



HELP ENSURE THEIR HOME STAYS WILD FOREVER

The March Point Heronry is small in acreage, but great in importance. At 700+ nests this heronry may be the biggest colony of Great Blue Herons on the entire west coast of the United States. **Skagit Land Trust has an immediate opportunity to purchase and conserve 3.5 acres within the core nesting area of the Heronry.**

The Trust will add this property to the 12 acres of the Heronry our supporters have already helped us conserve. **Skagit Land Trust has until August 1st to raise \$70,000 to purchase this land. If we cannot raise the funds in time, the landowners will put this property on the market.**

The herons need your help. We are halfway to our goal, but we must act now to save the critical breeding grounds for these beloved birds and Washington State Fish & Wildlife Priority Species.



The March Point Heronry is special. Historically, small colonies of Great Blue Herons were found throughout the forested marine shoreline of Puget Sound. With the loss of much of their nesting habitat, small colonies combined in the last best places to become mega-colonies containing over 200 nests.

Drivers on Hwy 20 pass by this area so quickly, they may not notice the trees stacked with nests that support the largest heron breeding area in the Salish Sea. The Trust currently protects 75% of the land the herons nest on and has an opportunity to increase that protection.

Continued on page 4...

Letter from the Board President

Dear Members and Partners,

My hope is that this newsletter finds all of you in good health and high spirits. As our weather transitions to warmth and sunshine, the Skagit Land Trust Board of Directors is also making some changes. We should all express gratitude to Jim Glackin for leading our Board with distinction for the past two years and for sharing his calm expertise during acquisition of several complex additions to our portfolio of properties. Thankfully, though Jim has stepped down from presidential duties, he continues as a Board member and will help inform our future deliberations.

We should also extend heartfelt thanks to John Hunt, who is stepping down from the Board after serving as our Treasurer for the past twelve years. As we have grown, so have the complexities of our finances, which John managed very carefully and with great precision. John joined the Board when I last was able to serve; his clarity of thought and speech impressed us all at the time and now we must acknowledge the continuity he provided the Trust, through thick and thin. We will miss John very much!

Skagit Land Trust was able to acquire several large properties this past year due to successful grant applications made by our staff and our partners, along with donations from a wide variety of supporters. Looking forward, we can expect our ability to purchase new properties will be impacted by behavioral changes made in response to the current pandemic. Land costs are increasing as demand for rural properties rises. My hope is that we are able to devise effective strategies for establishing extensive conservation easements on resource lands in the coming years. Creative thinking by all of our members is both necessary and welcome!

Meanwhile, staff and numerous volunteers continue to restore habitats and build resiliency to climate change as we remove invasive plants and add a variety of native vegetation to some of our conservation areas. They have done a fantastic job stewarding our properties despite the challenges of the pandemic. For that, we can all be grateful! Thanks for your support!

- Mark Hitchcock, Skagit Land Trust Board President



Samish Island Conservation Area Open House on July 31st



We are excited to welcome the community back together on the land this summer with our first big in-person event for 2021. Mark your calendar for Saturday, July 31st, and join us at the newly expanded Samish Island Conservation Area.

Activities will include walks through the newly completed Samish Flower Farm upland trails, a chance to catch up with Skagit Land Trust staff and board members, and management planning talks on the recently conserved shoreline at the entrance to Samish island.



Guests are encouraged to bring a picnic to enjoy on the beach. A schedule of events and parking information will be available at the beginning of July. Visit our website to sign up for updates.

Martha Frankel Brought a bit of Yellowstone to the Skagit and Much More



Martha Frankel with a bouquet of thistle. Doing her part on Earth Day!

That friendly person you speak with if you call Skagit Land Trust is Martha Frankel. Martha moved from Montana to Washington in 2015. Before she and her husband Tom had even found a place to live, Martha had landed a job as our Membership and Office Administrator. After six wonderful years, Martha is retiring this fall. We will miss her greatly.

