



NISQUALLY LAND TRUST

Summer 2016
Newsletter

Salmon Project Spawns New High School Campus

STEM Site Adjoins Ohop Restoration

In a collaboration believed to be the first of its kind in the state, the Land Trust has transferred a three-acre farmyard and historic buildings to the Eatonville School District for development as a high-school Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) campus.

The campus site was carved out of the Land Trust's 414-acre Ohop Creek Restoration project. Eatonville students will use the site to grow and produce farm products for the school, other students, and a local family agency.

Over a century ago, dairy farmers ditched Ohop Creek to drain the Ohop Valley, which had a devastating impact on salmon that use the creek. As part of the Nisqually Salmon Recovery Plan, the Land Trust, the Nisqually Indian Tribe, and a host of local, state, and federal

(continued page 4)

The historic structures from the Burwash farmyard will be given new life in the Eatonville School District's STEM program.

Land Trust launches Marine Initiative to protect Puget Sound (page 5)



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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Old Education Center
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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 in this publication are courtesy of Land Trust staff and volunteers




Oil Spill Double-Take



"Oil" on Ohop Creek: Natural, or pollution?

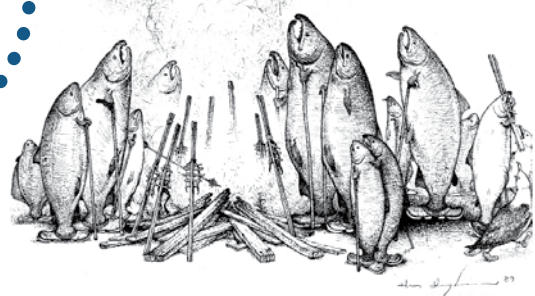
Recently the Land Trust received a call from a concerned citizen reporting an oil spill in our Ohop Valley protected area. Land Steward Charly hurried to the site to investigate and found, to everyone's relief, that it was actually a naturally occurring surface film (above).

Surface films develop on stagnant or slow-moving water from any combination of pollen, dust, algae and decomposing plant oils. They can look a lot like spilled motor oil, but they behave differently. If you poke a suspected oil slick with a stick and it breaks apart (above photo), it's from a natural source. If it doesn't, then it's likely motor or kitchen oil.

Oil spills have serious implications for wetlands. If something looks suspicious it's best to err on the side of caution and report it to the Washington State Department of Ecology, at (800) 424-8802. 



2016 Annual Meeting and Salmon Bake



Join us for a picnic-style dinner and an update of Land Trust activities. Watch our website for more information at www.nisquallylandtrust.org.

This event is generously sponsored by:



Land Trust Makes History with Microsoft Carbon Deal

Equivalent of taking 6,000 cars off the road

The Land Trust and Microsoft have made national news and local history by completing the state's first-ever "carbon credit" transaction.

News of the deal made the *Seattle Times*, the *New York Times*, the *Tacoma News-Tribune*, the *Olympian*, radio stations KPLU and KUOW, and over a hundred other media outlets nationwide.

To simplify, as part of its voluntary \$20 million-a-year initiative to offset 100 percent of its carbon emissions worldwide, Microsoft has paid the Land Trust for carbon stored on a 520-acre property within our Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve, near Ashford.

As trees grow, they pull, or "sequester," carbon pollution from the atmosphere and help reduce the impacts of climate change. The amount of carbon and the rate at which the Land Trust's trees are sequestering it has been verified under California's rigorous cap-and-trade program, the country's only regulated carbon-credit program.

Microsoft purchased 35,000 carbon credits, the equivalent of taking 6,000 cars off the road. If we had not acquired the property and eliminated commercial harvest of the trees, much of that carbon would have been released into the atmosphere.

"This is a game changer," said Land Trust Executive Director Joe Kane. "There are 28 land trusts in the state, and we all face a common problem: How are we going to finance stewardship of our conservation properties over the long haul?"

"The carbon market might hold an answer. As these trees grow, they'll continue to generate new credits. Potentially, we have a perpetual stewardship fund."

The forest Microsoft has invested in provides habitat for at least fifteen different wildlife species, including marbled murrelets and northern spotted owls, which are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Mike Ryherd, right, holds the certificate verifying that he and his wife, Anne, were the winning bidders for 25 carbon credits at the Land Trust's annual auction.

