



SPRING 2015

SKAGIT UPDATE

NEWSLETTER OF THE SKAGIT LAND TRUST

Forever Wild Illabot Creek

Largest Ranch on Illabot Creek Conserved Forever

By Jane Zillig, Land Specialist

Just east of Rockport you will find Illabot Creek, one of the most important tributaries of the Skagit River. This flourishing creek provides spawning and rearing habitat for Chinook, chum, coho and pink salmon; bulltrout and steelhead. With such a wild fish smorgasbord, it's no surprise that one of the largest bald eagle wintering areas in the lower 48 is adjacent to Illabot Creek. Because of this ecological richness, Illabot Creek has been the focus of a variety of wildlife habitat protection and restoration projects through the decades.

Recognizing the importance of this tributary, several years ago Skagit Land Trust reached out to the landowners of the largest remaining private tract in the lower Illabot watershed to propose a project that would benefit salmon habitat as well as farmland.

Ken and Velma Perrigoue bought 100 acres with a half mile of frontage on Illabot Creek in 1986. They had a history of farming and ranching and this property allowed them to continue a lifestyle they loved. Over the years, they have observed cougar, bear, bobcat, deer and coyotes on their land. Woodland Park Zoo released rehabilitated and tagged bald eagles on their property. When the Trust contacted the Perrigoues, the key was finding the right tool to both protect the land for salmon habitat conservation along with supporting their ranching lifestyle.



PHOTOS: THE OLD SAYING "SALMON SO THICK YOU CAN WALK ACROSS THE RIVER ON THEIR BACKS" STILL HOLDS TRUE FOR ILLABOT CREEK. KEN AND VELMA PERRIGOUE PICTURED ABOVE RECENTLY PLACED MORE THAN A HALF MILE OF THE RIVER AND 100 ACRES INTO PERMANENT PROTECTION WITH SKAGIT LAND TRUST.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

"The real names of the environment are the names of rivers and river valleys; creeks, ridges, and mountains; towns and cities; lakes, woodlands, lanes roads, creatures, and people." ~Wendell Berry

Dear Members,

It is an honor to write to you in the role of Skagit Land Trust Board President. It has been a humbling and deeply rewarding experience to work closely with the board and staff of this organization. They are bright, hard-working people. This year we welcome Jana Hanson to the Board of Directors. Jana is recently retired, having served as the Community & Economic Development Director for the City of Mount Vernon since 2003. She brings a depth of knowledge and energy to the board that we are fortunate to have.



At the Trust's auction this year, a wise person said "How great it is to be in a room full of people who share the same values." Our membership is broad and diverse, but we are all connected to this beautiful, dynamic river valley. We all know this environment by name. We all want clean water and clean air. We all want to know that there will be places where our children and grandchildren can experience the natural world and find their own connection to it.

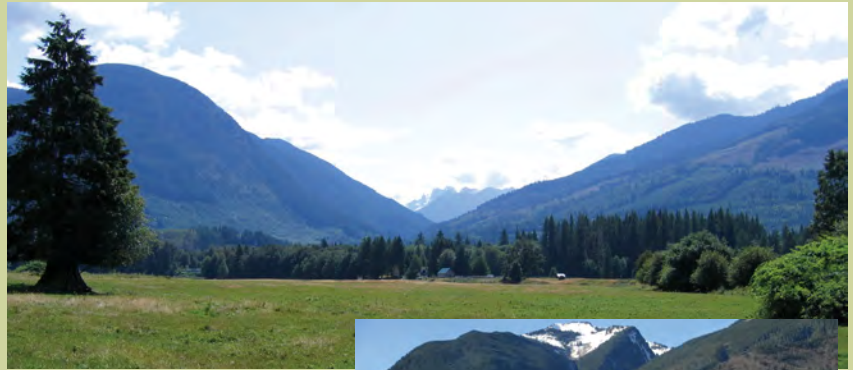
Like the lands we protect for future generations, the Trust itself is a dynamic entity. This year will see new horizons for the organization. We are implementing a new Conservation Strategy that focuses on the preservation of enough land in the right places to allow our ecosystems to sustain themselves. We are completing a new Strategic Direction for the Trust that takes stock of where we have come from, confirms our core values, and sets a clear vision for our future. We see healthy landscapes, where our natural world in turn sustains and supports the health and wellbeing of our communities. This year we will also see changes in the faces of our staff, as both Martha Bray and Diane Bednarz prepare to begin their next adventures in life.

