GREENSPACE FOR ALL

Resource Kit for Local Governments & Practitioners

Enhancing the social, ecological, and climate resilience of communities through equity-informed greenspace and climate action strategies

March 2026

STEWARDSHIP CENTRE
FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA

Introduction

As local governments recognize the inextricable links between public health, climate resilience, and social equity, ensuring that all residents can access high-quality greenspaces and the benefits they provide is emerging as an essential planning priority.

Greenspace for All, a three-year pilot project led by the Stewardship Centre for BC with support from Environment and Climate Change Canada, was initiated in 2023 to support these efforts. To achieve its objectives, SCBC developed key partnerships with local agencies that work with equity-deserving communities in three regional districts on Vancouver Island. Practical approaches were identified to reduce access barriers to greenspace for these groups, while raising awareness of the role of nature in community health and resilience.

This resource kit translates the project's findings into actionable guidance for municipal decision-makers and practitioners to enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of greenspaces for the benefit of all residents. Each recommendation page in this guide features the following information:

- Recommendations based on project insights
- Best practices for implementation
- Case studies of project activities
- Successful examples of local initiatives
- Resources on related research and initiatives

By embedding accessibility and equity considerations into land-use planning, natural asset management, climate adaptation strategies, and community engagement processes, governments can meet legislative requirements like the *Accessible British Columbia Act* while advancing broader goals for climate resilience, collaboration, and community well-being.

Background

Equitable access to nature is increasingly recognized as a core component of healthy, resilient, and inclusive communities. Yet across Canada, research shows that a lack of access to greenspace is closely tied to factors such as income, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and mobility.

Marginalized and underserved populations – including racialized communities, Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, newcomers, low-income households, seniors, youth, women, and people with diverse physical and cognitive abilities – are more likely to encounter physical, social, economic, or psychological barriers to accessing greenspaces. They are also more likely to live in neighbourhoods with fewer greenspaces, limited tree canopy, and less opportunities to connect with nature, resulting in unequal distribution of the health, social, and climate-resilience benefits that nature provides.

These inequities are rooted in long-standing systemic factors, such as colonial land-use decisions, discriminatory planning practices, and limited opportunities for underserved communities to participate in environmental governance. As a result, many residents who already face social and economic marginalization often experience heightened exposure to climate-related risks, including extreme heat, flooding, and poor air quality.

Local and regional governments can play a critical role in reducing these disparities by embedding equity principles into the policies and systems that shape the use and enjoyment of greenspaces for all residents.

RECOMMENDATION #1
Improve Community Engagement

Engage with equity-deserving communities to understand the diverse barriers they face when accessing greenspaces, and develop strategies that reflect the needs of these communities.

Actively engaging with equity-deserving communities during the design, implementation, and assessment of greenspace and climate adaptation strategies is key to reflecting their needs and voices. Seeking *procedural equity* through participatory planning provides residents with a platform to share their experiences with nature and the opportunity to highlight different needs, barriers, and interests related to greenspace access. This approach helps governments develop strategies and policies that address these barriers and concerns, supporting equitable greenspace and climate adaptation efforts.

Best Practices:
- **Build trust and meaningful relationships** with equity-deserving community members
- **Minimize the burden of participation** and select appropriate modes of engagement that consider time, financial cost, location, accessibility, and transportation needs
- **Host activities in trusted, familiar spaces** that these communities already frequent, and align engagement efforts with existing events led by equity-deserving groups
- **Consider paying honorariums to persons with lived experience** for their work on projects (i.e. accessibility audits)
- **Host meetings during evenings and weekends** for working community members
- **Consider the provision of childcare** to make events more accessible to busy parents

CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY-LEVEL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In 2024, SCBC conducted a Community-level Needs Assessment to better understand the following: how residents value and utilize greenspaces; barriers that limit access to greenspaces; and the types of improvements or programs that may enhance their access to nature. One highlight from the responses received was the value of walking groups for seniors, and support for sensory-friendly programs for neurodivergent youth.
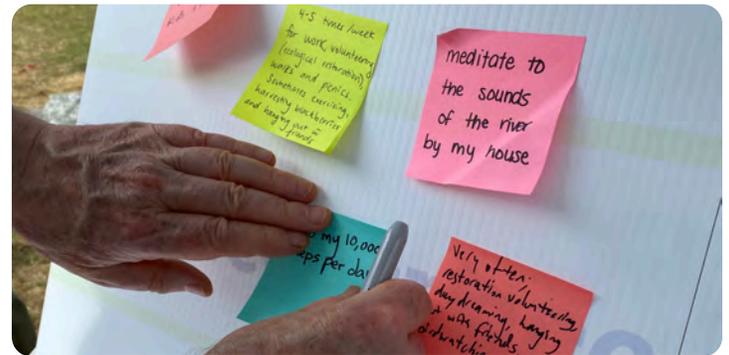
Understanding how residents utilize greenspaces. Photo by Ariadne Boutsakis (SCBC)

SUCCESS STORY: REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO (RDN)

In accordance with the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, the RDN established an Accessibility Committee and the 2023-2026 Accessibility Plan to remove barriers, improve accessibility, and promote inclusion within public spaces for persons with disabilities.

SUCCESS STORY: CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

The Capital Regional District's Guide to User-Friendly Trails addresses the needs of seniors and people living with disabilities by identifying accessible trails and greenspaces in the Greater Victoria area. The guide includes information on trail length and slope, rest areas, amenities, parking, and transit routes.

RECOMMENDATION #2
Adopt an Equity-Centered Approach

Integrate an equity lens across greenspace policies and strategies to identify barriers, remove barriers, and prevent barriers from an equity perspective — including considerations for race, ethnicity, ability, income, gender, sexual orientation, and age.

Improving *distributive equity* by removing or reducing barriers to accessing greenspaces requires the consideration of multiple factors, including spatial or locational access, accessibility, affordability, language accessibility, representation, and perceived safety. Adopting an equity-centered approach to municipal or regional greenspace and climate adaptation planning will help decision-makers understand who is benefiting from these measures and ensure that the diverse needs, interests, and lived experiences of equity-deserving communities are addressed.

Best Practices:
- **Establish an operational definition of equity** to guide greenspace and climate strategies
- **Incorporate equity criteria into planning tools** like recreational parkland acquisition and evaluation frameworks
- **Promote the comprehensive benefits** of nature beyond recreation and sustainability (e.g. mental and physical health, culture, social inclusion)
- **Develop performance metrics** to assess how equity goals are being met
- **Communicate important accessibility information,** including the presence or absence of accessibility features in greenspaces on websites, signage, and resources
- **Integrate equity criteria** into planning for new capital projects within greenspaces to strengthen accessibility and inclusivity (e.g. universal washrooms, trails, signage, etc.)

CASE STUDY: POLICY REVIEW REPORT

The Greenspace for All Policy Review Report (Muñoz, 2024) analyzes the extent to which greenspace and climate adaptation strategies from three regional districts on the east coast of Vancouver Island reflect and address the diversity of equity considerations in their communities.

The report found that while current strategies address equity to varying degrees, there is a lack of integration of measurable and specific actions that encompass all aspects of diversity — including dimensions related to ethnicity, income, and gender.

SUCCESS STORY: CITY OF VICTORIA

BlindSquare is a self-voicing navigation app that supports the recreational experience and enjoyment of residents who are blind or partially sighted. Along the City of Victoria's Trans Canada Trail, the app communicates practical navigation details and site features like rest areas, washrooms, cultural or historical sites, trailheads and interpretive signage.

SUCCESS STORY: CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

The Capital Regional District's 2022-2032 Parks and Trails Strategic Plan recognizes the need to improve equitable access to regional parks and trails and assess barriers related to age, income, gender, and mobility through an accessibility audit and a gender equity study.

RECOMMENDATION #3
Develop Accessible & Inclusive Programs

Develop and implement low-barrier, welcoming, and accessible programs to engage equity-deserving communities with nature.

Offering tailored programs that meet the needs, interests, and priorities of equity-deserving communities is an important way to engage them with nature. These programs should address considerations like cost, location, language, transportation, sense of safety, and accessibility. Developing and implementing programs in collaboration with organizations that represent or serve equity-deserving groups can enhance the experience of participants, build trust, foster connections to others of shared identity, and expand the program's reach. *See Appendix B for examples of program and partnership opportunities*.