Martha's job entails numerous responsibilities. She says one of the joys of her work has been getting to know our members. Martha notes, "I have never met many of them in person, but I have handled their giving for a long time. I feel a real connection to these people."

Martha brought many skills to the Trust, including those she gained while working for Yellowstone Public Radio. Martha took one look at our 15 Skagit Sustainers who gave a recurring gift, grabbed the nearest microphone and said, "Sustaining Membership is an easy and efficient way for members to support the protection of the lands they cherish." She may have even started promoting the idea of SLT tote bags for Skagit Sustainers.

While we don't have a broadcast signal, her message got out. Among her numerous accomplishments for the Trust, Martha has been the force behind growing our sustaining members to almost 90 households. It is her goal to get to 100 by the time she retires.

"Every time someone becomes a Sustainer, I think, that is a big show of confidence in our work. It makes me really happy," Martha says. "It's convenient for members. You don't have to think about it, or renew - it just happens. And when you do think about it, you have this great feeling that you are supporting an organization you really care about. You are also saving the Trust time and money that can be put into conservation."

Martha says that in addition to using credit cards and echecks online to make recurring donations, she is seeing an increasing number of members who give directly from their bank through a "bill pay" or similar systems.

"I had no idea when I applied for this position how many projects and activities could be going on at one time," Martha reflects on her time working for the Trust. "This small group of people with these wonderful members and volunteers get so much accomplished. It is really quite remarkable."

Look for Martha in the field at Samish Flower Farm. She looks forward to volunteering regularly after her retirement. Thank you Martha!

Careers in Conservation

This summer Skagit Land Trust will be hiring for two full-time positions. We're adding a Conservation Project Manager to the Land Department to work on land transactions, and a Membership & Office Administrator to support our donor database and office systems.

We're also recruiting for two 2021/2022 AmeriCorps positions: Stewardship Member and Community Engagement Member. These positions serve from September 2021 through July 2022.

We recognize that our mission is best accomplished through building a staff, board, volunteer and support base of people of diverse backgrounds, and beliefs. We encourage applicants from all cultures, races, ages, gender identities, sexual orientations, political affiliations, religions, disability statuses, protected veteran statuses, and other statuses protected by law. Check our website for position descriptions and spread the word!



The herons have chosen this site due to nearby feeding grounds in Padilla, Fidalgo, and Similk Bays. At more than 700 nests, the forested hill of the March Point colony has become almost three times as large as any other colony in Puget Sound. The sheer number of herons breeding, nesting, and rearing their young at March Point provides the genetic diversity necessary to sustain a healthy population of Great Blue Herons in the Salish Sea.

This property is an integral part of the Heronry. Great Blue Herons build their nests in trees 50 feet or more above the ground. The mature coastal forest found on this property provides ideal nesting habitat for herons and room for the March Point colony to expand. The primary threat to the Heronry is tree clearing or development that could lead to its abandonment. We believe that any development of the Moon Uplands Property could be devastating for the March Point Heronry. This is a risk we cannot take.

We have the great honor and responsibility of stewarding this remarkable, unique, local heronry. As pressures on land use increase, conservation of the core habitat is the best help we can give these remarkable birds.

Purchase of this property has been a decades-long goal for Skagit Land Trust. The opportunity to purchase this land will not come again. Thanks to a generous grant we are halfway to the \$70,000 we need to raise. **We ask that you consider a gift to the Great Blue Heron Fund to help us purchase and steward this land for all generations of Great Blue Herons.**

Gifts can be made online (please mark "Heronry" in the comment box) or by using the enclosed envelope to mail a check. Please note "Heronry" in the memo of your check or on the envelope.



