

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Organization Requesting Grant: <i>(Please list parent/sponsor organizations in parenthesis)</i>	Whistler Naturalists
Society Registration Number:	S4010
Organization Mailing Address:	Box 845 Whistler BC V0N 1B4
Contact Name & Title:	Kristina Swerhun & Bob Brett - Board members
Organization Phone Number:	
Organization Email Address:	whistlernaturalists@gmail.com
Organization Purpose or Mandate: <i>(Please provide this answer in one sentence.)</i>	To increase the knowledge of and appreciation for the natural world in the Whistler area through education and research.

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

How many years has the organization existed?	22
How many active members/participants does the organization have in the current year?	800
How many volunteers/executive/staff are required to administer the organization in the current year?	9 Board members
Age range of participants in the organization:	1-99
Please list active website URLs and active social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.):	www.whistlernaturalists.ca https://www.facebook.com/whistlernaturalists/ https://www.facebook.com/groups/201210103262296
Can anyone join the organization or participate? If no, please specify the restrictions and requirements for membership or participation:	Yes
Does the organization have any outstanding debts or other means of funding from the RMOW? If yes, please state the amount and reason:	No

GRANT INFORMATION

1. Purpose of Grant:	<i>Explain in detail how the funding will be spent. Please refer to Council Policy A-7 Community Enrichment Program, available at www.whistler.ca/cep for funding criteria and eligibility. Please be as concise as possible using the space below.</i>
<p>The mission of our completely volunteer run group is to increase local knowledge of and appreciation for the natural world in the Whistler area. All our events and programs have both a public education and species data collection component that complement each other.</p> <p>The Natural Environment chapter in the RMOW OCP is about "Protecting, monitoring and restoring the natural environment in Whistler". We feel our events and programs work towards all these outcomes because:</p> <p>1) While we still strongly believe in the value of the data component of our events (see next two points), the public education component has evolved into school outreach that has been incredibly rewarding and successful (in reach and in how it's received by teachers and students). We have also refined our events to reach local adults in a more effective way and, each year, evolve our programs to improve. Nature education leads to appreciation, which leads to stewardship. From all the great feedback we got the public, students and teachers alike, we know our events have helped community members on their journey towards stewardship/restoring the natural environment in Whistler.</p> <p>2) Without species inventories, we wouldn't be able to share with the community what species call Whistler home. Also, with more data about the species that live in Whistler, better management decisions can be made to support biodiversity. Although this is fundamentally true, information alone is not enough. Without political will (fostered by increased stewardship in point #1), biodiversity conservation can get ignored.</p> <p>3) Finally, our events and programs have been uncovering new species every single year. At a time when most news is about the decline of biodiversity, new species discoveries are hopeful news to celebrate as a community.</p> <p>For 2021, we are asking the RMOW to support the following ongoing events and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistler BioBlitz – This year marks the 15th year of our annual event that promotes biodiversity research, education and stewardship. We will continue to build on two main components with: (a) an in person and/or virtual school program (depending on what Covid restrictions allow) that reaches as many possible classes in Whistler schools as possible; and (b) surveys from valley bottom to the alpine that further increase our understanding of which species are in Whistler and where they're found. <p>In spite of Covid, last year's event reached seven classes with live virtual presentations (more watched the recorded presentations) in three schools. This year we intend to expand that reach even more with one specific goal to present to students in Mt. Currie at the Xitolaow school and/or Tszil learning centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fungus Among Us – This popular annual event is now in its 19th year. Over that time, hundreds of residents have been introduced to and learned about mushrooms and other fungi in our forests. Fungus Among Us also includes a strong school program as well as the public programs during the event itself. • Bird Studies – Our bird studies actually predate the Whistler Naturalists which gives an indication of the amount and quality of the information produced over that long time. Our current programs and events include monthly bird counts, the Breeding Bird Survey (now in its fifth decade!), and Christmas Bird Count. 	

