

KLTF CHAIR REPORT 2024

The following report provides a synopsis of KLTF actions and accomplishments since the AGM in 2023.

Submitted by Theresa Shea (Board Chair)

It was this time two years ago, on Halloween, in fact, that the land was officially transferred from the private ownership of Jeff Gusdal and Hanae Kiyooka to the Kiyooka Land Trust Foundation.

As I provide the following select synopsis of the work accomplished this past year, once again, I think we should be proud of all that we have achieved.

Since our official date of incorporation on May 31, 2021, a mere three-and-a-half-years ago, we continue to be the little land trust that could, and we punch well above our weight.

2024 saw the board devote more time to attracting groups to use the residence for field research, artistic pursuits, and as an ongoing community resource for residents in the Robson Valley.

- Letters were sent to a variety of educational institutions, informing them of our existence and the many possibilities for its use.
- A letter was also drafted for arts groups, in the hopes that artists would find ways to use the space.
- In addition, guidelines for an arts residency were solidified, and the board agreed that rates could be severely reduced and/or waived for indigenous groups interested.
- A birdwatching event, hosted by local birder Elsie Stanley, attracted a LOT of interest, with 32 people in attendance.
- Stéphane Dubé, an instructor in Natural Resource and Forest Technology from College of New Caledonia (CNC) in Prince George brought students to the land, and Hanae spoke to them via Zoom for a discussion on land trusts.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Also this year, to comply with the Canadian Land Trust Compliance Standards, the board drafted and passed a health and safety policy, as well as identified draft conservation policies.

As KLTF is a non-profit, our treasurer applied for a GST waiver, and we will now file a GST rebate every 6 months to receive 50% of any GST paid on things related to the house.

THE HOUSE

Ongoing issues with insurance made it impossible to rent the house for much of 2024. However, the plus side was the added vacancy enabled the board to do some maintenance while the house was unoccupied.

To protect the house as an asset to fulfil many of KLTF's educational and community goals, the board decided to replace the forty-four year-old roof and hired local handyman Andy Hagenguth to do the job. That work was completed in April, and board members and volunteers contributed over 100 volunteer hours to assist with this task. Kate Ohe, a member

and supporter of the land trust, donated a significant amount of money and was happy to have it used for the roof replacement to help preserve this asset.

To piggy-back on the roof replacement in April, KLTF organized a community work bee, and a number of people joined to help with weeding and other housekeeping duties.

Also, in an ongoing effort to ensure the house is “fire smart” or fire safe, the land stewardship committee flagged some trees that were leaning towards the house, or growing too close to it, that needed to be taken down to both reduce fire risks and also to reduce the risk of them falling onto the house. In May, Brendan Taylor and his crew took down “hazard trees” surrounding the house. In addition, during the roof replacement, board members removed the woodpile that was against the house.

Much of the firewood from the woodpile was donated to Barb Zimmer, a neighbour and enthusiastic supporter of the land trust from the get-go. Barb helped us to compile a plant inventory and led the first nature walk at our inaugural community event. Her husband Joe recently passed away, and she greatly appreciated our thoughtfulness. The Zimmers have known the Kiyooka family since the 1980s, and one of the great things about a grassroots land trust such as ours is that we are able to both tap into and build onto existing relationships that were developed and nurtured over decades. And even though Frank and Ann are no longer with us, the social currency and goodwill attached to the Kiyooka name remains strong in the Robson Valley.

Finally, we are pleased to say the house is generating enough income to pay for itself without KLTF having to rely on donations.

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

In moving towards fulfilling our goal to invite and improve indigenous engagement, and to build on the work we did last year with Pulxaneeks in the Heart-to-Heart Indigenous Relations Consultation, KLTF established an Indigenous Engagement Committee to ensure that we visit the issue at every board meeting and brainstorm about possible ways of expanding these relationships.

COMMUNITY EVENT

We held a community celebration on June 22nd, the day after National Indigenous Peoples Day, that was well attended.

- We invited All Our Relations Dance Troupe, and Indigenous group from Kamloops, to perform at our community celebration, and that was a big hit.
- We applied for and were grateful to receive a Fraser-Fort George Regional District-in-Aid grant to help offset costs for the community celebration.
- We also hosted workshops by two locals: Leona Mintz led a plant identification workshop, and Toni Appleby led a ponderosa pine needle basket making workshop
- We had a nice write up in the June 28, 2024 [Rocky Mountain Goat](#) about our community event.

After that celebration, three board members toured a 29-hectare piece of land in Tête Jaune Cache, because its owners, Josie & Elton, are investigating the possibility of making an ecological gift to the land trust.

And finally, to support local arts activities in the Robson Valley, KLTF donated a four-night stay at the house to the Robson Valley Music Festival, who, in turn, gifted it to musicians who'd arrived from New Zealand.

FINANCES

To ethically grow our stewardship endowment fund, we invested in VanCity Community Foundation, a Credit Union in Vancouver.

The board approved a motion to have our financial statements reviewed by a registered accountant, Daniel W. Roberts (with King & Company), and he validated that our financial procedures are sound. This review engagement report will be useful (and necessary) for any pending grant applications.

BOARD

In March of this year, one of our founding board members, Forest Borch, expressed the need to retire from the board. However, his commitment to KLTF remains strong, and he is happy to volunteer advice, share information, and be involved on a committee to help us to move towards greater green efficiency. As the year ends, Dave Pilcher, another founding member, has just announced his resignation from the board. He, too, will continue on as a supporting member. The board owes much to these two individuals who helped us to get it to its current secure status.

KLTF remains a member of the Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia, an organization that provides wonderful resources for land trusts.

In short, the Kiyooka Land Trust board remains robust, and our financial situation is sound.