SPRING 2026

CONNECTIONS

Dear friends and partners,

We hope everyone has had a restorative winter season and a productive start to the spring. As the land begins to wake and we move past the spring equinox, the Partnerships for Applied Research Centre (PARC) team has been keeping busy with our ongoing projects and community-led biodiversity monitoring initiatives across the country.

In this second edition of *Connections*, we are excited to share a new way to navigate the funding landscape. We know that identifying the right resources—from habitat restoration to species at risk recovery to improving community infrastructure—is a vital part of our shared role as caretakers and stewards of the land.

Introducing: the Western Canada Biodiversity Grant Tracker. We hope this new tool helps streamline the process for your community by providing an easier way to find and filter funding opportunities tailored to your unique priorities.

We are also pleased to showcase the impactful work currently underway with the Thompson-Nicola Conservation Collaborative mapping ecological corridors within Secwepemcúĺecw.

We look forward to staying in touch, and as always, we welcome your stories, feedback, and ideas.

With gratitude,
Todd, Taylor, Pete, and Jo
PARC Team

WESTERN CANADA BIODIVERSITY GRANT TRACKER

Staying on top of deadlines for biodiversity and restoration grants can be a challenge. The new interactive Western Canada Biodiversity Grant Tracker app is designed to help your organization find the right support more efficiently.

With this new tool, you can:

Filter by Applicant Type: Quickly identify grants specifically for Indigenous Nations, NGOs/Non-profits, or research and academic institutions.

Refine by Region: Narrow your search to opportunities available in your specific geographic area.

Sort by Funding Amount: Find programs that align with your budget and scale.

Monitor Deadline Windows: View upcoming closing dates at a glance to prioritize your proposal development.

Whether you are seeking support for species at risk stewardship or habitat restoration, we hope this app makes these opportunities more accessible than ever. Note that this app is still in development, and there may be errors or bugs. We look forward to hearing your feedback on the app and continuing our journey of shared learning together.

As we move into this busy season on the land, we remain grateful for the trust and collaboration that make this work possible. Did you try out the app? Let us know! Contact David Evans (devans3@ualberta.ca) or Taylor Baker (taylor.baker@ubc.ca) with any feedback.

VISIT THE GRANT TRACKER APP

I built the Western Canada Biodiversity Grant Tracker to help solve one of the biggest challenges I encounter in my work supporting Indigenous community-based monitoring: finding the right project funding.

The grant tracker summarizes information from over 40 funding portals in one spot. My hope is that it reduces the administrative burden of biodiversity research and monitoring, and helps us all spend more time doing the work that inspires us!

David Evans, Indigenous Partnerships Specialist with the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Find these opportunities and more in the Western Canada Biodiversity Grant Tracker!

GRANT NAME	DEADLINE	NOTES
OSHKI WUPOOWANE | THE BLANKET FUND		
Capacity Building Grants	Open now. Up to $175,000 per year. Deadline for expression of interest: May 31, 2026	Supports grassroots Indigenous charities, programs, communities, and initiatives with the potential for significant impact. This grant stream commits to multi-year relationships which increase the capacity, networks, programs, and profile of the partners selected.
NEW RELATIONSHIP TRUST		
Guardians and Stewardship Training Initiative*	Multiple tiers of funding. Opens May 15. Closes when funds exhausted.	Supports Guardians initiatives with funding for training, education, knowledge, and skills development to enhance local Guardian capacity
Nation Building Grant*	$60,000/year Opens May 15. Closes when funds exhausted.	Provides multi-year funding to BC First Nations and Tribal Councils, supporting self-determined priorities that enhance governance structures, institutional capacity, and community resilience.
BC HYDRO COMMUNITY GRANTS (BC)		
Sustainability and Environmental Initiatives	$5,000 Deadline: May 31, 2026	Funds programs that help communities take meaningful action to protect and restore the environment.

**Please be aware that this grant is in very high demand every year. NRT has noted a high volume of interest, so we encourage all applicants to have their materials finalized and ready for submission by opening week.*

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Find these opportunities and more in the Western Canada Biodiversity Grant Tracker!

