



Nisqually Land Trust

Winter 2015
Newsletter

Land Trust Acquires 50 More Acres of Ohop Creek Shoreline

Nelson, Corey Families Help Launch Next Stage of Creek Restoration

Steve Nelson has lived in the Ohop Valley for 55 years, but not long ago he looked out his front window, down along Ohop Creek, and saw something he'd never seen there before: a black bear.

He read that as clear evidence that the fifteen-year project to restore Ohop Creek has taken hold. "The elk are coming back, too," Steve said recently. "And they're coming back because the creek and its habitat are coming back."

Like many before him, Steve raised and milked cattle in the Ohop for decades. As the dairy business declined, one farmer after another moved on, but Steve and his wife, Janette, stayed put. "The Ohop Valley is a beautiful place to live," Steve said,

"and as the cattle moved out, the elk moved back in."

The Land Trust is pleased to announce that it has completed a transaction with the Nelsons that will keep them in their valley home while also securing an opportunity to extend the restoration project from the lower creek into what is known as the "middle" Ohop, just upstream of the now-completed first stage of restoration (see page 6).

The Land Trust has acquired 32.6 acres along Ohop Creek from the Nelsons and an adjoining 17 acres from their neighbors, Carl and Wanda Corey. Both the Coreys and the Nelsons retained their homes and portions of their property along the bluff above the creek. *(Continued on page 9)*

Acquisition of the Nelson and Corey properties represents the first step in the next stage of Ohop Creek restoration. The project has restored 2.4 miles of ditched creek bed over the past 16 years.

2016-2020 Strategic Plan adopted! Read all about it on page 4.



OUR MISSION

The Nisqually Land Trust acquires and manages critical lands to permanently benefit the water, wildlife, and people of the Nisqually River Watershed.

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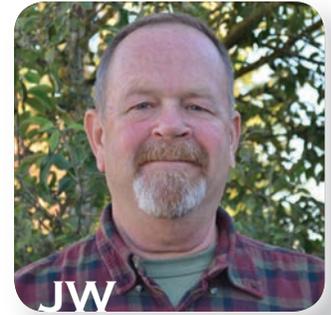
The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

The photographs on this publication's cover banner are courtesy of Land Trust volunteers Josh Goodin, Ed Kenney, and Crow Vecchio and Land Trust staff.

President's Letter

Everyone is talking about us!

We received amazing news as we went to press. By now it might already have reached you: We've made history by creating – and having officially verified! – the state's first carbon-credit project.



Stay tuned. We'll be getting details out soon. But the gist is that a major Washington corporation will pay us to grow trees that capture carbon and help offset the company's impact on climate change. Essentially, we'll be paid for as long as the trees grow, providing a perpetual fund for land stewardship.

Our project will also benefit our fellow land trusts, by creating a successful model. When it comes to protecting our Washington forests, this is a game-changer.

But wait, there's more! We've packed this newsletter with our recent greatest accomplishments. I mean, seriously, when the State of Washington gives us an award just for having the best application for funding (see page 11), that's a "Sally Fields" moment – They like us, they really like us!

This little ol' Land Trust of yours is doing work that will last lifetimes. And we're saving lives, too. Salmon lives, steelhead lives, probably a bunch of lives we don't even know we're saving.

That's the beauty of it. What we're doing is important immediately and in the long run. We are making our river, and our little corner of the planet, a better place for uncountable lives to enjoy in the future. Aren't you glad to be a part of this? I sure am.

There are so many people to thank for their contributions to all of this that we can't do it in one newsletter, but believe me, we are grateful. It's been a wonderful year. And it's worth talking about.

See you on the river.

