

BC Small Wetlands Association

With funding from the Natural Resource Canada “Two Billion Trees by 2030” initiative, the BC Small Wetlands Association (BCSWA) and the Switzmalph Cultural Society provides tree planting events in school grounds, on Reserve, along walking trails and in public parks. BCSWA supplies trees through Sagebrush Nursery in Oliver, from a few trees to groves of 215 to honor the children of Kamloops Industrial Residential School. BCSWA collaborates with SD#83 indigenous support workers and Secwepemc Elders to create Reconciliation in Action events that include ceremony and education on the cultural uses of the trees, based on the traditional knowledge of Secwepemc Elder Dr. Mary Thomas. Mary’s sister was one of the missing children of KIRS. An invitation to plant trees went out in January 2022 to every school principal and indigenous support worker in School District 83 and a number of schools are planning planting and Reconciliation in Action events for Earth Day, including:

April 20 - Carlin Elementary Middle School: planting 78 trees, a mix of conifers to help filter dust and pollution from the highway and deciduous to act as a noise barrier. Elders from Little Shuswap Band will participate in a ceremony.

April 21 - Sorrento Elementary (an HCTF wild school) in partnership with the Sorrento Centre: planting 50 deciduous trees and 10 shrubs. Bonnie Thomas, daughter of Mary Thomas, is participating in the ceremony and helping to make interpretive signage.

April 22 - Len Wood Middle (an HCTF wild school): planting a mix of 170 trees and shrubs at Pleasant Valley Wetland Heritage Park.

April 22 - Falkland Elementary: planting 7 trees for Earth Day and a larger event planned for fall.

April 22 - Salmon Arm West (an HCTF wild school): planting 24 trees, a mix of conifers and deciduous, on school grounds.

April 22 – A.L. Fortune Secondary: Reconciliation in Action event planting 215 trees, a mix of conifers and deciduous, on the Enderby Rail Trail in collaboration with Splats’in and with Secwepemc Elders and dignitaries participating in a ceremony.

April 22 – Armstrong Elementary: planting 2 large deciduous trees with ceremony and commemorative plaque.

April 25 - North Shuswap Elementary: planting 60 deciduous trees on school grounds for bio diversification.

April 25 – Pleasant Valley Secondary: planting 25 trees along the fence and trail

Fall planting - Highland Park Elementary: 215 trees

Events will include education surrounding the benefit of trees, including:

- Creating habitat, food, nesting areas for a host of critters
- Providing study areas, shade, wind breaks and opportunities for family recreation (making school grounds educational)
- Creating carbon absorbing "machines". A single tree produces 260 lbs. of oxygen per year and absorbs 48 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year.
- Improving aesthetics on school grounds.
- Creating HOPE and a feeling of doing something positive for the environment.