

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This policy sets out the broad principles and procedures for voluntary involvement in The Land Conservancy. It is of relevance to everyone concerned with recruiting, supporting, developing and managing volunteers and promoting volunteering activity.
- 1.2 The policy and its implementation are kept under review to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of The Land Conservancy and its volunteers.  
Procedure:
  1. A committee consisting of two volunteer representatives, two *TLC* staff representatives, and the Volunteer Advisor will consider changes to the Volunteer policy. Suggested policy revisions will be forwarded to the Executive Director for approval.
  2. The Volunteer Advisor distributes copies of the Volunteer Policy manual to two *TLC* staff, one volunteer representative's for review when changes have occurred within the policy.
  3. Policy revisions can be made on an as needed basis by forwarding suggestions to Volunteer Advisor who will then follow procedure 1.

## **2 VOLUNTEER VISION**

The Land Conservancy's commitment to people and place will be expressed through active partnerships with individuals and communities, reflecting the volunteer vision and spirit as a leader in the field of volunteering.

## **3 COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERING**

- 3.1 The voluntary principle on which The Land Conservancy was founded is one of its greatest strengths. Volunteers are an established and integral part of The Land Conservancy. Without their active participation, the organization would be unable to prosper.
- 3.2 The Land Conservancy is committed to working with volunteers and communities to meet its founding purposes and objectives. Volunteering involvement in appropriate tasks and projects is welcomed, encouraged and developing at all levels of The Land Conservancy's activity.

## 4. Values and Principles Behind The Land Conservancy Volunteering

### 4.1. The Land Conservancy:

- i) recognizes volunteering as a means of fulfilling its purposes of enabling the permanent preservation of British Columbia's special places, and being 'of benefit' to all people by providing participative access
- ii) values volunteering as an inclusive act of participation that is itself important in promoting The Land Conservancy 's work
- iii) sustains the distinctiveness of the places which it protects through the practical involvement of people from local communities
- iv) appreciates that volunteering is enjoyable and can change and enrich the lives of individuals. Successful volunteer involvement takes account of individuals' motivations, aspirations and fulfillment
- v) acknowledges volunteering as of wider benefit to society and its beliefs and values
- vi) recruits volunteers on a task-led basis to match *TLC*'s needs with volunteers' skills, knowledge, experience and motivation
- vii) respects volunteers in both listening to and learning from what they have to say
- viii) values and respects the individual through providing equal opportunities for active involvement within the scope of The Land Conservancy's needs and resources
- ix) values volunteering as integral to its work at all levels and recognizes, as Octavia Hill did, the 'gifts of time' from volunteers as critical to its well-being and success
- x) works with individuals, organizations, groups and communities to achieve shared objectives within the principles of partnership and mutual benefit in order to attract widely based support to carry forward The Land Conservancy's own ideals and work
- xi) distinguishes volunteering from employment, and puts its flexibility and informality to best effect to complement the work of paid staff.

\*[Octavia Hill was the founder of the National Trust and of the "*gifts of time*"]

