

**Annual Report on the Woodhaven Eco Culture Centre, 969 Raymer Road, Kelowna,
November 1 2013- September 2014**

Submitted to the Regional District of the Central Okanagan, September 22, 2014

In reference to the MOU established between UBC Okanagan and The Regional District of the Central Okanagan, this report provides an outline of the activities undertaken by UBCO's Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies (FCCS) for the past year, the first of our agreement.

The objectives laid out in the MOU are as follows:

2.1. UBC Objectives - UBC wishes to establish a residency program for graduate students, post-doctoral students, and visiting scholars and artists ("**Participants**"). Participants will take residence in the Buildings to retreat, conduct research and art projects, and generally engage in an interdisciplinary setting to support the goals of the UBC Okanagan Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies ("**FCCS**"). Specific objectives in establishing the Program are to:

- (a) develop and highlight the FCCS graduate programs;
- (b) contribute to UBC Okanagan sustainability initiatives;
- (c) contribute to FCCS research into eco cultures; and
- (d) build connections between UBC and the local community.

2.2. RDCO Objectives - RDCO objectives in establishing the Program are to:

- (a) utilization of RDCO facilities in the Park that is consistent with RDCO and RDCO Parks Services overall strategic objectives;
- (b) engage the public in environmental education through ECO Art;
- (c) aid in expanding a greater diversity of programming for the residents of the RDCO;
- (d) build connections between RDCO and the higher level educational community; and
- (e) foster continued local community support for RDCO Park Services initiatives.

The activities agreed upon in the MOU are as follows:

3.1. UBC - Each prospective participant will apply for acceptance into the Program, and if accepted by UBC, will take residence in the Buildings subject to terms and conditions established by UBC. Each Participant will conduct research projects around arts, environment and education, as will have been set out in the Participants application to the Program. Such projects may include Eco Art presentations, exhibits, displays or art sessions of the research projects, which the Program will display for the general public three times per year.

The parties envisage that over time a gallery of Program art will be developed. However, recognizing that ownership of Participants' art remains with each Participant, contribution of any piece of art to such a gallery will be subject to agreement of the particular Participant. UBC will endeavour to contribute to any gallery to the extent that it is able.

Evaluation of the applications and determination of which applications are successful will be in the sole discretion of UBC.

3.2. RDCO - RDCO will continue to develop the Park in accordance with its mission, but will have regard to the Program and presence of Participants in the Buildings when considering and implementing any development. The RDCO anticipates that development in the Park will consist of a trail loop and signage.

FCCS has had an entirely productive and successful year meeting the objectives and undertaking the activities above. What follows below is a short summary of the events and residencies.

From September 2013 – June 2014, the main house was home to two graduate students, Connal McNamara a Master of Fine Arts (Creative Writing) student, and Nicola Campbell, a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (English and Indigenous Studies) student. The small studio over the car port was used as a short –term residence for the following writers from January – April 2014: Don McKay (one of Canada’s most renowned nature poets from Newfoundland) and Camille Martin (a poet from Toronto).

In April 2014, Nancy Holmes, Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, with some funding from FCCS, a subsidy for Work Study, and funds from the Eco Art Incubator, hired a graduate student (Kelly Shepherd) to run summer programming on the property. The following is a short description of the many events. The events fall into two categories: 1) special, single events or workshops and 2) The Woodshed Reading Series, a regular literary and music event that occurred approximately every two weeks over the summer.

MAY

May 21. **Woodshed Readings**, opening event. Readers Jessica Bonney, Kelly Shepherd, and Nicola Campbell. We held it in the actual woodshed. 8 audience members.

JUNE

June 4. **Woodshed Readings** – John Lent and Jake Kennedy read and discuss their new poetics project. 18 audience members.

June 12. Daniella Roze “Living Wild in the Stone Age” slideshow presentation. 8 or 10 audience members.

June 18. “Beat Salad” Live poetry readings and a 100-mile potluck. This was the artist residency project of Clay McCann and Julia Prudhomme. Featuring performance poet Ali Riley from Calgary, and poetry readings by Sharon Thesen, Harold Rhenisch, Clay McCann, Kelly Shepherd, Laura Sciarpalletti, and Jessica Bonney. Performance piece by Amy Modahl and Julia Prudhomme. Musical guests: Rhoneil from Nelson and Kelowna’s Darian D. Soul the Soulsamurai. 35-40 people in attendance.

June 21. Summer Solstice Concert – with vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Karen Donaldson Shepherd, and featuring Canadian folk-blues legend Herald Nix. 35 people in attendance.

June 29. Lorna Tureski and Joanne Salé – Body of the Land, day-long workshop. Only one participant.

June- three day residency by poet Natalie Rice.

JULY

July 2. **Woodshed Readings** – Sandra Lynxleg and Lori Mairs. 12 people in attendance.

July 11. **Woodshed Readings**--Aaron Peck poetry reading – with Jason Dewinetz. 11 people in attendance.

End of July, through August. Troy Nickle, visiting Alternator Gallery artist (from Lethbridge) did a stone installation at Woodhaven—remains in park until October.