Join us for an informational meeting with Executive Director, Molly Doran, and Board Member and Community Science Volunteer, Anne Winkes, about the Trust's work with Great Blue Herons and this acquisition project on **June 21st at 6pm. Learn more and RSVP on our website, skagitlandtrust.org.**

Overwhelming Community Supports Protects Entrance to Samish Island



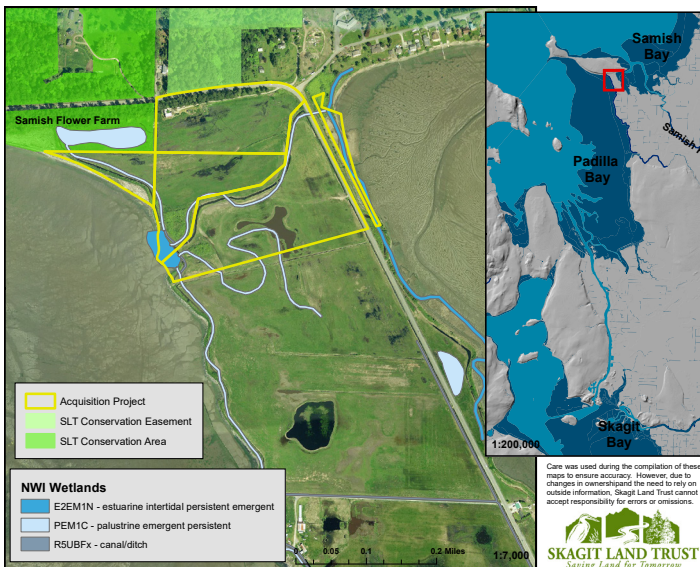
Hundreds of families and individuals responded to the call to help protect the entrance to Samish Island in a fast-paced race to the finish line. A federal National Coastal Wetlands grant, and an anticipated state grant were matched by generous community donations. This enabled Skagit Land Trust (the Trust) to purchase 50 more acres at the entrance to Samish Island in April.

The recently acquired property features a historic slough, freshwater wetlands and open space, salt marsh, and tidelands on both Padilla Bay and Alice Bay. The Trust now protects 100 acres and over a half a mile of marine shoreline at the Island's entrance. The recent acquisition along with the Samish Flower Farm and an adjacent private conservation easement ensure that the entrance to Samish Island will forever be natural open space. In addition to its natural attributes, the area has historic and cultural significance for the Coast Salish people.

“This property is diverse and important for the northern Puget Sound,” said Conservation Project Manager, Kari Odden. **“It supports a beach, freshwater wetlands, tidal marsh, a small creek, and tidelands. It may provide future opportunity to restore a portion of what once was an intricate shoreline and sheltered tidal wetlands that provided habitat for juvenile salmonids, crab, herring and millions of worms, shrimp, clams and other invertebrates.”**



Samish Neck Coastal Protection - 68.66 acres



The Trust's partnership with the Washington State Department of Ecology helped secure an \$875,000 competitive grant from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation (NCWC) Grant Program to assist in purchasing and restoring the property. The Trust is working to secure further grant funds which will help repay loans taken out for the purchase and assist in property restoration. Partners who submitted support letters to help secure these competitive grants include the Samish Indian Nation, Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Skagit Audubon, Skagit County Public Works, and Samish Island Neighbors to the Property.



Skagit Land Trust’s Executive Director Molly Doran said, “Almost 300 households and businesses rose to the call this spring and made generous donations to help purchase this property. We had a great opportunity but a large financial challenge and a rapidly approaching deadline. We could not have met it without their help.”

“The support shown by the community to purchase this property was overwhelming. We had a little over two months between when we knew we had been awarded the NCWC grant and could begin fundraising, and when we needed to close on the property,” said Development Director, Laura Hartner. “Since we could not take people out for tours on the land due to COVID, we switched to reaching out online. More than 100 people from the Island and well beyond, joined us for small online meetings about the project and helped spread the word to their friends and neighbors. It was heartening to see how much the community cares about this place.”

The Samish Island Conservation Area is made up of the new 50-acre acquisition and the Samish Flower Farm protected in 2019. It adjoins a private conservation easement. Jim Squires Jr and Cliff Squires donated the conservation easement over fifteen years ago. This newly protected land was also part of the former Squires homestead.

