yiyχmɛštəm qʷaqʷtəm
Willow Creek Stewardship

July 24, 2026

Xʷɛmaɬkʷu Signs Onto Greenways Land Trust's Letter to MP Aaron Gunn

On July 22nd, Greenways Land Trust sent a letter to North Island-Powell River MP Aaron Gunn, seeking his support in maintaining and strengthening federal salmon stewardship funding programs delivered through Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Xʷɛmaɬkʷu Chief Darren Blaney was a signatory to the letter, along with other organizations and partners.

These federal funding programs – such as the ones Homalco has utilized for our own yiyχmɛštəm qʷaqʷtəm Willow Creek Stewardship work – enable communities to continue the important work of undertaking community-led salmon habitat restoration, monitoring, community engagement, and public education.

Thank you to Greenways Land Trust and all the fellow signatories for advocating for community-led salmon stewardship!

The full letter, including the full list of signatories, can be read on the following pages.

Learn more about the Willow Creek Stewardship Project here

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The Honourable Aaron Gunn, MP
North Island—Powell River

July 22, 2026

Dear Mr. Gunn,

Re: The Economic Value of Community Salmon Stewardship Funding

I am writing on behalf of Greenways Land Trust regarding the importance of continued federal investment in community-based salmon stewardship programs delivered through Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

For nearly 30 years, Greenways has coordinated salmon stewardship, habitat restoration, monitoring, volunteer engagement, and public education initiatives throughout the Campbell River region. In doing so, we work closely with local governments, local First Nations, Fisheries and Oceans Canada staff, stewardship groups, community organizations, volunteers, and funding partners to deliver meaningful outcomes for salmon and the communities that depend on them.

While stewardship funding is often viewed through an environmental lens, its economic value is equally significant.

Community stewardship programs represent one of the most cost-effective investments government can make. Modest federal contributions are leveraged into substantial public benefits through volunteer labour, local employment, partnerships, and additional funding sources. Last fiscal year alone, Greenways volunteers contributed more than $41,000 worth of labour to stewardship activities. Those volunteer contributions supported salmon monitoring, habitat restoration, public education, debris removal, and community engagement activities that would otherwise require government staff or contracted services.

Stewardship organizations also generate economic activity within their communities. Federal investments support local employment, youth workforce development, contractors, equipment suppliers, training opportunities, and community capacity. Greenways is grateful for the recent support received through the Canada Summer Jobs program, which will enable four local youth to gain meaningful work experience while contributing to stewardship and community projects. Programs such as Canada Summer

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Jobs and DFO stewardship funding work together to build local skills, create employment opportunities, and deliver measurable value for taxpayers.

Beyond direct economic benefits, stewardship funding helps reduce future costs. Community organizations provide ongoing monitoring, habitat maintenance, volunteer coordination, and rapid-response capacity that help identify and address issues before they become larger and more expensive challenges. This preventative approach protects the natural infrastructure that supports fisheries, tourism, recreation, Indigenous food systems, and coastal economies throughout British Columbia.

Greenways also hosts a monthly stewardship table that brings together local First Nations, Fisheries and Oceans Canada staff, the City of Campbell River, stewardship volunteers, community organizations, and funding partners. **This collaborative forum improves communication, reduces duplication of effort, and helps ensure that limited public resources are used efficiently.**

At a time when governments are focused on fiscal responsibility and value for taxpayers, community stewardship programs continue to demonstrate an exceptional return on investment. They mobilize volunteers, create local employment, leverage additional funding, support salmon-dependent economies, and deliver services that would cost substantially more if undertaken directly by government.

We respectfully ask for your support in maintaining and strengthening federal stewardship funding programs that enable communities to continue this important work. These programs are not simply environmental expenditures; they are strategic investments in local economies, community capacity, and the long-term sustainability of British Columbia's salmon resources.

Thank you for your consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the impact and value of community stewardship programs with you further.

Sincerely,

K Lavoie

Katharine Lavoie
Executive Director
Greenways Land Trust

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The following organizations, partners, and community members support the contents of this letter:

Organization	**Representative**	**Signature**
Campbell River Environmental Committee	Leona Adams, Vice President	Leona Adams
Quadra Island Salmon Enhancement Society	Board of Directors	*see attachment
Quadra Island Climate Action Network Water Security Team	Claire Hemingway, PhD, and Colin Chapman, PhD	*see attachment
Astraea Consulting Ltd.	Arin Yeomans-Routledge, RPBio	Arin Yeomans-Routledge
Willow & Kingfisher Creek Volunteer Streamkeeper	Chuck DeSorcy	
Caddisfly Creek Volunteer Streamkeeper	Greg Roberts	Greg Roberts
Wei Wai Kum Guardians	Blair Billard	Blair Billard BSc. Wei Wai Kum Guardian Manager.
Homalco First Nation	Chief Darren Blaney, Xʷɛmaɬkʷu	

We are pleased to support this letter written by Greenways to MP Aaron Gunn.

Claire Hemingway, PhD, Quadra Island Climate Action Network, Water Security Team

Colin Chapman, PhD, Quadra Island Climate Action Network, Water Security Team

Quadra Island Salmon Enhancement Society Board of Directors