GRANT NAME	DEADLINE	NOTES
FISH & WILDLIFE COMPENSATION PROGRAM (FWCP) (BC)		
Community Engagement Grant	Up to $1,500 Ongoing.	Quick-turnaround funding for small projects that engage the community in fish and wildlife conservation.
COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST (BC)		
Small-scale Ecosystem Grants	Accepted on a rolling basis until funding is fully allocated.	Supports small-scale projects (<2 years) that improve ecological health and native biodiversity in the Columbia Basin region.
Ecosystem Enhancement Program	Up to $750,000 Deadline: May 22, 2026	Supports Basin communities, including Indigenous Peoples, to steward and lead ecosystem enhancement and restoration projects that maintain and improve ecological health and resilience to a changing climate in the Basin.
PACIFIC INSTITUTE FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS		
Relational Foundations Grant	$5,000–8,000 Deadline: June 17, 2026	Funding through either the relationship building or knowledge exchange pathway
World Weaving Multi-Year Research Pathway	$80,000–$200,000 Deadline: June 17, 2026	Longer-term climate research that addresses complex, systemic, or emerging climate challenges facing First Nations communities.

START PLANNING SOON!

Typically, there is an early fall intake for the federal Habitat Stewardship Program, Indigenous Partnerships for Species at Risk, and aquatic-focused Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk.

Large BC grants from the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund and FWCP also open in the fall. Note: you must submit a notice of intent by early September if applying for an FWCP grant in either the Columbia or Peace regions.

SPOTLIGHT

Mapping Ecological Corridors: Braiding Knowledge for Conservation in Secwepemcúlecw

The Mapping Ecological Corridors Project is a collaborative initiative focused on identifying and conserving key wildlife movement corridors within Secwepemcúlecw. By integrating Local and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (LTEK) with western science, the project is taking a "walking-on-two-legs" approach to conservation—recognizing the strengths of both knowledge systems and working together for long-term ecosystem resilience.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS STRENGTHEN WILDLIFE, ECOSYSTEM, AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

With support from the Thompson-Nicola Conservation Collaborative (TNCC) and Biodiversity Pathways, seven First Nation communities in Secwepemcúlecw are advancing the ecological corridor project within their territories by completing Ecological Corridor Action Frameworks summarizing their corridor's significance, current pressures, and priority actions to support long-term stewardship.

TNCC is a regional, partnership-based initiative that brings together local governments, First Nation communities, non-profit organizations, scientists, and residents to advance biodiversity conservation across the Thompson-Nicola region through collaboration, knowledge sharing, and coordinated action.

On January 22, TNCC hosted the North Thompson–North Okanagan Corridors Workshop in Kamloops, BC, to discuss ecological connectivity at a regional scale. PARC team member Peter Baker presented outputs from a connectivity modelling process and resulting broad regional corridor maps to serve as a starting point for discussion.

Workshop participants worked together throughout the day to identify priority corridors based on both their unique views and collective values.

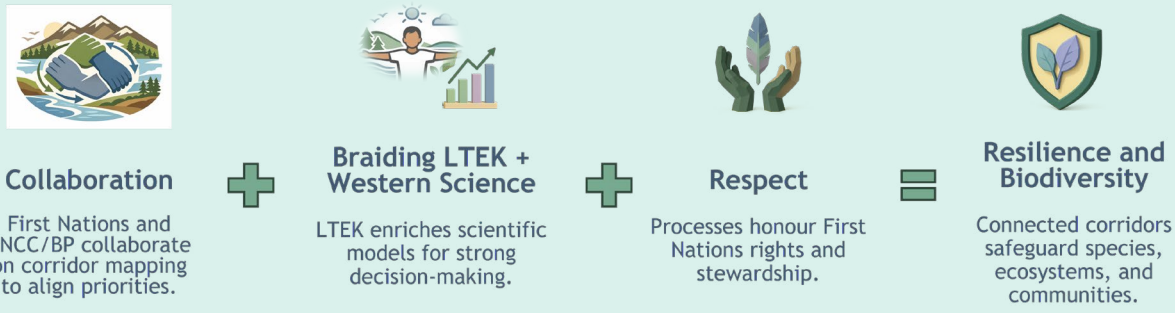

PHOTO: TNCC HOSTING THE NORTH THOMPSON-NORTH OKANAGAN CORRIDORS WORKSHOP. CREDIT: JO-ANNE HALES.