And like the lands we protect, we are a durable and resilient organization. There is strength in our diversity, and we have a clear direction and plan for the organization that allows for change, while ensuring that we are able to continue protecting those special places we know by name for many generations to come. It is exciting to be a part of such great work. I thank you for your partnership and look forward to the year ahead.



Sara Young, President - Board of Directors

The Trust proposed a voluntary conservation easement which became a win-win for both parties. When the easement was signed in December 2014, the Perrigoues extinguished their remaining development rights, ensuring the land would not be developed for home sites. Instead the conservation easement ensures that the stream corridor, wildlife habitat and the open space are protected forever. The project also restores a 130 foot buffer along the creek. New fencing will be installed, invasive weeds will be removed and then native trees and shrubs will be planted along this beautiful and important stream.



Successful projects like this are made possible through strong partnerships. Skagit County Public Works is heading up the stream shoreline restoration efforts and provided matching grant funds. The Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office-Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the Department of Ecology generously assisted with funding the project. The Skagit Watershed Council provided expert guidance on pulling the many pieces of this project together. "In terms of fish, there are few tributaries as important as Illabot in the Skagit watershed" says Executive Director Molly Doran. "We are grateful to the Perrigoues and our partners for working with us to find the common ground where the fish and wildlife habitat will thrive and the landowners will continue ranching."



THE PERRIGOU RANCH IS A WORKING CATTLE RANCH. UP TO NINE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS AND ALL SUBDIVISION POSSIBILITIES ARE NOW EXTINGUISHED, PRESERVING THE CREEK, OPEN SPACE AND RANCH. A BUFFER OF NATIVE TREES WILL BE PLANTED ALONG ILLABOT CREEK BY PARTNER SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS.

Hidden Lakes Update

As many of our supporters know, Skagit Land Trust and the City of Mount Vernon tried to purchase 120 acres of the Hidden Lakes property adjacent to Little Mountain Park in 2011. We were unsuccessful in that attempt and the property was recently purchased by a Bellingham-based logging company. One of Skagit Land Trust's most successful conservation methods is to acquire land from willing sellers for the purpose of permanent conservation. Thus, the Trust is again looking into the possibility of purchasing some of this property to ensure it is protected for our community. It is too early to know if this will come together. Our hope would be that the property's wetlands would eventually be added to the Mount Vernon's Little Mountain Park for recreation and as a nature preserve.

Stay tuned....



In Memory – James Clifford Squires

James Clifford Squires passed away in December 2014. James was the son of James Squires Jr., the Samish Island property owner who donated a conservation easement to the Trust in 1995. In 2004, James Clifford added more land to the easement bringing the total protected acreage to 13 acres of forest, with cedars and firs that are more than 90 years old and host numerous native species, including a large great blue heron nesting site. James grew up on Samish Island and was employed with Boeing for 50 years. He was an avid reader and would come up to the Samish Island farm every weekend. He is survived by his wife Joanne at the family home. He and his father left a lasting and important legacy of conservation on Samish Island.



Thank you Diane Bednarz and Martha Bray: Colleagues, Friends, Conservationists

By Molly Doran, Executive Director



As serendipity would have it, two of our key staff are retiring at the end of July. It is impossible to detail in this space how much they have done for the land, for our community and future generations and for the Trust. Their impact has been huge. It has been a great privilege to work with Martha and Diane.