JW Foster, Board President

GRANTS RECEIVED SINCE OCTOBER 2014

Our deep thanks to the organizations below for supporting our work

Community Foundation of South Puget Sound • Darden's Restaurant Community Grants Program (Olympia Olive Garden) • Greater Tacoma Community Foundation • Natural Resources Conservation Service • Nisqually Indian Tribe Charitable Fund • Pierce Conservation District Green Partnership Fund • Pierce County Conservation Futures • Sustainable Paths Foundation • Thurston County Conservation Futures • US Fish and Wildlife Service • US Forest Service • Washington Recreation and Conservation Office - Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program

Remembering Judy Scavone

Land Trust says goodbye to longtime friend and board member

It is with love, respect, and a profound sense of loss that we note the passing of our longtime friend and board member Judy Scavone on July 28. She died peacefully at her home in Ashford, surrounded by friends and family.

It is a simple statement of fact that without Judy pushing and pulling us, leading by example, raising support, and, as her health waned, becoming our biggest cheerleader, we would not have accomplished the lion's share of our work over the past decade – especially the creation of our 2,500-acre wildlife corridor, the Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve, on the flanks of the mountain Judy worked so hard to protect, and where she made her home.

Judy was a force of nature in every good sense of the

phrase. Her profound sense of community and her commitment to conservation of our shared natural legacy will always inspire us. We will miss her.

Many thanks to all those who made contributions to the Land Trust in Judy's memory. Special thanks to an anonymous donor – Judy championed our Forever Fund, and in her honor a retired teacher has offered to match up to \$20,000 in Forever Fund contributions at our 2016 Conservation Dinner, on April 2 (see page 10). ♻️



Welcome Aboard, Familiar Faces and New Friends!



Kathy Mix joined the Land Trust Board of Directors in June. As a long-time Olympia resident, she is enthused to support the Land Trust's mission, believing the river and surrounding habitat to be an important part of our community.

A native of Wyoming, Kathy is committed to conservation and protection of the West's wild rivers, landscape, and wildlife. She is a retired public attorney, having served for many years in the State Attorney General's Office, and also as a gubernatorial appointee on the State's two quasi-judicial environmental review boards.



Cris Peck served three terms as the Land Trust's AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinator before joining the Land Trust staff as Outreach Coordinator in August.

Prior to his AmeriCorps service, he worked at a cannery in Alaska, as a camp counselor in Kentucky, on a trail crew in Appalachia, and on restoration projects throughout the Midwest, including wetland mitigation in the infamous "flaming" Cuyahoga River watershed. Wild places and conservation are his passion, and he says he feels "incredibly fortunate to work within such a unique and wonderful community."



Claire Cook began her service with Nisqually Land Trust in September as AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinator. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from The Evergreen State College, with a focus on Ecosystem Ecology.

Her love of botany and the outdoors has guided her from field to lab, propagating plants, tutoring science undergraduates, and conducting water-quality analyses. "Stewardship of natural lands is of vital importance," she says, and she is "thrilled to have the privilege to work with volunteers in service to the Nisqually River Watershed." ♻️

Turning Dreams into Action: Land Trust Adopts New Five-Year Strategic Plan

After an intensive year-long effort by our board, staff, and supporters, the Land Trust has adopted an ambitious five-year strategic plan designed to expand our work and continue our growth as a regional conservation leader from 2016 through 2020.

The final document is posted on our website. We invite you to take a look, tell us what you think – and find a place to plug yourself in!

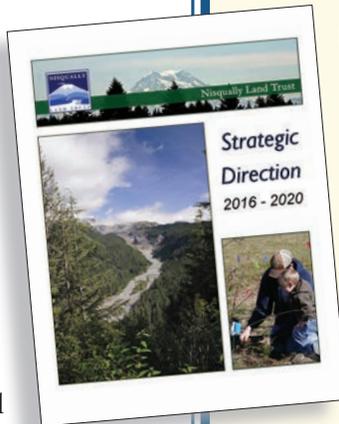
We started with fundamental questions:

- ▶ How can we assure that the Nisqually Watershed's precious natural treasures – clean water, abundant wildlife, healthy habitats for people, plants and animals – will be passed along to future generations?
- ▶ What are we doing well, and where can we improve?