Peter used a connectivity modelling algorithm called Omniscape to analyze how landscapes connect for three types of species—general forest, grassland, and wetland species—as well as a model for grizzly bears. Publicly available maps and data were used to decide which areas and features would help or hinder movement. These included variables like terrain, vegetation, water, species locations, and human activities such as roads, farms, and buildings. These sources were supplemented with peer-reviewed academic literature and knowledge contributed by the TNCC First Nations working group.

Models were built by giving each map layer a resistance score from 1 to 100 reflecting how hard it is for animals to move through that space. Scores were based on ecological knowledge and information from government agencies in BC. Strong barriers like big water bodies or developed areas had the highest scores, while natural features animals prefer had lower scores.

Resulting landscape connectivity maps were overlaid with climate data to predict which areas might be most important under future climate change scenarios.

PROJECT GOALS AND APPROACH: BRAIDING KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

The project aims to support wildlife movement, species recovery, habitat restoration, and ecosystem connectivity. Conservation planning is guided by both LTEK and western science, ensuring that First Nations ownership and sensitive information are respected throughout. Western scientific knowledge provides rigorous methods for data collection, modelling, and analysis. LTEK offers detailed understanding of seasonal cycles, species behaviour, and ecosystem relationships.

By braiding knowledge systems, the project brings together community priorities, cultural heritage, and stewardship responsibilities, and addresses complex ecological challenges holistically and inclusively.

The project's outputs have many practical applications, including:

- **Land and resource management planning**
- **Wildlife conservation and management**
- **Cultural heritage protection**
- **Addressing cumulative effects**
- **Informing policy and industry practices**
- **Responding to referral applications**

PHOTO: PETER BAKER FROM PARC PRESENTING CONNECTIVITY MODELS. CREDIT: TNCC.

PARC OUT AND ABOUT

The 10th B.C. Cabinet and First Nations Leaders' Gathering took place November 4 and 5, 2025, on the territories of the Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx w̓ú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations.

The Gathering is a partnership between the First Nations Leadership Council (comprised of the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit, and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs) and the Government of British Columbia.

As one of the largest meetings of provincial and First Nations leaders in the country, the Gathering is designed to recognize, respect and honour relationships, and foster joint dialogue and collaboration.

Members of the PARC Team—Jo-Anne, Peter, and Taylor—attended the FNLG and hosted a Biodiversity Pathways booth. The booth allowed us the opportunity to share ongoing projects and research, exchange ideas on sustainable resource management, and learn from First Nation leaders and communities. The Gathering presented a unique opportunity to connect with those who hold deep traditional knowledge and stewardship practices related to biodiversity and land management.

ABOVE: PETER AND JO-ANNE

RIGHT: JO-ANNE AND TAYLOR AT THE BOOTH

COMING SOON

We are proud exhibitors at the upcoming 10th Indigenous Resource Opportunities Conference from June 3 to 5, 2026!

We hope to see you at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre in Nanaimo, BC. Stop by our booth to say hello!

Visit www.bciroc.ca for more information about the event.

STAY CONNECTED

If you'd like to receive updates like this regularly, please sign up below. If you'd like to share your own project news or funding leads in this newsletter, please let us know!

Contact: taylor.baker@ubc.ca
The Biodiversity Pathways website: https://biodiversitypathways.ca/
The wildlife science team: https://wildlifescience.ca/about/our-team/

THE PARC TEAM AT BIODIVERSITY PATHWAYS IS AVAILABLE TO:

- Discuss project ideas and potential alignment with current funding
- Assist with proposal development and technical inputs
- Connect you with potential collaborators or co-applicants

Reach out to us at taylor.baker@ubc.ca to discuss how we can support your work.

TODD PENKE
PARC DIRECTOR

TAYLOR BAKER
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY COORDINATOR

JO-ANNE HALES
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT LEAD

PETER BAKER
COMMUNITY SCIENCE PROJECT LEAD