



Friends of  
Kootenay Lake  
Stewardship Society

# Strategic Plan to 2021

## **Mission**

*To improve the health and stewardship of Kootenay Lake in the context of a changing climate through monitoring, habitat restoration, capacity building, and the empowerment of local communities and stakeholders.*

## **Vision**

*That Kootenay Lake is a productive and sustainable ecosystem supporting abundant fish and wildlife, with land and water uses that support clean water and long-term sustainable lake communities. That residents and other stakeholders have a strong sense of place and engage actively in lake stewardship and governance.*

**Goal 1: Empower people to be lake stewards and respond to the demands of change, including climate change with an enhanced level of care and concern.**

About 60,000 people live around Kootenay Lake. According to the 2016 Community Values Study, 71% of respondents visit the Lake every week. The study also indicated that existing regulations and by-laws are difficult for the public to understand. 71% of survey respondents said they would like FOKLSS to focus on outreach events to empower the public on issues on and around the lake. Many people who live, work and recreate around Kootenay Lake stated in our Community Values Study (approximately 70% of survey respondents) that they would like FOKLSS to focus on outreach and empowerment related to issues on and around the lake.

Objectives	Potential activities
<p>1.1 <u>Shoreline Care</u> Motivate those who directly affect the shoreline to do so responsibly.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organize outreach to shoreline owners, realtors, developers, installers, contractors and local government. Emphasize pride in stewardship and long-term value to owners and communities.</li> <li>2. Provide clear written and online information that clarify regulations, inspire responsibility, and offer support to act as stewards.</li> </ol>
<p>1.2 <u>Youth Engagement</u> Reach out to educate and involve students in lake stewardship.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with Kootenay Lake School District (SD8) to integrate lake stewardship into the curriculum — in the context of climate change.</li> <li>2. Develop youth specific learning and engagement events.</li> <li>3. Engage young adults through research and project partnerships with post-secondary institutions.</li> </ol>
<p>1.3 <u>Communications and Education</u> Increase knowledge and encourage changes in behaviour of residents and visitors.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilize Ktunaxa knowledge and other possible First Nations educational sharing opportunities.</li> <li>2. Instill knowledge through the Kootenay Lake Summit.</li> <li>3. Use a newsletter to focus on successes and ways to take action.</li> <li>4. Educate residents and communities about changes they can anticipate, plan for, and help mitigate in the context of climate change.</li> </ol>
<p>1.4 <u>Inspiration and Recognition</u> Celebrate Kootenay Lake and organize positive actions for people to take.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organize work parties for all ages and communities.</li> <li>2. Share the history and heritage of the lake and people around it.</li> <li>3. Be present at selected events across the Lake community.</li> <li>4. Establish Stewardship Awards for Kootenay Lake.</li> </ol>
<p>1.5 <u>Lake Governance</u> Advocate for responsible, coordinated and efficient governance of Kootenay Lake.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify all the bodies/organizations that govern Kootenay Lake to inform people regarding the potential allies in stewardship activities.</li> <li>2. Advocate for constructive actions amongst all levels of government on Kootenay Lake. Support collaboration, information sharing and streamlining, monitoring, and ecosystem restoration work, all in the context of climate change.</li> </ol>

**Goal 2: Conserve and restore ecosystem abundance and diversity of Kootenay Lake.**

Ecosystems in and around Kootenay Lake are rated as the top value according to the 2016 Community Values Study with 92% of respondents placing the natural environment as their top priority for the lake. Maintaining healthy and intact aquatic and riparian ecosystems today and for future generations reflects the priorities of surrounding communities and are an important underpinning to a healthy economy.