Martha Bray started with the Skagit Land Trust in 1996 working to protect Barney Lake. In her 19-year career with the Trust, she managed to get almost all of this special wildlife sanctuary conserved in five separate and complex projects. She was also at the center of directly conserving over 6,700 acres of other threatened natural land throughout Skagit County. Imagine children in 100 years walking amongst old growth forest along the wild and scenic Skagit River as they watch kingfishers swoop down on their prey – or hikers gathering on top of Guemes Mountain to drink in one of the most expansive, natural views in Puget Sound. That is the essence of Martha's impact. She has worked diligently to make sure that we use both science and local knowledge to protect what

is needed for a sustainable, connected Skagit far into the future. One of Martha's keystone philosophies is partnership. Some of the most successful projects under her leadership have protected ecosystems across multiple ownership boundaries, helping landowners, community members, non-profits and public agencies to join a wider protection network. Few can match what Martha has done for the natural legacy of Skagit County. Because of the professionalism, passion and tenacity Martha put into her work as Conservation Director, that legacy will be here, thriving for wildlife and our community, for as far as we can see.

Diane Bednarz. The old adage is that we only get one chance to make a good first impression. Since 2004 Skagit Land Trust has been extremely fortunate to have Diane be the first impression many people have when they contact the Trust. Diane exemplifies the ethos of the Trust and has set the tone for our strong community of members, board and staff, volunteers, landowners and partners. As our Office and Publications Manager, on top of knowing who you are before you finish saying "hello", she has overseen daily membership and thank you letters, the newsletter and annual report, board support and has kept track of all our schedules and office needs. With a background in art and graphics, we have been lucky to have Diane as our in-house designer. She has been part of the leadership team of every auction the Trust has ever run and every special event since 2004. Her work has touched every piece of mail from us to you that you have received in the past 12 years. Her knowledge of our members has meant that we have established strong relationships with many of our supporters - and Diane continues to grow those connections even as she leaves. Never one to take center stage, Diane has been standing behind all of us and all our work for more than a decade, connecting all of you with all of us in the office. As the secret ingredient in the Trust's ability to accomplish what we do, we cannot thank her enough.



Connecting Youth to Outdoor Observations and Experiences

By Lisa Miller, Community Engagement Assistant

"EEEEWWWW, I don't like mud," exclaimed one of the 7th grade girls in my group from Sedro-Woolley's Cascade Middle School. A group of 42 students applied to attend this April's field trip to Skagit Land Trust's Utopia Conservation Area. This nature experience included hands-on native tree and shrub planting with Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group and EarthCorps and discussions about land stewardship and how our community is helping to conserve wildlife habitat and green places across Skagit County. Over the course of an hour-and-a-half with the group, we covered the basics of planting a bare root tree, why invasive grass is harmful and why the ground was very muddy. What grabbed my attention was how confidently they answered questions about natural and connected habitats and how, in one day, they were helping improve the lives of many different animals today and for the future. These observations were coming directly from the mouths of our community's future land stewards and conservation leaders.

At 11am some were weary of touching the mud, but by 2pm some were wearing it on their arms and faces! "Some people pay money at spas to have mud on their face" I told them, as they laughed, they remarked how all of the "nutrients must be good for your skin just like it is good for the trees". It is these experiences we have on the land, and in the mud, that prepare our conservation leaders of the future. Recent grants from the Satterberg Foundation, Cascade Natural Gas, Lucky Seven Foundation and other partners are enabling the Trust to expand our youth in conservation program to further our collective impact. This past year we partnered with several excellent youth groups and classrooms including Emerson High School, the Sedro- Woolley Boys and Girls Club, several Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, and Cascade Middle School. If you would like to help grow our Youth in Conservation program, contact Lisa Miller at lisam@skagitlandtrust.org or give us a call at (360) 428-7878.



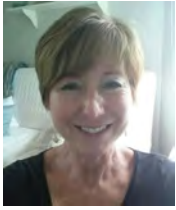
PHOTOS, LEFT TO RIGHT:
• WHISTLING GRASS AT UTOPIA ON EARTH DAY

• CASCADE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WERE HAPPY TO HELP PLANT TREES.