We convened focus groups in local communities, interviewed key stakeholders, and held facilitated retreats and study sessions for board and staff.

We have high hopes. Our 2009-2013 plan guided us to a quadrupling in land protection, stewardship, volunteer engagement and financial reserves. Highlights of the 2016-2020 plan include:

- ▶ An emphasis on “community conservation” – getting people out on Land Trust properties and working even more closely with our local communities to meet and address their needs.
- ▶ An expansion of our work into the Nisqually marine environment, in Puget Sound (until now, we have focused almost exclusively on freshwater systems – our rivers and streams).
- ▶ Further development of “cutting edge” conservation strategies such as the Nisqually Community Forest, the sale of carbon credits to support perpetual stewardship of our lands, and development of the Road to Rainier Scenic Byway.
- ▶ Engagement of even more volunteers and students -- like you! 



2016-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN KEY GOALS

- ▶ Increase Land Trust protection of the mainstem Nisqually River by 15 percent
- ▶ Increase protection of the Mashel River by 50 percent
- ▶ Increase protection of Ohop Creek by 25 percent
- ▶ Launch the Land Trust's Marine Conservation Initiative
- ▶ Add at least 500 acres of forestlands in the upper Nisqually Valley/Mount Rainier Gateway
- ▶ Develop at least three locations where people can experience the Land Trust's work first-hand
- ▶ Engage over 400 volunteers annually

2009-2013 STRATEGIC PLAN KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal: Protect an additional 400 acres of lower Nisqually River and tributary shoreline

- 700 additional shoreline acres protected

Goal: Protect an additional 500 acres of timberlands in the Mount Rainier Gateway

- 1,800 additional acres protected

Goal: Complete 6 land-acquisition projects

- 24 projects completed

Goal: Complete 3 habitat-restoration projects

- 30 restoration projects completed

Goal: 300 K-12 students per year use Land Trust properties for environmental education

- Over 900 K-12 students per year use Land Trust properties

Goal: Achieve Land Trust Alliance national accreditation

- Accredited!

The Littlest Site Steward

For the Goslings, volunteering and good land stewardship are a family affair

Nick, Ariel, and Micah Gosling are Site Stewards at the Land Trust's Uster property in Yelm. They have been active volunteers for almost two years, joining the Land Trust family shortly before Micah was born in 2013.

It's hard to believe that this on-the-go family can find the time to volunteer, with stay-at-home dad Nick finishing his master's degree in communications management and busy mom Ariel working as an occupational therapist at Madigan Army Medical Center.

For Ariel and Nick, it's about a love of the land and sharing that passion with their son. "We are outdoor and nature enthusiasts," says Ariel, "and we love that the Nisqually Land Trust is committed to preserving the natural beauty of Washington. It is very important to us that Micah grow up experiencing the outdoors as much as possible so he appreciates it as much as we do."

In addition to their Site Steward activities, the Goslings attend volunteer work parties, which can vary from invasive plant removal to native tree plantings on protected lands.

"We love being able to spend time outdoors and help keep our community beautiful and healthy," says Ariel. "We have a lot of fun planting or digging up weeds with the work parties and learning about natural Washington."

If you would like to learn more about volunteering and our Site Stewards program, contact Claire at 360-489-3400 x106 or volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org. 

Although we are fortunate to count many friends who have been with us since our beginning some 26 years ago, we have very few that have been with us since their beginning. Ariel was 9 months pregnant with Micah when the Gosling family (below right) began stewarding the Uster property. Micah, now 20 months old (below left), has been a hardworking Site Steward ever since. (Photos courtesy of the Gosling family.)



WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Tell us about your experiences in the Nisqually Watershed and why being involved with the Land Trust matters to you and you could be featured in a future publication!

