

**Chip Wilson's Foundation continues its land conservancy efforts through \$6 Million donation to The Nature Trust of BC to re-naturalize and enhance the Englishman River Estuary and to create public access nature park**

*Donation marks a critical step to re-naturalize and restore the tidal flow of the estuary.*



*Englishman River, located in Parksville on Vancouver Island*

**VANCOUVER, B.C., September 16** (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) - The Wilson 5 Foundation has doubled down on its pledge to protect and conserve critical habitats of Southwestern British Columbia through its latest donation to The Nature Trust of BC. The \$6 Million gift will allow The Nature Trust of BC to purchase Mariner Way in Parksville, a 2.8-hectare in-fill property at the mouth of the iconic Englishman River on Vancouver Island.

The Englishman River is located in the Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone, which is B.C.'s most endangered zone and a top conservation priority for The Nature Trust of BC. Since the late 1800s, its estuary has been impacted by dikes, roads, residential and industrial development. Today, portions of the estuary are almost completely cut off from natural tidal, river and nearshore processes and has become less accessible for fish and wildlife that would normally use these habitats to shelter, feed and rear their young.

The land acquisition is a critical step to re-naturalize and restore the tidal flow of the estuary and ultimately enhance the ecosystem function of the entire river. Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, The Nature Trust of BC has secured 500 conservation properties, including nine properties along the Englishman River. The Nature Trust of BC now owns 67.4 hectares in the estuary and has successfully conserved 244.3 hectares along the Englishman River.

Through the addition of the open-air Wilson Nature Park and pavilion at the Mariner Way estuary site near Parksville, the Wilson Family remains steadfast in developing and preserving open, everlasting, beautiful parks available to everyone to encourage exploration and movement.

"Conservation of land is important to us, not only as a family, but as British Columbians who care deeply about preserving land for all to enjoy for generations to come," says Foundation Co-Founder, Summer Wilson. "We are thrilled to partner with The Nature Trust of BC to support the Englishman River and Salish Sea and to create a dedicated park accessible to everyone to explore nature, birdwatch and exercise."

"We are honoured to receive this generous donation from the Wilson 5 Foundation," says Jasper Lament, CEO of The Nature Trust of British Columbia. "This donation moves the needle for the restoration of the Englishman River. It means that migrating salmon will be able to reach an expanded estuary that flows more freely into the Salish Sea."

The donation made by the founders of lululemon and current owners of Arc'teryx, Chip and Summer Wilson and their five sons will directly impact the Englishman River's ecosystem and marks the largest land conservancy gift made by the Wilson 5 Foundation to date. In June 2021, the Wilson 5 Foundation donated \$4 Million to the BC Parks Foundation to protect, forever, West Ballenas Island, Saturnina Island and 250 acres of waterfront on Lasqueti Island in support of the threatened Salish Sea ecosystem. Over the last decade, they have gifted two iconic art installations to the City of Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale: *A-maze-ing Laughter* in English Bay and the *TransAm Totem* in False Creek. Together, Chip and Summer also founded imagine1day in 2007 so that "by 2030, all Ethiopian children will have access to quality education free of foreign aid" that has built over 75 primary and secondary schools in Ethiopia benefiting over 265,000 Ethiopian children annually.

#### **About the Wilson 5 Foundation**

Creating amazing places for British Columbians. Our goal is to make a lasting contribution to Vancouver and Southwestern British Columbia by supporting land conservancy, parks, and public art to encourage recreation and movement. Learn more at [www.wilson5foundation.org](http://www.wilson5foundation.org).

#### **About The Nature Trust of British Columbia**

The Nature Trust of British Columbia has a 50-year history as a leading non-profit land conservation organization. We acquire and care for our province's most critical natural habitats for vulnerable wildlife and plants. Since 1971, we have protected more than 178,000 acres (72,000 hectares) of ecologically significant land with our partners. Learn more at [www.naturetrust.bc.ca](http://www.naturetrust.bc.ca).

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