Best Practices:

- **Partner with community agencies** that represent or serve diverse communities
- **Offer free or low-cost** programs to reduce financial barriers to participation
- **Design programs for the diverse needs** and priorities of equity-deserving groups
- **Consider locations that meet accessibility needs,** including accessible parking, public transportation, universal and gender-neutral washrooms, safety, accessible pathways, etc.
- **Hire program leaders** who reflect the shared identity of participants
- **Provide accessible and multilingual communications** and information on programs
- **Promote programs through channels** where equity-deserving communities already receive information, such as local agencies and libraries
- **Reserve program registration or participation** for people of a shared identity to support safety and comfort, like Stanley Park Ecology's Birding with Me program

CASE STUDY: FOREST TO SKY WELLNESS DAY

The Forest to Sky Wellness Day was organized with support from the Malahat SkyWalk and in collaboration with Power To Be and the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS). This free, family-friendly, and accessible event invited participants to connect with nature and each other through a guided Coastal Forest Bathing experience, led by Candice McBryde.

To ensure the experience was welcoming and barrier-free, complimentary admission was generously provided by the Malahat SkyWalk. A group shuttle bus was arranged to further support participation by assisting those without access to a personal vehicle.

SUCCESS STORY: CITY OF NANAIMO

The City of Nanaimo offers programs that help residents connect with local greenspaces, including AdventureSmart's "Hug a Tree and Survive" workshop; group nature strolls and walking tours for newcomers, families, and seniors; and volunteer park stewardship opportunities.

SUCCESS STORY: METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL PARKS

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks has several programs dedicated to connecting newcomers with nature and their community, such as the "Practice English in a Park" and "Learn to Camp" programs.

RECOMMENDATION #4
Collaborate with Community Partners

Support community-led initiatives and collaborate with local organizations to maximize capacity, engagement, and impact

Local governments can enhance their capacity to meaningfully engage with equity-deserving communities and implement inclusive initiatives by forming partnerships with local organizations that serve these audiences. Examples of such organizations include youth centres and schools, libraries, multicultural societies, disability agencies, health centres, and nature centres. These organizations have established trust and familiarity within their communities, giving them insight into local needs and priorities, as well as knowledge of how and where to engage with target audiences.

By supporting existing efforts or initiating new collaborations, local governments can leverage the resources of both parties to widen their reach and impact. This approach not only helps meet the diverse needs of communities but also advances goals related to greenspace and climate action.

Best Practices:
- **Collaborate with organizations** that employ nature educators and that offer existing nature-based education programs
- **Partner with local agencies to apply for funding** to support low-cost, accessible, and inclusive programs for equity-deserving communities
- **Work with multicultural societies** to incorporate multilingual programs for outdoor recreation, outdoor safety, and nature education
- **Acquire adaptive outdoor recreation equipment** to donate to outdoor recreation organizations or lend to the public
- **Create a funding pool** to support community-led placemaking and events, like Metro Vancouver Regional Park's Bus Grant Program.

CASE STUDY: WINTER BIRD WALK

The Winter Bird Walk, hosted at the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary and in collaboration with the Gorge Waterway Action Society and the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society, welcomed families, newcomers, and birders of all experience levels to learn about local bird species from an ornithologist, and allowed participants to connect with each other in an accessible urban greenspace.

Participants of all ages enjoyed the opportunity to participate in a free, family-friendly, and educational event followed by free snacks and crafts at the Nature House.

Participants at the Winter Bird Walk at the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, led by ornithologist Hannah Hickli. Photo by Ariadne Boutsakis (SCBC)

SUCCESS STORY: POWER TO BE

Power To Be is a registered charity that supports access to nature for youth, adults, and families living with cognitive, physical, financial, and social barriers. Programs include kayaking, canoeing, hiking, rock climbing, and more, with adaptive mobility devices like the "TrailRider" available to facilitate explorations in nature.

RECOMMENDATION #5
Prioritize Equitable Distribution of Greenspace

Assess the distribution and accessibility of greenspaces across neighbourhoods to prioritize equitable access to greenspaces and amenities

Understanding the spatial or locational accessibility of greenspaces, particularly within low-income neighbourhoods, can help municipalities identify which communities face inequitable access to greenspace and their benefits, and where initiatives should be prioritized. By focusing on *recognitional equity*, municipalities can better understand which communities are underrepresented in climate and greenspace policies due to pre-existing social, political, and economic structures.