Share your pictures and stories with us: 360-489-3400 x102 or ctobin@nisquallylandtrust.org.

That's A Wrap!

Construction of first major stage of Ohop Creek restoration is now complete

In August, after more than fifteen years of planning, construction, and re-vegetation, the Land Trust and a team of partners completed the re-meandering of the last quarter-mile of the first major stage of the Ohop Creek Restoration Project, which has converted 1.8 miles of ditched creek into

2.4 miles of meandering, salmon-friendly stream.

Now that the creek is flowing freely in the new channel, we wondered how our partners felt about the project. Here's what a few of them had to say:



"Working on the Ohop Restoration Project makes me hopeful for our future. Over three years, we will have more than 1,500 students participating in making our communities healthier places. We help our local threatened salmon species as well as the climate of the entire planet! The trees they plant today will provide ecosystem services for hundreds of years. I am extremely grateful that the Nisqually Land Trust provides us the opportunities for these amazing 'service learning' projects."

Sheila Wilson

Program Director, Nisqually River Education Project

“Our visits to Ohop have provided [graduate] students an opportunity that we could not have anywhere else: to observe stream restoration as it is happening. Our trips to Ohop Creek are not only about learning how basic science is applied to solve environmental problems, but they have also been a chance for students to meet a variety of stakeholders and restoration experts. The trips may have even inspired some to pursue river restoration as a career. We are grateful to the Land Trust for allowing us access, introducing students to the project and connecting us to partner organizations.”

Dr. Juliet Crider

*Geologist & Program Director, Masters in Earth and Space Sciences,
Applied Geosciences, University of Washington*

“This project improves rearing habitat for salmon and provides an extended wildlife corridor. Since 2009, the Tribe’s crew of restoration technicians and hundreds of volunteers have installed over 85,000 plants!”

Cathy Sampelle

Restoration Biologist, Nisqually Indian Tribe

“Cardno engineers, ecological scientists and geomorphologists were delighted to be a part of all three phases of the Ohop Creek restoration efforts. We work regularly on large river projects of this scale, but were particularly impressed with the depth and breadth of the agencies, non-profit entities, and dozens of volunteers it took to accomplish this project. And, to the team’s delight, we welcomed a salmon in the new channel just a couple days after the water was reconnected!”

Sky Miller

PNW Restoration, Engineering & Geomorphology Practice Lead, Cardno

“To me, the Ohop Creek Restoration Project is a very special and unique restoration project that will become a legacy for the Nisqually watershed and the generations to come. Aquatic habitat in Ohop creek has been expanded to 2.4 miles, nearly double that of the former ditched stream, and over one hundred acres of wetlands have been restored. Future generations will have the opportunity to watch the beauty of this legacy unfold.”

Brian Combs

Project Manager, South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group

Left: A rough-skinned newt looks on as Land Trust interns Rose Edwards and Deni Murray rescue creatures from an agricultural ditch in the Ohop Valley. The ditch was filled in as part of the floodplain restoration and its inhabitants were relocated to Ohop Creek. Around: Restoration activities on Ohop Creek ranged from heavy equipment landscaping to delicate seedling planting, and a variety of tasks in between!



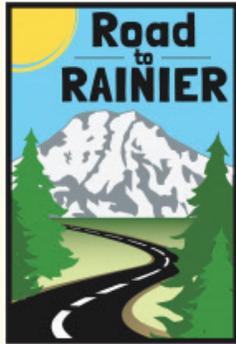
We still need your help!

Join us this winter for **volunteer work parties** in the Ohop Valley to plant native trees and shrubs and control weeds. Visit our website, give us a call or send us an e-mail for more information. 



Scenic Byway Website Launched

Recreation and tourism are important economic resources for local communities, especially around Mount Rainier National Park. Visitors to the area can now take advantage of the Nisqually Land Trust's new Road to Rainier Scenic Byway website, which features useful information about events and attractions and a trip planner to help get the most out of the Pacific Northwest experience.