July 22 - August 2. Indigenous Activist artists. The summer intensive students used the Eco Culture Centre as a residence, not for public events. Except for one finale event, a smoke and light tipi facilitated by Cheryl L'Hirondelle. This event included the 15 or 20 students and about 10-15 additional guests.

AUGUST

Aug 13. **Woodshed Readings** featuring Nancy Holmes, Natalie Rice, Brianna Ferguson, Megan Hunter with musical guest Natalie Ingram. 18 people in attendance.

Aug 15. Daniella Roze "Living Wild" presentation at the Environmental Education Centre for the Okanagan (EECO), Mission Creek Park. 6 people in attendance.

Aug 16. Daniella Roze full-day workshop: "Wild Plants: Healing and Nourishment" 9am - 4pm. 6 workshop participants.

Aug 17. Daniella Roze full-day workshop: "Cedar Bark Basket Weaving" 9am - 4pm. 5 workshop participants.

August 21 - 25. Laurie MacFayden, Edmonton poet and visual artist, visiting artist residency.

August 22. **Woodshed Readings** with Laurie MacFayden. Musical guest Karen Donaldson Shepherd. 22 people in attendance.

August 25 - 30. Erin Candela, northern BC / Toronto visual artist and gallery director, visiting artist residency. Place- and story-based visual art in people's homes—created work for three homes/ families.

Aug 27. **Woodshed Readings** season finale – readers Kelly Shepherd, Laisha Rosnau, Michael V. Smith & Matt Rader with musical guest Darian D. Soul the Soulsamurai. 35 people in attendance.

Costs were \$5000 to support the student facilitator, and about \$1200 for events and fees for artists.

Considering the RDCO Objectives specifically, the programming over the past year can be seen to fulfill the objectives in the following ways:

- (a) *utilization of RDCO facilities in the Park that is consistent with RDCO and RDCO Parks Services overall strategic objectives:* The events and works always foregrounded a sense of place and stewardship. Environmental and ecological awareness were always underpinning our activities, and each event contributed to an exciting sense that this special place could enhance the bonds we have with the natural world. Over and over attendees exclaimed how they felt close to nature – and sightings of doe and her fawn, pileated woodpeckers, chickadees, and many other birds and animals while these events occurred were valued and appreciated.
- (b) *engage the public in environmental education through ECO Art:* The artworks that were created by resident artists were all focused on eco art practices, processes and outcomes. A beautiful sculptural work of stones in the forest by Troy Nickle remains in the park until the end of October and one painting by Erin Candela created especially for the small studio over the carport after a conversation with Josanne Crayke, former owner of the property, remains as a permanent installation on the property. This little painting anchors this natural place into its cultural history.
- (c) *aid in expanding a greater diversity of programming for the residents of the RDCO:* We suspect that the RDCO has no other programming quite like what FCCS is doing at the Eco Culture Centre- poetry, art, music, artists in residence etc.
- (d) *build connections between RDCO and the higher level educational community; and*
- (e) *foster continued local community support for RDCO Park Services initiatives:* The growing number of people who attended over the summer speak to the increasing awareness of and interest in the activities. Another community connection is the website blog that we have created for the Eco Culture Centre: blogs.ubc.ca/woodhavencentre.

FCCS feels the Eco Culture Centre has similarly supported its objectives and initiatives by providing an exceptional space for art and nature work and a unique opportunity for students and visiting artists. Photographs and recordings of all events can be found on the blog and a short film of the summer activities is in production and will be posted on this site in the next month or two.

The Upcoming Year:

As of September, we have two new residents in the home, Clayton McCann, a Master of Fine Arts (Creative Writing) students and Daan Hoekstra, a Master of Arts (Fine Arts and Sustainability) international student.

We plan on hosting one or two final Woodshed readings at least until the weather gets too cold, and we are busy working on the small fenced-in garden to create a permaculture plot of pollinator plants and edible native food plants, which we also hope to enhance with artwork.

Tasks/ Recommendations/ WishList:

- find some funding to continue the summer programming for next year- Eco Art Incubator money is ending—funding to hire a student facilitator and some funds for paying artists. (\$6000)
- coordinate the public communications with RDCO more efficiently so we get more bang for the buck.
- work on the blog to make it really navigable and friendly.
- think about finding sponsorship or funding for a longer term artist in residence over the summer.
- business plan update to include regular yard maintenance and property maintenance over the summer, possibly to include (as we did this year) supporting a young man with a developmental disability to work on the property with a job coach to learn some skills.
- continue to receive donations to furnish house appropriately and well.
- continue to nourish neighbourhood connections.
- upgrade some aspects of residences—collect water for garden and to prevent icy drive (eavestroughs), a convection oven for studio over carport to make long term stays easier, possibly blinds upgrades in main house and in studio.
- students have complained about the difficulty in controlling heat in the house—work on getting this working better.
- upgrade/ repair lighting around circular driveway for public events—and get it controlled outside basement for use by other residents.

The Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies would like to express its gratitude to the Regional District of the Central Okanagan for partnering with us on this wonderful, unique and enriching opportunity to create an eco art focussed venue in Kelowna. We think so far it has been a stellar success!

Nancy Holmes
 Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies
 FCCS, UBC Okanagan
nancy.holmes@ubc.ca
 250-807-9369