



# Nisqually Land Trust

## Spring 2017 Newsletter

### Land Trust Expands Nisqually River Shoreline Protection

New Properties Also Increase Potential for Yelm-Tenino Trail Extension

The Land Trust recently added two more highly prized properties to its acquisitions along the Whitewater Reach of the Nisqually River, near Yelm, which is rated highest priority for protection in both the Nisqually Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan and the Nisqually Steelhead Recovery Plan.

The properties total twenty acres and just over one-third mile of shoreline, and they provide spawning and rearing habitat for all five Pacific salmonid species native to the Nisqually Watershed, including Chinook, coho, chum, and pink salmon and steelhead trout.

Both Chinook and steelhead are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

In addition, the purchase of one of the properties completes the goal of securing land for the potential extension of the Yelm-Tenino Trail all the way to – and possibly across – the Nisqually River.

The property and one purchased in 2016 bookend railroad tracks, owned by the city of Yelm, that cross the river and run to Roy, in Pierce County. The track and its trestle could be converted to a pedestrian and bike crossing, which would be the first on the Nisqually River.

“It’s a bold vision,” said Land Trust Outreach Coordinator Cris Peck, who will work with Yelm on planning for the potential project, “but it’s an inspiring one. The Yelm-Tenino Trail already connects with the

*Continued on page 3*

*Whitewater Reach, Nisqually River, near Yelm*



## OUR MISSION

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

### OFFICE

Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge  
Old Education Center  
100 Brown Farm Road NE  
Olympia, WA 98516

### MAILING ADDRESS

1420 Marvin Road NE  
Suite C PMB 243  
Lacey, WA 98516-3878

Telephone: (360) 489-3400  
E-mail: [staff@nisquallylandtrust.org](mailto:staff@nisquallylandtrust.org)  
Website: [www.nisquallylandtrust.org](http://www.nisquallylandtrust.org)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JW Foster, President  
Mary Gentry, Vice President  
Kathy Mix, Secretary  
Brian Sullivan, Treasurer  
Roger Andrascik  
Steve Craig  
Lloyd Fetterly  
Brad Jones  
Martin McCallum  
Sunny Thompson

### BOARD MEMBER EMERITUS

George Walter

### STAFF

Joe Kane, Executive Director  
Kim Bredensteiner, Associate Director  
Susan Callender, Development Manager  
Charly Kearns, Land Steward  
Nikki Dizon, Operations Associate  
Mollie Parsons, Administrative Assistant  
Cris Peck, Outreach Coordinator  
Katie Kirdahy, Americorps Volunteer Coordinator



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

*Pictured on cover:*

*Upper: Sweet Coltsfoot*

*Lower: Whitewater Reach, Nisqually River, near Yelm*

*All photos in this publication are courtesy of Land Trust staff and volunteers.*

## President's Letter

I was having one of “those” days recently – you may know the kind – and needed a mental break. So I went rafting down the Nisqually River.

Well, not really. I just *imagined* that I was rafting down the Nisqually, like I did last summer with about 50 Land Trust friends.



It was a great ride: warm summer day, lots of beautiful trees and flowers along the banks, eagles soaring overhead... and even if it was for just a few minutes in my chair with my eyes closed, it did the trick.

I was so glad that I had that memory to refresh me, and I had to smile at the thought that the river we have worked to protect was now, in turn, restoring me!

Recently, I've worried some about how things are changing politically and how those changes may affect funding for future projects. After a quick trip down the river, though, I know that the team that made all those good things happen will continue to find ways to pursue our mission. It's who we are and what we do.

This newsletter is full of success stories and accomplishments. We did that. We'll find the way, and the means, and we'll do it again.

And we'll do it together. Whether it's boots on the ground or pens on the check, it's all part of the answer. The question is, what next?!

I'll see you on the River!

JW Foster, Board President

### Save a tree!

Sign up to receive this newsletter by e-mail at [www.nisquallylandtrust.org](http://www.nisquallylandtrust.org). Please recycle or pass on to a friend. Printed on recycled paper.