2. Is This a New Program or Activity?	<i>If yes, what are your targets and goals for this program/activity?</i>
No	

3. Current Year Highlights and Community Benefits:	<i>Detail the specifics of activities and community benefits your organization provides.</i>
<p>Providing opportunities to learn about Whistler's natural world strengthens the connection people feel to nature. We are so lucky to be able to call this spectacular natural landscape home, but in our busy lives or fast sports, the connection piece is often missing. When you have more people connected to nature, you have more people who are inspired to become natural stewards and take care of this beautiful place for the benefit of all. Through education, connection; through connection, stewardship.</p> <p>Whistler BioBlitz This money will be used to support our 15th annual BioBlitz and Canada's longest running event. BioBlitz showcases Whistler's amazing biodiversity through education and the collection of species data. Education focuses on our school program which has been growing due to the phenomenal response from teachers and their students. We have built strong connections with the local schools and keep working to improve and expand students' exposure to all aspects of local biology and biodiversity delivered by some of BC's best biologists. BioBlitz biologists will again present to local classes (either in-person or virtually), in a wide range of grades from 1 through 12. After taking a year off because of Covid, we hope to again offer student internships to experience a day in the life of a field biologist. We also offer public talks about Whistler's amazing biodiversity.</p> <p>Collection of species data involves scientists scouring different ecosystems to increase our knowledge about the diversity of species in our area. In total, volunteer contributions for BioBlitz exceed 1,000 hours each weekend. In just 14 weekends of BioBlitz spanning back to 2007, BioBlitz findings now represent more than one-third of all records on the Whistler Biodiversity Project (WBP) master list. Results from the 2020 BioBlitz brings the total number of species documented in the Whistler area to 4,497. Among the direct benefits of BioBlitz, this work has contributed to the RMOW's biodiversity conservation initiatives, especially the conservation of species at risk.</p> <p>Fungus Among Us This money will be used to support our 19th annual event, which showcases Whistler's amazing fungal diversity through education and the collection of hard science. We expect to again attract BC's top mushroom experts to one of the BC's biggest mushroom events. The event includes mushroom talks, walks, a cooking demo and displays of all the fungi found on the walks. In a non-Covid year, ticket sales cover the majority of costs related to the weekend event, although additional costs are incurred by school presentations. Continued in section #6.</p>	

4. Existing Funding and Grant Applications:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>List the specific grants, funding and fundraising planned, approved or pending for the existing year, and</i> <i>Please also list rejected or non-approved funding (with reasons).</i>
<p>Whistler Community Foundation Environmental Legacy Fund 2021: \$23,000 (pending) Whistler Community Foundation Environmental Legacy Fund 2020 deferred: \$6,700 (confirmed) Resort Municipality of Whistler Community Enrichment Program: \$9,500 (pending) Earned revenue during Fungus Among Us: \$4,500 (pending)</p>	

GRANT INFORMATION (CONTINUED):

5. Grant Request Amounts and Financial Breakdown:		<i>Please ensure numbers provided in this table coincide with the required financial documents you provide in your application.</i>	
	Annual Operating Budget	Grant Requested	<i>Provide a brief description of the specific amount requested. (Ex: Products, services, staffing roles, advertising, etc.)</i>
Salaries/contracts:			
General operations:	42,615	9,500	
One-time project / program:			
Physical assets:			
Rent (RMOW facilities):	720	N/A	
Rent (other facilities):			
Other:	132,000		In kind
Total	\$ 175,700	\$ 9,500	<u>5</u> % <i>(Grant request ÷ Annual budget amount)</i>
Reminder: The grant amount requested cannot be more than 50% of the annual operating budget of the organization.			

6. Additional Information:	<i>Please list any additional information, details or explanations regarding your grant request that you would like to be considered by Council.</i>
<p>Fungus Among Us (continued)</p> <p>This event is a highlight of many residents (and non-residents) every fall since mushroom hunting has become so popular. The great feedback we get each year from participants and gurus alike is the main reason we run the festival. Results from the event are collated by the Whistler Biodiversity Project which now tallies up to 975 species of fungus, the majority of which are from Fungus Among Us.</p> <p>Due to the popularity of school presentations, especially over the past two years, we are planning an expanded school program for 2021 and beyond. We will definitely have virtual presentations that were so successful last year (and our only option due to physical distancing). If restrictions allow, we will also have a full continent of in-class presentations in local schools. As with BioBlitz, we will also reach out to schools in Mt. Currie in the hope of presenting to one or more classes there as well.</p> <p>Each year, we have worked to increase the scientific value of fungi collected during the event, including partnering with various experts and institutions to catalogue and perform DNA analysis on important species. In particular, our partnership with the UBC Beaty Museum has been very successful. Last year we increased the number of mushrooms collected for that museum, and thereby increased both the accuracy of the identifications and contributions to knowledge about fungi in Whistler and beyond. While our event is volunteer-driven, some funds are needed to include this important function.</p> <p>Bird Studies</p> <p>Our Annual Bird Studies includes monthly bird counts, the Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count. Most costs are related to: (i) travel expenses for the five out-of-town birders who have conducted the Breeding Bird Survey since the 1970s; and (ii) ancillary costs of the Christmas Bird Count, including food for volunteers.</p> <p>Additional Information</p> <p>After making adjustment to run our events with physical distancing requirements during 2020 because of Covid, we really hope we can go back to in-person events while keeping some of the things that worked well during Covid. Our projected revenue in our budget assumes this is the case. If this is not the case and we still need to physically distance, we will include mostly virtual events as in 2020. In that case we would have less revenue but also fewer costs related to accommodation and travel/honoraria so would still expect to break even.</p>	