## **5. DEFINING VOLUNTEERS AND THE LAND CONSERVANCY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM**

- 5.1. A volunteer is someone who, without expectation of financial compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses, performs a task at the request of and on behalf of The Land Conservancy.
- 5.2. Volunteers participate at properties, regional and head offices, at many levels of skill and involvement. They also work in communities to promote The Land Conservancy's interests. Volunteers include the Executive Director, the Board of Directors, regional and local advisory committees, as well as individual members and supporters.
- 5.3. The importance of maintaining a balanced, effective and mutually beneficial staff/volunteer partnership is essential. It is based on the principle that The Land Conservancy Staff provide the structure, organization, direction and day-to-day management together with appropriate levels of accountability, while volunteers add value to The Land Conservancy's work by performing a wide range of complementary roles, contributing time, flexibility and specialist skills. Thus, within this framework volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity which is supported and encouraged by The Land Conservancy but is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment.
- 5.4. The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time or carry out the tasks provided. Likewise, The Land Conservancy cannot be compelled to provide regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken.
- 5.5. Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly and without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged - both what The Land Conservancy expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of The Land Conservancy - as well as attainment of the high standards on which The Land Conservancy's reputation depends.
- 5.6. There is no "right" to volunteer. *TLC* will make every effort to accommodate applicants, including applicants with special needs or community service requirements. However, the needs of the agency and the goals of the mandate shall take precedence over the needs of an individual.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1. The Land Conservancy acknowledges the need for a clear and consistent organizational framework for voluntary involvement which creates a positive climate for development.
- 6.2. Each volunteer or volunteer group has a designated member of staff or volunteer, to guide and advise them in their tasks. Volunteers are told who to approach for support and have regular access to that person.
- 6.3. The managers or TLC staff at properties, Regional and Head offices are responsible for the effective deployment and development of day-to-day voluntary activity.
- 6.4. At regional and the head office levels, the Executive Director invests resources for the management, planning and development of volunteering. Every region and the head office location has a manager or other member of staff with responsibility for devising and recommending strategic direction and disseminating and monitoring standards, coaching and good practice. The Volunteer Advisor is also accessible to volunteers at property level to advise on personal volunteering issues.
- 6.5. The Volunteer Advisor on behalf of the Executive Director has functional responsibility for The Land Conservancy's overall volunteering program, including the development and monitoring of standards and best practices.  
Procedure:
  1. The Volunteer Advisor will provide direction for the *TLC* Volunteer program through current and sound policies and procedures for working with volunteers.
  2. The Volunteer Advisor will be consulted about any matter that might affect the Volunteer program and conversely will advise on any volunteer matters that may affect The Land Conservancy.

## 7. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- 7.1. The Land Conservancy is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of sex, sexual orientation, race, disability, marital status, age (subject to 7.2 and 7.3), religion, community background or political beliefs. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to do the specified task subject to the needs and restrictions of the location.  
Procedure:
  1. The volunteer's interests, skills, and experience will be determined through interview and application to the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff.
  2. Volunteers will be referred to appropriate areas based on the potential ability to do the role.
  3. Should a Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff not place a volunteer they will record the reason for not accepting them and inform the Volunteer Advisor.

7.2 Potential volunteers will be interviewed by the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff to determine their interests, skills, and suitability and to answer questions the volunteer may have about the volunteer program. Successful placement of volunteers results from matching the volunteer's interests, skills and motivation with the role requirements.

Procedure:

1. All potential volunteers complete an enrolment form.
2. Prior to placement at least two references will be contacted for assessment on suitability and to confirm previous experience.
3. Records of interview, reference checks and reasons for non-referral will be kept on file for 2 years after the time of application.

7.3 There is no lower age for the recruitment of young volunteers provided they are able to make a useful contribution, they are undertaking suitable tasks for which there is no legal minimum, they are supervised and not left alone and a parent or guardian has given permission if they are under nineteen.

Procedure

1. Minors applying to volunteer will be given a form to have signed by their parent or guardian.
2. Minors will not be placed in a volunteer position until the form is on file with the Volunteer Advisor.
3. Minor volunteers will only be placed with *TLC* staff or volunteers that has had a Criminal Record Check.

7.4 The Land Conservancy does not specify a general volunteer upper age limit and recognizes the valuable contribution made by older volunteers in terms of knowledge and experience. However, The Land Conservancy would be irresponsible if it permitted volunteers to continue beyond a point where volunteering is detrimental to their own or other people's health and safety.

Procedure:

1. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff will do a performance appraisal of the volunteer, as related to the role description.
2. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff meets with the volunteer to discuss the volunteer experience and the results of the performance appraisal.
3. The Manager will issue a letter of appreciation for their volunteering involvement
4. When the placement is completed, the Manager/*TLC* staff notifies the Volunteer Advisor.

7.5 All new volunteers need to participate in the general *TLC* volunteer orientation as soon as possible upon placement. The volunteer orientation gives volunteers a better understanding of the history, purpose and organization of The Land Conservancy. An informed volunteer is more effective and often more motivated in the work they do when they understand the importance of our mission.

Procedure:

1. The line manager schedules a Volunteer Orientation once a month.
2. Regional/Property Managers/*TLC* staff ensures that their volunteers attend the *TLC*'s orientation prior to their first assignment or contact Volunteer Advisor to arrange an alternate form of orientation.

3. Regional/Property Managers/*TLC* staff contacts the Volunteer Advisor with the names of volunteers attending the orientation.

