



Announcing the Recipients of the **2025 Sitka Activator Fund**

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The Sitka Foundation is pleased to announce the results of the inaugural Sitka Activator Fund.

This philanthropic fund, launched in summer 2025, enables small charitable organizations and communities to engage citizens, members and neighbours in local stewardship actions through volunteering and presence on the land and water. The Sitka Foundation hopes that this will inspire community connections and also encourage British Columbians to protect and restore nature in their own backyard.

This year thirty-two grants were awarded in amounts between \$1,000 and \$25,000, totalling \$500,000. Each grant offers small organizations that lead community based work in the Salish Sea funding to use in the upcoming year. To qualify, each group shared their plans to generate, amplify and enhance volunteering for nature. The pilot Activator Fund was significantly over subscribed, showing an

interest by Salish Sea leaders to encourage place-based stewardship. The call for proposals closed in Fall 2025 and funding has just been sent: all the applicants who took the time to apply are celebrated for their important work. The Sitka Foundation worked hard to make the process quick, easy, short, and transparent. Selection was a tough and demanding process.

Thanks go to the Advisory Circle who played an essential role in shaping, launching, and stewarding this Fund. They are Nikki Wright, Shauna Johnson, and Trisha Beaty. Their understanding of what communities need and their collective lived experience of the power of community-led nature caregiving has shaped the Activator Fund as a relevant, easy-to-access, and helpful source of grant money. The Sitka Foundation is grateful for their wisdom and time to make decisions for the final recipients of the Fund.

“We are delighted to support thirty-two organizations who are leading efforts to make a meaningful impact to nature around the Salish Sea,” said Ross Jameson, a Program Officer at the Sitka Foundation, who launched the Fund this year. “Our hope is that these grants will enable people in communities to build connections to nature and to each other. By getting their hands dirty doing something as simple as pulling invasive species from a community park next to each other, they will get to know each other, their nearby ecosystems, and themselves.”

About the Sitka Foundation: The Sitka Foundation is a charitable family foundation that funds the conservation of nature and the protection of biodiversity through granting programs.

Below are the Sitka Activator Fund Grant Recipients for its inaugural pilot program 2025-2026:

Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society

To convene the Howe Sound Environmental Educators Network and foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and resource exchange among educators and academics.

BC Marine Trails Network Association

To expand the Coastal Caretaker initiative to promote safe, positive stewardship actions and enhance volunteer-led environmental care.

BlueAct Marine Society

To fill data gaps on herring spawning in Gibsons, highlight eelgrass beds, and support Indigenous leadership in coastal stewardship.

Circular Farm and Food Society

To connect hands-on outdoor agriculture with school meal programs, teaching sustainable food-growing practices.

Cowichan Community Land Trust Society

To increase volunteer stewardship of Garry Oak ecosystems while integrating Indigenous priorities around reconciliation and access.

Denman Conservancy Association

To develop a community-based ecosystem monitoring program, engaging volunteers, especially youth, in long-term data collection for sustainable land management.

Discovery Coast Greenways Land Trust

To launch an environmental education program that combines school programs and community Nature Club activities for hands-on conservation learning.

Galiano Conservancy Association

To revitalize volunteer programs by expanding outreach, resources, and learning opportunities to increase community participation.

Gambier Island Conservancy

To provide resources to build and support a volunteer team to launch and sustain a Streamkeepers initiative.

Hornby Island Natural History Center

To advance the Seaweed education and research program, and strengthen youth and family outdoor learning.

Institute for Multidisciplinary Ecological Research in the Salish Sea

To mobilize regional biodiversity data, empowering communities to respond to ecological change.

Lasqueti Island Nature Conservancy

To expand volunteer engagement and lead conservation and monitoring activities.

Marine Life Sanctuaries Society of British Columbia

To maintain and expand citizen science marine monitoring programs using volunteer divers.

Mitlenatch Island Stewardship Team

To support the Volunteer Stewardship Education and Support Project.

Nanaimo & Area Land Trust Society

To support citizen science Turtle Ambassadors in monitoring nests, documenting activity, and educating park visitors.

Pender Islands Conservancy Association

To carry out land stewardship, ecological restoration, community education, and monitoring programs that build resilience and protect biodiversity.

Rocky Point Bird Observatory Society

To support banders in training volunteers and strengthen Indigenous community relationships.

Salish Sea Regenerative Farm Society

To engage volunteers and youth in ecosystem restoration and community-based food system resilience.

Saturna Island Marine Research & Education Society (SIMRES)

To expand community participation in marine research, conservation, and education.

Society of Friends of Strathcona Park

To engage volunteers in hands-on invasive species removal and environmental stewardship.

Stanley Park Ecology Society

To renew Stanley Park's nest box program by engaging volunteers in building, monitoring, and cultural walks to support bird populations.

Stewards of Sc'ainew Society Incorporated

To use trail cameras to monitor wildlife and collect data that will guide conservation and management decisions.

Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

To expand volunteer opportunities and respond to community requests for conservation support across the Sunshine Coast.

The Loon Foundation

To engage community volunteers in hands-on ecological monitoring of marine and freshwater ecosystems.

The Starfish Environmental Society

To mobilize more than 500 youth under 25 to take action against shoreline pollution while developing leadership and environmental skills.

Transition Salt Spring Society

To formalize and increase volunteer engagement in coordination with restoration programs to meet growing community interest.

Tsolum River Restoration Society

To engage citizen scientists in monitoring fish and habitat, providing data to inform restoration and emergency response efforts.

Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association

To support the volunteer-run Learning Garden and provide hands-on education on biodiversity, sustainable gardening, and urban ecosystem health.

WildResearch Society

To enable skilled, permitted banders to coordinate and train volunteers, manage data and site access, and provide hands-on experiences.

Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia

To support and train volunteers to safely take on leadership roles in restoration and work events.

WSÁNEĆ Lands Trust Society

To revitalize community-led wetland and riparian restoration at WSÁNEĆ owned sites.

Young Naturalists Club of British Columbia Society (Nature Kids BC)

To support volunteers, strengthen outreach, and sustain programming that connects families to air, land, and sea.



MEDIA INQUIRIES

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