# Nisqually River Shoreline Protection

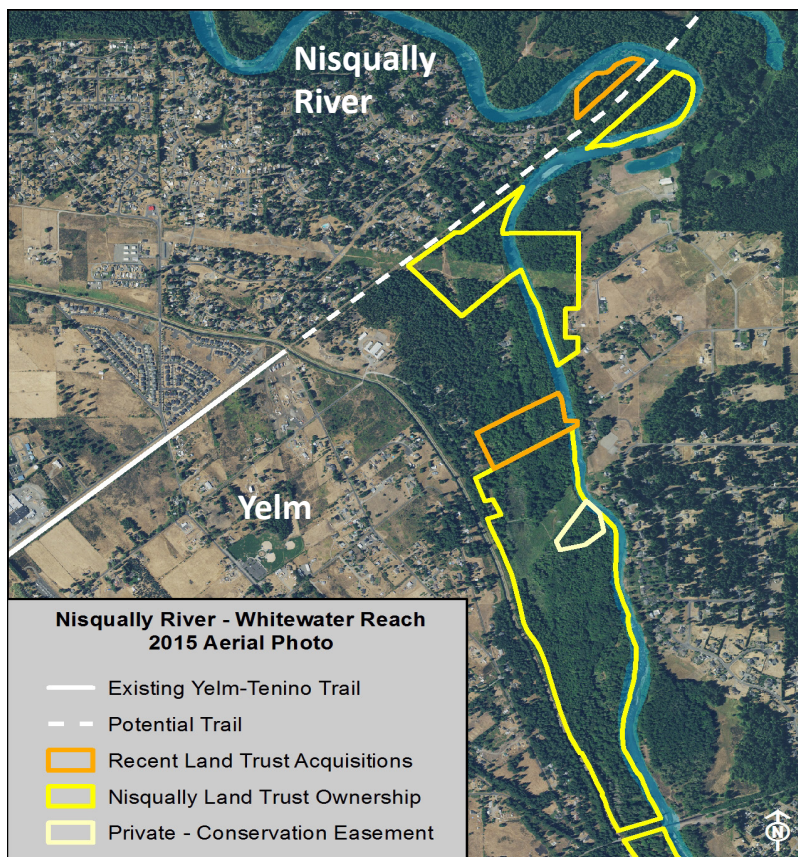
*Continued from cover*

Chehalis Western-Woodard Bay Trail in Thurston County. If we can extend it across the river to Roy, and connect the Thurston County network with the planned Pierce County trail network, we'll have a regional jewel."

The two new property acquisitions, and a third completed in 2016, are part of a combined project funded by Thurston County Conservation Futures and the Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Total cost for the three properties was \$490,000.

The two new properties are undeveloped, with largely intact shoreline, forest, and wetland habitat. "Acquiring high-quality habitat while it's still healthy – before it has to be restored – is unquestionably the most cost-efficient strategy for salmon recovery," said Land Trust Executive Director Joe Kane.

All three properties will be managed as part of the Land Trust's Yelm Shoreline Protected Area, expanding it to 227 acres and 2.79 shoreline miles.



*This map shows the potential extension of the Yelm-Tenino Trail across the Nisqually River, connecting Thurston and Pierce counties via the river's first nonmotorized crossing.*

## Thank you, Olympia Federal Savings

*Oly Fed Signs On as Lead Sponsor for Land Trust Activities*

Our deepest thanks to our "Watershed Partner," Olympia Federal Savings, for its two-year, \$20,000 commitment to underwrite our community-building activities, including float trips, nature walks, steward-

ship parties, our annual auction, and the Yelm-Tenino Trail project described above. Oly Fed's partnership is a key component of our work to strengthen the Nisqually Watershed community.