The Ryherds' credits are the first ever to be retired to offset the carbon emissions of private individuals in South Puget Sound. They are the equivalent of approximately one-half of an average local household's annual carbon emissions.



However, Kane said, the project was a "big gamble. It took over two years and was enormously expensive for us, with no guarantee of success.

"But the carbon-credit model holds huge potential for the climate, for our forests, and for land trusts. Somebody had to step up. We consider it our job to be a conservation innovator, so we gave ourselves the assignment."

The Washington Environmental Council (WEC) partnered with the Land Trust. WEC's Paula Sweden, one of the nation's leading authorities on carbon markets, was the project's lead developer.

"It was a rigorous process," she said. "But it has to be. California companies are legally required to meet emissions standards, and there can't be any question about what work the forest is doing. The data has to be rock-solid."

Meanwhile, she said, WEC wanted to demonstrate to other Washington businesses that a carbon project can be done. "We wanted to pair carbon financing with forest conservation right here at home."

This is the first time a business has purchased credits in Washington State. "Microsoft has set an example," Kane said. "And this is a carbon project you can walk around on. How cool is that?"

Land Trust Salmon Project Spawns Eatonville Campus

(Continued from cover)

partners have converted 1.8 miles of ditch back into 2.4 miles of meandering, salmon-friendly stream.

The project included purchase of the 114-acre Burwash Farm and its historic home and outbuildings, which were slated for demolition.

The school district will restore the buildings and develop a hands-on agricultural curriculum with Pacific Lutheran University, the Eatonville Family Agency, and the GRUB program at Olympia High School. Pierce County funded purchase of the farmstead through its Conservation Futures program.

District Superintendent Krestin Bahr and Land Trust consultant Eric Erler spent over a year working out the intricacies of the transfer.



“This is a story of cooperation, creativity and commitment at every level,” Eric said. “Krestin had a unique vision of what this site could be, and it inspired all of us to help make it happen.”

Superintendent Bahr said the district will work with Pierce County, the Eatonville Historical Society and the town “to preserve not only the structures but the stories of a farm in rural America,” with special attention to Native American influences. “This site has been very important to Eatonville residents, and we look forward to incorporating the past into our students’ futures.”



In partnership with the Nisqually River Education Project, hundreds of elementary school students—many from Eatonville—have helped replant the Ohop site in the last few years. Students will grow food for the Eatonville community on the STEM campus.

Over the past two years the Land Trust has had the good fortune to engage consultant **Eric Erler** to handle some of our most complex projects, including the creation of the Eatonville School District STEM campus (cover) and the launch of our Nisqually Marine Initiative (page 5).

Many people know Eric as the former executive director of Capitol Land Trust, which he led for fourteen years and helped build into one of the most effective and respected land trusts in the state.

Since stepping down from that position, in 2014,

Eric has divided his time between consulting for organizations and private landowners and indulging his passion for biking, kayaking, skiing, and general revelry in the outdoors.



“Eric’s experience, intelligence, and commitment are unmatched,” said Land Trust Executive Director Joe Kane, who has collaborated with Eric on many projects over the years, including the founding of the Washington Association of Land Trusts. “He’s a natural resource unto himself, and we’re lucky to have him.”

Land Trust Launches Nisqually Marine Initiative

After 27 years of focusing on the Nisqually Watershed's freshwater systems – its rivers and streams – the Land Trust has launched the Nisqually Marine Initiative, which will expand our conservation efforts into Puget Sound.

“This is a natural extension of the work we’ve been doing all along,” said Lands Committee Chair George Walter. “The freshwater and marine environments are really one big system. We’ve worked very successfully with freshwater habitat, but marine conditions have steadily deteriorated and are growing more urgent by the day.”

The Land Trust has had a long but limited presence in the marine waters, through its land purchases in support of the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, at the mouth of the Nisqually River.

In 2011, the Washington Department of Natural Resources established the Nisqually Reach Aquatic Reserve, a designation assigned to approximately 19,000 acres and 39 miles of marine shoreline habitat in southern Puget Sound adjacent to the Refuge.

The Reserve extends from the Nisqually River Delta across the Nisqually Reach to the shores of McNeil Island.

In 2014, with support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Land Trust completed a preliminary assessment of conservation needs and potential opportunities for protecting priority marine habitats in support of the Reserve.