7. Attachments:	<i>Please indicate the attachments you are including with your Grant Application Form:</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Financial Statement (audited preferred) or Organization Budget (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Proof (copy) of registered not-for-profit society status or registered charity status (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2021 Budget for BioBlitz, Fungus Among Us and Bird Studies
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

COMMUNITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<p>Please list how your organization may improve Community Performance Indicators:</p>	<p>First, please visit www.whistler.ca/monitoring to learn about the five priority areas of Whistler's <i>Community Performance Indicators (CPI)</i>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Enriching Community Life</i> 2. <i>Enhancing the Resort Experience</i> 3. <i>Protecting the Environment</i> 4. <i>Ensuring Economic Viability</i> 5. <i>Partnering for Success</i> <p>Secondly, identify how your grant (or organization) may improve any CPIs described in the five areas listed above.</p> <p>Note: Each priority listed above has numerous areas of measurement to choose from and all are listed with their existing statistical trend at www.whistler.ca/monitoring</p>
<p><i>Example: This grant addresses the priority of "Enriching Community Life" because it improves personal health status, a sense of belonging and increases resident volunteer rates. Specifically, this is because...</i></p>	
<p>Protecting the Environment: 1) Because people only care FOR what they first care ABOUT. Through nature educating we help people care ABOUT it and in turn those people are much more likely to become stewards of the environment. 2) Because to make good environmental management planning decisions, you need good data. All our programs have a hard science component where leading scientists in BC contribute. This unbiased data is invaluable when making environmental management planning decisions, e.g., it has been incorporated into two recent reports: (i) RMOW Species and Ecosystems at Risk; and (ii) Species and Habitat Priorities for Biodiversity Conservation in the RMOW.</p> <p>Enriching Community Life: 1) Because our community loves to learn, through our programs we give the community access to learning opportunities. For example our school program gives students an opportunity to learn from some of BC's best biologists. 2) Since we are completely volunteer run, we have diverse volunteer opportunities where volunteers feel a sense of belonging with likeminded people who love nature.</p> <p>Enhancing the Resort Experience: 1) Our programs give visitors the opportunity to participate in a community based cultural events. 2) This promotes a positive atmosphere for the visitor who will feel more connected to the community after participating.</p> <p>Ensuring Economic Viability: 1) Because the more the community learns about it's natural environment, the more we can collectively act as curators of the wonderful place to the majority of visitors that come here for a natural experience. 2) Because we know that people come and stay in Whistler to attend our annual Fungus Among Us Festival, which drives room nights. As natural history cultural opportunities increase, it will only have a positive effect on room nights and visitor satisfaction. Knowledge gained from our events also contributes to ecotourism businesses that can improve their programming as a result.</p>	

GRANT APPLICATION AUTHORIZATION:

Submitted by:	Kristina Swerhun
Phone number:	[REDACTED]
Email:	whistlernaturalists@gmail.com
Acknowledgement:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I confirm that the information provided in this CEP Grant Application Form is true; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I confirm that a representative is required to present this grant request at a future Council Meeting; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I confirm that if any amount is granted that the the Grant Reporting Form is due by December 1 of this year; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I confirm that if any amount is granted it will be used only for its intended purpose unless otherwise approved by Council.
Signature:	[REDACTED]

Funding decisions will be announced during a Regular Council Meeting in April 2021.

Please contact the Legislative Services Department at corporate@whistler.ca if you require any assistance.



DUPLICATE

NUMBER: S-40150

SOCIETY ACT

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

I Hereby Certify that

WHISTLER NATURALISTS SOCIETY

has this day been incorporated under the *Society Act*

Issued under my hand at Victoria, British Columbia

on July 06, 1999



JOHN S. POWELL
Registrar of Companies
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA