

NISQUALLY Land Trust

www.nisquallylandtrust.org

June 2005

NLT Initiates Stewardship Program

Linda Kunze knew she would be busy when she joined the Nisqually Land Trust as its new part-time Stewardship Coordinator.

“There’s just a lot to do to get started,” she said. “We need to inventory our properties to better understand what’s there and then create management and stewardship plans and priorities for them.” Kunze is also charged with developing and funding a volunteer-based stewardship program.

“By training volunteers, we will also provide community members with the opportunity to experience the watershed and learn about its environment and how to sustain it.”

Kunze says a stewardship program is important, since the Land Trust has acquired a large number of properties and expects to continue growing rapidly.

“Many of our properties are small or were disturbed in the past and are not self-sustaining,” she said. “Properties need restoration and stewardship to maintain vegetation, wildlife and salmon populations.”

Kunze cites management of invasive species that degrade habitat, such as ivy, Scots broom and Himalayan blackberry, as one area that will require intensive efforts. And that’s just for starters!

The Land Trust has already experienced a few problems with trespass, dumping and illegal occupancy. Kunze says stewardship can prevent that.

“Dumpers and occupiers single out land that appears neglected or has evidence of previous dumping,” she said. “If you have a good stewardship program, the land looks tended and cared for, and trespass and dumping are reduced.”

Kunze says the Land Trust cannot afford to postpone stewardship activities because “the habitat could be seriously damaged by unwanted human uses and overrun by invasive species to the point where it would be very expensive or even impossible to rehabilitate the land.”

Asked what the program needs most, Kunze replied “secure funding and an excited cadre of workers.” Kunze was hired on a trial basis; she will need to raise funds to pay for volunteer training, equipment, supplies and manage-

ment expenses.

Kunze, who grew up in Seattle, studied biology and plant ecology at Whitworth College and the University of Washington, respectively. She worked for the Nature Conservancy and the State of Washington inventorying wetlands, and writing management plans for them. She also owned and operated a nursery specializing in native plants. Her return to the workforce after taking time out to parent her daughter was opportune for both Kunze and the Land Trust.

“Land management is where my heart is,” said Kunze. “To work with the Nisqually Land Trust is an amazing opportunity.” ■



Linda Kunze
Stewardship Coordinator

Landowner Protects Habitat

Land Trust Acquires Ohop Creek Property

The Land Trust is pleased to announce an agreement to purchase a parcel of some three acres on Ohop Creek, an important salmon-producing tributary of the Nisqually River. Though small, the parcel includes 300 feet of salmon shoreline and will be a key addition to the Land Trust’s holdings in the Ohop Valley, which now total over 150 acres.

In 2004, the Land Trust contacted property owners along Ohop Creek to assess their interest in protecting riparian habitat on their properties. Among the owners who responded were Dennis and Sandy Lundgren, who ultimately agreed to sell us their property at a bargain price so that it will be permanently protected.

The Lundgren property is a beautiful piece of land, with mature second-growth timber, a small wetland, and a sweeping curve of shoreline. The Lundgrens bought the parcel more than twenty years ago, and Dennis, an avid salmon fisherman, said he felt it was time to give something back. “It’s just so crowded anymore—we have to



Dennis and Sandy Lundgren

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leave something for the game and the fish. I wanted to give something back,” he said.

Salmon biologists have determined that the Lundgren land is a good candidate for restoration, which will include re-establishing the hydraulic connection between Ohop Creek and the wetland and planting trees along the creek’s riparian zone.

In addition, the site is directly across the creek from a Salmon Stewards restoration project on a privately owned property, which was reforested with funding from the Pierce County Community Salmon Fund. Restoring both sides of the creek will have a cumulative beneficial effect and provide a good example of multiple property owners working together on stream restoration.

Ohop Creek and its tributaries are used by fall Chinook salmon, cutthroat trout, coho and pink salmon, and steelhead. The Nisqually Chinook Recovery Plan has identified the Ohop as having high restoration and preservation potential, and this project will directly address three critical actions called for in the plan: land acquisition, enhancement of degraded riparian areas, and restoration of lost-channel habitat.

Habitat restoration efforts in the Ohop appear to be paying off already: Dennis Lundgren recently spotted elk tracks on his land. And that, he said, “is something I’ve ever seen before.” ■

Intern Designs Land Management Plan for NLT

The opportunity to design a land management plan has brought Evan Marks to the Nisqually Land Trust. Marks, an undergraduate student at the Evergreen State College, arranged an internship with the Land Trust after meeting NLT President George Walter at a classroom presentation.

“I’m interested in resource land management,” said Marks, “and since my experience so far has been limited to inside the classroom, I wanted the opportunity to learn how resource conservation really works.”



Evan Marks
Land Management Intern

Marks is designing a management database, plus a prototype land management plan for three parcels of Land Trust property near Yelm. He says there are several directions the Land Trust could choose for the property, which contains wetlands, timber, creeks and river shoreline.

“My first consideration is the goals and values of the Land Trust. My job is to identify the options available for meeting those goals,” explained Marks. He hopes to develop a process to help board and staff decide which options are best for each property.