Thank you to all of the donors who helped us save and conserve the entrance to Samish

Evelyn Adams	Pamela Cahn	Larry & Pat Edwards	Robert & Judith Higgins
Kathleen & Thor Albro	Clayton & Nancy Campbell	Diane Eiesland	Emory Hill
Eric Allan	Rebecca Cannon	Joline El-Hai	Mark & Alison Hitchcock
Deborah Allen	Katherine Carson	Bruce & Cathy Entrikin	Michael Hobbs
Daniel Allison	David & Janet Cater	John & Marie Erbstoeszler	Diana Hoffman
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Howard & Thais Armstrong	Anne Chase-Stapleton	Cissy Fisher & Rish Pavelec	Chuck Howell & Charlene Day
Casey Audette	Elaine Chuang	Judy Fisher	Roger & Sally Hulbush
Lynn Beebe	Linda Cline	Thomas & Kathleen Flanagan	Marcia Hunt
Rachel Benbrook	Eileen Coan & Ross McConahey	Larry & Susan Forsythe	Sarah Huntington
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Claude & Annie Blackburn	Marc Coltrera & Anne Buchinski	Roger Fuller & Mary Silva	Mark Jacobson
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Ros Bond & Jill Marsden	Cynthia Corbin	Stephen Giles	Martha Jordan
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Cath Brunner & Eric Riedel	Michael & Katherine Earley	Deena Heg	David & Georgia Lang
John T Buchanan	James Eberhardt	George & Myrna Heleker	Harriet Leclair
Claire Burwash	John Edison	Darwin Helmuth	John Scott Lee
Kelly Bush & Russ Dalton	Craig & Noma Edwards	Jenny Heutmaker	Joseph & Brynn Leighton

“The Trust is excited to steward this special place and work with our partners, including local tribes, and the community on restoration possibilities,” said Stewardship Director, Regina Wandler.

The Trust will start with a site cleanup. There are several steps before this work can begin. The unoccupied house will temporarily be left standing while we prepare for cleanup, house removal, and develop a full plan for the property. A renter will continue living on the property in an RV next to the house for several months. Thus, at this time, the interior part of the property is closed. However, The Padilla Bay shoreline is open for public access and allows views of the newly acquired land.



Contract crews including 'Native Restoration' are already starting to remove invasive species like scotch broom.



The Padilla Bay shoreline is accessible to the public from the Samish Flower Farm on Samish Island Road. The Trust and many dedicated volunteers have also developed an upland trail through the forest of Samish Flower Farm. Visitors to these trails are asked to keep their pets on a leash and take dog baggies home to ensure continued access for pets, while

sh Island

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Barbara & Skip Lemanski | Margaret Neudorfer | David C. & Kerrie Salkeld | Kathryn True |
| Larry Lesser | Edward K. Newbold | Eric & Karrie Sanderson | Kathryn Utter |
| Karen Lewis-Hart & Derek Hart | Terry Nightingale | Rick & Cynthia Sapp | Andrew & Marie Vanderhoof |
| Tiffany Linbo | Therese Ogle | Betsy & Mike Sauther | Gary & Karen Vassallo |
| Ron Lindsay & Theresa Connolly | Mike & Bonnie Olpin | Peter Schmitz & Mary Richter | Connie Veldink |
| Michael Little | Andy Omdal | Marlene & Mark Schuck | Gregg & Erin von Fempé |
| Kathryn Longfellow | Tracy & Ty Ouellette | Sue Sell | Lea von Pressentin |
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| Jean & Ed Markus | Dennis & Lori Pollett | Lonnie Somer | Harold Wiggers |
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| Robert Martin | Terry Purdy | Joanne Stellini | Christa & John Williams |
| Teri Martine | Karen & Doug Radcliffe | Jack Stephens & Ellen O'Neill Stephens | Cheryl Willis |
| John McCallum | Steffany Raynes & Lin Skavdahl | Larry & Alba Stevens | Susan Wilson & Eric Hall |
| Phyllis & Donald McKeehen | Ann Reid & Tom Theisen | John Stewart & Heather Higgins | Ken & Anne Winkes |
| Ruth McNally | Peter Remick & Sandra Krot | Gary Stoyka | Cathy Wissink |
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| Bev & Jim Mowrer | Melanie Ross & Tim Buck | | Anonymous Donors |
| Kathy & Mike Murray | Leah Ross | | |
| Dianne Murray | Joanne Rousland | | |



conserving the health of this beautiful property and the waters and critical eel grass habitat of Padilla Bay.

