni







SHARE



# Community Engagement and Impact

Community volunteerism is at our core, and makes a specific contribution by generating well-being for the site, people and region. Volunteers lend a hand with farm, gardens, trails, conservation and fundraising activities.

- Continuing to grow meaningful individual and group volunteering opportunities to support campus renewal projects and Friends of Cheakamus member events
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year partnership with Sea to Sky Community Services providing a welcome and inclusive environment for adults with developmental disabilities to become more independent, make friends and practice communication and social skills
- 4<sup>th</sup> year as host venue for World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF), an international volunteer help exchange of “education, culture, and sweat”







Violet-green Swallow ~ 2019 Bird of the Year

“I realize I now see, hear, and feel the natural world in a whole new way – the more I know and recognize, the more closely connected I feel to my natural surroundings.

This is the gift that Cheakamus Centre offers to all who visit this amazing place.”

Mark Thomson, volunteer bird counter and founder of Annual Bird of the Year competition



# Facility & Special Event Rentals and Impact

Our natural setting enriches gatherings and events by fostering deeper human connections within communities, and between people and nature. Proceeds from facility and site rentals support school programs and facility upgrades.

- Provided venue space for meetings, retreats, family celebrations, summer camps and institutes for 86 groups from the local and broader community
- Finalist in the Professional BC Wedding Awards: Best Reception Venue and Best Catered Wedding
- Partnered with the Firefighters Burn Fund for another successful year as host venue for the annual Young Burn Survivors Camp. Since 1994, over 1000 young burn survivors aged 6-18 kids have attended this camp for a week of fun, connection, and support
- Celebrated 26 years as home base for Artist for Kids' Summer School of Visual Arts
- 5th year transforming the hatchery into the summer base camp for Wedge Rafting's whitewater scenic float tours on the Cheakamus and Elaho rivers





“My favourite part of Burn Camp is just being here...

We are all here for the kids because of the support. Survivors often go through depression or have anxiety. It's nice to have a week to be away from all that and be around people who are just like you.”

~ Junior Counsellor Thomas Zarelli



# 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House Community Day

The Annual Open House is a highly anticipated family day of nature exploration and discovery. This popular community event is co-hosted with the North Vancouver Outdoor School Alumni Society.

- Proudly celebrated the milestone 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House with special anniversary activities and fanfare
- Welcomed over 2,200 visitors to the site to participate in nature activities, and learn about the wide variety of programs and services available to the community
- Raised funds for the Outdoor School for Kids Bursary that will provide for over 20 students to participate in life-changing overnight learning experiences in FY2019





50<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE







GROW



# Sustainability and Impact

Cheakamus Centre continues to implement green practices in our operations to ensure we tread gently on the earth, and inspire and engage our students, staff and visitors in sustainable best practices and environmental stewardship.

- Reduced dependency on commercial food suppliers through sustainable development of the farm and onsite edible gardens, greenhouse and honey bees
- Diverted nearly 8000 kgs of food waste from the landfill which was used for animal feed and composting for gardens; pigs consumed over 3,500 kg of food scraps diverted from the landfill
- Processed over 250 kgs of our own pork and collected nearly 1500 eggs used in the Cheakamus kitchen
- Pressed 10 liters of apple juice and collected 250 litres of maple sap with the help of students
- Implemented variable speed pumping at ELC for the geo-exchange loop to reduce electricity consumption and peak electrical demand
- Piloted new strategies and technologies for cabin retrofits, such as centralized heat recovery ventilation and natural flooring





Cabins Energy Retrofit Project



# Wildlife Conservation and Impact

Since 1981, Cheakamus Centre has been restoring historic salmon habitat to support five species of Pacific salmon and large overwintering populations of bald eagles.

As a result of successful partnerships with Nature Conservancy of Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Squamish Nation and many local and regional conservation organizations, the property has the most restored side-channels in the Squamish Watershed.

- Released 39,510 salmon fry with the help of students and visitors - 28,561 Chum and 10,949 Coho
- Collaborated with Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council to assist with detecting and eradicating invasive species on the property and dike
- Strengthened partnerships with Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Squamish River Watershed Society and Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program to continue to protect spawning channels and other sensitive habitats in the Dave Marshall Salmon Reserve





# Cheakamus Foundation and Impact

Established in January 2009, the Cheakamus Foundation for Environmental Learning “Cheakamus Foundation” is a registered charity that works to support the ongoing success and viability of Cheakamus Centre.

- Secured over \$185,000 in grants and donations, and additional in-kind from BCIT, Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Farm to School BC, Nature Canada, Pacific Salmon Foundation, RBC, Rick Hansen Foundation, Squamish Arts Council, TD Friends of the Environment
- Completed two cabin retrofits for a total of 4 cabins renovated with accessibility enhancements
- Facilitated two indigenous youth programs - BCIT High Performance Tradesperson and the second year of the Indigenous Youth Leadership summer program
- Hosted the sold-out 2nd Annual River Feast Fundraiser
- Grew Friends of Cheakamus membership to 250 members, and offered 6 Friends of Cheakamus family-friendly learning events
- Launched 50 Years 50 Faces campaign acknowledging special individuals and partners over five decades
- Strengthened organizations' capacity for long-term collaboration with post-secondary partners



A photograph of a forest stream. The water flows over moss-covered rocks, creating a small waterfall. A large, dark log lies horizontally across the stream in the foreground. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees, with sunlight filtering through the leaves. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

“Cheakamus Centre changed my life. It was the first time I felt connected to what was around me and part of it.”

~ Wade Caswell, Friend of Cheakamus





**Thank you for a momentous 50<sup>th</sup> year!**

If you would like to learn more about Cheakamus Centre and how you can get involved, we would love to hear from you!

Visit our website at [www.cheakamuscentre.ca](http://www.cheakamuscentre.ca) or reach out to Cathy or Sarah at:

Cathy Jenkins  
Project Manager, Campus Renewal  
[cjenkins@sd44.ca](mailto:cjenkins@sd44.ca)  
778.772.0157

Sarah Bainbridge  
Senior Development Officer  
[sarah@cheakamuscentre.ca](mailto:sarah@cheakamuscentre.ca)  
604.848.5668

CHEAKAMUS  
CENTRE

nature is in session