



STRATEGIC PLAN 2026 2031

FREE THE FERN
STEWARDSHIP SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

VISION

A thriving ecosystem in the Champlain Heights Trails where all feel welcome to care for the land, connect, and create.

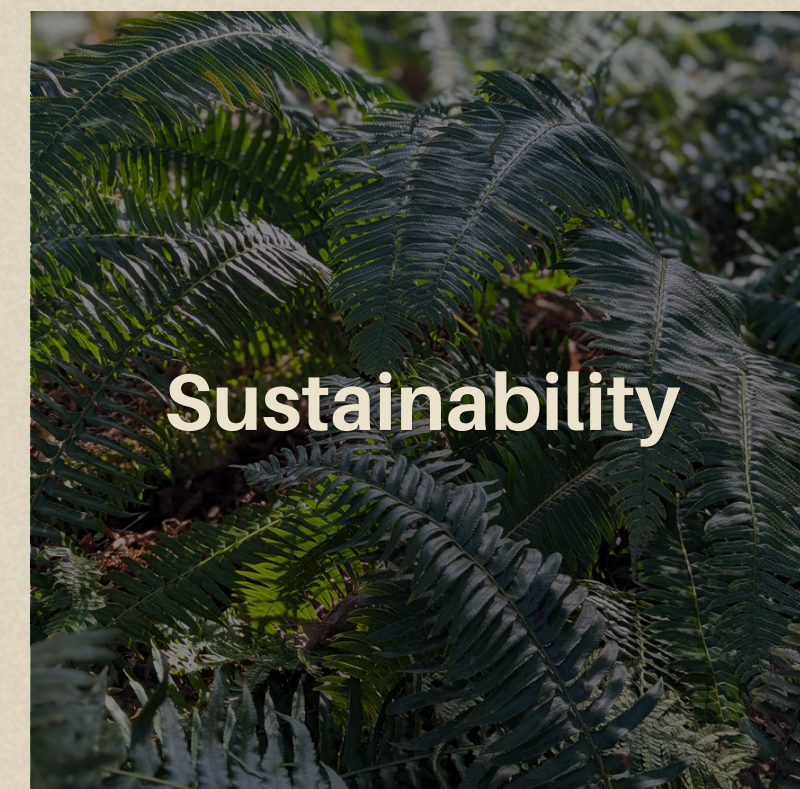
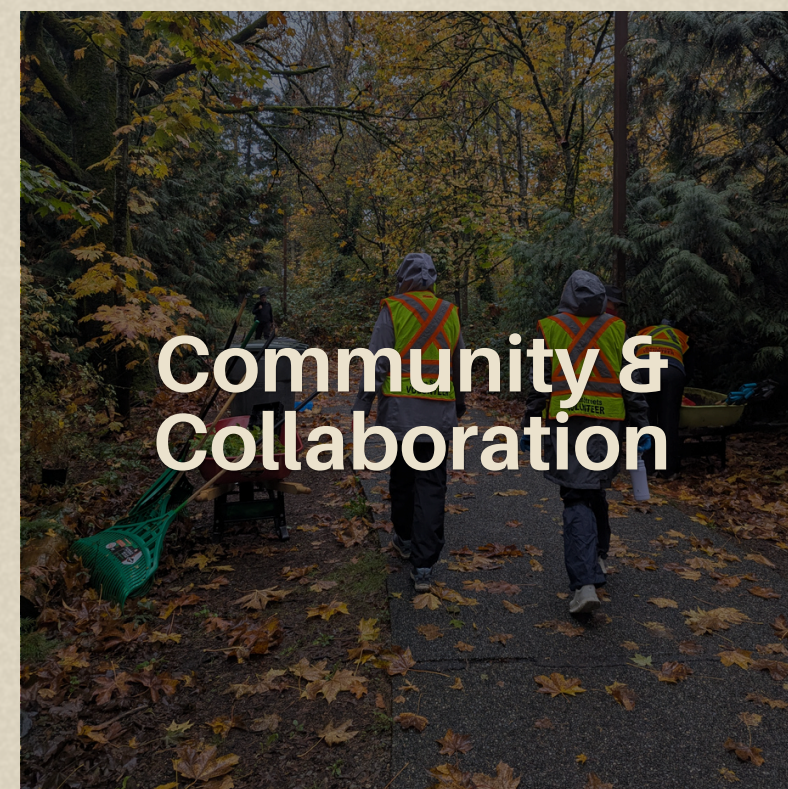
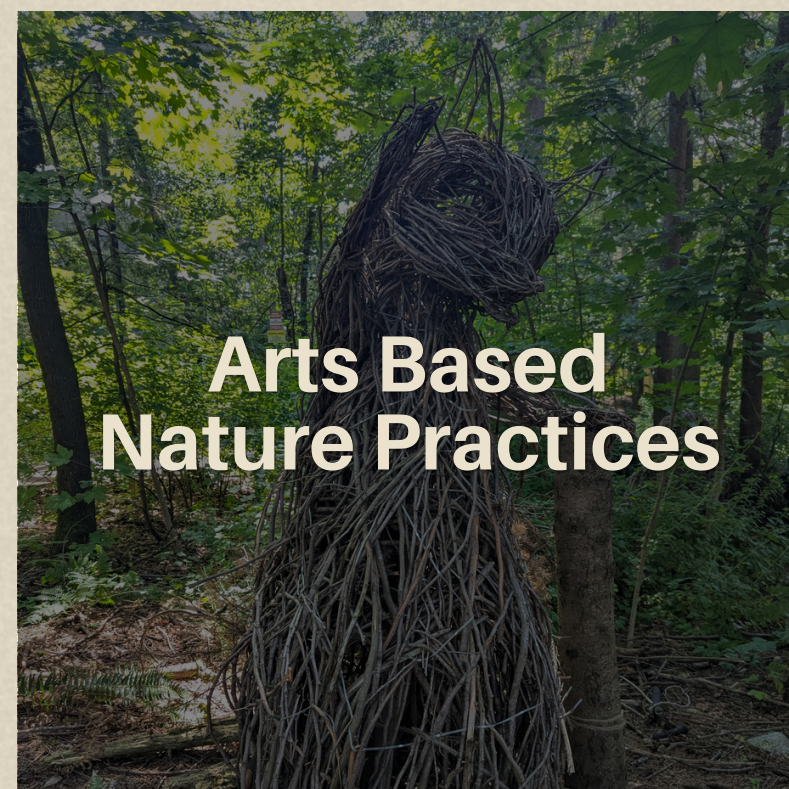
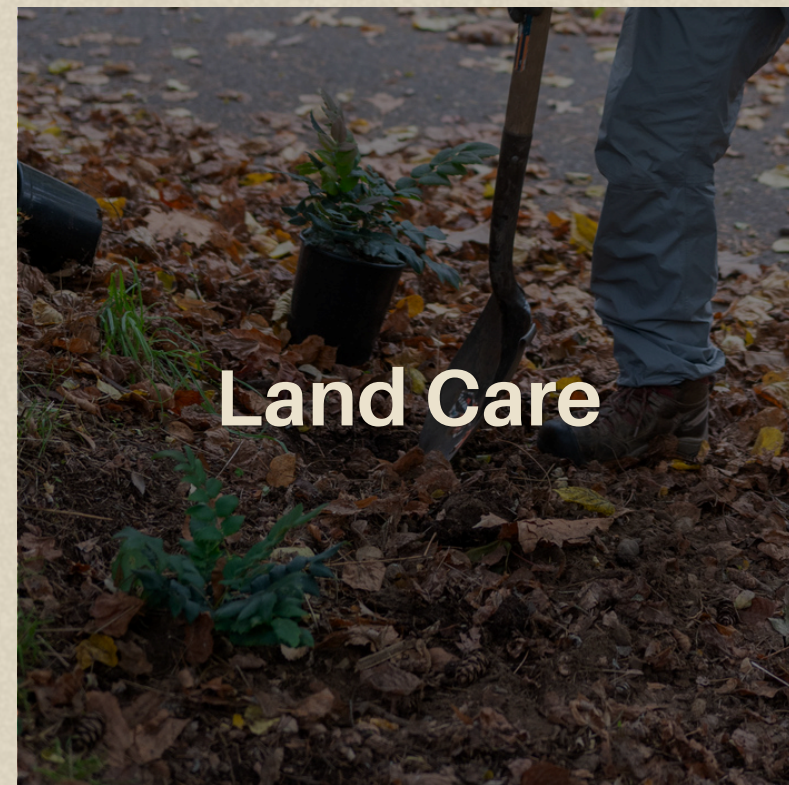