7.6 Individual volunteers have a clear, concise and current role description. Managers within the recommended *TLC* format prepare these. The underlying principle is the identification of real need for a task to be undertaken. Both volunteer and the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff must have a clear understanding of exactly what that work is. A role description serves a number of functions:

- Ensures a division between volunteer work and paid work.
- Clarifies the duties and expectations of the volunteer for the volunteer, *TLC* staff, the Regional and Property Manager, and the Volunteer Advisor.
- Provides a basis from which to do performance appraisals.
- Provides a record of the contribution the volunteer has made at *TLC*.

Procedure:

1. Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff will develop a general outline of the duties of the volunteer using the form provided in appendix.
2. If a volunteer is already in place, the Regional/Property Manager will discuss the duties with the volunteer. Role description for existing positions shall be reviewed on an annual basis or when substantial changes have occurred in that position.
3. The role description is considered in terms of its benefit to the volunteer. If the benefit to the volunteer is minimal then the duties should be reconsidered in order to make the role more desirable. If this is not possible within the scope of the duties then the role is not suitable for a volunteer.
4. The Volunteer Advisor and the Regional/Property Manager prior to recruitment, approve the role description in terms of suitability for a volunteer.
5. The role description will then be approved to be used by the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff.
6. A copy of each role description will be included in a Volunteer Role File. This file will be kept in the possession of the Volunteer Advisor for orientation purposes, and shall be available to volunteers upon request.
7. Provision of role descriptions for Board Members will be the responsibility of the Executive Director.

7.7 Where necessary, The Land Conservancy pro-actively uses appropriate communication channels to recruit volunteers for specific opportunities.

7.8 Selection procedures for individual volunteer roles pay due regard to protecting The Land Conservancy interests and references are requested in most cases. Equally important to The Land Conservancy is that procedures seek to identify what the individual or group expects from their volunteering in order to ascertain whether their needs can be met.

7.9 When the Land Conservancy recommends that a person being considered for a particular volunteer role be invited for an informal interview with the relevant Manager to explore suitability and motivation. Similarly, a Manager meets with

volunteer group leaders in advance to discuss and clarify group tasks and area of involvement. Successful volunteer placement results from the volunteer being aware of and comfortable with the duties and responsibilities of the position and the *TLC* staff person being comfortable with the skills and knowledge of the volunteer. Potential volunteers who have been approved by the Volunteer Advisor are referred to the appropriate Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff will have the final decision in placing a volunteer in their area or project.

Procedure:

1. The Volunteer Advisor, Regional Manager, manager or *TLC* staff will screen applications for general skills, experience, and suitability. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff has the knowledge [or be trained] to screen the volunteers for the specific skills and abilities that are required for the volunteer position in their area.
2. After initial screening has been done, a summary of the applicant's skills and a copy of their resume (when available) is kept on file with the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff.
3. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff prioritises the applications and interviews those with the required skills, experience, and abilities.
4. Prior to acceptance, the Volunteer Advisor and Regional Manager discusses the details of the role description to ensure that the placement is mutually agreeable.
5. The Regional Manager/*TLC* staff selects a successful volunteer or volunteers and informs the Volunteer Advisor of the decision.
6. The Regional Manager/*TLC* staff contacts the unsuccessful candidates or arranges for the Volunteer Advisor to do so.
7. The Regional Manager/*TLC* staff maintains the records of the selection process.

7.10 Individual voluntary involvement begins with a letter of acceptance, usually issued by the line Manager.

7.11 New individual volunteers are given time to settle-in, both to allow them to learn about The Land Conservancy and their role and give The Land Conservancy the opportunity to assess how their involvement is working out. At the end of a settling-in period considered suitable by their Manager and indicated when volunteering commences, an informal discussion is held between the volunteer and Manager to discuss any issues of concern.

Procedure:

1. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff will do a performance appraisal of the volunteer, as related to the role description near the end of the settling in period.
2. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff meets with the volunteer near the completion of the settling in period to discuss the volunteer experience and the results of the performance appraisal.
3. If it is agreeable that the volunteer should continue, then the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff notifies the Volunteer Advisor of the successful placement.

