

# Media Release

For immediate release  
July 27, 2009

## B.C. wetlands get boost from new partnership

Surrey, B.C. — Efforts to conserve B.C.'s wetlands took a major step forward today as government and several non-governmental organizations jointly formed the Wetland Stewardship Partnership (WSP).

“Congratulations to everyone who showed their commitment to protecting B.C.'s wetlands,” says Environment Minister Barry Penner. “Protecting our wetlands is a key part of the B.C. Government’s Living Water Smart plan for keeping our water healthy and secure for everyone.”

“The Wetland Stewardship Partnership is committed to ensuring that B.C. is a province where wetlands and their larger watersheds are valued and conserved for today and for tomorrow,” remarks Les Bogdan, chair of the WSP.

Bogdan further comments, “Wetlands are among the most biologically diverse, productive, and important ecosystems on Earth. Valued not only for the habitat they provide, they are critical to the environmental, social and economic health of B.C.'s towns and cities: improving water quality, minimizing the effects of flooding and droughts and doing their part to remove and store greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.”

The WSP also unveiled *Wetland Ways: Interim Guidelines for Wetland Protection and Conservation in British Columbia*, a series of guidelines and best practices developed to promote best management practices for wetland conservation in B.C. Wetland Ways will be field tested over the next two years among key stakeholders and will be available on [bcwetlands.ca](http://bcwetlands.ca) in the near future.

The WSP highlighted the Wetland Action Plan for B.C. currently in development, which assesses the current status of and threats to wetlands, evaluates current conservation initiatives, and outlines specific conservation objectives and actions. The plan looks to help mitigate the historic and ongoing wetland loss experienced across B.C., particularly in at-risk areas due to urban expansion and commercial development.

The partnership was announced today at a ceremony held at Serpentine Wildlife Management Area in Surrey, B.C.

The Wetland Stewardship Partnership is a multi-agency group dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and other sensitive ecosystems. For the complete list of partners, check out *Backgrounder – WSP Partners*.

– 30 –

For more information, please contact:

Wendy Fister  
Phone: 604-312-4632  
e-mail: [info@bcwetlands.ca](mailto:info@bcwetlands.ca)



The WSP is a multi-agency group dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and other sensitive ecosystems. Partners include:

Environment Canada • Ministry of Environment • Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport • BC Hydro  
BC Nature (Federation of BC Naturalists) • BC Wildlife Federation • Ducks Unlimited Canada  
Grasslands Conservation Council of BC • Nature Conservancy of Canada • Nature Trust of B.C. • Pacific Salmon Foundation