• TOP LEFT THE SEDRO-WOOLLEY BOYS & GIRLS CLUB WERE A HUGE HELP PULLING IVY AND PLANTING TREES.

• EMERSON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WORK WITH US REGULARLY. HERE THEY HELP LAND STEWARD DICK RAISLER WITH PLANTING.

Welcome Jana Hanson to the Board



Jana Hanson joined the Trust's Board of Directors in April 2015. Jana recently retired after 11 years as the Community & Economic Development Director for the City of Mount Vernon. During her time with the City of Mount Vernon, Jana was instrumental in efforts to transform Mount Vernon's historic downtown with

a flood protection project and waterfront revitalization plan. She developed a community marketing campaign; initiated the Skagit Innovation Partnership Zone for Value Added Agriculture and worked with others in the county to strengthen the region's economy. Also under Jana's direction, the city adopted a model ordinance with broad community support to protect critical areas. Jana shares "I chose to live in Skagit because of its amazing natural beauty and agricultural landscape, so it is a great privilege to be part of a strong and effective land trust whose mission it is to conserve these precious resources for today and tomorrow. Skagit Land Trust is comprised of people with the passion to protect Skagit's extraordinary resources and equipped with the knowledge and expertise to be effective stewards. I look forward being part of the solution to conserving Skagit's resources and raising awareness about the public benefits of conservation."

Shop and Support Youth in Conservation

Shop at the Skagit Valley Food Co-op on **Friday, July 24** and 4% of the day's proceeds will benefit Skagit Land Trust's Engaging Youth in Conservation Program! Funds will enable local students and youth groups to participate in conservation leadership activities such as tree planting and nature walks at Conservation Areas near our communities.



Annual Auction & Dinner a Success

Thank you to the 250 guests who attended our Have Fun, Save Land Auction & Dinner on March 7th and generously helped us raise over \$100,000 for local land conservation! We extend our sincere gratitude to all of the people and businesses who gave their time, talent and treasure to make this event a great success. Save the date for the Trust's 10th Annual Auction on Saturday, March 5 2016 at the St Joseph Center in Mount Vernon.



JUMBLED PIE STARTED THE AUCTION OFF WITH A "TWANG".



PHOTOS BY ERIC HALL

Join Us! Annual Picnic on August 8th at Elysium near Birdsvie

Skagit Land Trust's Annual Members & Volunteers Picnic will be held on Saturday, August 8 from 11am - 2pm at the Elysium Conservation Easement near Birdsvie. The picnic is our thank you to supporters who make local land conservation and stewardship possible. We will explore this beautiful property's farmland, forest, and 1 mile of Skagit River shoreline and hear stories from the dedicated landowners. The Trust will provide the main dish and members with last name A - J are encouraged to bring a dessert and K - Z a side dish to share. Visit skagitlandtrust.org for more information.



Leave it to Nature, Forever

Learn how an estate gift can preserve Skagit's wildlife habitat and green places for generations to come. View Skagit Land Trust's Guide to Planned Giving at skagitlandtrust.org or contact Executive Director Molly Doran at (360) 428-7878 or mollyd@skagitlandtrust.org for information on ways you can leave a legacy gift.



Utopia Conservation Area



Wildlife Habitat Restoration Honors Community Leader & Conservationist Ric Boge

Skagit Land Trust connects our community with the protection and stewardship of the natural environment. There has not been a better example of this than working with Ric Boge's family and friends to restore wildlife habitat at our Green Road Marsh Conservation Area. More than 100 people participated in events to honor and remember Ric's contribution to the Skagit. This enthusiastic crew installed more than 1,600 native trees and shrubs as well as bird and bat houses to transform this wetland for wildlife. It was a gift to all of us that Ric was able to participate in a planting this past fall.