4. If the placement has not been successful, the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff and the volunteer discuss the necessary steps to improve the placement or for reassignment.
  5. Should there be disagreement regarding the success of the placement, the Volunteer Advisor should be contacted to mediate.
  6. If reassignment is required, the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff notifies the Volunteer Advisor for follow-up.
  7. If the placement is completed, the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff notifies the Volunteer Advisor.
- 7.12 All new volunteers will be asked to participate in the general *TLC* Volunteer Orientation as soon as possible upon placement. The Volunteer Orientation gives volunteers a better understanding of the history, purpose and organization of The Land Conservancy. An informed volunteer is more effective and often more motivated in the work they do when they understand the importance of our mission.
- Procedure:
1. Schedule volunteer orientations once a month with the Volunteer Advisor.
  2. Regional/Property Managers/*TLC* staff ensures that their volunteers attend the *TLC*'s orientation prior to their first assignment or contact Volunteer Advisor to arrange an alternate form of orientation.
  3. Regional/Property Managers/*TLC* staff contact Volunteer Advisor with the names of volunteers attending the orientation.
- 7.13 All new volunteers and volunteers new to a specific area will receive an orientation including function, safety, security, and emergency procedures to that project or area by their Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff at the commencement of their assignment. It is essential for safety and Insurance reasons that volunteers receive a safety orientation.
- Procedure:
1. A Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff develops an orientation to the area that the volunteer is working in and arranges for the volunteer to complete it.
  2. The volunteer will be re-oriented after any changes to the area.
- 7.14 Recruiting friends and family members are welcome to volunteer, but they should not, except in exceptional circumstances, be placed under direct supervision of other members of their family who are employees. The support of family members for The Land Conservancy is greatly appreciated. By refraining from supervisory relationships between family members, perceptions of conflict of interest or favouritism can be avoided.
- Procedure
1. Family members of *TLC* staff go through the normal channels for screening and recruitment.
- 7.15 Volunteers are welcome to attend training in order to fully enjoy their placement. For fairness and consistency all volunteers, doing the same role, require the same training. Optional methods of training, within reason, may be required and be developed in order to accommodate or remove barriers for some volunteers. Participating in training is a responsibility that the volunteer has accepted in order to have a warm and enriching experience volunteering within *TLC*.

Procedure:

1. Inform volunteers of the training, accept reasons for not attending and record the procedures to take when they are unable to attend.
2. Take attendance at all training sessions.
3. Those volunteers who did not attend and who did not contact the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff prior to the meeting are contacted to determine the reason that they did not attend.
4. Remind the volunteer of their dedication to *TLC* and that the training is important to increase their enjoyment and understanding in their roles.
5. Record the discussion with the volunteer. Determine if it is possible for training to be provided in a different manner.
6. Monitor volunteer's attendance at future training events to determine if the volunteer is enjoying the training.
7. If the volunteer repeatedly does not attend, send a letter to thank them for their interest with *TLC*, remind them of other ways that they can be involved with *TLC* and invited them to a future event. Send a copy of the letter to Volunteer Advisor.

## 8. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

8.1. New volunteers are made to feel welcome and provided with a copy of the **Essential Information for Volunteers** booklet together with an introduction pack including material relevant to their role.

8.2. The development of training and support for volunteers is a high priority for The Land Conservancy in order to provide them with the necessary information and skills to carry out their tasks.

Procedure:

1. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff arranges for the volunteer to receive the Land Conservancy Orientation through Volunteer Advisor.
2. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff works with Volunteer Advisor to develop a training schedule for the specific training that the volunteer will need to do their role. Training can be done individually or in groups.
3. The Regional or Property Manager will consult the volunteer to determine if they feel comfortable in their new position.

8.3 Volunteers may want to develop new skills while helping The Land Conservancy and, where appropriate, are encouraged to take on new roles or assume greater involvement.

Procedure:

1. It is the responsibility of the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff, in co-operation with the volunteers in their area or project, to determine what the nature of the training should be and to arrange for it.

