



BCLSS

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025 Fiscal Year

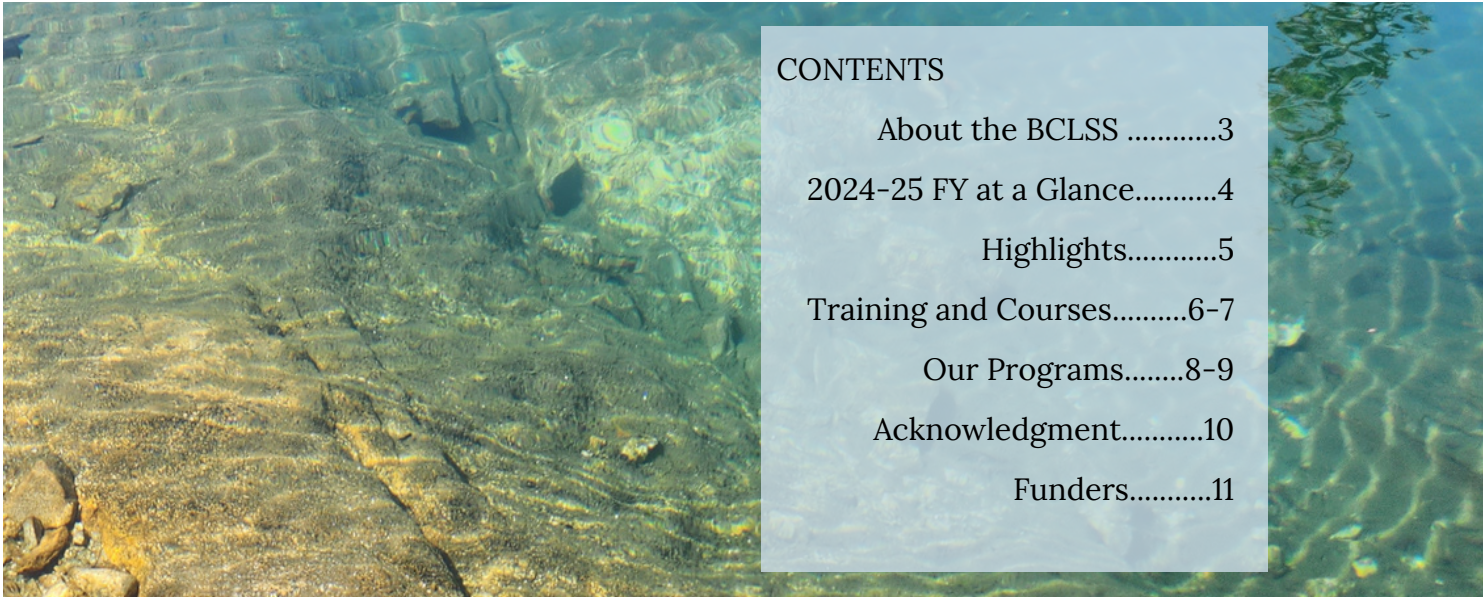
BC LAKE STEWARDSHIP SOCIETY

MESSAGE FROM THE BCLSS

The 2024-2025 Fiscal Year has been our busiest year yet at the BCLSS! Participation in the Level 1 BC Lake Stewardship and Monitoring Program was at an all time high, we delivered more training courses than any other year in BCLSS history, and wrote more peer reviewed reports than any other year. With the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year shaping up to be even busier, the BCLSS staff and Board of Directors are excited about what is to come for the BCLSS.

In the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year, we had 35 lakes monitored under Level 1 programs through the BC Lake Stewardship and Monitoring Program, we conducted 7 LakeKeepers workshops, and we spent more time training and checking in with our volunteers. The BCLSS continues to strive to improve our services to members and strengthen the quality of our data base by conducting in person and online check ins with volunteers and members. This year, our First Nations LakeKeepers Workshops continued to be very popular and we were excited to begin delivering our new Lake Ecology and Monitoring Training and Certification Course. We also developed a Watershed Monitoring and Assessment addition to our LakeKeepers training.