Best Practices:

- **Map the location** of protected and recreational greenspaces relative to underserved and marginalized communities
- **Map other natural assets** relative to underserved and marginalized communities
- **Identify key indicators and target areas** that are below average for indicators (e.g. low tree canopy in low-income neighbourhoods)
- **Understand how greenspaces are used** as living spaces by the unhoused community, and how to ensure the safety of all users
- **Identify and mitigate** the potential unintended consequences of increasing the distribution of greenspaces in underserved communities

meika johnson, Vice President of Queer Centre Comox Valley, leading the Bevan Wetlands Pride Walk. Photo by Ariadne Boutsakis (SCBC)

CASE STUDY: NATUR&D

NatuR&D's Resilient Urban Systems & Habitat (RUSH) Initiative is an innovative mapping tool that highlights community assets, green infrastructure, and climate adaptation measures across the Capital Regional District (CRD), and provides community members with a "shared language on the vulnerabilities and opportunities for long-term health and climate action."

In 2025, SCBC partnered with NatuR&D to share Greenspace for All data prepared by UBC BRITE intern, Jenny Muñoz, visualizing the relationship between access to protected greenspace and underserved communities in the CRD. Community members and decision-makers can now compare this information with other natural and community assets, further supporting efforts to build equitable, healthy, and resilient communities.

SUCCESS STORY: CITY OF VICTORIA

The City of Victoria's VicMap is an interactive mapping tool that showcases the City's owned and natural assets, including tree canopy coverage, greenspaces, and park amenities. It also enables users to visualize demographic profiles and key indicators like park access and exposure to urban heat islands.

CONCLUSION
& Acknowledgements

Conclusion

This resource kit brings together practical guidance and successful examples that show how equity-informed planning, collaboration, and community engagement can enhance equitable access to nature and its benefits for everyone. By integrating the recommendations presented in this resource kit into policies, programs, and partnerships, local governments and practitioners can meaningfully reduce barriers to accessing nature while strengthening the role of greenspaces in community health and climate resilience.

Acknowledgements

Photo Credits
Cover photo: Forest to Sky Wellness Day at the Malahat Skywalk. Photo by Ariadne Boutsakis

A Swan Lake Nature Educator showcases insect and wildlife specimens during a pop-up outreach and engagement event at Uptown Shopping Centre.
Photo by Ariadne Boutsakis (SCBC)

Vancouver Island University (VIU) students learning about local bird species with Doug Fraser from Nature Nanaimo during the Nature Wander at Buttertubs Marsh Park.
Photo by Ariadne Boutsakis (SCBC)

APPENDIX A
Additional Resources

EQUITABLE GREENSPACE AND CLIMATE POLICY

Access to nature in Vancouver: What does it mean, and can we map it?

The Access to Nature in Vancouver (Fitzgibbons, 2020) report explores how "access to nature" can be defined and mapped in the City of Vancouver, based on public perceptions and literature review. The author proposes the Restorative Natural Area Index as a framework for assessing the "restorative" or mind-healing potential of greenspaces and informing planning decisions around access to nature. The report also draws on national and international examples of defining, measuring, and planning for access to nature.

Advancing green space equity via policy change: A scoping review and research agenda

Advancing green space equity via policy change (Rigolon et al., 2024) synthesizes current knowledge on policies designed to address inequitable access to urban greenspace, highlighting how equity-deserving communities remain disproportionately underserved. Drawing on existing literature and an interdisciplinary workshop, the authors propose a research agenda organized around policy evaluation, power building, green gentrification, health equity, and climate resilience.

Bridging the nature gap: Supporting ethno-racial diversity in outdoor spaces

In Bridging the nature gap: Supporting ethno-racial diversity in outdoor spaces, Hamaneh et al. (2026) discuss the factors that support Black, Asian, and Latine people's participation in nature-based activities, including the role of programs that foster community, build social connections, and cultivate environmental education and skills.