2. In the course of discussing performance appraisals with volunteers, the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff develops guidelines as to the training needs.
  3. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff meets with the volunteer or representative group of volunteers for input and to discuss perceived needs.
  4. A mutually satisfactory training plan based on discussions is developed.
  5. Arrangements for implementation of the plan are made.
- 8.4 In-house training courses on 'Working with Volunteers' are made available to staff and volunteers involved in volunteer management.
- Procedures:
1. The Volunteer Advisor will develop training programs for Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff.
  2. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff contacts Volunteer Advisor to participate in a workshop or for individual training.
  3. The Volunteer Advisor notifies Regional/Property Managers/*TLC* staff about workshops and training opportunities that might be of interest to them.
- 8.5 Examination of the effective involvement of volunteers is a component in the annual personal performance review of staff working with volunteers. Performance reviews should be non-threatening, constructive, supportive, flexible, and empowering. They should motivate the volunteer to aim for the highest standards and pinpoint where the organization can help the volunteer to achieve their goals.
- Procedure
1. Standards of performance are developed for each role description
  2. The volunteer is made aware of the standards of performance and the performance reviews process at the time of placement.
  3. Performance reviews should be cumulative and ongoing. Volunteers should be observed, in terms of performance reviews, over a period of time in order to account for the variety of situations they may encounter.
  4. An appointment is made with the volunteer to discuss the performance reviews.
  5. The performance reviews should offer recognition and support for the areas in which the volunteer is performing well. A plan should be developed, with input from the volunteer, to resolve those areas where improvement is needed.
  6. A copy of the performance reviews is filed with the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff. A copy of the performance reviews will be forwarded to Volunteer Advisor.
  7. The President will conduct performance reviews of the Board Members.

## **9. SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION**

- 9.1. The Land Conservancy understands that although volunteers do not seek reward they do appreciate recognition. All staff and volunteers responsible for volunteers are encouraged to ensure appropriate acknowledgment on a regular basis. This could range from a simple 'Thank you' to a volunteers lunch or tea party and perhaps even,

on rare occasions, a nomination to the Honours List for exceptional voluntary support.

Procedure:

1. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff should try to determine the preferences of the volunteers in their area to determine what action is required.
2. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff should take opportunities such as placement interviews, probationary and performance reviews interviews to determine appropriate methods for recognizing volunteers in their area.
3. The Volunteer Advisor in collaboration with the Executive Director, staff and volunteers, shall determine appropriate recognition and ensure that it takes place.
4. The Volunteer Advisor develops an annual volunteer recognition plan in cooperation with Regional/Property Managers and *TLC* staff.
5. An award of the Year to be implement in 2002. With noted Requirements: Eligibility period: and how selection is to be made.

- 9.2. Volunteers are given the opportunity to claim reimbursement, subject to the approval of an agreed reasonable out of-pocket expenses, subject to production of receipts. The Head Office, Volunteer Advisor, or Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff issues the Land Conservancy's guidelines on the payment of expenses to volunteers.

Procedure:

1. Volunteers may be reimbursed for expenses incurred while carrying out their duties on behalf of The Land Conservancy if such expenses have been pre-approved.
2. Volunteers should not accept an expense that is the responsibility of The Land Conservancy. Whenever possible alternate arrangements should be made in order to avoid the use of the volunteer's resources.
3. It is the decision of The Land Conservancy as to what expenses are required therefore, pre-approval is required prior to the volunteer incurring the expense.
4. Foreseeable expenses are discussed with the volunteer. If the volunteer feels comfortable incurring the expense, written confirmation of the commitment to reimburse specific expenses may be given to them. It should be explained to the volunteer that reimbursement might not be immediate as the request for reimbursement may take two weeks.
5. Any expense not pre-approved by *TLC* staff may be ineligible for reimbursement.
6. The volunteer presents receipts to the Regional/Property Manager for reimbursement. This may be done through petty cash or a Request for reimbursement form.

- 9.3. It is recommended Land Conservancy practice that Managers discuss progress with their volunteers on a regular basis. This also gives the opportunity to monitor the usefulness of the role, establish whether the volunteer would like to reduce or develop their current contribution, and ensure that they feel valued and happy in their role.

## 10. MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The Land Conservancy is committed to implementing and improving standards and best practice for the management and resources of voluntary activity and to maintaining good relations with its volunteers. Key management issues include:

### 10.1 VOLUNTEERS AS LEADERS:

A volunteer may act as a trainer, supervisor, leader or project Manager, providing this is properly specified and it has been established that the volunteer has the necessary skills or potential.

### 10.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY:

The Land Conservancy has a health and safety statement that will be available at its properties and offices. The Land Conservancy is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all its volunteers as well as staff and to giving appropriate instruction, training and supervision for their welfare. Appropriate protective clothing is provided where needed (except boots for Working Holidays & Work Weekends, which participants are asked to provide Steel-toed boots for themselves).