MISSION

To restore and protect the Champlain Heights Trails in Vancouver by creating welcoming, accessible opportunities for community-led stewardship, environmental education, and art-based nature practices. We strive to make space and enable knowledge-sharing from diverse perspectives. Part of our work involves the active process of unlearning and uncovering the legacies of colonialism. We believe that caring for the land builds knowledge, connection, and a sense of belonging for present and future generations.

OUR VALUES





LAND CARE

In an effort to restore the ecosystem along the Champlain Heights Trails, our focus is on removing invasive plants and planting native species.

Actions

- Host monthly Invasive Pulls with members of the public (September-June)
 - Complete all the invasive removal and restoration in the area to the West and to the South of the Champlain Heights Trails Playground within the next 5 years
 - Remove 240 m3 of invasive plants
- Actively recruit and bring new volunteers to our stewardship events
 - Welcoming 2,000 event volunteers over the next five years
- Lead an annual fall planting where we replant hundreds of native species
 - 4,000 native plants over the next 5 years
- Regularly host Free the Fern Fridays to maintain stewardship areas

Strategic Plan Goal

- Complete stewardship work of the trail area below the playground



EDUCATION

Education is a key part of our work. In order to care for the land, we must first know the land. By sharing this knowledge with learners from a variety of ages and backgrounds, we ensure that future generations continue to take pride in caring for this land.

Actions

- Offer a minimum of one free walk or workshop for the public monthly (September-June)
- Update our garden's corkboard
 - Feature 2 upcoming Free the Fern events on a monthly basis
 - Refresh the public educational materials on the corkboard
- Make a minimum of two social media posts a month for education and promotion
 - Share two blog posts a month to showcase our work
- Seek one new knowledge partner per year

Strategic Plan Goal

- Develop outreach information packages for schools
- Conduct research in partnership with one post-secondary institution annually

Acknowledging the original stewards of this land, we seek to centre Indigenous voices and perspectives in our work.