You can reach Regina Wandler, the Stewardship Director for Skagit Land Trust, at reginaw@skagitlandtrust.org if you have questions about property management.



Gift to the Campaign In Honor or Memory

In memory of Margarethe L. Allen
Deborah Allen

In memory of Tony Ball
Charles and Marnie Pennington

In memory of Doris Anna Beebe
Lynn Beebe

In memory of Rick Boge
Patt and Neil Jorgensen

In memory of Molly Bradshaw
Dorothy Bradshaw

In memory of Rosemarie Butler
Dennis and Lori Pollett

In memory of Andy Christensen
Kelly Bush and Russ Dalton

In memory of Harold Christenson
Karen and Doug Radcliffe

In honor of Jim Daulph
Betsy and Mike Sauther

In memory of Chuck Davis
John T Buchanan

In honor of Ann Dursch
Jane Brandt

In memory of Lois & Ben Englebright
Larry and Alba Stevens

In memory of Michael Golding
Linda Swan

In memory of Robert and Nelly Han
Amy Han and Brian Berry

In memory of Jean Heflin
Ann Reid and Tom Theisen

In memory of Steve Herman
Sarah Pedersen

In memory of John Hitchcock
Mark and Alison Hitchcock

In memory of John Lewellyn
King Jennifer King

In memory of Jim Kirk
Janet Lowry

In honor of Claudia Ross-Kuhn & Jim Kuhn
Melanie Ross and Tim Buck

In memory of Ed and Hannah Lagerlund
Sue Sell

In honor of Diane Leschner
Bill Hebner and Lora Leschner

In memory of Erma Jean Lewis
Jean and Ed Markus

In memory of Douglas MacPhillamy
Michael Little

In memory of Joan Martin
Robert Martin

In memory of Gene Mizell & Joan Vanderhoof
Barbara and Skip Lemanski

In memory of Carol Mae Murray Weyer
Julie Aune

In honor of Therese Ogle & Molly Doran
Richard Studebaker and Eileen Andersen

In honor of George and Muriel Park
Susan Gwost

In honor of Dennis Paulson
Victoria King

In memory of Lynn and Russell Phillips
Nadene Frazier-Westphall

In memory of Blitz & Carol M. Purdy
Terry Purdy

In honor of Rainbow Riders
Shelly Bowman

In honor of Eric Riedel
Janis Jones

In memory of Bertha Robertson
Joanne Robertson

In memory of Viola Rosencrans & Martin Barnes
Rebecca Rosencrans

In memory of Ms. Murle Thomas
Annett Gamble-Olson

In memory of Ellen True
Kathryn True

In memory of Joan Vanderhoof
Andrew and Marie Vanderhoof

In memory of Art Wait
Terry Nightingale

In memory of John J. Warner
Andrea Warner

In memory of Jess & Maude Willard
Margaret Neudorfer

In memory of Nora Wilson-Lesser
Larry Lesser

In memory of Ginny Wolff
Tom Glade and Brenda Lavender

In honor of Grace & Willow Young-Craig
Rebekah Craig and Brent Young

So Many Ways to Get Outside and Help Conservation This Summer

With longer days and warmer weather, this is great time to get out and explore Trust properties. Here are just a few ways you can connect with nature and support the Trust.



Help create ecological surveys

Our newest community science project invites you to take a closer look at nature. Bring your camera or phone along on your next visit to a Trust property and snap some photos of plants and wildlife you observe. Upload these photos to iNaturalist to contribute to a community collection of observations. This will help us create an inventory of plants and animals at each property. This information will help guide our stewardship management efforts throughout Skagit County.