Canada's Urban Forests: Bringing the Canopy to All

Nature Canada's Bringing the Canopy to All (Whittingham & Vabi, 2022) report analyzes the distribution of urban tree canopies related to socio-demographic and socio-economic factors. The report finds that urban tree canopy tends to be significantly lower in low-income and racialized neighbourhoods, lending support to the 3-30-300 principle for equitable tree cover distribution. The authors recommend expanding equity metrics to include proximity, quality, and governance of urban forests.

Canadian City Parks Report

Park People's Canadian City Parks Report (2026) sheds light on emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities related to urban parks and greenspaces in Canada, including the growing recognition of parks as essential spaces for public health and climate adaptation, the systemic barriers to park access and enjoyment, and the limited capacity of municipalities to maintain and enhance park systems.

Equitable Implementation of Green Infrastructure: An Analysis of the City of Vancouver

Equitable Implementation of Green Infrastructure (Jang & Doyon, 2023) identifies gaps in how equity is incorporated into green infrastructure siting and proposes equity criteria and GIS variables grounded in distributional, recognitional, and procedural equity dimensions. Through a case study of Vancouver, the authors assess how social equity is integrated into GI planning and offer a framework to help municipalities embed equity considerations into their planning tools and decision-making processes.

Equity and Justice in Climate Action Planning: The Challenge of Evaluation

Equity and Justice in Climate Action Planning (Swanson, 2023) examines how equity and social justice are evaluated in climate action planning and recommends place-based, participatory evaluation methods that reflect community input and lived experience. By centering plan efficacy and local perceptions of justice, the paper shifts evaluation away from process efficiency toward how well plans meet community needs and priorities.

Equity Strategy for Municipal Climate Action Planning

The Equity Strategy for Municipal Climate Action Planning (Lazarus-Munnick, Radatus-Smith, & Nguyen, 2023) presents a comprehensive framework to help Canadian municipalities integrate recognitional, procedural, and distributive equity equity into their Climate Action Plans and offers practical and adaptable steps to implement equitable climate planning processes.

Integrating Equity, Diversity and Inclusion into Municipal Climate Action

Integrating Equity, Diversity and Inclusion into Municipal Climate Action (Tangirala & Meaney, 2023) is a guidebook for municipal staff and decision-makers that explains key EDI concepts and how to address the disproportionate climate impacts faced by marginalized communities. It offers practical examples, common challenges, and supporting resources to help local governments embed EDI principles more effectively in climate action planning.

Pathways to Living Cities Framework

The Pathways to Living Cities Framework (Tozer et al., 2022) provides strategies, best practices, case studies, and resources to help local governments and practitioners advance equitable and thriving green infrastructure in their communities.

Race and Nature in the City

Nature Canada's Race and Nature in the City (Scott & Tenneti, 2021) report provides evidence-based, community-informed recommendations for meaningfully engaging racialized communities in nature and nature-based programming in urban areas. The report offers insight into the lived experiences of newcomers and people of colour in nature, as well as the physical, psychological, economic, cultural, and language-based barriers that impede access to nature.

Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees to Canada: The Role of Municipalities

The Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees to Canada (Holley & Jedwab, 2019) toolkit provides an overview of the main challenges, types of action, examples of municipal EDI initiatives, and practices for welcoming newcomers in Canadian cities. This guide is important for understanding newcomers' priorities and the context required to inform equitable climate and greenspace strategies.

Resources for municipal climate adaptation

The Green Municipal Fund has a variety of resources to help municipalities advance climate adaptation, equity, and resilience in their communities, including:

- Factsheet: Why equity matters in municipal climate adaptation
- Factsheet: Advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in municipal service delivery
- Factsheet: Urban forest planning
- Webinar: Start collaborating for municipal climate adaptation planning
- Climate-Ready Communities Assessment Tool

APPENDIX A
Additional Resources

PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

Beyond Inclusion: Equity in Public Engagement

Developed by Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue (2020), the Beyond Inclusion: Equity in Public Engagement Guide introduces local government practitioners and decision-makers to eight principles that support the meaningful and equitable inclusion of diverse voices in public engagement processes.