Procedure:

1. Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff informs volunteers of the Health and Safety procedures that affect their work areas.
2. Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff supervises volunteers to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the procedures.
3. Volunteers knowingly not following appropriate procedures will be re-informed about this policy.
4. All accidents, regardless of severity, must be reported immediately to the Volunteer Advisor, Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff, who will complete an incident report.

### 10.3 INSURANCE:

**THIS IS A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF WHAT *TLC* IS OFFERING.**

- i) The Land Conservancy's liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them.
- ii) Personal accident insurance is in force for the benefit of volunteers in certain age categories.
- iii) The Land Conservancy does not insure the personal possessions of volunteers against loss or damage except for a limited amount of cover, if the loss occurs from *TLC* vehicle. All claims are made at the discretion of The Land Conservancy of British Columbia.
- iv) The Land Conservancy insurance is in force to cover loss or physical damage to equipment provided for the use of volunteers
- v) The insurance position is brought to the attention of volunteers in the *Essential Information for Volunteers* booklet and introduction pack.

- 10.4 **PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY:**  
If volunteers use their professional skills at The Land Conservancy's request for purposes on which they are qualified to advise, The Land Conservancy issues a letter on request releasing them from professional indemnity.
- 10.5 **PUBLIC STATEMENTS:**  
Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate *TLC*, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate *TLC* staff. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as ambassadors of *TLC* as specifically indicated within their role descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.
- Procedure
1. Upon being contacted to make a public statement, the volunteer consults with their Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff to determine appropriate action.
  2. The Regional/Property Manager contacts the *TLC* staff that has authorization for the particular situation.
- 10.6 **DATA PROTECTION:**  
Personal information recorded about volunteers is stored and maintained with appropriate safeguards for confidentiality. The Land Conservancy informs volunteers of their right of access to personal records. Records of the history of each volunteer are required for recognition and supervisory purposes. They may also be required should any legal action result from the volunteer's activities.
- Procedure:
1. Information gained from these records will only be released with permission of the volunteer.
  2. A note will be made on the file of any volunteer that does not want information released. This information will be kept on file in the Victoria Head office only.
  3. Volunteers will be asked for permission to release information for scheduling and emergencies purposes on their application form.
  4. The Regional/Property Manager *TLC* staff will maintain records on supervision and hours of service.
  5. A copy of volunteer records on disciplinary action and role descriptions will be forwarded to the Volunteer Advisor Office.
- 10.7 **CONFIDENTIALITY:**  
The Land Conservancy advises volunteers of the need for confidentiality where they have access to sensitive Land Trust information, which is not public knowledge.
- 10.8 **COPYRIGHT:**  
Volunteers are asked if they would donate to The Land Conservancy any original copyright works, they may produce while volunteering
- 10.9 **CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS:**  
Every effort must be made in order to protect children who are participating in The Land Conservancy programs. Volunteers working with minors will be required to

submit a Criminal Record Check prior to commencement of assignment. Volunteers who refuse a Criminal Record check or who have been convicted or have charges pending for offences related to the assignment requirements may not be accepted. Standard procedure is for all volunteers working with children to be screened for a criminal record.

Procedure:

1. Any volunteer applying to volunteer in an area with children's involvement will be asked to submit a criminal record check.
2. Information regarding Criminal Record checks is available through Volunteer Advisor.
3. The Volunteer Advisor provides the potential volunteer with a letter confirming their involvement at The Land Conservancy of British Columbia.
4. Criminal Record checks that indicate a record or pending charges will be discussed with the volunteer. Records that indicate a potential for risk to children or employees will not be accepted.

#### 10.10 DIFFICULT SITUATIONS:

The Land Conservancy aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. Managers are responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer conduct or complaints. They seek to ensure that the volunteer's views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution based on The Land Conservancy's guidelines on dealing with difficult situations.

**A. HANDLING OF GRIEVANCES OR COMPLAINTS** - Handling concerns with respect and fairness may prevent escalation of the issues as well as establishing a creative and supportive atmosphere.

Procedure

1. The *TLC* staff person receiving the complaint will hear and acknowledge the complaint within one week of receipt.
2. Volunteers, if need be, are referred to the correct lines of communication.
3. Every effort should be made to resolve the complaint in a mutually acceptable manner. The concern should be addressed through discussion, information, and negotiation between the Regional/Property Manager or *TLC* staff and the volunteer, if possible. The steps taken need to be recorded.
4. Should the issue not be resolved the *TLC* staff person invites the volunteer to discuss the matter with the Volunteer Advisor.