PHOTOS: TEAM RIC WORKED THROUGH RAIN BLOWING SIDWAYS, POTS FULL OF ICE, AND BEAUTIFUL DAYS IN FRIENDSHIP AND COLLABORATION, TO CREATE A LIVING LEGACY IN RIC BOGE'S HONOR.

MEMORIAL AND IN HONOR GIFTS

In honor of John Annis
Ted & Carol Hegg

In honor of Joan L Baker
Dr John & Judge Joan Baker

In memory of Ric Boge
*David Hartley
Gabriel Hall
Gwen Williams
Heather Robins
Joe Bucek & Mary Heath
Laura Holmes
Lois & Robert Hartwig
Lucy Kinsella
Phyllis & Donald McKeehen
Rose Field
Ryan Hargraves*

In memory of Sophie Braaten
Anne Braaten

**In honor of Inspiring Hero
Martha Bray**
Barbara Francis

In memory of Bruce
Laura Saunders

In memory of George Bucher
Nadene Frazier - Westphall

**In honor of
Abby Miller Busche**
Susan & Fred F. Miller

**In honor of
Kelly Bush's retirement**
Pat Milliren

**In memory of
Harold Christenson**
Karen & Doug Radcliffe

**In honor of Frieda Cohan's
graduation**
Jay Smith & Susan Wood

In memory of Jan Conklin
Charles Stavig

**In memory of
Thomas F. Corrigan MD**
Barbara Corrigan

**In memory of
Ernest Cunningham**
Linda Speck & Ken Willis

**In memory of
Richard Elander, MD**
Hal & Susan Rooks

**In honor of
Ger Jan van den Engh**
Margery & Richard Trask

**In honor of
Ben & Lois Englebright**
*Anonymous
Annette Woolsey & Jim Shiflett
Larry & Alba Stevens*

In memory of Robert D. Fawell
Tom & Stacy Fawell

In memory of Rita Fisher
*Glenda Alm & Richard Kent
Diann & Ed Bradley
Gene & Bette Huff
Nancy & David Ridgway*

In memory of Fran Ford
Jim Ford

In memory of Roslyn Glasser
Mary Pease

In honor of Louise Line Grout
Bobbi Krebs-McMullen

**In honor & memory of
Ralph Heft**
Lisa Nissley

In honor of John & Linda Hunt
*James Hunt
Martha Wilson
Carrie Zerjav & Nathan Moore*

**In honor of
Marcia Hunt & Steve Hulse**
*James Hunt
Martha Wilson
Carrie Zerjav & Nathan Moore*

In honor of Roger Kinney
Judy Fisher

**In memory of Hildegard
Kretschmer**
*Ingrid & Bruce McBane
Louise Harris*

**In honor of grandchildren
Marisol and Azuul**
Richard Bergner

In memory of Bob Matchett
Holiday Matchett

In honor of Stan & Leslie Miller
Peter Remick & Sandy Krot

**In honor of
Michael David Mitchell**
Patricia & Edward Cowgill

In honor of Gene Murphy
*Gerri & John Gunn
Ginny Murphy
Sean Murphy*

In honor of Leo Osborne
Patricia Meinzer

**In honor of
George & Linda Pransky**
Peter Remick & Sandy Krot

In memory of Cora Quiggle
Jerry & Marilyn Eisner

In memory of Howard Ratcliff
Iola Ratcliff

In honor of Ronan
Erin Conroy

In honor of Sally Scott
*Marilyn Clarke
Betty Rockwell*

In memory of Joan Skeele
Robert Skeele

**In honor of the Swan Road
Neighborhood**
Walter & Cathy Pfahl

**In memory of
Matthew Stevens**
Stan & Cheri Relyea

In memory of Erik Tjersland
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Tjersland

**In honor of
Lynnette Trucco-Baier**
Doug Baier

In memory of Todd Wilbur
Alix Foster & Rick Shorten

**In honor of
Ken & Anne Winkes**
*Alan Breen
Mary Carr
Gus Winkes*

**In honor of
Margaret Yeoman**
Gerri & John Gunn

In memory of Annie Zillig
Douglas & Lani Haag

Thank You for Your Support

Businesses & Organizations - April 1, 2014 - March 31, 2015

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(\$5000 & up)

Bradford E. Furlong, P.S.