One in Spirit Walk at Bowen Park, led by Elder Randy Fred for clients of the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (CVIMS). Photo by Sarah Haynes (CVIMS)

Climate Caucus Handbooks for Local Leaders

Climate Caucus' Community Engagement for Local Leaders and Climate Justice handbooks support equity-centered climate action and offer recommendations for engaging with diverse communities, including 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, newcomers and immigrants, low-income groups, marginalized and racialized communities, women, youth, and people experiencing homelessness.

Participatory Urban Planning Guide

The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre (MUEC)'s Participatory Urban Planning Guide (2015) offers a framework for municipalities to adopt a participatory, neighbourhood-level approach that centers community knowledge and lived experience. This approach emphasizes continuous engagement with stakeholders throughout the planning and decision-making process to reflect local observations, needs, concerns, and visions for their community. The MUEC also offers a toolbox of participatory planning exercises.

Resilient Conversations Toolkit

The Resilient Conversations Toolkit (2019), produced by the Center for Connected Communities and ResilientTO, offers a framework for engaging in conversations around lived experiences, social inequities, and community needs - particularly in the face of climate change - to help identify the vision, goals, and actions for building neighbourhood resilience.

Sowing the Seeds for Local Climate Leadership: A Learning Guide for Resident Engagement Using a Connected Communities Approach

The Sowing the Seeds for Local Climate Leadership (2021) guide, prepared by the Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA) and the Centre for Connected Communities (C3), aims to help practitioners advance equitable climate action by developing meaningful local partnerships, centering residents' voices and priorities, and supporting community-led climate initiatives.

Tools and Resources for Project-Based Community Advisory Boards

The Urban Institute's toolkit for project-based community advisory boards (Arnos et al., 2021) offers practical guidance, questions, and approaches for incorporating a community advisory board (CAB) into a project or initiative to strengthen community empowerment, buy-in, and participation.

Community Planting Party at the Esquimalt Gorge Park Green Shores for Shoreline Development (GSSD) Demonstration Site. Photo by Kelly Loch (SCBC)

COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING

Evaluating the role of community-led urban greenspace programming in advancing belonging, social connection, and health equity

Hassen et al. (2026)'s study of Park People's Sparking Change Toronto program offers critical insights into the socio-ecological determinants that influence social connection, belonging and health equity, and highlights how community-led greenspace programs can positively influence health and wellbeing among equity-deserving communities.

Examining Psychosocial and Economic Barriers to Green Space Access for Racialised Individuals and Families: A Narrative Literature Review

Robinson et al.'s (2022) review of the psychosocial and economic barriers to greenspace access within UK and USA contexts to help to inform how green social prescribing interventions can be adapted to support more equitable access, including culturally responsive design, improved safety measures, and targeted funding.

Healthy by Nature

The BC Parks Foundation's Healthy by Nature program is a national, evidence-based initiative with the mission to ensure all Canadians have the opportunity to experience the health benefits of nature.

Measuring Health, Wellbeing, and Equity in Greenspaces: A Toolkit & Common Indicators Framework

Park People's Measuring Health, Wellbeing, and Equity in Greenspaces toolkit (Hassen, Mohamed & Mulligan, 2025) shares practical tools, guiding questions, and lessons learned to help practitioners deepen their impact measurement practices, including key indicators for for community health, wellbeing, and social equity.

Towards liveable cities: A review of ethnicity, public urban nature space and wellbeing

Towards liveable cities (Wolf and Waitt, 2023) examines the relationships between urban greenspaces, ethnicity, and health equity in the Global North. The authors present twelve pathways for more inclusive park design and management, offering evidence to help urban greenspaces better support the wellbeing of diverse communities.

NATURE-BASED LEARNING

Canada's National Framework for Environmental Learning

The National Framework for Environmental Learning, designed for educators, policymakers, and leaders in the formal and non-formal education sectors, aims to strengthen environmental education across Canada for a more sustainable and climate resilient future. It outlines guiding principles, priority areas, and illustrative examples to support action, including the development of learning materials, programs, goals, assessment criteria, and reporting.

Nature for Newcomers Guides

The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley has developed a Nature for Newcomers guide that presents important information on wildlife safety in multiple languages.