**B. GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE** - Volunteers will address complaints, grievances or concerns through the formal channels of communication. Volunteers bring a valuable and potentially useful perspective to The Land Conservancy. A clear procedure for volunteers to challenge the policy, procedures and activities of The Land Conservancy allows them to do so in an effective and constructive manner.

Procedure:

1. Volunteers are made aware of the procedure for addressing grievances or complaints in the Volunteer Orientation and in their orientation manual.
2. Address concerns verbally or in writing, to the volunteer's Regional/Property Manager or *TLC* staff person.
3. Every effort should be made to reach resolution at this stage through discussion, negotiation, and information sharing. If resolution is not found in this manner,

the volunteer will inform the *TLC* staff person of their intention to approach the next level of supervision. This procedure can be repeated if necessary.

**C. DISMISSAL** - Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of The Land Conservancy of BC or who fail to fulfil their responsibilities are subject to dismissal. The leadership of The Land Conservancy develops policies, direction and guidelines for the institution based on direction they have been given and their own skills, knowledge, and experience. In order for The Land Conservancy to be a healthy functioning institution respect and trust for the leadership must exist. Volunteers are given the privilege of being considered amongst the staff resource of *TLC* and must in turn respect the policies of the institution. Dismissal is considered a last resort approach to resolving differences.

Procedure:

1. A system of progressive discipline is used except in the case where immediate dismissal is required. Dismissal will be considered only after other appropriate approaches have been tried and failed.
2. Dismissal takes place only after consultation among the immediate area Manager, Volunteer Advisor and the volunteer him/herself.
3. The Volunteer Advisor at the earliest possible opportunity of any corrective action to be taken will inform the Executive Director.
4. Grounds for immediate dismissal may include but are not limited to:
  - gross misconduct or insubordination,
  - being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing volunteer assignment
  - theft of property or misuse of funds, equipment or materials.
  - lies or falsification of records
  - illegal, violent, or unsafe acts
  - abuse or mistreatment of co-workers or visitors
  - failure to abide by agency policy or procedure
  - not willing or inability to support and further the mission of *TLC* and/or objectives of the program.
  - inability or unwillingness to follow written or verbal direction

**D. APPEAL PROCESS** - Applicants who have not been accepted as volunteers have the right to know why he or she was refused and may appeal the decision. Volunteer work may be a stepping-stone to employment, educational opportunities, or lifestyle changes. Volunteer screening should be a fair and just process but also a flexible process that allows volunteers to the opportunity to grow with experience and experiment with interests whenever possible. The Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff may refuse at the initial screening or applications. Documentation should be kept to support the decision.

Procedure:

1. Applicants contact Volunteer Advisor regarding their application.
2. If the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff refused the application, the Volunteer Advisor will meet with the Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff to discuss the reason for the refusal.
3. When possible, a negotiated placement should be explored.
4. The Volunteer Advisor will explain reasons for the volunteer's application not being accepted and will offer to discuss the application further.

5. If an applicant wants to appeal decision, a written letter detailing the concerns should be submitted to the Executive Director.
6. The Executive Director will discuss the appeal with both parties and make a final decision on the application.

#### 10.12 INFORMATION:

The Land Conservancy provides volunteers with policies, position statements and information necessary to carry out their roles. Responsibility for communication rests with the direct line Manager, who is expected to include volunteers in appropriate meetings and briefings. Every volunteer will have a Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff who will be responsible for supervision, consultation, support, and direction. Volunteers deserve supervision and guidance in order for them to receive feedback, recognition, and to improve and develop their skills. The volunteer should know who their supervisor is and what their role is.

Procedure:

1. When developing a role description/position a Regional/Property Manager or *TLC* staff is assigned.
2. The Regional/Property Manager/ *TLC* staff meets with the volunteer on a regular basis either through group meetings or individually.
3. Regional/Property Manager/*TLC* staff that normally have group meetings meet with volunteers individually at minimum on an annual basis or as needed.
4. Supervision would include a review of the role position/description, identifying and resolving concerns of both parties and determining training needs.
5. The immediate supervisors of volunteer's liase with the Manager of volunteers, providing progress reports, notice of any problems or concerns, and input regarding volunteer work performance on an as needed basis or on request.

