

# Stories about Connecting People to Nature



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# Opening ceremony

Wood, stone, feather and bone

Roar of the ocean guide us home (x2)

Wolf and Raven, Wolf and Raven

In my soul, in my soul

# Where we're going today...

- Applied Research Project – the plan
- What really happened
- Story telling as a research method
- The stories
- What we can learn from the stories about connecting people to Nature



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# The research plan

- Give some legs to Goal 3 in the Recreation Framework
- Earth shattering is overrated -- Share small ideas and stories that contribute to connecting people and nature – small but mighty...and doable
- February – May 2017
- Call for stories, email communique and snapshot presentation at BCRPA conference
- Collect stories from Recreation Practitioners
- Publish them on the Healthy in Nature website (BCRPA)

# Story telling as a research method

- Harness the power of story telling to help increase knowledge, understanding and momentum within community recreation.
- Facts and figures matter but stories are what people instantly connect with.
- Learning through real experiences is how we experience and understand the world.
- There is power in telling a true story.

# Your turn...

- Find a partner
- Rock, paper, scissors to see who goes first
- Share a story about a recent connecting to nature experience (2 min each)
- Hold those two stories in your head

# What I thought was going to happen...

- Track down the stories like an investigative journalist
- Edit, rewrite the stories
- Post the stories on the website



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*in nature*

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A collection of stories from recreation professionals about how they connect people to nature.



RESEARCH and BENEFITS

PUBLIC PLANNING

PROGRAMMING

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDES

PROMOTING HEALTHY IN  
NATURE

#### Welcome to the BCRPA Healthy in Nature website!

This site has been developed specifically for parks and recreation practitioners and offers resources and materials to support your Healthy in Nature activities and initiatives.

It also provides a platform for you to [collaborate online](#) with others involved with the Healthy in Nature movement.

Some key features of the site include the ability to:



# What really happened

- People emailed me stories
- They were posted “as is” – in the story teller’s voice
- They were diverse and interesting
- They were small and big

# Snapshot of the stories

- 22 stories in total
- 14 Urban / 8 rural
- All ages of participants in stories
- Types of Programs
- Who submitted? – programmer level or managers

The Stories.....

and what we can learn from them..

# Connecting to Nature benefits any age

- From nature preschools in [West Shore Parks and Recreation](#) and [Terra Nova Nature School in Richmond](#)
- to [middle school youth in Victoria](#)
- to the [Baby and Me hiking group in North Vancouver and Coquitlam](#) and the
- [Seniors Garden Club in Burnaby](#) and [Walking Group in Powell River](#)  
– People at every age and stage in their lives benefit from connecting to nature.

# Connecting to Nature builds community

- The [Community gardens project, adopt a walkway, and neighborhood events in Campbell River](#) grow community.
- Surrey is working to [connect people to their parks](#) and create community.
- [Bird Week](#) partners with many smaller community organizations to create a community that is bird-engaged.
- [Cameron's summer camp](#) worked with community stakeholders to bring nature and environmental awareness to the camp.
- The [Baby and Me hiking group](#) grows a community of parents in nature –
- and in Cowichan Valley the [Lake to Lake walk and Marathon](#) connects people to nature and the community.

# Connecting to Nature gives us perspective about ourselves and our place in the world

- [Hiking to blue lake in Kelowna](#) gave participants an opportunity for nature discovery, to learn about themselves and connect to others.
- [An outdoor meeting in New Westminster](#) inspired programmers to ask questions about what they are doing to connect themselves and their community to nature.
- At [UVIC, second year students](#) are challenged to see what barriers there are in connecting to nature and the benefits of a nature connection.

# Connecting to Nature is part of a healthy human experience

- In Maple Ridge, programming reflects an emphasis on [children and families](#) and healthy eating, in the community.
- In Victoria [the Nature's Way Program](#) helps to decrease anxiety in youth.

# Connecting to Nature can have unintended consequences and surprising results

- [Rock rolling](#) in Kelowna is a simple story that shows how one leader can make a difference in a spontaneous, nature-way.
- In [Kate's Kindergarten class](#), there is some perspective shift about what nature is.
- In Port Coquitlam, encouraging summer camp and program leaders with [an "intention" to connect to nature](#) created really positive results.



# Nature is everywhere – even unlikely places

- In a hospital room as in the story about [Cheney's dad](#).
- Or [“Nature as the ‘unintended consequence’”](#) story of the Walk Richmond group.
- Nature is a community garden, a pocket park, a woodlot attached to an elementary school.

# Wrap up

- The value of small
- The small things create momentum (grassroots history of recreation)
- Each story contributes to a bigger conversation
- Sharing our own stories in our own voices is meaningful

# Links and contact info

[Connecting People to Nature research report](#)

[BCRPA Healthy in Nature website](#)

[Nature Stories on Healthy in Nature Website](#)

Presenter Contact:

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# Closing Ceremony

River, sea, Cedar Tree

Howling of the wind going to set us free (x2)

Eagle and salmon, eagle and salmon

In my soul, in my soul