

Nisqually Land Trust

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Adopted September 17, 2008

Article I PURPOSE

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect the interests of the Nisqually Land Trust when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a director, officer or staff member of the Land Trust, or might result in a possible excess-benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable corporations.

Article II DEFINITIONS

1. **Interested Person.** Any director, officer, or staff member who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. **Financial Interest.** A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment or family:

- a. an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Land Trust has a transaction or arrangement, or
- b. a compensation arrangement with the Land Trust or with any entity or individual with which the Land Trust has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Land Trust is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are substantial in nature. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

3. **Inurement.** Inurement means that the action proposed or taken shall be to the benefit, use or advantage of an individual.

Article III PROCEDURES

1. **Duty to Disclose.** In connection with any actual or possible conflicts of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of his or her financial interest and must be

given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with board-delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted on. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

If the board or committee decides that in fact a conflict of interest exists, the procedures of Article III, Section 3, shall apply.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the board or committee meeting, but after such presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement that result in the conflict of interest.
- b. The chairperson of the board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- c. After exercising due diligence, the board or committee shall determine whether the Land Trust can obtain a more advantageous transaction or arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably attainable under circumstances that would not give rise to a conflict of interest, the board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Land Trust's best interest and for its own benefit and whether the transaction is fair and reasonable to the Land Trust and shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement in conformity with such determination.

4. Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy

- a. If the board or committee has reasonable cause to believe that an interested person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the interested person of the basis for such belief and afford the interested person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the response of the interested person and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the board

or committee determines that the interested person has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Article IV RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

The minutes of the board and all committees with board-delegated powers shall contain the following:

1. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise are found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

2. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection therewith.

Article V COMPENSATION

1. A voting member of the board of directors who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Land Trust is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

2. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Land Trust for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

3. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Land Trust, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Article VI ANNUAL STATEMENTS

Each director, officer, and staff member shall annually sign a statement which affirms that such person:

1. Has received a copy of the conflict of interest policy;
2. Has read and understands the policy;
3. Has agreed to comply with the policy; and

4. Understands that the Land Trust is a charitable organization and that in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

**Article VII
PERIODIC REVIEWS**

To ensure the Land Trust operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

1. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's-length bargaining.

2. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Land Trust's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, in impermissible private benefit, or in an excess-benefit transaction.

**Article VIII
USE OF OUTSIDE EXPERTS**

In conducting the periodic reviews provided for in Article VII, the Land Trust may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used their use shall not relieve the board of its responsibility for ensuring that periodic reviews are concluded.

APPROVED at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors on the 17th day of September, 2008, at which a quorum was present, by a vote of ____ Yes and ____ No.

ATTEST:

George F. Walter
President

Kelly McAllister
Secretary