We are inspired by our dedicated community of volunteers, professionals, our highly qualified board of directors, and generous sponsors and donors. We are grateful to work with so many inspiring individuals and groups in the pursuit of our vision: clean, healthy lakes that provide quality habitat for aquatic life, wildlife, and people throughout British Columbia.



CONTENTS

About the BCLSS	3
2024-25 FY at a Glance.....	4
Highlights.....	5
Training and Courses.....	6-7
Our Programs.....	8-9
Acknowledgment.....	10
Funders.....	11

ABOUT THE BCLSS

Did you know that British Columbia has **386,049 lakes** (Freshwater Atlas, 2008)? They are one of our most valuable resources as they provide drinking water, habitat for fish and wildlife, energy, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, and connection to the natural world. These beneficial uses of lakes are of fundamental importance to the environment and to the well-being of communities. Our vision is clean, healthy lakes throughout BC.

The BC Lake Stewardship Society is dedicated to strengthening the stewardship sector to ensure the preservation and protection of British Columbia's lakes.

The BCLSS promotes stewardship and understanding of lakes, reservoirs, and watersheds and provides information, training, and resources to concerned citizens. Our programs empower volunteers throughout BC to take action and steward their local lakes. Protecting lakes also means protecting watersheds which we will be able to support through our new watershed monitoring and assessment module.

The BCLSS aims to further expand and strengthen the provincial network of lake stewards by participating in community events, meeting with school groups, providing workshops, and hosting conferences.

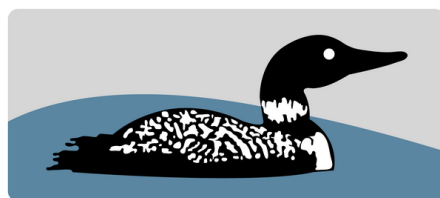
The BCLSS respectfully acknowledges that the lake stewardship activities of our staff, directors, and volunteers take place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded lands of First Nations Peoples throughout British Columbia. We recognize that Indigenous Peoples have stewarded these lands and waters for generations and we are grateful to the Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, and youth that implement their knowledge and traditional laws to preserve water and life for the benefit of all. We have been excited to work with and learn from various First Nation Guardians throughout the province.



BCLSS

THE 2024-2025 FISCAL YEAR AT A GLANCE

- BCLSS managed all BC Lake Stewardship and Monitoring Program Level 1 programs while program partner, BC Ministry of Environment and Parks, managed all Level 2 & 3 programs.
- Delivered four 3-day Lake Ecology and Monitoring Certification courses, a new addition to our training programs.
- Expanded BCLSS training options offered with the creation of a Watershed Monitoring and Assessment module to complement LakeKeepers training.
- Expanded our First Nations LakeKeepers Program through various partnerships.
- Welcomed new members, volunteers, and newsletter recipients.
- July was proclaimed as Lakes Appreciation Month for the 5th year in a row and we continued to facilitate the annual Secchi Dip-In for BC.



BCLSS

APRIL 1, 2024-MARCH 31, 2025

HIGHLIGHTS

35

Level 1 lakes monitored
by volunteers under
the BC Lake
Stewardship &
Monitoring Program

7

LakeKeepers
Workshops delivered

27

Volunteer Quality
Control Checks

19

Lakes visited in-
person by BCLSS staff
and contractors

16

Introductory limnology
and lake specific training
sessions delivered

35

Secchi Dip-In
readings on

27
lakes

4

Lake Ecology and
Monitoring Training
and Certification
Courses delivered

853

Monthly
newsletter
subscribers

6

Year 3, peer
reviewed Lake
Reports written

14

Educational
posts

8

Year 1, lake data
summary
reports written

1

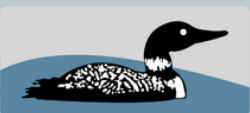
New Watershed
Monitoring and
Assesment Module
developed

BCLSS TRAINING AND COURSES



We offer a range of training and course options!

From a 1 hour basic monitoring and lake overview to an intensive 3 day lake ecology and monitoring certification course. We have flexible training options for all skill levels and budgets!