#### 10.13 CONSULTATION:

The Land Conservancy supports a two-way dialogue between staff and volunteers. Volunteers are consulted about decisions, which would substantially affect the performance of their tasks.

Procedure:

1. Discuss changes that may substantially affect the performance of the duties with the volunteer or volunteers. Be prepared to explain the reason for the change and the possible impacts it may have.
2. Consider any input or concerns that the volunteer may have. Negotiate with the volunteer to find ways to alleviate concerns where possible.
3. Monitor the affect on the volunteer after the changes have been made to see if they are comfortable with the new situation.
4. Should the volunteer not feel comfortable with the new role, discuss the situation with Volunteer Advisor who may be able to arrange for a new placement that meets the needs of the volunteer.

#### 10.14 STAFF AS VOLUNTEERS:

Paid employees may serve in direct-service volunteer roles which are outside the scope of their paid work within the organization, where a definite distinction can be made between their paid employment and their volunteer involvement and when the activities take place outside of usual working hours. Paid employees may have an

interest in becoming involved in activities at *TLC* for personal growth or recreational purposes.

Procedure:

1. *TLC* staff persons who would like to volunteer should contact the appropriate Manager to discuss their involvement.
2. The Executive Director has the final approval for the placement.

#### 10.15 SIGN-IN/OUT LOGS :

All volunteers will sign in at their work area upon arrival and sign out when leaving. Signing in and out, records are useful for emergency producers at the project for tracking volunteers, also for recording volunteer hours.

Procedure:

1. Record the volunteer hours in the house binder.
2. Explain the importance of registering the volunteers.
3. Records are kept for several years.

#### 10.16 KEYS:

*TLC* staff may request keys for registered volunteers in their area by following the *TLC* Security policy. Keys should only be issued when necessary to volunteers working in areas that require keys to access their work area or for use in the course of their work.

Procedure

1. Determine if the volunteer requires the use of keys in the course of their work.
2. Make a request to the *TLC* staff responsible for the keyed area.
3. Explain to the volunteer the responsibility that accompanies the possession of a key
4. Note in file that received the key and have them sign for it when receiving the key and when returning the key.

#### 10.17 IDENTIFICATION:

All volunteers need to wear *TLC* identification while performing their duties on The Land Conservancy's properties.

Procedure

1. Ensure a completed application and role description is on file with Regional/Property Manager or Volunteer Advisor.
2. Nametags are issued at the properties when volunteer arrives for shift.

#### 10.18 TRAVEL/USE OF VEHICLES :

Volunteers may use their vehicles in the course of their duties in accordance with their I.C.B.C Insurance coverage for their own vehicles. The Land Conservancy must take steps to decrease the risk to passengers in vehicles driven on The Land Conservancy's behalf. Volunteers' own vehicles may be used for The Land Conservancy of British Columbia activities provided 'third party liability' (recommendation is 3 million for one person and for more than one person up to 5 million.) coverage is in effect and the insurers have been advised of the use.

Procedure:

1. The volunteer submits a copy of their driver's license to Volunteer Advisor.
2. If reimbursement for mileage is required, pre-approval from the Regional/Property Manager must be completed

3. Drivers with convictions or charges pending for criminal driving offences will be informed of this policy and will be invited to offer reason that the record should be disregarded.
4. Applicants who are not accepted, as a driver due to their driving record will be redirected to other volunteer positions.

#### 10.19 PARKING:

The Land Conservancy has limited parking at all *TLC* Properties, and in some cases due to limited bus access, ask volunteers to car pool whenever possible, to their volunteer assignments. The Land Conservancy encourages the use of public transportation, cycling, and carpooling for both *TLC* staff and volunteers. For those with disabilities or who must travel a considerable distance to volunteer the use of a car may be an important option. Lack of parking could be a barrier to their involvement at *TLC* properties.

##### Procedures

1. Parking privileges only extend for the period of time that the Land Conservancy volunteers are involved in *TLC* activities and properties.
2. Volunteers using the parking spaces may be asked to register their license plate number in the office immediately following securing a space.

#### 10.20 MOVING ON:

The Land Conservancy recognizes that volunteers may cease their involvement at any time. Exit interviews are recommended to ascertain why a volunteer is leaving, share any learning points and establish whether they may want to be involved again in the future.