Visit: www.roadtorainier.com

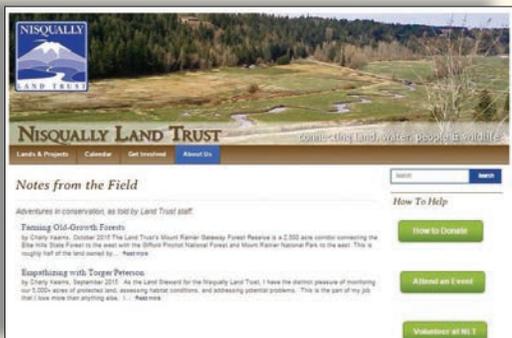
Don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/NisquallyLandTrust



New Stewardship Blog Shares "Notes from the Field"

In September the Land Trust launched a new monthly blog on our website that details the adventures and stories of staff and volunteers on protected Land Trust properties.

Check in every month to see what's new:
www.nisquallylandtrust.org/notes-from-the-field



Building Your Conservation Legacy

The Land Trust now has two great new ways for you to create a lasting conservation legacy in your Nisqually River Watershed. Like you, the Land Trust plans for the long-term care of our investments, knowing that the most precious lands in the Nisqually will always require management and protection. Together, we can be guardians of these rich natural assets in perpetuity.

The Nisqually Land Trust Endowment Fund

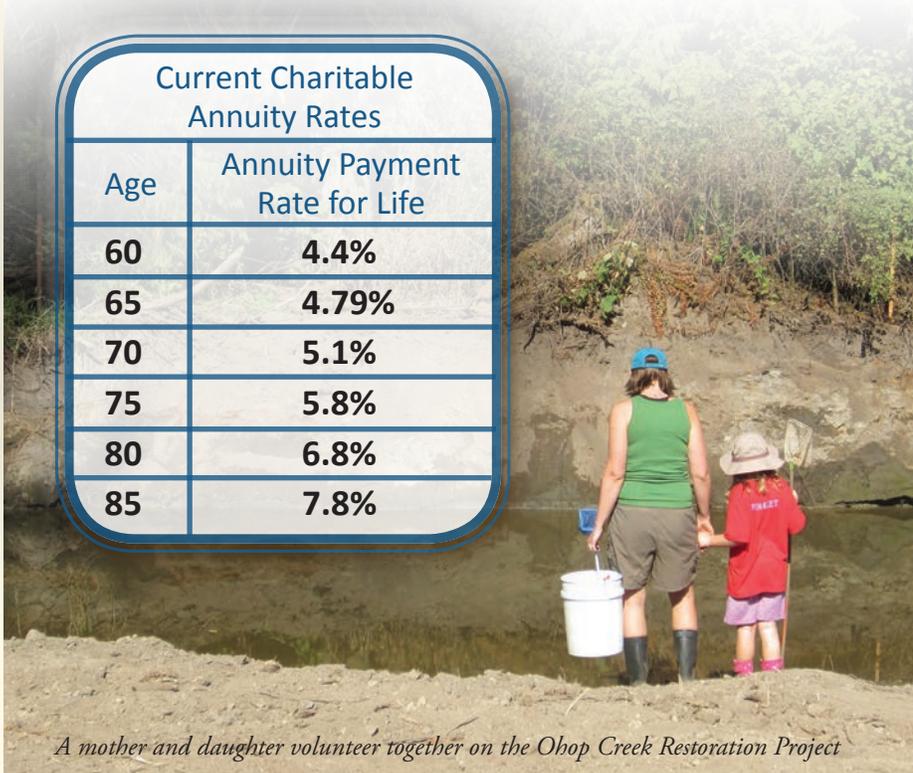
We've established the Nisqually Land Trust Endowment Fund with our local community foundation. Your contribution is an investment in conservation that will live on long after the gift is given. The Endowment Fund is invested to produce current income and growth of the principal. It provides us with a stable funding source to help ensure the permanent conservation of the Nisqually Watershed's rich natural legacy.