Objectives	Potential activities
<p>2.1 <u>Ecosystem Knowledge</u></p> <p>Collaborate and share information on the conditions of ecosystems in and around Kootenay Lake.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Incorporate traditional ecological Ktunaxa knowledge and other Indigenous knowledge and information.</li> <li>2. Share information about species and habitats at risk by website, through restoration projects, and at the annual Summit. Align with information on climate change.</li> <li>3. Ensure data on shoreline spawning salmon is collaboratively used.</li> <li>4. Participate in at least one research project.</li> </ol>
<p>2.2 <u>Restoration Action</u></p> <p>Find and develop opportunities for ecosystem restoration.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focus on engaging people to conserve / restore – on the ground, understanding that this is a shared space. Identify restoration opportunities.</li> <li>2. Enable fish shoreline / creek spawning habitat, including demonstrating actions that landowners can take independently.</li> </ol>
<p>2.3 <u>Climate Adaptations</u></p> <p>Identify adaptations for ecosystems in response to climate change.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advocate for lake regulations to fit a shifting future (e.g. adequate setbacks for water level changes).</li> <li>2. Use a climate change lens in all FOKLSS initiatives to ensure mitigation and adaptation are considered.</li> </ol>

**Goal 3: Enhance and protect Kootenay Lake water.**

- Ecosystem health
- Human health
- Recreation

Kootenay Lake is the heart of the communities surrounding it. According to the 2016 Community Values Study, 78% of survey respondents said they would like FOKLSS’s to focus on water quality monitoring. With consistent monitoring, FOKLSS is able to advocate for flows and lake levels that support the needs of ecosystems and communities within the context of climate change. Water plays a major role in local economies and recreation, and the lake itself holds significant cultural history.

Objectives	Potential activities
<p>3.1 <u>Threats and Vulnerability</u></p> <p>Identify and prioritize potential threats to water</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaborate on research and water monitoring.</li> <li>2. Understand the data on lake flows and levels optimal for ecosystem integrity and sustainable communities.</li> </ol>

quality and quantity and make the information publicly available.	3. Advocate for appropriate flows and lake levels, in consideration of the changing climate.
3.2 <u>Citizenship</u> Enhance the ability of area residents to interpret, identify and report potential threats to water quality.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide tools, learning and advocacy methods for residents — via the website, annual Summit, outreach, and targeted campaigns. Empower them to act as water stewards, through knowledge of what to look for and where to direct concerns.</li> <li>2. Engage citizens in collecting data on issues of concern and interest related to maintaining or enhancing water quality.</li> </ol>
3.3 <u>Pollution Reduction</u> Reduce non-point source pollution entering lake.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advocate and collaborate around reducing inappropriate dumping — through monitoring, educating and supporting regulation, reporting and enforcement.</li> <li>2. Communicate to residents how they can play a role in reporting polluters and poachers — and what recourse will be taken.</li> <li>3. Participate in monitoring, education, policy advocacy and other efforts to reduce the impacts of pollution</li> </ol>

#### **Goal 4: Nurture a vibrant and strong organization.**

To fully achieve its mission and vision, Friends of Kootenay Lake must be sustainable, well-supported, reflective, and adequately resourced. Ensuring the Society has capable leaders, a diverse membership, long-term funding, and productive relationships with communities and other Kootenay Lake stakeholders further enhances the success of achieving objectives.

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Potential activities</b>
4.1 <u>Membership Diversification</u> Diversify and grow FOKLSS.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Actively collaborate with First Nations</li> <li>2. Increase representation from across the region.</li> <li>3. Emphasize recruitment / engagement of youth.</li> </ol>
4.2 <u>Long-term Funding</u> Secure long-term funding for programs and core operating.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Diversify funding streams and find innovative ways to increase membership fees, event income, major donors, and institutional / grant funders.</li> <li>2. Achieve charitable status to increase donor and grant potential.</li> </ol>
4.3 <u>Personnel and Planning</u> Maintain a strong, diverse and effective board and staff.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure resources and operations are aligned with a strategic plan.</li> <li>2. Monitor progress: produce an annual review of successes and failures.</li> <li>3. Diversify the Board and put active succession planning in place.</li> <li>4. Support staff through positive working conditions and enabling personal development.</li> </ol>