



Step to It

FRASER VALLEY

AGASSIZ

HABITAT HEALERS AMBASSADOR TEAM

2023



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PROGRAM SCHEDULE



HAIG HIGHWAY INTRODUCTION AND PLANTING EVENT

Join us for an introduction to the Habitat Healers program and the Haig Highway planting site, along with planting 100 trees and shrubs.

Date: Saturday, April 8, 2023

Location: Agassiz Rec Centre and Haig Highway Planting Site

Instructor: Jon Blais, Fraser Valley Conservancy



REVIEWING STEWARDSHIP GOALS & TASKS

In this meeting, we'll go over what it will look like for our dedicated Habitat Healer team to steward the Haig Highway planting site to ensure it stays beautiful and well-maintained.

Date: Thursday, April 27, 2023

Location: Zoom

Instructor: Andrea Sadowski, Fraser Valley Conservancy



NATURE STEWARDSHIP SCHOOL: STEWARDSHIP 101

Learn what it means to responsibly steward the environment and practical stewardship strategies you can undertake in your everyday lives.

Date: Tuesday, May 23, 2023

Location: Friendship House, 7272 Morrow Road

Instructor: Aleesha Switzer and Tamsin Baker from the Fraser Valley Conservancy



INVASIVE PLANTS 101

Environmental professionals will join us to share what types of invasive plants are common to the Fraser Valley, and how we can effectively manage sites that contain these species and how to prevent them from spreading.

Date: Saturday, June 10, 2023

Location: TBD

Instructor: Fraser Valley Invasive Species Society and the Invasive Species Council of BC



INDIGENOUS PRESENCE AND HISTORY IN THE FRASER VALLEY

At this eye-opening workshop, learn about the peoples who have been inhabiting the Fraser Valley since time immemorial.

Date: July 2023

Location: TBD

Instructor: TBD



NATURE WALK-AND-TALK

Join us for an afternoon of exploring success stories in Agassiz by looking at different properties that are healthy habitats for all life forms.

Date: August 2023

Location: TBD

Instructor: TBD



SITE MAINTENANCE DAY

During this work party, we'll be picking up litter and removing invasive plants to prepare the planting site to welcome hundreds of new plants.

Date: September 2023

Location: Haig Highway planting site

Instructor: Jon Blais (Fraser Valley Conservancy)



POTENTIAL PLANTING PROJECT

(In development) Come help us plant more native trees and shrubs and continue to find ways to support habitat along the Haig Highway walking trail. More details to come soon!

Date: October 2023

Location: Haig Highway planting site

Instructor: Jon Blais (Fraser Valley Conservancy)



GRADUATION PARTY!

Come to party and celebrate the hard work done by the team in maintaining and expanding this planting project! During this potluck we will be discussing what the program will look like moving forward.

Date: November 2023

Location: Agassiz Rec Centre

HAIG HIGHWAY



The Haig Highway project was the first native plant installation done by the Step to It program in November of 2022. A dedicated volunteer team helped put more than 400 plants in the ground after months of meetings. This site was chosen because of an abundance of native plants here adds aesthetic value to the walking path that runs along the highway and provides habitat and a food source for local birds and wildlife.

The Fraser Valley Conservancy, in partnership with the District of Kent, plan to expand the planting project further along this walking trail to create a tree canopy, providing shade and shelter for so many.

THE HABITAT HEALERS AMBASSADOR TEAM

The Habitat Healers Ambassador Program is meant to give Agassiz residents the knowledge, tools, and support needed to maintain and enhance the Haig Highway planting project, ensuring it becomes a thriving and resilient ecosystem for generations to come. This program is for experienced naturalists and curious community members alike, who want a happier and healthier community.



STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES:

Removing invasive species and litter from the area to keep the site aesthetically pleasing for all residents to enjoy.

Planting native trees and shrubs to continue enhancing the ecological values of this site.

Monitoring the site for bird and wildlife usage and enhancement of the site for the species who call it home.

Establishing interpretive areas, including signage, a native plant display garden, and murals by local artists.

The Habitat Healers Ambassador Program will provide residents with free training and workshops to learn the ins and outs of how to maintain and steward the planting site. The Fraser Valley Conservancy and Step to It program will continue to support community leaders who will maintain this site for years to come.



**FRASER VALLEY
CONSERVANCY**

The Fraser Valley Conservancy (FVC) has been protecting and preserving natural habitats in the Fraser Valley since 1998. The FVC is a local land trust focusing on environmental conservation and community education. The FVC has a variety of programs that aim to conserve habitat and protect wildlife across the Fraser Valley, partnering with residents to protect this beautiful and diverse region.



The Step to It Program is a community engagement program that aims to get a broader audience interested in and involved with habitat restoration in their backyards and neighbourhoods. We do this by providing free workshops, training, and resources to any community member who is interested.

Our Mission

To create engaged communities across the Fraser Valley by providing the knowledge, tools, and support needed to replenish and restore the natural areas that surround them.

Our Vision

Communities learn and work together to conserve thriving and resilient ecosystems in the Fraser Valley, providing clean air, water, soil, and habitats for all.

WORKSHOP INFORMATION

Disclaimer: For all on-site workshops and work parties, participants are required to wear closed-toed shoes, long pants, and long sleeves. We will be removing invasive species, like the Himalayan blackberry, that have thorns. We will provide participants with all other necessary equipment, like gloves, pruners, and litter grabbers. We will also make sure there is lots of drinking water and snacks for participants. However, there are no restrooms at Windebank Creek, so please plan accordingly.

HAIG HIGHWAY INTRODUCTION AND PLANTING EVENT

Instructor: Jon Blais, The Fraser Valley Conservancy

Date: Saturday, April 8, 2023

Overview: This information session will teach you all about what the Habitat Healers program is; why do we exist, what are our goals, and how can you get involved? After this presentation, we will be moving to the Haig Highway planting site, where our Habitat Enhancement Coordinator, Jon, will introduce you to the plants that have already been planted at our last event in November. Then, you will get your hands dirty by helping us plant 100 more native trees and shrubs on the site after a short planting demonstration.

Gear: Closed-toed shoes, long pants, your questions about the program.



Jon is the Habitat Enhancement Coordinator at the Fraser Valley Conservancy. His ability to tirelessly eradicate invasive plants by hand and spot the elusive egg masses of the endangered Oregon Spotted Frog, has made him an invaluable member of the FVC's conservation team. His years of experience as a gardener, landscaper and general plant enthusiast are now being used to help our local ecosystems

REVIEWING STEWARDSHIP GOALS & TASKS

Instructor: Andrea Sadowski, The Fraser Valley Conservancy

Date: Thursday, April 27, 2023

Overview: During this online meeting we will be reviewing the stewardship plan for the Haig Highway planting site and what we need team members to do to maintain this site to keep it looking aesthetically pleasing and ensure that the plants are growing big and strong.



Andrea joined the FVC in 2022 as the Step to It Project coordinator. She has extensive experience with community engagement and communications projects through her work as Editor-in-Chief of The Cascade newspaper. She graduated from the University of the Fraser Valley in 2022 with a BA in Global Development Studies. She has almost 10 years of experience working for a variety of non-profits, both locally and internationally.

NATURE STEWARDSHIP SCHOOL: STEWARDSHIP 101

Instructors: Aleesha Switzer and Tamsin Baker,
The Fraser Valley Conservancy

Date: Tuesday, May 23, 2023

Overview: Stewardship is such a huge concept. During this fun and educational workshop, two conservation experts will unpack what it means to responsibly steward the environment and practical stewardship strategies participants can undertake in their everyday lives. Pizza will be served before the workshop starts.

Gear: A willingness to learn and all the burning nature questions you can think of!



Aleesha is a Project Biologist at the Fraser Valley Conservancy, where she has been helping save threatened amphibians since 2010. She has helped develop and supervise a wide range of FVC's programs including the Oregon Spotted Frog, Bradner-Mount Lehman Neighborhood, Frog Finders, and Step to It programs. Aleesha is a Registered Professional Biologist (RPBio) with the College of Applied Biology.



Tamsin is the Stewardship Coordinator at the Fraser Valley Conservancy, where she runs the Nature Stewards and Nature Stewardship School programs and provides support for the FVC's land conservation, species at risk recovery, and partnership building programs. She is a nature stewardship specialist with over 20 years of land conservation experience in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley.