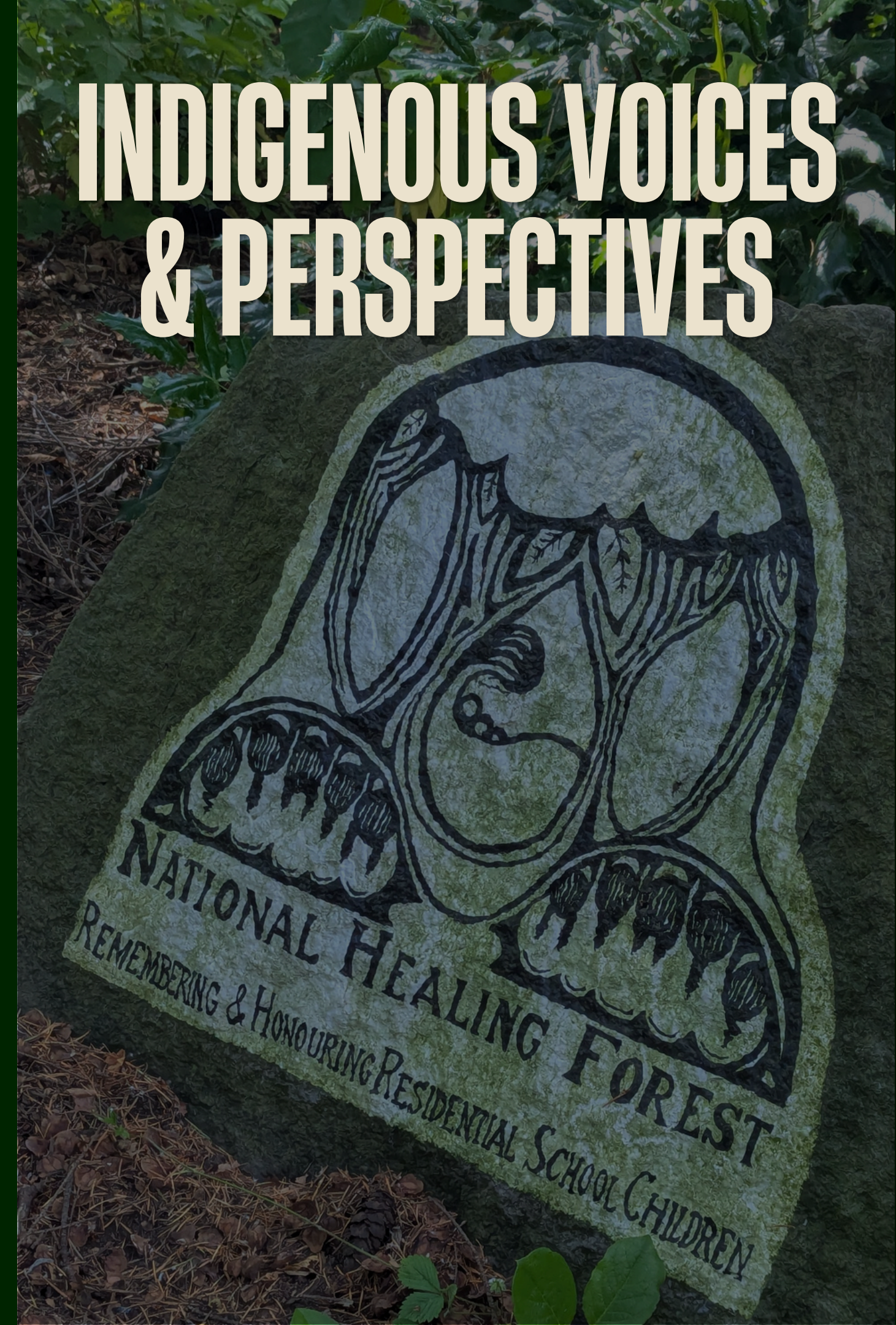
Actions

- Invite one Indigenous collaborator for a project, workshop, or walk each year
- Honour knowledge-sharers by naming them when resharing knowledge
- Actively work on building long-term reciprocal relationships with Indigenous partners
- Maintain the stock of our Reconciliation Library with 10 books by Indigenous authors
- Ensure 50% of gifts are sourced from Indigenous-owned organizations

Strategic Plan Goal

- Partner with language speakers to incorporate Host Nations' languages for plant species, with priority given to Hulquminum
- Investigate the TRC Calls to Action, and identify key actions that we can take

INDIGENOUS VOICES & PERSPECTIVES



INCLUSIVENESS



In caring for the land, we acknowledge that everyone has something to offer. We seek to be inclusive and welcoming of the diverse members of our community.

Actions

- Identify groups in our community that face barriers to participation
 - Connect with two groups that comprise this target demographic to inform programming needs
 - Host a minimum of 2 events per annum directly working with and for this demographic
- Provide accommodations to ensure that participants feel welcome and comfortable participating
 - Include an accessibility self-declaration section in the event sign up form
 - Allocate an accessibility budget of \$2,000 to support accommodations
- Annually review and update our EDI Policy, in collaboration with the EDI committee

Strategic Plan Goal

- Create an accessibility guide to inform participants and visitors to the Trails



ARTS BASED NATURE PRACTICES

Art can be used as a creative way to connect people with nature. Folks who may not be otherwise interested or able to participate in stewardship activities may be drawn to art-based practices to connect with nature.

Actions

- Offer one free nature-based art workshop annually
 - Prioritize activities that repurpose invasive plants
- Partner with local eco-based artists to help facilitate workshops or events
- Seek collaborations for community art projects
 - Complete two projects per 5 year period

Strategic Plan Goal

- In partnership with a local artist, publish a map of the Champlain Heights Trails

COMMUNITY & COLLABORATION

We are more powerful together. When we join our friends, neighbours, and fellow organizations, we have a greater environmental impact and can inspire others to do the same.

Actions

- Recruit and bring new volunteers to our stewardship events
 - Invite up to 50 participants to our annual fall planting
 - Welcome a total of 2,000 event volunteers over 5 years
- Conduct outreach with the community
 - Board members will represent FTF at three outreach events annually
- Accept invitations to speak at talks and workshops
- Collaborate with other nonprofits to co-run events
- Highlight other local organizations on our social media

Strategic Plan Goal

- Following an election, send an introductory email to each new elected official to welcome them and make them aware of Free the Fern's work
- Invite elected officials and nominees to two major events per year

Sustainability, both within our organization and with the environment, underlies everything that we do. By resisting the pressure for exponential growth, we seek to stay within our capacity and prioritize quality over quantity.

Actions

- Offer all of our public events free of charge
- Assess current funding strategy in consultation with Board members
 - Narrow down and focus on key revenue sources
 - Evaluate our capacity for new fundraising opportunities
 - Assess annual plant fundraiser's potential for growth seasonally
- Diversify revenue stream
 - Continue advocating to the City of Vancouver for a designated stream of funding for environmental stewardship in the next 5 years
 - Seek out new support from Foundations
 - Investigate benefits and challenges of becoming a registered charity
 - Create a page on our website showcasing our programming and offerings for promotion of private bookings

Strategic Plan Goal

- Have secure, stable, and diverse operational funding within five years



SUSTAINABILITY



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