“You can’t do a one-size-fits-all kind of check list for a land trust. The habitats under conservation are diverse, so you need a process in place that starts with each new property. Stewardship, monitoring and sustainable resource utilization are all possibilities that can be considered.”

Marks says that good land management planning will help the Land Trust to focus and prioritize its restoration and stewardship resources.

“I am interested in pursuing resource lands management as a career, so this internship should help me develop some useful skills to use in the future,” said Marks.

“I have been disappointed that often management of resources is defensive and reactionary—with a ‘line’ between environmentalism and development. I’d like to join current efforts to blur that line a bit. I think we can apply a little cooperation and innovation to manage land resources with an emphasis on sustainability and still be economically viable. We need to create new connections between the various interests, because for environmentalism to advance beyond the protectionist mindset we will have to embrace development too.”

Marks, a native of Seattle, has studied anthropology and environmental history at the University of Oregon and is currently pursuing land management planning at The Evergreen State College. ■

The Nisqually Land Trust would like to recognize the following organizations, businesses and individuals for their outstanding financial support, in 2005, of habitat conservation in the Nisqually River watershed.

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Supporter Spotlight

Love of River Brings Volunteer to NLT

Land Trust volunteer Ginny Harris does it all in the Nisqually basin: She counts salmon, monitors wildlife habitat, fights invasive weeds, and helps out in the Land Trust office and at our annual auction. A resident of Yelm, she says that when the proposal to build a NASCAR track there surfaced a couple of years ago, “I asked myself, if I’m against NASCAR, then what am I for?”

She decided that what she was for was the Nisqually River. “I love the river,” she said. “It’s so alive.”

She signed up for the Nisqually Tribe’s Stream Stewards program and volunteered to count salmon runs on Muck and Lackamas creeks, which are Nisqually tributaries. Then she volunteered for the Weed Warriors program at the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, where she learned how to use GPS gear. (“Boy, those are fun! You can find your way back from anywhere!”)

Last July she joined the Land Trust’s annual float trip, rafting the lower Nisqually from the Centralia Powerhouse nearly to the delta. “Talk about having a lot to learn,”

she said. “At the time, I thought we’d be floating to Centralia.” She’s now become a regular presence in the Land Trust office, most recently hand-addressing—elegantly—hundreds of envelopes for our membership drive.

“One thing I’ve learned is that it’s not enough just to want something,” she said. “You have to act. You have to put your energy behind your intent.”

Formerly an elementary-school teacher in the Los Angeles area, Ginny moved to Eatonville with her husband in 1986. “We were in the lap of Mount Rainier,” she said. “I wanted room for chickens, and by god I bought a hundred of them.”

They settled in Yelm sixteen years ago. “I was here when the McDonald’s opened,” she said. “Growth is inevitable. I understand that. I moved here from somewhere else myself. But we have to protect the things that can’t be replaced.”

Her husband passed away in 1998, but Ginny is still going full speed. She’s eagerly awaiting the launch of the Land Trust’s volunteer-stewardship program. “I have my compass and my tree identifier,” she said. “I’m ready. This is such a lovely place to live!” ■



Ginny Harris at NLT’s recent auction.

From the Executive Director

Conservationists Make Great Ancestors

By Joe Kane

For fifteen years now you—our members and supporters—have been helping us buy land in the Nisqually basin. Now we’d like to get you out on that land. With the hiring of Linda Kunze as our Stewardship Coordinator (see front page), we’re launching a volunteer program designed to do just that.

Our goal is to build a program that involves volunteers in stewardship and restoration at whatever level best suits them—from one-day tree-planting sessions to years-long stewardship of specific parcels of land. That means training, equipment, supplies, and supervision.

All of that costs money, of course. We’d like to thank those who have made it possible for us to launch this program, including, thus far, donors and attendees from our annual auction (a portion of whose record proceeds were earmarked for stewardship); the Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation, which has provided a generous grant; the Nisqually Indian Tribe and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which have pledged in-kind help that will include

field and classroom training; and our members, whose dues help with administrative costs.

Some of our land is in great shape. Here in the Nisqually, we’re blessed to have large portions of relatively undisturbed habitat. But many of our holdings need work. Check out the photo below: It was taken at our Wilcox Flats property, where the Land Trust’s Stewart Helzer (on the right, with Land Trust member Bob Smith) spent three months hauling out tons of trash and debris left by the previous owners.

Few of our parcels have such dramatic needs, of course. But many of them require care and restoration, from pulling out invasive weeds like Scots broom to posting them for trespass to monitoring new plantings over the years. And while we’re legally bound to steward our land, legal imperatives are hardly our principal motivation. Salmon, beaver, eagle: that’s the motivation. That, and the knowledge that conservationists make great ancestors. ■



Last year, workers cleaned up a mountain of debris and garbage on NLT Wilcox Flats properties.

Record Auction Funds Land

“Most Successful Auction Ever”



Larry Schorno and NLT President George Walter get live auction bidding off to a lively start.



Clare Kane and Kira Faller (left) give away smiles with each raffle ticket purchase.