Sponsored by  
**Olympia  
Federal  
Savings**

## 2017 ON THE RIVER OUTINGS

### Nisqually River Float Trips

Saturday, July 22 and Sunday, July 23 • 9 am - 4 pm

Trips depart from Wilcox Farms in Roy. Cost is \$120 per person for one day and includes rafting gear, professional guides, and lunch.

Check our website ([www.nisquallylandtrust.org](http://www.nisquallylandtrust.org)) and your email for registration information.

*Space is limited and return time is approximate. Participants must be 8 or older and children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.*

# Remembrance - Caroline Feiss

## “Keep Up the Fight!”

by George Walter, Emeritus Board Member

In our fledgling years in the early 1990's, the Nisqually Land Trust faced a big problem. A property owner with land next to ours cut timber on our side of the boundary line. He was even developing a road on our property. Our land had valuable salmon habitat and we were struggling to protect it.

Then one day a note showed up from a supporter named Caroline Feiss. She told us to keep up the fight and sent a \$1000 check, and ultimately we won that battle. What a boost that provided for our little land trust!

A few years later Caroline learned that we did not have anyone to edit our newsletter. She contacted me, saying she had time on her hands and volunteered to step in. She went on to manage our newsletter during the critical years before we had professional staff. And she sent me the message that she was out there and cared.



*Caroline Feiss's first job, in the early 1970s, was helping to protect the Nisqually Delta. She became a major supporter of the Land Trust.*

In recent years Caroline provided, anonymously, very generous matching funds that pushed our fundraising to new heights – our annual dinner and auction now nets over \$100,000 each year because of her financial encouragement.

Caroline Feiss died in March. We will miss her greatly and send our sincere condolences to her life partner, Gordon Davidson. Caroline and Gordy have supported us in so many ways, in the beginning (they were both Charter Members), now (we are receiving memorial donations in her name) and in the future (the Land Trust is a beneficiary of Caroline's estate).

Caroline was small in physical stature but filled a large place in our community.

In remembering her, we are not mourning her passing but rather appreciating that such a person walked this good Earth, and that our paths crossed so many times on this journey to create our Nisqually legacy.

## Become a Nisqually Natural Legacy Partner

### How to Include the Land Trust in Your Estate Plan

We invite you to join our Natural Legacy Partners, a circle of supporters who have included the Nisqually Land Trust in their estate plans. With your help, we can assure a vibrant future for the water, wildlife and friends of the Nisqually River Watershed.

Here are two ways you can make a planned gift to support our work in perpetuity.

**1. Make a bequest to the Land Trust** – the gift of an asset through your will or trust. It's easy to do, and we can provide sample language for you and your

attorney or estate planner.

**2. Name the Land Trust as a beneficiary of your retirement plan.** As a charity, the Land Trust can receive IRA and other retirement assets tax-free.

We'd be happy to provide you with more information on our planned-giving program. And if you intend to include the Land Trust in your will, we'd be also be happy to work with you to be sure your gift will be used as you wish. Contact Susan Callender at [scallender@nisquallylandtrust.org](mailto:scallender@nisquallylandtrust.org) or (360) 489-3400.

# 2017 Conservation Dinner & Auction Highlights



**SAVE  
THE DATE**

**MARCH 17, 2018  
4:30 - 9:00 PM**

**CONSERVATION DINNER & AUCTION  
SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE - LACEY CAMPUS**

Guests enjoyed oysters from Taylor Shellfish and other appetizers, musical entertainment, dinner, and silent and live auction items.



*Thank you* to our generous sponsors!

**Olympia  
Federal  
Savings**

**Hancock  
Forest  
Management**

**PRAIRIE  
HOTEL**

**CALPORTLAND**

**Hampton Family Forests**

**MORRIS-SOCKLE  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW**

Alex B. Young, CPRC®  
Vice President  
Senior Financial Advisor  
Merrill Lynch

**RE·SOLVE**

SS&H Valuation

**The Healy  
Company, LLP**

In-kind support provided by Print NW· Schorno Auction Group · Taylor Shellfish

# Nisqually Community Forest: The Dream Is Now a Reality

## Community Forest Lands Its First Property

**A** long-held dream became reality in December when the Nisqually Community Forest project acquired its first property – 640 spectacular acres on Busy Wild Creek, near Ashford and Mount Rainier National Park.

The heavily timbered property includes over nine miles of shoreline along the Busy Wild and its tributaries. Busy Wild Creek is the headwaters of the Mashel River, the largest tributary to the Nisqually River.

The property is also the site of a key section of the most popular trail in the Mount Tahoma Trails Association's hut-to-hut cross-country ski system, the largest no-fee system in the country, and assures its permanence.

Both the Busy Wild and the Mashel were recently declared federal critical habitat for steelhead trout and are rated highest priority for protection and restoration in the Nisqually Steelhead Recovery Plan.

### What Is a Community Forest?

A community forest is a working forest owned and managed for the benefit of local communities. Created as a subsidiary of the Nisqually Land Trust after two

years of discussions and planning among watershed stakeholders, the Nisqually Community Forest has its own board and corporate status and a unique mission: to use working forestry to achieve local conservation, cultural, and economic goals, such as salmon recovery, job creation, and educational and recreational opportunities.

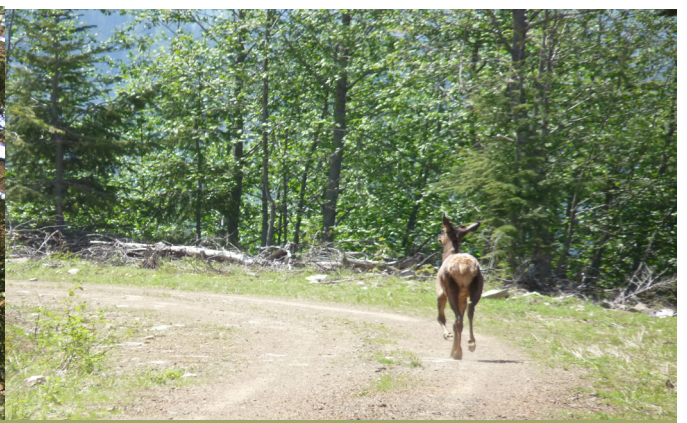
“Revenue isn’t our primary focus,” said Bryan Bowden, president of the community-forest board. “Our goals are environmental stewardship, recreation and local family-wage jobs. Any proceeds from forest management will be used to support these goals.”

Guided by sophisticated new modeling from the Environmental Protection Agency’s Western Ecology Division in Corvallis, combined with modeling used by the Nisqually Tribe for salmon recovery, the community forest’s management team will selectively thin the property’s timber stands to encourage old-growth forest characteristics and increase stream flow during the fall spawning season.

Current plans for site management include restoration with native species and removal of old logging roads.

**“You don’t succeed at this scale without robust partnerships. In**

*Upper Busy Wild Creek, headwaters of the Mashel River: The first community forest purchase protects over nine miles of stream and tributary shoreline.*



*The property will be managed as a working forest designed to support the recovery of threatened Chinook salmon and steelhead trout while also providing a suite of benefits to local communities.*

### Partnerships Drive Success

In 2014 the Nisqually Indian Tribe, the lead entity for salmon recovery in the Nisqually Watershed, completed its Nisqually steelhead recovery plan. The Tribe's research revealed the critical importance of the Mashel-Busy Wild system to the viability of the Nisqually steelhead and Chinook salmon populations, both of which are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

At about the same time, the landowner, Hancock Forest Management, received permits to commercially log timber on the property. As the new steelhead information came to light, Hancock agreed to suspend its plans pending an offer to purchase the property.

A joint grant proposal from the Tribe and the Land

Trust to the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program was ranked first in the state in 2015 and was soon followed by top-ranked proposals to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Pierce County Conservation Futures, and the U.S. Forest Service's Community Forest program.

"The Hancock team's willingness to work with us through the complexities of the grant process was a key factor in the project's success," said Joe Kane, secretary of the community-forest board. "So was support from our state senator, Randi Becker, who championed the project in the legislature.

"You don't succeed at this scale without robust partnerships. In the end, that's how a community thrives."

the end, that's how a community thrives."



# New Land Trust Staff



**Susan Callender, Development Manager**

Susan joined the Nisqually Land Trust team in November 2016. She has worked in fundraising and communications in our area since moving here in 1994. She and her family enjoy the beauty of the Pacific Northwest and have spent many, many weekends hiking in the Cascades and Olympics. Susan received her BS in Political Science from St. Joseph's College in Indiana, where she embarked on her fundraising career at St. Mary's College following graduation.



**Mollie Parsons, Administrative Assistant**

Mollie is a Georgia native who moved to the Nisqually area seven years ago and fell in love with the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest. She has worked in management and data analysis for the past eight years but has volunteered for many local non-profits for the last four years as well. She received her BA in History from Armstrong State University and her MBA in Project Management from Brenau University. She is grateful to be a part of the Nisqually Land Trust's mission and the protection of the wildlife and wonders of the Pacific Northwest.

## You Can Make a Gift through Your IRA

Simply instruct the institution holding your IRA to send a payment (in any amount up to \$100,000) to the Nisqually Land Trust. The tax you would normally have to pay on that distribution is forgiven, and if you're 70.5 or older, the donation is considered part of your Required Minimum Distribution. For more information contact our Development Manager, Susan Callender, at [scallender@nisquallylandtrust.org](mailto:scallender@nisquallylandtrust.org) or (360) 489-3400.

## Thank you!

## Temple Beth Hatfiloh

This year, Temple Beth Hatfiloh in Olympia selected the Nisqually Land Trust to receive a portion of the proceeds from its annual Blintzapalooza. Nearly 2,000 guests enjoyed blintzes, bagels and other treats in support of local non-profit organizations.

Russ Lidman, from the Temple, joined us at our April board meeting and presented a check for \$2,500. Pictured to the right are Board President JW Foster, Russ Lidman, and Executive Director Joe Kane.



Our friends at the Sierra Pacific Foundation stopped by recently to deliver a \$2,500 check to support our work in the Nisqually Watershed.

Pictured to the left: Executive Director Joe Kane with Sierra Pacific's Washington Lands Manager Tom Nelson.

## Creating a Nisqually Home for Western Bluebirds

By Charly Kearns, Land Steward

Western bluebirds are now a common sight at the Land Trust's Powell Creek Pastures property, along the Nisqually River. It's always a joy to see them hunting for insects or perched on fence posts. They are a cavity-nesting species but are unable to create their own nests, so they rely on woodpeckers, tree rot, and humans to create safe places to lay eggs. Volunteers have helped us install dozens of birdhouses throughout the Pastures property, and we have watched bluebirds successfully fledge multiple generations of young.

Bluebirds prefer open woodlands, like the Pastures, but are found in different habitats throughout the western United States. In summer, they primarily eat terrestrial insects, like caterpillars, pill bugs, and grasshoppers. In winter, they largely depend on seeds and hard berries. And, though stable, Western bluebird populations do face risks: habitat loss from development and extensive logging, loss of openings due to fire suppression, removal of dead trees, and invasive species, such as European starlings and feral cats.

Bluebirds have a fascinating and unusual family dynamic. Nesting pairs may allow some sons to remain within their defended territory but will cast out most daughters. The stay-at-home sons may try to mate with outcast daughters from neighboring territories and eventually create their own territory. However, some sons may not mate at all, and instead stay within their parents' domain and help care for offspring. This cooperative breeding strategy significantly increases the survival rate of fledglings.

Henry David Thoreau wrote that "the bluebird carries the sky on his back." This is actually closer to the truth than you might think. The color blue is rare in nature, especially in the animal world. In fact, the only vertebrate known to actually produce a blue pigment is a group of fish. All other blue-colored vertebrates get their color from structural elements. In bluebirds (and most blue feathers), this is accomplished by tiny air pockets within the barbs of feathers, which scatter light, reflecting only blue wavelengths.

These somewhat common birds are anything but ordinary, and we love providing them with a home!



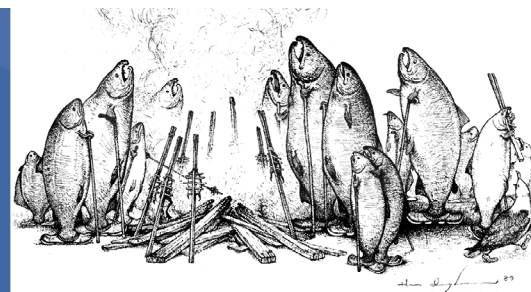
*Volunteers Donovan and Marilyn Rafferty welcome bluebirds to our Powell Pastures property along the Nisqually River: Donovan installs homes for them and Marilyn takes their portraits.*

Sponsored by  
**Olympia  
Federal  
Savings**

NISQUALLY LAND TRUST'S 2017 Annual Meeting &  
*Salmon Bake*

Sunday, September 17 • 4:00 pm – 7:30 pm • Odd Fellows Park, Olympia

Watch your email and our website for more information.



# Restoration Highlight

## Powell Creek Pastures: The Challenging Road to Shoreline Restoration

By Charly Kearns, Land Steward

One of the Land Trust's major stewardship goals is to restore and enhance riparian forests – shoreline forests that are critical for salmon recovery, as well as for a host of other species. In some areas, this is easier said than done. The Land Trust's Powell Creek Pastures site, along a highly dynamic reach of the Nisqually River, upstream of Yelm, is one example of adaptive management and success in the face of difficult conditions.

Between 1999 and 2007, we acquired 8 parcels, totaling about 64 acres of mostly open pasture, at the downstream end of our Powell Creek Protected Area. Here, the river flows through a meandering series of side channels, changing course with each high-water event. The site needed a forested buffer. Without trees and their roots to hold the soil together, erosive forces carved away at the bank, contributing to high sediment levels in the river.

Volunteers planted a portion of the Pastures in 2001, but limited capacity for follow-up maintenance resulted in poor survival. So restoration began again in 2006. The following summer, we realized just how droughty the site is. Sandy soil, and a distance of over eight feet to the water table, meant low seedling survival for native plants that are usually found along

river shorelines. Even native, highly drought-resistant species, such as western ponderosa pine, shore pine, and Oregon grape, struggled to survive.

In 2010, thanks to funding from the Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board, we began irrigating the site. For three summers, we laid out over a mile of fire hose and moved commercial agricultural sprinklers around the site. This hard work made a difference; summer survival rates began to greatly improve.

By 2013, Land Trust staff, volunteers, and contract crews had planted over 30,000 trees and shrubs throughout the Pastures.

Over the past four years, some smaller supplemental plantings have targeted stubborn areas where plant survival continued to be low. Today, the site is really taking off. Some of the trees are more than twenty feet tall and we've removed most of the plant protectors.

It is so satisfying to see the results of countless hours of hard work and dedication. We are truly grateful for all the volunteers who have helped us along the way, and for contributions from the Nisqually Indian Tribe and the funding agencies that have supported this critical work. Thank you!

### Powell Pastures Nature Walk

Come see the Powell Pastures restoration project – and a spectacular reach of the Nisqually River – firsthand! Our Summer Nature Walk series includes a visit to the site on June 24. For more information, see the back cover of the newsletter or visit our website, [www.nisquallylandtrust.org](http://www.nisquallylandtrust.org).



Staff and volunteers planted over 30,000 trees and installed an irrigation system.



Trees planted in 2007.



Trees after ten years of growth.

## Dan Miszewski, Hard-working Site Steward

By Katie Kirdahy, Volunteer Coordinator

Dan Miszewski was at Yelm Cinemas one day in 2015 when he saw an ad for the Nisqually Land Trust. He'd been a longtime volunteer with the Washington Trails Association and Mount Rainier National Park Associates, but he was looking for something closer to home. He began coming to our weekly work parties, and after a few months he joined our Site Steward program and "adopted" our Lower Reach Protected Area, on the Nisqually River near Yelm.



*Dan is a hard-working site steward for the Land Trust.*

The Lower Reach hasn't been the same since.

Dan turned out to be hardworking and a bunch of fun. Site stewards are responsible mainly for monitoring their properties, but Dan has gone well beyond that.

He's accelerated habitat restoration, spending over sixty hours caring for his site last year alone.

The Lower Reach has long had issues with dumping, camping, vehicle trespass, firewood robbery, and Scotch broom infestation. Dan tackled them head on. He cleaned up dumpsites and planted ferns and scattered logs to disguise and obstruct old four-wheeling paths. Over the winter, he also planted more than one hundred salvaged trees.

When Dan isn't planting he's pulling Scotch broom and generally keeping a watchful eye on this riparian forest and its shoreline, which provides high-quality habitat for all five species of native Pacific salmon. And Dan's site-visit reports are funny and positive, showing his connection to the outdoors: "Nature is very much reclaiming the place, the two side roads are just covered with wild grass and flowers."

Thanks to Dan for all he's done for the Land Trust. His work has been invaluable and we hope he sticks around for a while!

## AmeriCorps Member Needed

We're looking for an enthusiastic AmeriCorps Member to coordinate our volunteer programs. We're accepting applications through mid-June. For more information, contact Cris Peck, [cpeck@nisquallylandtrust.org](mailto:cpeck@nisquallylandtrust.org) or (360) 489-3400.



## SITE STEWARDS WORKSHOP JUNE 8, 2017 • 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Join Land Trust staff and fellow volunteers for an informational session on our Site Stewards program. Learn what it means to be a Site Steward. At the end of the program you will have an opportunity to "adopt" a Land Trust property to steward. We would love to have you join us in the field!

Contact Katie at [volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org](mailto:volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org) or (360) 489-3400 for more information and to sign up.



Nisqually Land Trust  
1420 Marvin Road NE  
Suite C PMB 243  
Lacey, WA 98516

Change Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
OLYMPIA, WA  
PERMIT #205

Sponsored by

**Olympia  
Federal  
Savings**

## NISQUALLY LAND TRUST

### 2017 ON THE LAND • NATURE WALKS

Join us for a nature walk to enjoy the beauty of our natural areas and learn how collaborative conservation is making a lasting difference. Outings are free, but registration is required. For more information and to register contact [staff@nisquallylandtrust.org](mailto:staff@nisquallylandtrust.org), call (360) 489-3400 or visit our website: [www.nisquallylandtrust.org](http://www.nisquallylandtrust.org).

#### May

Bird Walk with Black Hills Audubon,  
Nisqually River Shoreline near Yelm  
Saturday, May 27 | 8 am - 10 am

#### June

Van Eaton Homestead Walk,  
Mashel River near Eatonville  
Saturday, June 3 | 10 am - 12 pm

Bird Walk with Tahoma Audubon,  
Red Salmon Creek near DuPont  
Saturday, June 10 | 8 am - 10 am

Powell Pastures River Walk,  
Nisqually River Shoreline near Yelm  
Saturday, June 24 | 10 am - 12:30 pm

Bird Walk with Tahoma Audubon,  
Ohop Valley near Eatonville  
Sunday, June 25 | 8 am - 10 am

#### July

Wildflower Photography,  
Mount Rainier Gateway near Ashford  
Saturday, July 8 | 10 am - 1 pm

#### August

Petersen Farm Tour,  
Nisqually River Shoreline near Yelm  
Saturday, August 5 | 10 am - 12:30 pm

Mountain Hike,  
Mount Rainier Gateway near Ashford  
Saturday, August 19 | 10 am - 1 pm