The Nisqually Land Trust Charitable Gift Annuity

You can make a gift to the Land Trust and receive guaranteed fixed payments for life as well as significant tax benefits: You'll receive a federal income-tax deduction for a portion of your gift, effectively increasing the yield from your annuity. And if you fund your annuity with appreciated securities, no capital-gains tax will be due on the transfer.

For more information on these legacy giving options and including the Land Trust in your estate planning, please call us at 360-489-3400. ☎

Current Charitable Annuity Rates	
Age	Annuity Payment Rate for Life
60	4.4%
65	4.79%
70	5.1%
75	5.8%
80	6.8%
85	7.8%



A mother and daughter volunteer together on the Ohop Creek Restoration Project

Ohop Shoreline Acquisition *(continued from cover)*

The Land Trust purchased the land for a total price of \$440,000, with 85 percent coming from Pierce County Conservation Futures and 15 percent from the state's Salmon Recovery Funding Board. After the Mashel River, Ohop Creek is the most important salmon-producing tributary of the Nisqually and is particularly critical for the recovery of threatened Chinook salmon. Over a century ago, several miles of the lower and middle creek were straightened and ditched and the valley drained for dairy farming, which severely impacted salmon.

The Land Trust and a consortium of Nisqually partners recently completed the first stage of the creek's restoration,

turning 1.8 miles of ditch back into 2.4 miles of meandering, salmon-friendly stream and planting some 86,000 native trees and shrubs. The project is considered one of the most successful stream restorations in the state.

The Nelson and Corey properties are envisioned as part of a future stage of the project. "We had to acquire over 400 acres for the first stage," said Land Trust board member George Walter, who completed many of the transactions for the Land Trust. "That took almost fifteen years. A lesson we learned is that it's never too soon to start on the next stage."

With the purchase of the Nelson and Corey properties, the journey to that next stage has begun. ↻

S U M M E R



E V E N T S

If you were one of the...



105

participants
in our nine guided
Nature Walks; or



90

river rafters
who joined us for an
**upper Nisqually
River float trip**; or



44

volunteers who
contributed **417** hours at
**16 summer stewardship
work parties**; or



120

people who celebrated the
Land Trust receiving the
Recreation & Conservation
Office's Bravo Award at
our **Annual Meeting &
Salmon Bake**...

THANK YOU!

We hope you had as much fun as we did!

We look forward to seeing even more of our friends at next summer's events! ↻

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



The Nisqually Land Trust's 24th Annual Conservation Dinner and Fundraising Auction will be held on **Saturday, April 2, 2016**.

Same great event at a **NEW LOCATION:**
INDIAN SUMMER GOLF COURSE IN OLYMPIA, WA

We are now accepting item donations and sponsorships for our 2016 event! Please visit our website, call the office or contact Candi at ctobin@nisquallylandtrust.org for more information. 

Land Trust Adds Red Salmon Creek Property to Nisqually Wildlife Refuge

Restoration of Historic McBride Farm to Continue

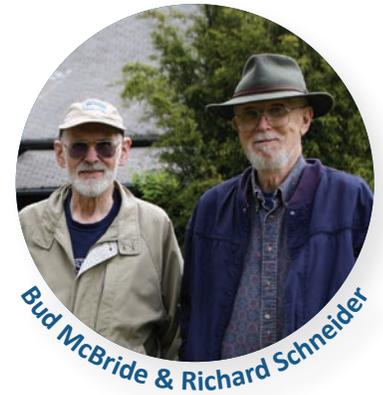
For most of his 86 years Albert “Bud” McBride – a descendant of Nisqually Indians and early American settlers – lived where he was born, on a farm along Red Salmon Creek in the Nisqually Delta.