The final bid has been tallied and the results are in—NLT’s thirteenth annual auction, held in March, was our most successful ever.

“The event brought in more than \$37,000,” said George Walter, NLT president, “thanks to our donors, supporters and of course, our top-notch volunteers.”

Enthusiastic bidders snapped up vacation packages, fine artwork, baseball tickets, museum memberships and much more, encouraged by auctioneer Larry Schorno and Walter, who was the master of ceremonies for the event.

Walter welcomes the land acquisition and stewardship opportunities that auction proceeds provide for the Land Trust.

“Because of the success of this auction we are able to hire a much-needed part-time stewardship coordinator,” he said, explaining that the Land Trust has more than 830 acres to manage now and expects to nearly double that within the next several years.

“Now is the time to develop a stewardship program to monitor, restore and maintain those properties,” said Walter.

Cash donations and items and services contributed for our auction were provided by the businesses, organizations and individuals listed at right. We encourage you to support businesses that support the Nisqually Land Trust. For contact information, call our office at (360) 458-1111. ■



Kris Phelps finds a treasure amongst the silent auction items.

Thanks, NLT Volunteers!

Our dedicated and creative auction volunteers set up, cleaned up, decorated, organized, cashiered and saw to a multitude of details that made our event run smoothly. Our thanks for an auction well done to:

Megan Armstrong
Karen Bond
Stephen Bond
Jill Brady
Patt Brady
Barbara & Tom Cook
Heather & Ignacio Diaz
Sheriff Gary Edwards
Kira Faller
Ruta & Patrick Fanning
J.W. Foster
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Justin Hall
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Ginny Harris
Clare Kane
Sofia Kane
Kristen Kinney
Bonita Law
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Diane Ludwig
Alexandra Smith
Joanne Stellini
Matt Wei

And for help with our newsletter and various office projects:

Tracey Bingham
Ginny Harris
Louise Olivera
Rae Pirie
Sarah Robischon

Acquisition, Stewardship



Ellen Leckrone places a bid on a plant for her yard.

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Chris and Lisa Wilcox, of Wilcox Family Farms, take a moment to relax.

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Photos by Scott Areman

THANK YOU!

Fourteenth Annual “Float the Nisqually” Raft Trip



Join us for a rare opportunity to enjoy a relaxing raft trip along seldom-seen stretches of the scenic Nisqually River. Two trips, each featuring a different region of the river, are available.

Saturday, July 23, journey 13 miles down a remote, mostly undisturbed stretch of the Nisqually River. This trip departs from the future site of the Nisqually-Mashel State Park, near Eatonville.

Sunday, July 31, float ten miles through a beautiful natural river corridor protected by Fort Lewis and the Nisqually Indian Reservation.

Both trips are peaceful five to six hour floats past cedar and fir trees and sweeping undeveloped wild lands. Naturalists will be available to answer questions about habitat and wildlife.

“This is an easy and fun river float,” said Joe Kane, NLT executive director. “It’s suitable for most people age six and up. Every year our conservation efforts protect more wild lands. This is a great way to see some of them.”

Seats on the raft trip are \$75 per person for Land Trust members; \$100 for non-members. A delicious catered lunch, served on the banks of the river, is included. Space is limited, so make your reservations early.

For reservations or information, telephone Nisqually Land Trust at (360) 458-1111 or email us at staff@nisquallylandtrust.org. Funds raised by the float trip will help the Land Trust acquire and preserve land in the Nisqually River watershed. ■

Annual Membership Meeting and Salmon Bake

Sunday, September 25, 2005
from 4:00 to 7:30 p.m.
at Odd Fellows Park

Join us for a tasty dinner of Nisqually River salmon, freshly prepared for you on site. Delicious side dishes and desserts complete the meal. Help us celebrate a successful year of habitat conservation and find out what the Land Trust will be doing next year.

This event is a celebration and is free to all supporters of the Nisqually Land Trust. We encourage you to bring guests! Call 360-458-1111 or email staff@nisquallylandtrust.org to make reservations and get directions to the park. ■



Thank You NLT Supporters!

Our members and contributors are conservators of the Nisqually watershed. You play a critical role in the preservation of our water quality and wild spaces. Donations and membership dues provide matching funds for land acquisition grants, restoration, stewardship and Land Trust operations.

Thank you, renewing members, for your continuing support. Welcome, new supporters! Please tell your friends and neighbors how they can help keep our watershed clean and beautiful for generations to come.

Donations and memberships received between January 1 and April 30, 2005

* new donor or member

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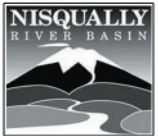
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Volunteer for Hands-On Conservation!

The Land Trust is organizing volunteers to help restore and steward our properties. We are developing stewardship plans and need volunteers to help manage these lands. We have a wide range of opportunities, from pulling weeds, planting trees and monitoring properties to office tasks. Let us know what you'd be interested in by calling Linda Kunze, our new stewardship coordinator, at 360-458-1111. You can also email her at nltsteward@ywave.com or visit our website, www.nisquallylandtrust.org, and click on "volunteer opportunities."

Saving a Natural Legacy



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Upcoming Land Trust Events—see page 6

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