Last year, we extended that research by hiring consultant Eric Erler to lead an assessment of strategic opportunities and challenges across the entirety of the Nisqually marine environment. More than 20 watershed stakeholders contributed insights and recommendations for the assessment.

And in September, as part of adopting our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, the Land Trust Board of Directors voted to expand our mission to include conservation of marine habitats as a strategic priority.

The Marine Conservation Initiative will build upon the work of the Land Trust's watershed partners and establish its strategic focus in cooperation with them. “We can bring unique resources to the table,” said George Walter. “Our capacity has grown, and I’m confident that we can expand beyond the Nisqually Watershed.”

Our recent acquisition in the Hogum Bay protected area enhances the protection of the pocket estuary at Mallard Cove, on Puget Sound.

Nisqually River Therapy



When was the last time you just sat and watched the river go by? Really just sat there and did nothing but let your thoughts drift with the current?

It had been quite a while for me, until just recently, when I was on a work party with Claire and Charly and a handful of our awesome volunteers. We had just finished pulling scotch broom and blackberry on one of our restored and protected properties on the Mashel River when I found myself along its shore.

I looked at the water for just a moment and smiled, then turned to go, because I had so much else to do. Then I realized that was like me every day – rushing on to the next thing that needs doing, and the next... And the river had been waiting for me all along.

So I sat down on a rock, fixed my gaze on the patient river, and exhaled one of those long, sighing breaths. You know the kind. With my next breath I took in the river's scent: moss, maple, salmonberry blossom, something decaying, spicy "dread" herb Robert (we'll get him next time).

And this time as I exhaled, I felt a whole lot of tension go with it. I didn't even know I was tense! But there it went, downriver without me. It felt great.

So I did it some more. It was five minutes of total relaxation and restoration. When I turned around to rejoin the work party I was even prouder of the work we'd just finished and of the Land Trust's accomplishments over the past year.

We're making new friends and gaining more support all the time. And we're finding new ways to be more effective in our mission to protect and restore the lands in our care. But best of all, we are creating places and opportunities for folks to have special moments.

Safe water for salmon, healthy habitat for dozens of other creatures, and beautiful restorative places for us and our children to enjoy. Strong work!

I hope you can join us on one of our nature walks or float trips this summer, so that you can have your moment, too. ~

See you on the river!

John Johnson
Board President

GRAPHIC DESIGNED BY FREEPIK

Nature Walks

Join us for the last THREE walks of the summer:



MOUNT RAINIER GATEWAY RESERVE
NEAR ASHFORD
JULY 9TH | 10 AM - 1 PM

BOXCAR CANYON
NEAR EATONVILLE
AUGUST 6TH | 10 AM - 1 PM

PETERSEN FARM
IN YELM
AUGUST 27TH | 10 AM - 12:30 PM

These walks are generously sponsored by:



You are invited to explore special Land Trust protected areas throughout the Nisqually Watershed (Pierce and Thurston Counties) on these free guided tours. RSVP is required to attend and space is limited. Please contact us at staff@nisquallylandtrust.org or 360-489-3400 to reserve your spot.

OUR IMPACT IN 2015

- ◆ Over **two** miles and **240** acres of salmon shoreline permanently protected; **5,125** total acres protected to date
- ◆ **\$8,785,535** raised for acquisition of conservation properties
- ◆ **3,901** hours donated by **349** volunteers to improve wildlife habitat on Land Trust properties
- ◆ **30,600** native plants installed; over **245,000** planted to date
- ◆ **38** acres of invasive ivy, blackberry and scotch broom removed to improve wildlife habitat

2015 PROGRAM PARTNERS

- Eatonville School District
- Evergreen State College
- Federal Highway Administration
- JBLM Personnel
- Mount Rainier National Park
- Mount Tahoma Trails Association
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge
- Nisqually River Council
- Nisqually River Education Project
- Nisqually River Foundation
- Nisqually Stream Stewards
- Northwest Natural Resource Group
- Northwest Trek
- Pierce Conservation District/Stream Team
- South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group
- Thurston County
- Thurston Conservation District
- U.S.E.P.A. Western Ecology Division
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- WA Department of Commerce
- WA Department of Transportation
- Washington Conservation Corps
- Washington Environmental Council
- Washington Service Corps/AmeriCorps

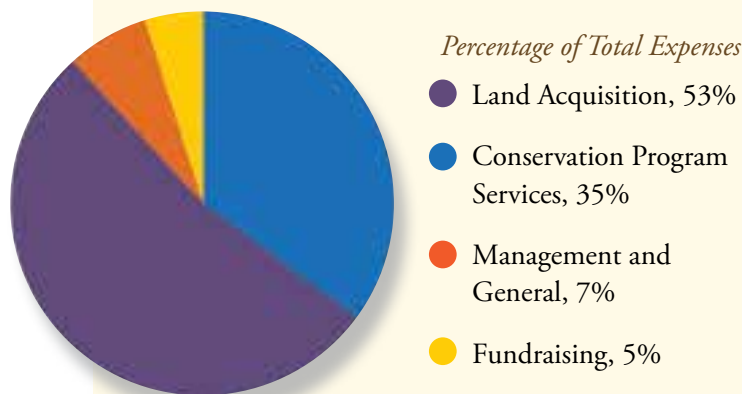
2015 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Condensed Balance Sheet

Cash	\$518,003
Conservation Land	\$22,482,887
Equipment (minus depreciation)	\$8,497
Investments & Other	\$993,970
Receivable	\$150,514
Prepaid Expense	\$8,978
Total Assets	\$24,162,849
Current Liabilities	\$52,110
Other Liabilities	\$0
Net Assets	\$24,110,739
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$24,162,849

Condensed Statement of Activities

<i>Support and Revenue</i>	
Grants and Contributions	\$1,311,616
In-Kind Donations	\$1,163
Fundraising	\$113,157
Earned Income	\$80,538
Interest and Dividend Income	\$31,887
Other Revenue	\$729
Total Support and Revenue	\$1,539,090
<i>Expenses</i>	
Land Acquisitions	\$798,321
Conservation Program Services	\$523,879
Management and General	\$108,268
Fundraising	\$85,477
Total Expenses	\$1,515,945
Net Result	\$23,145



These charts were derived from an independent audit by Aiken & Sanders, CPA, and represent the financial position of the Nisqually Land Trust as of December 31, 2015. For more information or copies of our audit, visit our website at www.nisquallylandtrust.org or call us at 360.489.3400.

Thank You

2015 DONORS

The Nisqually Land Trust gratefully acknowledges the individuals, businesses, foundations and agencies that have generously supported our work. Reflected below are contributions received or pledged between January 1 and December 31, 2015.

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- ★ Forever Fund Donors
- Three consecutive years+

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We've done our best to produce an accurate list of our 2015 donors, but if we missed you, our apology, and please contact Nikki Dizon at staff@nisquallylandtrust.org. Thanks!

We honor the memories of friends who have gone before us and generously provided for a better future for the Nisqually Watershed through gifts from their estates.

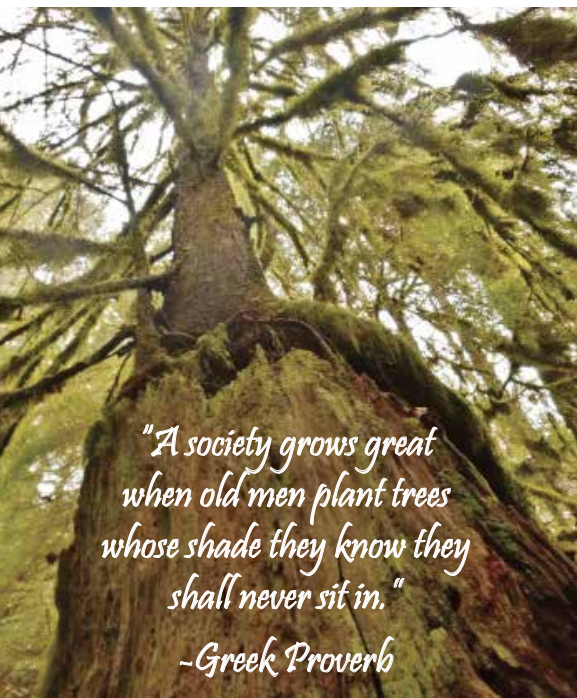
Bequests received in 2015:

Suzanne Shaefer
The Jane Willits Trust

By including the Land Trust in your estate plan, you will protect the health of our land and water for future generations.

Talk with your family, talk with your advisor, then talk with us.

Contact Executive Director Joe Kane at 360-489-3400 or jkane@nisquallylandtrust.org to learn more.



"A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."
-Greek Proverb

27 Years of Service, a Lifetime of Dedication

George Walter retires from the Board of Directors

George Walter, who founded the Land Trust in 1989 and served as its president from 1989-2012, retired from the Board of Directors in May after almost three decades of service.

We're happy to report that George will continue to chair our Lands Committee, which coordinates acquisition and stewardship of the Land Trust's properties. It is difficult to capture the profound impact George has had on conservation in the Nisqually Watershed. During his tenure with the Land Trust, we have permanently protected over 5,000 acres of wildlife habitat.

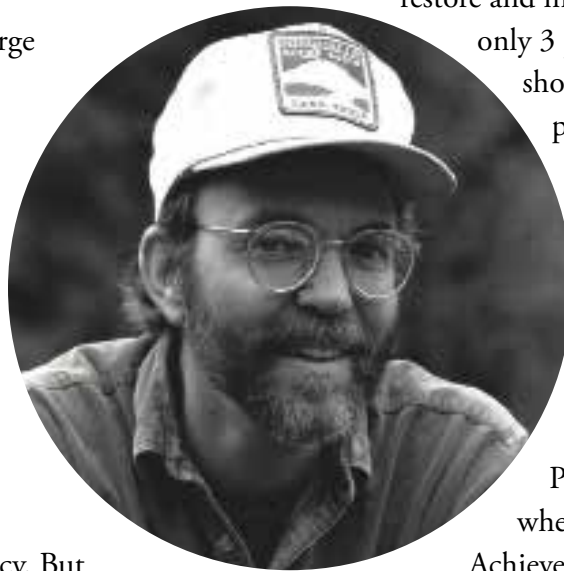
That alone is a tremendous legacy. But as a long-time employee of the Nisqually Indian Tribe's Natural Resources Department, as a former chair of the Nisqually River Council, and as the close ally and

confidante of the late Nisqually leader Billy Frank Jr., George has played an even larger role.

In 1980, when George helped draft the plan to restore and manage the Nisqually Watershed, only 3 percent of the Nisqually River shoreline was protected. Today, 78 percent of the shoreline enjoys permanent conservation status, making the Nisqually one of the most well-protected rivers in the state.

George has been at the center of achieving that remarkable progress, which the Puget Sound Partnership recognized in 2012, when it gave George its Lifetime Achievement Award.

We are immensely grateful for his leadership, his friendship, his inspiration, and his passionate commitment to our mission. Thank you, George! 🌿



Top, circle: George, at the beginning of it all, circa 1989. Left: George shares his wealth of watershed knowledge with participants on the Nisqually River Float Trip in 2009. Center: George has worn many hats over the years, including Salmon Bake Chef and dad to Margaret, Ellen and Aaron (pictured, 2003). Right: Past President George takes in the sights at the Tatrimita property with current President JW Foster. George has led several Nature Walks since the program's inception in 2013.

Farewell Friends



Thomas A. Ginsburg moved on from the Board of Directors at the end of 2015. This April the Land Trust gave Tom its first Above and Beyond Award for his outstanding service to the Nisqually Watershed in the boardroom, in the field, and at Land Trust events. In his spare time he continues to

volunteer as a Site Steward at one of the Red Salmon Creek properties. Tom, thank you for sharing your enthusiasm, unabated energy, and great sense of humor.

Thank you also to our most recent Stewardship Interns, **Hannah Andrascik** and **Julian Strodel**.

Hannah first volunteered with the Land Trust last November to assist with student planting events, which eventually morphed into an internship. Hannah

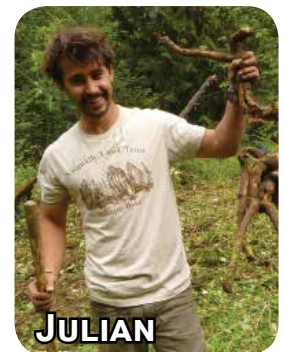


has since embarked on a new adventure with the Student Conservation Association at Shenandoah National Park.

Julian graduated from The Evergreen State College in June after interning with us for his final semester. He assisted with spring weed control and seedling

maintenance and conducted an intensive bird survey of the Ohop Valley restoration site, which will provide us with valuable data. After graduation, Julian will pursue a career in conservation.

We are grateful for the hard work Hannah and Julian put in (always with a smile) and wish them the best of luck!



Volunteering is a family affair!

Welcome Aboard!



Roger Andrascik joined the Nisqually Land Trust board last December, after retiring from the National Park Service, where he was responsible for natural and cultural resource management programs throughout his career. He most recently worked at

Mount Rainier National Park and served as the park's representative on the Nisqually River Council.

Roger is passionate about the Land Trust's mission and is dedicated to the preservation of the Nisqually Watershed. He volunteers as a Nisqually Stream Steward and as a site steward for Land Trust property in the Eatonville area, where he and his wife, Karen, a first grade teacher, have lived since 2002. They have two grown children, Sean and Hannah.

Roger is also an Eatonville School Board Director. He enjoys hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and sea kayaking.



Lloyd Fetterly is the newest member of the Board of Directors. Lloyd and his wife, Patricia, live in Tacoma and participate in tree planting, hiking and birder activities in the area. Both have been conservation supporters in Washington for many years.

Lloyd is retired from thirty years as an attorney with Pierce County. He is pleased to have worked in the past on land purchases for the Pierce County Foothills Rails to Trails.



2011



2016

Above: The reforestation at Trestle Farm will be a long process, but look how much it's already grown in five years! Below: Aspiring Eagle Scout Tristan coordinated and raised money for tree planting at the same site that he helped plant as a student in 2010.



An Eagle Takes Flight

In 2010 Tristan Martinez and his elementary school classmates visited our Trestle Farm property in Yelm with the Nisqually River Education Project. The goal of the program is to plant native trees in the ground and seeds of good environmental stewardship in the minds of the next generation.

Five years later, we're seeing the trees and the children grow.

Last winter, inspired by his early exposure to habitat restoration, Tristan approached the Land Trust about completing an Eagle Scout service project. He returned to Trestle Farm with a troop of Boy Scouts and 300 native trees purchased with funds he'd raised.

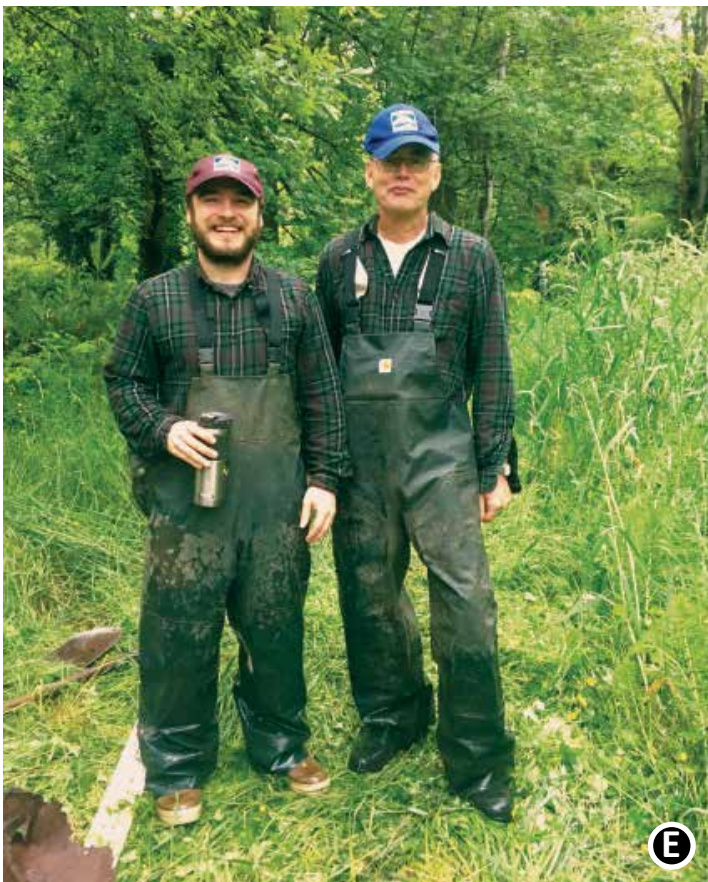
With help from Land Steward Charly Kearns, Tristan successfully initiated, organized and executed his planting project on the property where it all began.

Bravo Tristan and congratulations on your achievement! 🦅

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! Send your stories and pictures to staff@nisquallylandtrust.org.

Let's give a CHEER for the Land Trust VOLUNTEER!



Clockwise from top: (A) Office volunteer Mollie Parsons gets “down in the weeds” to help us organize our files. (B) Our volunteers aren't afraid to get dirty as they clean up a garbage dump site at the bottom of a hill near Eatonville. (C) Charly nearly lost our work truck behind the monster pile of scotch broom removed by volunteers at Petersen Farm in Yelm. (D) More than 60 volunteers helped plant native trees in the Ohop Valley for the Land Trust's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service event. (E) Plaid and waders became the “official” work party uniform when Outreach Coordinator Cris Peck and volunteer Jim Reisstroffer showed up in unintentionally identical outfits at a Red Salmon Creek event.

Creating the “Wild” for Wildlife

by Cris Peck

I like to call our stewardship work “habitat farming” - we protect, maintain and enhance habitat for wildlife, and one of our “yields” is increased wildlife populations. We’re elated when we learn about salmon, beaver, caddisflies, coyote, birds, elk, and bear on our properties. They’re all indicators of good habitat quality and connectivity.

The Lower Ohop Valley is a perfect example. Our restoration project there is massive, with a dozen partners helping to re-meander the creek and reforest the floodplain. The project was designed to benefit salmon, particularly Chinook and steelhead trout, but the fast-growing plantings and reconnected floodplain are providing habitat for amphibians and dozens of bird species. The valley is now home to a robust elk herd, and we’ve heard reports of a resident black bear for the first time in over 30 years!

We know much of what we know because we’re lucky to have volunteers and partner organizations that help collect wildlife data through citizen science and wildlife surveys. To help keep “common species common,” Northwest Trek, the wildlife park near Eatonville, brings volunteers to Land Trust properties, including the Ohop, to observe and record evidence and sightings of the critters using our lands, from stream bugs to big mammals. Volunteers from the park also



Wildlife monitoring equipment installation in the Ohop
conduct seasonal amphibian egg mass surveys in the Ohop. This ongoing monitoring helps quantify general habitat quality and tracks changes over time.

Furthermore, over the past two years, the Nisqually Indian Tribe has worked with consulting biologists to survey wildlife in the Lower Ohop floodplain. They installed nine cameras that captured images of elk herds, coyotes, deer, and even beavers! In addition, the cameras observed 55 bird species, including first-time documentations of black-headed grosbeak, hooded merganser, northern harrier, sharp-shinned hawk, and western tanager.

Like people of all ages and backgrounds, I often become captivated for a few short moments by the presence of a wild animal, whether a tiny insect or a large mammal. The idea that future generations will have the opportunity to experience this sense of awe is a cornerstone of why we’re dedicated to land protection and habitat restoration in this beautiful watershed. ∞



A sampling of the 196 species documented in the Ohop Creek Restoration wildlife surveys conducted by the Nisqually Indian Tribe Natural Resources Department and ICF International. Wildlife cameras caught, left to right: Roosevelt elk, northern flicker and coyote. (Photos on this page: Nisqually Indian Tribe & ICF International)

2016

Conservation Dinner and Auction



BY THE NUMBERS



229

FUN-LOVING GUESTS



3

REPRESENTATIVES FOR OUR PARTNER OF THE YEAR, THE WASHINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

\$134,000+

RAISED FOR NISQUALLY WATERSHED HABITAT PROTECTION



147

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FLOAT THE UPPER NISQUALLY RIVER!

SUNDAY IS SOLD OUT!

TWO TRIPS AVAILABLE: **SATURDAY, JULY 23RD** AND **SUNDAY, JULY 24TH**

9 AM - 4 PM (return time is approximate) with departure from **WILCOX FARMS IN ROY, WA**

Join us for a scenic and family-friendly 13-mile river float down the Nisqually River. Children must be accompanied by an adult and weigh at least 60 pounds to participate. Space is limited and late registrations may be subject to waitlisting.

\$115 PER PERSON

INCLUDES PROFESSIONAL RAFTING GUIDES,
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