BCLSS

LAKE ECOLOGY & MONITORING COURSE

3 DAY COURSE

The BCLSS Lake Ecology and Monitoring Course was created for environmental professionals. The course provides an in-depth overview of lake monitoring and lake ecology. Participants are assessed on their knowledge of the material presented throughout the course through study questions and a final quiz. Participants also need to demonstrate field proficiency with the sampling procedures covered in the course. A certificate is issued upon successful completion of the course.

LAKEKEEPERS

1.5 DAY WORKSHOP



The BCLSS LakeKeepers training course provides participants with a greater understanding of lake ecology and health. Human impacts to watersheds and lakes are also covered. This knowledge increases the ability of citizens to steward their lakes, as they are equipped with a better understanding of the watershed and potential land-use impacts.

Regionally based LakeKeepers courses also create peer-to-peer learning opportunities through networking and can address issues and concerns specific to the location.

The workshop consists of one day in class that includes hands on training to use lake monitoring equipment, followed by one – half day at a lake where participants apply a variety of lake ecology and water quality monitoring techniques.

BCLSS TRAINING AND COURSES CONT.

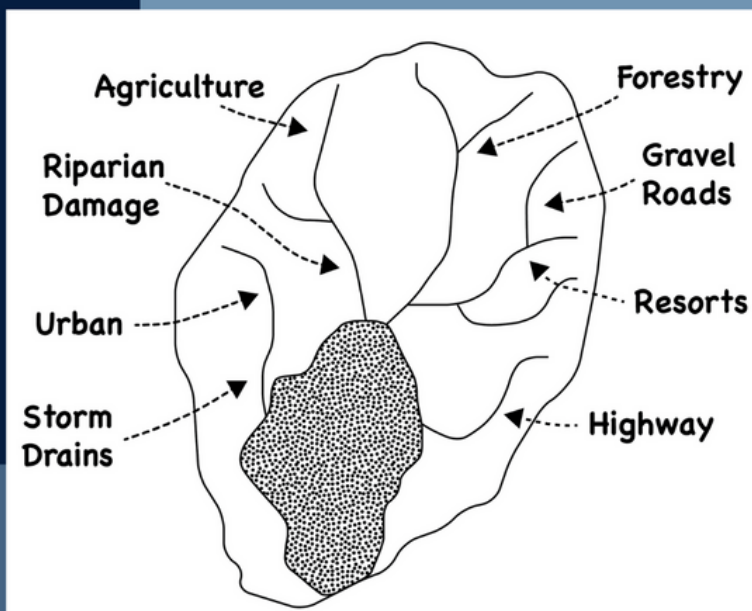


BCLSS is pleased to announce a great addition to the training courses we offer. We have developed a module to supplement our training courses that covers the basics of initiating a watershed monitoring program, with the additional goal of conducting a watershed assessment. The course content is particularly applicable to understanding the effects of nonpoint (diffuse) sources of pollution on water quality. This information is essential for assessing the current state of water quality and ultimately for the development of a watershed management plan.

This training is a half-day complement to the LakeKeepers training, intended to provide participants with guidance for watershed monitoring and assessment. However, it can serve as a complement to any of the training BCLSS offers. It also has sufficient scope to be presented as a stand alone 1 day course for those wanting more in depth training in this aspect of environmental assessment.



Non-Point Source Pollution



- Runoff from diffuse sources – no single point of impact
- Sources can add up to result in a cumulative impact to the lake downstream

If your group or organization is interested in receiving this training, please contact the BCLSS office at info@bclss.org.

This project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through the federal Canada Water Agency.

BCLSS PROGRAMS

First Nations LakeKeepers Program

The BC Lake Stewardship Society is pleased to report on our on-going First Nations Lake Stewardship & Monitoring Training Program (First Nations LakeKeepers). See above for details on our 1.5 Day LakeKeepers Workshops. In the 2024-25 Fiscal Year our LakeKeepers workshops were enthusiastically received by the Xaxli'p, P'egP'ig'Lha, Xwisten, Tsalalh, Esk'etenc, Lake Babine, Simpcw, Williams Lake First Nation, the Cheam and the Skwah.