INVASIVE SPECIES 101

Instructors: Kathy Green, Fraser Valley Invasive Species Society and Allison McCabe, Invasive Species Council of BC

Date: Saturday, June 10

Overview: Join us for an interactive presentation with invasive species experts who will talk about invasives from a local and a broader provincial perspective, as well as give you ways to get involved with the work they do! After the classroom portion, we'll do a little walk-and-talk to practise identifying local invasive species. You'll also learn different management options and considerations for invasive species.

Gear: All your invasive species questions and good walking shoes.



Kathy is the Executive Director for the Fraser Valley Invasive Species Society, first joining the organization in 2016. Kathy graduated from Simon Fraser University with a BSc in Physical Geography (Biogeophysical Sciences) and a minor in Environmental Education. She comes from a background in environmental and agricultural integrated pest management. Even when not working, Kathy still spends most of her time wandering around with her dog looking at plants.



Allison is the Senior Lead of outreach at the Invasive Species Council of BC. She is excited about all things living (but especially botanical and amphibian). She is a biology educator and experienced environmental project coordinator skilled in horticulture science; environmental, biodiversity, and climate change policy; green infrastructure & watershed management; and decolonizing education.

STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING WORKSHOPS!

MEET OUR TEAM



Andrea Sadowski
Step to It
Program Coordinator

Andrea is the force behind the Step to It program, which works towards getting Fraser Valley residents more engaged in climate action in their everyday lives.

When she is not sending copious amounts of emails you can find her exploring the forest with her dog, tending to her patio garden, or cooking delicious plant-based meals.



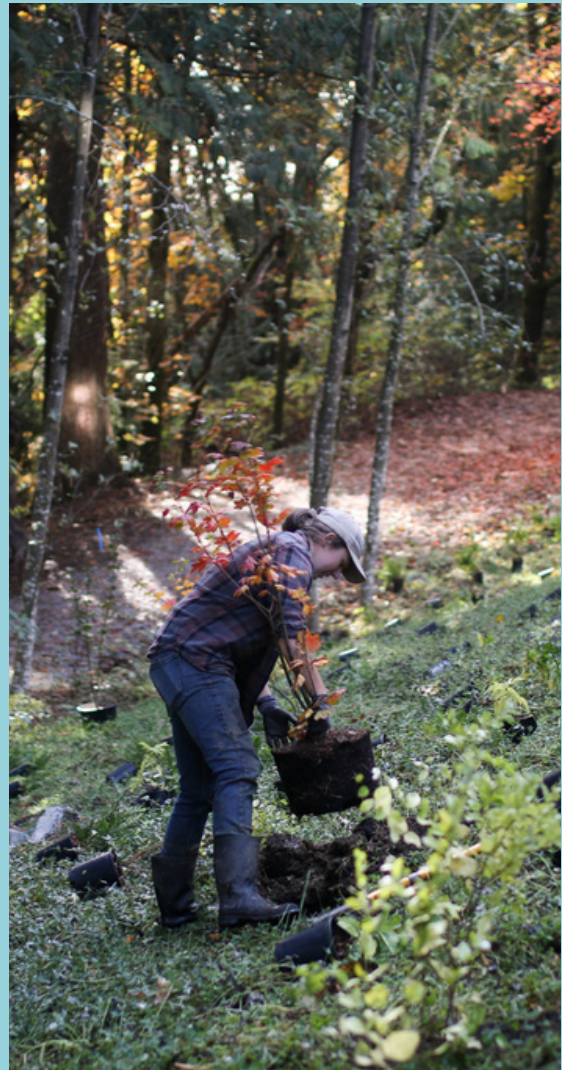
Patricia Fantillo
Coordinator of
Volunteers

Patricia is the Coordinator of Volunteers for the FVC, a herbalist, and forever a student of nature.

Patricia's love for plants began in her great grandmothers garden when Patricia was a little girl. As an adult, she has her own garden and grows herbs, vegetables, fruit, and native species.

Patricia has completed two courses at BCIT on native plant identification and soil assessment. She is currently studying herbal medicine with Commonwealth Centre for Holistic Herbalism and at Evolutionary Herbalism. Her passion for plants, the earth, and need to help people are intertwined.

WANT TO JOIN THE TEAM?



RSVP TO UPCOMING EVENTS ON OUR WEBSITE, OR GET IN CONTACT WITH THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR, ANDREA, FOR ALL QUESTIONS!

WEBSITE fraservalleyconservancy.ca/programs/habitat-healers

EMAIL andrea@fraservalleyconservancy.ca

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