Letterbox Trail Walks

In partnership with several organizations, including Skagit Conservation Education Alliance, the Trust is hosting a letterbox trails at Cumberland Creek Conservation Area. This is a great family friendly activity. Take a walk around the oxbow pond and down to the Skagit River. learn about the creatures and plants that call Cumberland home. Hop along one section of the trail and look for evidence of elk in another.

Restoration Work Parties in June

Join us for a trash pick up along the shoreline at the new Samish Island Conservation Area, help remove scotch broom at Day Creek Slough, or pull English ivy at Fidalgo Bay Carstens. Visit the events page on our website for a full list of upcoming work parties.



A Sneak Peek at the Marblemount Conservation Area

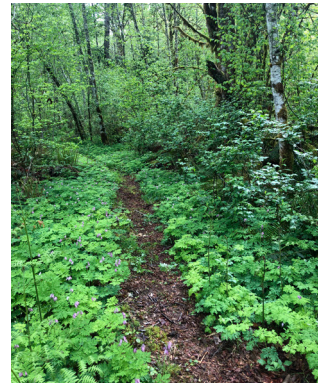


Members will have a chance to explore the recently acquired Marblemount Conservation Area this summer during a series of Friday work parties and nature walks.

“This is one of the most beautiful properties we own” says Michael Kirshenbaum, Conservation Director. “ It has not been open to the public before and there is so much to explore here”.

Volunteers will remove invasive species to open up views of the river and into the forest and along the Skagit shoreline. This property protects over half a mile of Skagit River shoreline and 67 acres of forest containing a mature mix of conifer and hardwood trees.

This spring, staff and volunteers discovered a carpet of Pacific bleeding heart and a healthy understory of oso berry and other shrubs in bloom. Accompanied by the sounds of courting birds and the rushing river, they worked to clear winter blowdowns from a loop trail that meanders through the woods and alongside the Skagit.



Summer volunteers can enjoy a peaceful walk through the woods after the work party. Sack lunches are encouraged, along with dipping your toes in the cool water of the Skagit.

What better way to start a weekend in the Cascades than by helping the Trust restore this site! Check the Trust website for dates and times.

The Guemes Mountain & Valley Conservation Area Starts a New Chapter

Since the generous gift of an additional 77 acres to the Guemes Mountain and Valley Conservation Area in November 2020, the Trust has been working to have this large property host agriculture, wildlife habitat and trail access for Guemes Mountain.



Beavers are one of nature's most ingenious architects, and play an important role in an ecosystem.

Management of the valley and wetlands is ever changing – mainly due to beavers who reside on properties in the valley. Their natural engineering work has expanded wetland boundaries and restored wildlife habitat, but also inundated part of a road and former pasture areas. The Trust is working with a local farmer, the County and conservation partners to support sustainable agriculture that coexists with the wetlands. We all want agriculture to remain viable on Guemes Island and the wetland is wonderful habitat for many types of birds, insects, and amphibians and retains water for the valley.

"I recently watched a pair of eagles bathing in the wetland and then perch on a tall tree limb overlooking the field to dry off," notes Conservation Areas Coordinator, Hannah Williams.
Photo courtesy of Chris LeBoutillier.

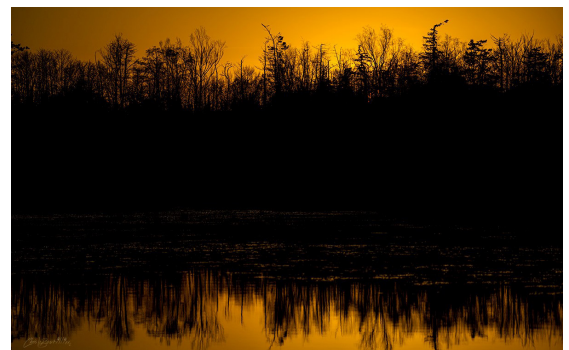


As you drive South Shore Rd, the large red barn comes into view overlooking the valley. We are working with structural engineers to determine the best way to stabilize this iconic barn so it can be used for agricultural and associated uses for many years to come.



A homesite with a two-story farmhouse was also on the land donated. The homesite was long loved but in disrepair. The donor's vision was that the house would be removed and the next iteration of this area would begin. The Trust is in the process of removing the home as well as invasive species. As we clean up the site, staff is working with volunteers and partners to explore options for trail access, parking, and native vegetation restoration.

Special thanks to volunteers, especially Ian Woofenden and John Stratham for their help and commitment to recycling and re-using materials. Also, a big thanks to local companies, Mimnaugh Excavation, Island Electric, Asbestos Inspection Northwest, and Environmental Asbestos Abatement. Their participation has made site cleanup safe, local, and much easier.



Sunset reflection off the valley wetlands. Photo courtesy of Chris LeBoutillier

Committees Work In Many Ways to Protect & Steward Local Lands

Volunteers with Skagit Land Trust support local lands and waters by planting trees, removing invasive species, getting youth out in nature, and helping with events. Some volunteers serve as Trust committee members. The Trust depends on guidance from committees such as Stewardship, Land, Public Policy, Development & Outreach, Facilities, Investment, and Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI). There are also seasonal committees such as event and fundraising committees. Committees are made up of staff, board, and volunteers from the community.

“We like to have people join our committees who bring a wide array of experience and viewpoints,” says Executive Director Molly Doran. “They give us a tremendous amount of insight and help make decisions to meet our mission.”

This spring, two volunteer committee members are stepping down after many years of service. We want to thank Rick Machin who served on our Stewardship Committee and Dave Scott who served on our Investment Committee for their wise counsel. Members have also recently joined committees. We welcome Chris Varela to the Development & Outreach Committee, Laura Cailloux to the JEDI Committee, and Martha Bray to the Public Policy Committee.



“Engaging members in committee work is a golden opportunity to find their special interests and talents,” says Rich Machin. “The effort becomes a win-win: the Trust benefits from that deep pool of knowledge and enthusiasm, and the individual members are provided with a chance to do what they love to do in a cooperative and fulfilling endeavor.”



The Trust’s conservation efforts depend on our committees. Board members chair committees assisted by a staff. Some committees meet monthly while other committees meet as needed. **We are always seeking new committee members who bring perspectives from the broad range of Skagit communities.** If you are interested in learning which committees have openings currently or want to learn more about a specific committee, please contact Molly Doran at mollyd@skagitlandtrust.org.

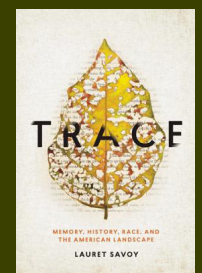
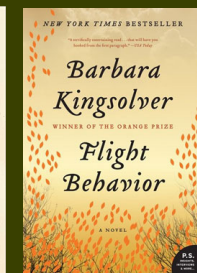
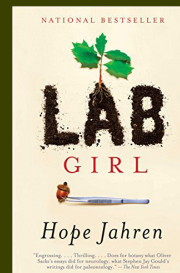
Summertime and the reading is easy...

Holding book discussions virtually this past year have allowed us to talk to authors and readers from around the country. We love connecting with you and discussing the impact reading these has made. SLT Reads continues via Zoom throughout the summer.

Join us on June 11 at 5:30pm as we discuss *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren.

A memoir as well as a treatise on plant life, Jahren “extends the mantle of scientist to each one of her readers, inviting us to join her in observing and protecting our environment. Warm, luminous, compulsively readable, *Lab Girl* vividly demonstrates the mountains that we can move when love and work come together.”

If you’d like a little more time to read, our next two books will be Barbara Kingsolver’s novel *Flight Behavior* with discussion on July 8 and on August 12, *Trace: Memory, History, Race and the American Landscape* by Lauret Savoy. Details to come. RSVP for all SLT Reads events on our website.



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Saving Land for Tomorrow



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SAVE THE DATE!

Lands We Love Online Auction & Celebration on the Land

September 11 & 12, 2021

Join us online and on the land for a celebration of local conservation efforts.



More details coming soon!