



Research Forest

Legacy Funding Helping to Nurture Local Culture and Food Sustainability

The Young Rainbow Warrior Society, is a non-profit society based outside of Burns Lake and is establishing a food garden in the forest to promote self-sustainability for northern communities. With the creation of a multifunctional space in the forest, the Society is seeking to fulfill their mission to create jobs, entrepreneurship, learning and recreational opportunities and programs which encompass traditional teachings and sustainability. The Raven's Nest site that the Society is developing now includes a hexagon-shaped log structure for learning and gathering and an expanded garden area incorporating multiple hugelmounds supporting multiple food plants, two seasonal greenhouses, and prepared ground for future cereal crops¹.

CNC Research Forest was pleased to award The Young Rainbow Warriors Society with the Legacy Fund in 2020. Dawn Belcourt, an active member of the society reports, "With funding received from the CNC Research Forest Society the Young Rainbow Warrior Society was able to have one of its most productive and successful seasons, since its inception in 2014."

Despite a year full of challenges, the following months after receiving the funding, the Young Rainbow Warrior Society, was busy landscaping, building facilities, and expanding their gardens and greenhouses. In the spring and summer of 2020, they were able to: construct outbuildings for work areas, storage and animal husbandry; purchase a backhoe excavator; construct additional outdoor garden beds; build greenhouses; purchase pigs to clear, till and fertilize additional land; purchase new a wood cook stove for heating and food preparation; and expand the garden with fruit and citrus trees, as well as pollinator species.



The Society is looking forward to another successful year in 2021 with goals of a new rock garden, planting the newly prepared ground with cereal crops; construction of a year-round greenhouse; installation of pollinator habitat, producing food to supply local markets; and facilitating workshops and programs for teaching and learning traditional culture and self-sustainability.

"We felt blessed beyond our wildest expectations when we received half the grant awarded by the College of New Caledonia Forest Research Society's (CNCFRS) Legacy Fund in celebration of their 10th year. From this most generous donation, our community members will be able to enjoy fresh local produce from our garden in 2021 that will be affordable as well as nutritious, organic, and sustainably grown. The funding we received from this grant has also significantly contributed to - and will continue to - creating and maintaining a sustainable model of food grown in a northern climate." – Dawn Belcourt, member of The Young Rainbow Warrior Society.

1. Belcourt, D. (2021, March 31). Personal email communication.