There is strong interest among many First Nations who have established or are starting Guardian Programs. "This was an awesome course. Instructors were awesome and helpful. I would recommend this course to others who want to know more about the land," said Foster Thom, a Tsalalh Lands Guardian.

BCLSS has been honored to provide this training and learn from the participants as well! Read 2024 highlights from the First Nations LakeKeepers Program [here](#). Anyone interested in the BCLSS First Nations LakeKeepers Program can contact the BCLSS office at info@bclss.org.

BC Lake Stewardship and Monitoring Program

Good water quality is important for aquatic life and wildlife that rely on lakes for food and habitat, and to people, who use lakes for drinking water, fishing, boating, swimming, other recreational uses, and for the natural beauty they offer. There is an increasing need for individuals and groups throughout the province to take on a greater role in stewardship activities and water quality monitoring as citizen scientists. Collection of lake data by citizen scientists is important for the protection of lake water quality. Volunteer-collected data provides valuable baseline and background information, that helps us examine and understand what is happening in aquatic environments and observe long term trends.



The BCLSS and the BC Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) recognize the importance of citizen science and assists individuals and local groups with taking on a greater role in caring for lakes through the BC Lake Stewardship and Monitoring Program (BCLSMP). This program was launched in 2003, in partnership between BCLSS, the Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV), and volunteers.

Under the BCLSMP, volunteers are provided with training, equipment, and support to facilitate the collection of water quality data and observations from lakes in BC. The program is unique in that it gives dedicated volunteers the knowledge and tools to become stewards of their favourite lake. It also promotes community-based involvement and extensive collaboration efforts.

BC Lake Stewardship Engagement Initiative



The BC Lake Stewardship Society recognizes the increased need to focus on education and communication to advance stewardship throughout the province. The BC Lake Stewardship Engagement Initiative (BCLSEI) is an educational program developed in 2019 to improve the capacity of lake stewards and to complement our other well-established programs and services.

The 2018 the Integrated Lake Monitoring Framework outlined the need to expand and enhance the volunteer lake stewardship sector and also verified that the sector required more training and diverse support. The BCLSS aims to fulfill the needs identified of the volunteer lake stewardship sector through the BC Lake Stewardship Engagement Initiative (BCLSEI), an educational program offered through meetings, presentations, and workshops.

The diverse activities of this program is based on the needs and requests of communities being visited and can include general lake science, information on lake stewardship and citizen science, general support and advice for lake stewards, increasing awareness on lake related issues such as aquatic plants and invasive mussels, and assistance with operating a stewardship group, including information on fundraising. The BCLSEI can be adapted to incorporate more technical components such as procedural and safety training for lake monitoring and auditing of monitoring to ensure high quality data is being collected.



The Annual Secchi Dip-In



The Secchi Dip-In takes place during Lakes Appreciation Month, July 1st to 31st. This is an international effort of the North American Lake Management Society during which volunteers collect a snapshot of the water quality in their local lake. Volunteers from across North America have participated in this event for over twenty-five years, gathering important environmental information about their lakes. The BCLSS has been a collaborator of this event in BC since 2002!

THANK YOU

to our members and volunteers

The BCLSS Board of Directors and staff are grateful for our members and volunteers that support our society and are committed to their local lakes. We recognize the time and effort you put into being citizen scientists, advocates, and educators at your local lakes.

We welcome new volunteers, members, and partners to join our growing stewardship network, so that we can continue to strive towards the shared vision of clean, healthy lakes throughout British Columbia.





BCLSS

THANK YOU

to our 2024-2025 fiscal
year funders!

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of:

- The Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Environment and Parks
- The Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- The Canada Water Agency through the Fraser River Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative
- The BC Conservation and Biodiversity Awards
- Our generous individual donors and sponsors!

We must conceive stewardship not simply one individual's practice, but rather as the mutual and intimate relationship extending across the generations, between a human community and its place on earth. John Elder.