Nature-based Learning Guides & Activities

Nature Canada offers a wide variety of resources and activities to encourage nature-based learning and awareness for all ages, including their "Lessons in a Backpack" for elementary school students, multilingual bird identification handouts, and multilingual nature guides for newcomers.

Program & Partnership Ideas

PROGRAM IDEAS:

- Walking or birding groups for seniors
- Ecological restoration or stewardship groups
- Accessible nature "wanders" with adaptive equipment
- Land-based language learning with Indigenous Elders
- Forest bathing sessions with health professionals
- Nature literacy & outdoor safety workshops for newcomers
- Multilingual guided nature walks with cultural ambassadors
- Pop-up nature classrooms at elementary and secondary schools
- Sensory-friendly nature walks or "sits" for neurodiverse individuals
- Intergenerational healing walks with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers
- Spring or summer break camps for youth on local ecosystems and climate adaptation
- Urban hiking or walking groups for women, people of colour, and queer communities

WHO TO PARTNER WITH:

- Older adult and senior groups
- Community agencies and libraries
- Accessibility and disability agencies
- Mental and physical health agencies
- Multicultural societies and settlement agencies
- Nature education and stewardship organizations
- Primary, secondary, and post-secondary schools, clubs, and youth groups
- Friendship Centres, Indigenous Elders, and Traditional Knowledge Holders
- Community-led collectives that serve equity-deserving communities (e.g. BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities)

World Ocean Day Climate Resilience Walk at Esquimalt Gorge Park, led by Greenspace for All Project Manager, Kelly Loch (right). Photo by Sarah Primeau (SCBC)

Accessibility: The degree of ease that something (e.g. service, physical environment, information, and transportation) can be accessed, used and enjoyed equally by everyone, particularly persons with disabilities. The proximity to and ease of access to greenspaces and their ecosystem services (Queens University, 2020).

Distributive equity: The distribution of climate action benefits and burdens within society across different groups and communities (Lazarus-Munnick et al., 2023).

Diversity: Differences in the social identities and lived experiences and perspectives of people that may include race, ethnicity, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, class, and/or socio-economic situations. These personal characteristics are protected grounds under Canadian human rights legislation (University of British Columbia, 2023).

Equity: Achieving parity in policy, process and outcomes for historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized people and groups while accounting for diversity (University of British Columbia, 2023). Equity is the fair distribution of opportunities, power and resources to meet the needs of all people, regardless of age, ability, gender, income, education level, culture or background (BC Healthy Communities Society, 2020).

Equity-deserving groups/communities: Groups of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to resources and opportunities as other members of society, and who need those resources and opportunities to attain just outcomes (Green Municipal Fund, 2025). Equity-deserving groups often experience barriers in accessing greenspaces and benefiting from the ecosystem services they provide, including attitudinal, historical, social, and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation, and transgender status (Queens University, 2020).

Equitable access to greenspace: Equity in access to greenspace means that each person – regardless of age, ethnicity, language, income level, ability, gender, sexual orientation, and citizenship status – lives in proximity to accessible greenspaces and benefits from the ecosystem services they provide. Each person feels safe and welcome in these shared spaces, free of financial, psychological, and physical barriers, and in cases where access is constrained, has easy access to resources, programs, and services that help facilitate their access to greenspaces.

Greenspace: Any vegetated areas of land or wetland within or adjoining an urban area, including forests, conservation areas, wetlands, parks, greenways, and trails (Taylor & Hochuli, 2017).

Inclusion: An active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege, and to build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces and opportunities to flourish for all (University of British Columbia, 2023).

Procedural equity: The equitable processes and efforts to include groups who are normally not included in decision-making, including the education, participation, and engagement of equity-deserving groups (Lazarus-Munnick et al., 2023).

Recognitional equity: The acknowledgement of communities or groups who are most vulnerable or who have been ignored or underrepresented due to race, gender, age, or socioeconomic status, as a result of pre-existing social, political, and economic structures (Lazarus-Munnick et al., 2023).

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The Stewardship Centre for British Columbia (SCBC) is a not-for-profit organization that is committed to championing science-based stewardship practices so that all Canadians understand, enjoy, and sustain healthy ecosystems. As good stewardship relies on good decision-making, SCBC works closely with partners to develop innovative technical, educational, and capacity-building resources.

CONTACT

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