

British Columbia's Chemainus Estuary

A Vital Estuary



Lack of urban development has contributed to the Chemainus Estuary's relatively untouched natural state.

First Nation's people were the areas earliest inhabitants until the 1870s, when private land in the area was granted to European settlers and the First Nation communities were restricted to reserves. These private lands have remained intact and in agricultural use ever since. The remaining properties, held as Crown land, were given to the E&N Railway and eventually sold to forest and mining companies.

The estuary and surrounding lands have been a priority for conservation

organizations since the 1980s when Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and its partners attempted to acquire the land because of its vital habitat value to waterfowl and other wildlife.

Although unsuccessful in their early attempts to secure this habitat, it has continued to be a priority area of concern for DUC.

In March of 2009, the most recent landowner, Catalyst Paper Corporation, approached DUC to express their interest in selling the property. This opportunity has allowed DUC to acquire the agricultural, forested and intertidal lands.

Partnerships were Essential to Conserving Chemainus Estuary

Protecting the Chemainus Estuary is the result of collaborative efforts from the following organizations:

B.C. Trust for Public Lands partnership:

- Environment Canada
- B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and the Integrated Land Management Bureau
- B.C. Ministry of Environment
- Union of B.C. Municipalities
- Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- The Land Conservancy of British Columbia
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- The Nature Trust of British Columbia
- Pacific Salmon Foundation

- Catalyst Paper Corporation

In partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada through the Pacific Coast Joint Venture:

- North American Wetlands Conservation Act
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

The Chemainus Estuary is highly valued because of its relatively undisturbed diversity, which helped it earn the highest ranking (Class 1) in a recent estuary study led by Environment Canada and Ducks Unlimited Canada. The report ranked B.C.'s 442 estuaries based on a number of factors, the results of which are guiding future regional conservation initiatives.



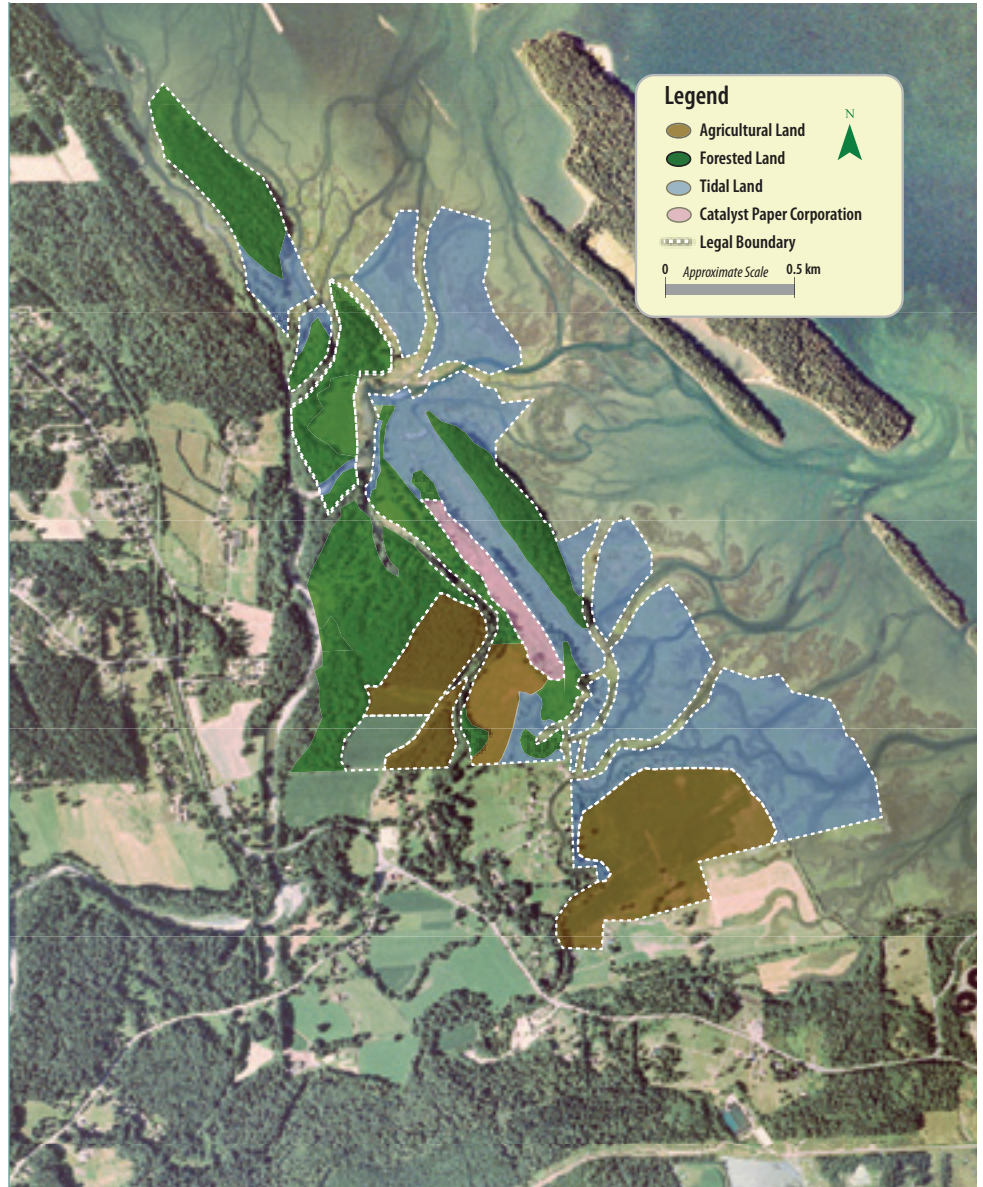
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.

Project Details

The Chemainus Estuary project consists of 210.5 ha (520 ac) of agricultural fields, intertidal flats and forested areas. This, combined with a close proximity to inland watersheds, such as Somenos Marsh in Duncan and other nearby lakes, makes this project a highly valuable area for a wide variety of waterfowl and wildlife species relying on this important migratory stretch along the Pacific Flyway.

Reportedly, averages of 1,000 waterfowl per day have been sighted during the migration and wintering periods. Great blue herons, bald eagles, and many species of mammals are also abundant and contribute to the estuary's rich biodiversity.



For more information contact:

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Phone: 604-592-0987

E-mail: du_surrey@ducks.ca