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**METRO VANCOUVER LEVERAGES LEGACY GIFT FOR REGIONAL PARK IMPROVEMENTS
PACIFIC PARKLANDS FOUNDATION AWARDS FIVE GRANTS TO VOLUNTEER PARK ASSOCIATIONS**

Metro Vancouver launches the George Ross Legacy Stewardship Program, a funding program created to support hands-on citizen stewardship projects by park partners in Metro Vancouver Regional Parks. Administered by the Pacific Parklands Foundation, a registered charity that raises funds to support Metro Vancouver's Regional Parks, the program is funded by the interest from a generous endowment created by George Ross.

George Ross, a park lover and long-time resident of Burnaby, passed away in 2012 and left a bequest of \$2.8 million dollars to fund stewardship activities in Metro Vancouver Regional Parks.

"Mr. Ross was a true visionary for our parks and, by leaving a gift in his will to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, he created a timeless legacy for our regional park system," said David Pohl, President of the Pacific Parklands Foundation. "His generosity will have a ripple effect throughout our park system for generations to come, allowing us to provide volunteer associations with the financial support they need to help protect and preserve our regional parks."

The grants range from \$3,000 to \$10,000, and total more than \$30,000 from the newly established George Ross Legacy Grant Fund for volunteer-led stewardship activities in the regional parks such as restoring ecosystems and planting native species.

"Metro Vancouver applauds the integral role of the Pacific Parklands Foundation in administering the George Ross Legacy Stewardship Program, and the extraordinary contributions to enhance our regional parks made by Regional Park Associations," said Heather Deal, Chair of Metro Vancouver's Regional Parks Committee. "These dedicated groups of volunteers work hard, year in and year out, quietly undertaking the work of enhancing our regional parks for the benefit of everyone."

In the 2016 inaugural grant cycle, five Regional Park Associations were awarded grants:

- Burnaby Lake Park Association: North Avalon Restoration (\$4,000)
- Campbell Valley Equestrian Society: Northwest Perimeter Trail Buffer Planting (\$3,500)
- Campbell Valley Park Association: Perimeter Trail Wetland Phase 2 Planting (\$10,000)
- Colony Farm Park Association: Sheep Paddock Riparian Planting (\$3,000)
- Kanaka Education and Environmental Partnership Society: Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre Phase 3 Constructed Wetland Planting (\$10,000)

About Pacific Parklands Foundation (www.pacificparklands.com)

Founded in 2000, Pacific Parklands Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of Metro Vancouver's regional parks. There are 23 regional parks covering more than 10,000

square hectares. In 2015, 11.3 million visitors experienced the natural beauty of British Columbia through the parks system.

While ongoing maintenance and day to day operations of regional parks are publicly funded, Pacific Parklands Foundation actively raises funds to expand and improve the parks in ways that go beyond the basic necessities. Working together with government, businesses, community leaders, other non-profit organizations and groups, and individuals, The Pacific Parklands Foundation works to make our regional park system the best that it can be, now and for future generations.

About The Park Partnership Program

The Park Partnership Program is a way for community volunteers and Metro Vancouver Regional Parks staff to work together to promote and protect the system of regional parks. Together, these partners facilitate opportunities for all citizens to enjoy, shape and contribute to stewardship, conservation, education and recreation in regional parks.

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Metro Vancouver is a partnership of 21 municipalities, one Electoral Area and one Treaty First Nation that collaboratively plans for and delivers regional-scale services. Its core services are drinking water, wastewater treatment and solid waste management. Metro Vancouver also regulates air quality, plans for urban growth, manages a regional parks system and provides affordable housing. The regional district is governed by a Board of Directors of elected officials from each local authority.