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(\$1000-\$4999)

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Macy's
Northwest Real Estate Valuation
Skagit Bank

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(\$500-\$999)

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Big Lake Trees

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Gere-a-Deli

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Golden Glen Creamery

Guemes Island Resort

Hedlin Farms

Horizon Audio & Video

Insight Tree Care

Intimate Photography

Island Adventures

Jalillah's Cookies

Janicki Industries

Jumbled Pie

Kaptein's Ace Hardware

Kulshan Brewery

La Conner Channel Lodge

Le Crema Cakes

Lee & Bryce Mann Photography

Lefebber Turf Farm

LeMay Family Collection Fnd.

Lincoln Theatre

Lithtex NW

Lost Arrow Arborists

Lost River Winery

Lost River Winery

Lunch Box

Lyon's Furniture & Sleep Center

Majestic Inn & Spa

Marine Supply & Hardware Co

Mariposa

Max Dale's Steak & Chop House

Mike & Jean's Berry Farm

Moon River Metal Works

Museum of Northwest Art

Native Plant Society - Salal Chapter

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North Cascades Institute

Northwest Brewers Supply

Northwest Credit Union - Burlington

O'Neils Arts

Oyster Bar

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Skagit PUD

Samish Indian Nation

Seattle City Light

Skagit Audubon Society

Skagit Community Foundation

Skagit County GIS

Skagit County Marine Resources

Skagit County Parks

Skagit County Planing Dept.

Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group

Skagit Public Works

Skagit River Systems Cooperative

Skagit Soil & Water

Conservation District

Skagit Watershed Council

Stillaguamish Tribes

The Nature Conservancy, WA

WA Association of Land Trusts

WA Department of Ecology

WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board

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Americorps

Burning Foundation

Cascade Natural Gas ECO Fund

Horizons Foundation

Hugh & Jane Ferguson Foundation

Linnemann Family Foundation

Lucky Seven Foundation

Norcliffe Wildlife Foundation

Nysether Family Foundation

PACCAR Foundation

Rose Foundation for Communities

& the Environment

Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Satterberg Foundation

Seattle Audubon *Martin Miller Fund*

Seattle Foundation GIVE BIG

Shasserre Family Fund

Sierra Pacific Foundation

Temcov Foundation

The Benevity Community Impact Fund

Towne Foundation

Tulalip Tribes

Matching Gifts

Becton Dickinson

Boeing Gift Matching Program

Cambia Health Foundation

Employee Matching Fund

Fred Meyer Community Rewards

Google Matching Gifts

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Matching Gifts Program

Harris & Eliza Kempner Fund

Microsoft Matching Gifts Program

PEW Charitable Trusts

Puget Sound Energy Foundation

Shell Oil Company Foundation

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wetlands, agricultural and forest lands,
scenic open space and shorelines
for the benefit of our community and as a
legacy for future generations.

SAVING LAND FOR TOMORROW

Upcoming Events

ACFL Geology Walk – July date TBD

Friday, July 24th

4% Friday at Skagit Valley Coop

Saturday, August 8th

Annual Picnic at Elysium Conservation Easement,
Birdsview

Thursday, November 12th - Conservation Social at
MoNA, La Conner

***Visit skagitlandtrust.org to view
events calendar***



*PHOTO: WORKING TO PROTECT THE SENSITIVE WILDFLOWERS ON GUEMES MOUNTAIN
MEANT SOME HEAVY LIFTING OF "PERFECT" LOGS TO CREATE A PROTECTIVE BUFFER...
AND A PLACE TO SIT TO TAKE IN THE VIEW.*