In 1999 the Land Trust purchased the 32-acre farm from Bud under an agreement that allowed him to live out his life there along with his life partner, Richard Schneider. Bud died in 2012, and in 2014 Richard moved to Orcas Island to be near family. The Land Trust has now incorporated their former property into the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.

“It’s what Bud and Richard had always wanted to see,” said George Walter, who as president of the Land Trust in 1999 purchased the property from Bud and established his life estate. “They were great supporters of all of the many efforts to protect the Nisqually Delta and Nisqually River.”

The Land Trust has conducted an ambitious restoration program on the property, reclaiming almost half a mile of Red Salmon Creek, a salmon-producing stream that feeds directly into the Nisqually Delta.

Thanks to herculean efforts by Land Trust staff and volunteers and the Washington Conservation Corps, the stream, once so smothered in blackberry and other invasive plants that it was thought impossible to reclaim, now hosts vibrant runs of coho salmon every fall, and hundreds of native trees and shrubs are now established and thriving.



Under terms of a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Land Trust will continue restoration of the property. 

Restoration efforts have been underway at the McBride property for nearly a decade and the toils of volunteers, Land Trust staff, and work crews to revert old pastures to native riparian forests are paying off. Join us for a native-tree planting on November 21st. Visit our website calendar for more information and to RSVP.



2006



2014

Restoring Habitat, Putting Bread on the Table

Land Trust conservation projects create local jobs

Habitat restoration can get pretty technical. For projects that require a high level of expertise, the Land Trust tries to employ local contractors, like Tim Surface of Tim Surface Contracting, in Ashford.

For over 35 years Tim has worked primarily on road construction and maintenance for commercial timber companies, upgrading cross-drains, ditches, and culverts to meet water-quality standards.

But over the past five years, Tim has also completed four major projects for the Land Trust, operating heavy equipment to remove culverts and abandon more than five miles of outdated logging roads in our Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve.

Logging roads alter the natural flow of water, and failing roads and blocked culverts are a recipe for erosion. In decommissioning them, Tim breaks up compacted roadbed and removes the culverts, creating conditions for native vegetation to reclaim the area and springs to resume their natural flow.

Ironically, one recent Land Trust project found Tim deconstructing a road he had installed himself, many years ago. 🌀



CONSERVATION MEANS LOCAL JOBS FOR LOCAL PROS

The Land Trust strongly believes that our conservation work can succeed only if our local communities have healthy economies, and we make it a priority to hire local contractors whenever possible.

Conservation projects are local projects. They create jobs that can't be outsourced to far-off places.

Our local professionals who help make habitat restoration possible include:

- ▶ Appraisers
- ▶ Arborists
- ▶ Attorneys
- ▶ Demolition Contractors
- ▶ Environmental Assessors
- ▶ Foresters & Forestry Crews
- ▶ Native Plant Nurseries
- ▶ Planting Materials Producers
- ▶ Plumbers
- ▶ Restoration Crews
- ▶ Surveyors
- ▶ Well Contractors

Bravo Award Caps Record-Setting Year for Land Trust

The Land Trust staff was honored to receive the Recreation and Conservation Office's Bravo Award for the best grant proposal in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program competition, which capped a record-setting year.

The Bravo Award singled out the Land Trust's "visionary" Middle Mashel Phase IV project, which proposes to protect over 1,000 acres and 9.7 miles of river and tributary shoreline for threatened salmon.

In 2015, with generous support from our donors, Land Trust staff wrote a record \$9 million in successful conservation proposals, including five ranked number one in

their respective competitions at the national, state, regional and county levels. 🌀





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Clean water.

Healthy forests.

Vibrant communities.

Protected wildlife habitat.

People connected to the land.

**You are part of
the big picture.**

Please donate to our 2015 Conservation Appeal at

www.nisquallylandtrust.org or call us at 360-489-3400. Thanks!



2015
Conservation
Appeal