



Wildflowers in bloom in the Nisqually Community Forest

NISQUALLY LAND TRUST

Spring 2018

Land Trust Triples Size of Nisqually Community Forest

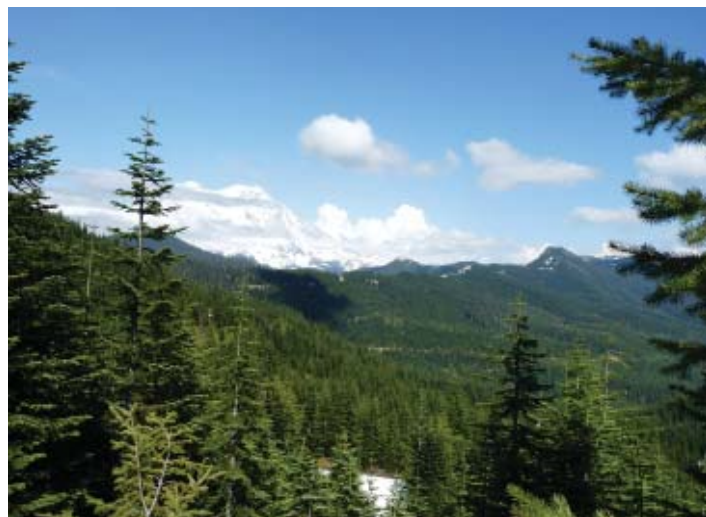
Two Purchases Add 1,280 Acres, Complete Phase One

The Land Trust and the Nisqually Community Forest board of directors recently tripled the size of the Community Forest with two major acquisitions.

In December, acting as the purchasing agent for the Community Forest, the Land Trust acquired a full section (640 acres) of heavily forested timberlands along Busy Wild Creek, the headwaters of the Mashel River. This property adjoins the first section of the Community Forest, which was acquired in 2016.

And in April, in two separate transactions, the Land Trust added two 320-acre parcels to the existing block, bringing the Community Forest to a total of 1,920 acres. This completed Phase I of the project, which is now the largest locally-owned community forest in the state. It was also the first community forest in Puget Sound.

These purchases were made possible in part by grant funding from the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program and the Washington Salmon Recovery Board, administered by the state's Recreation and Conservation Office, and from the Pierce County Conservation Futures program.



Looking upstream along Busy Wild Creek at the newly acquired section of the Nisqually Community Forest.

And one of the April purchases would not have been possible without a substantial, eleventh-hour loan from The Conservation Fund, a national nonprofit organization that supports development of community forests. Without the loan, the property would have gone to another buyer.

Our deepest thanks to these partners, and also to the

Continued on page 3



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

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

President's Letter: Passing of the Paddle

Time flies when you're having fun! My term as president of the Nisqually Land Trust Board of Directors is over, and I now confidently pass the paddle to Brian Sullivan. I'm so proud of what our land trust has achieved over the past few years, and I'm happy to have played a part in those accomplishments.



Each of us has our unique way of contributing to the Land Trust's mission, be it planting trees along the Mashel River or signing policies in the board room. Each job is as important as the other, and we get it all done – together. Forever.

Thanks for all your support and enthusiasm. And a special thanks to our staff and amazing volunteers.

By the way – I'm not leaving. I'm just changing my role. Back to planting trees and pulling weeds.

And I will see you on the River!

JW Foster



Time flies and time brings change.

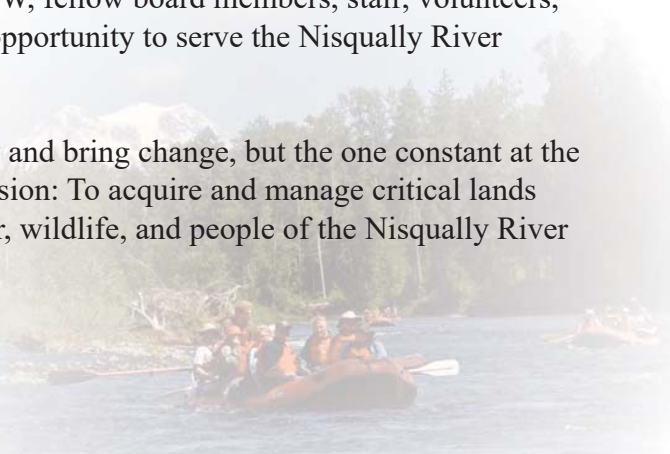
In 2000, when I started out as a Nisqually Land Trust volunteer planting native plants, I never imagined becoming board president. But then I found myself in this "small watershed with big ideas" wanting to learn and to do more. Time flies and brings change, and here we are!

Thank you JW, fellow board members, staff, volunteers, and our many partners for this opportunity to serve the Nisqually River Watershed community.

Time will always seem to fly by and bring change, but the one constant at the Nisqually Land Trust is our mission: To acquire and manage critical lands to permanently benefit the water, wildlife, and people of the Nisqually River Watershed.

See you on the River!

Brian Sullivan, Board President



Community Forest Expansion

Continued from cover

seller, the Hancock Timber Resource Group, which worked patiently with us through a complex transaction process.

“This is a vivid demonstration of the power of partnerships, and of community,” said Community Forest Board President Bryan Bowden. “And it’s just the start.”

Located near Ashford and Mount Rainier National Park, the Nisqually Community Forest is a working forest managed specifically to benefit our local communities by providing forestry and tourism jobs, recreation, education, clean air and water, and abundant wildlife habitat.



The Nisqually Community Forest and the Land Trust’s Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve include over three miles of the Mount Tahoma Trails Association’s popular Copper Creek cross-country ski trail.

The Nisqually Community Forest now protects some 22 miles of shoreline along Busy Wild Creek and its tributaries, which are critical to the recovery of threatened steel-head trout and Chinook salmon.

As well, the Community Forest adjoins the Land Trust’s 2,500-acre Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve. Between them, the two projects also provide long-term protection of some three miles of the most popular section of the Mount Tahoma Trails Association’s hut-to-hut cross-country ski trail, the largest such no-fee public trail in the country.



View of the first section of 640 acres of Nisqually Community Forest timberlands from the most recent purchase.

Nisqually Community Forest Public Meeting – Mark Your Calendar!

To learn more about the Nisqually Community Forest, including how you can get involved, please plan to attend the first annual public meeting, to be held on the following date and time:

What: Nisqually Community Forest Annual Public Meeting

Where: Ashford Fire Station, 29815 State Route 706 East, Ashford, WA 98304

When: Tuesday, June 12, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

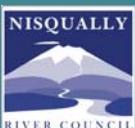
For more information, visit the Nisqually Land Trust website, www.nisquallylandtrust.org.



We Have a New Look!

After 29 years under the bright blue “umbrella” logo we share with our Watershed partners in the Nisqually River Council, we’ve created a logo that is uniquely ours.

We’ve grown tremendously since our founding, in 1989. We have expanded our base of supporters, broadened the scope of our mission, and developed innovative new projects. Our new logo captures that story.



What hasn’t changed is our commitment to our Nisqually partners. We’ll continue to identify the Land Trust as a proud member of the Nisqually River Council – the oldest active river council west of the Mississippi River.

2018 Conservation Dinner and Auction Highlights



Congressman Denny Heck shared his thoughts on the importance of saving salmon. He also did a great job as a guest auctioneer!



State Representative J.T. Wilcox and his wife Kathy were the high bidders on this hand-carved paddle.

Guests enjoyed oysters from Taylor Shellfish, a delicious dinner, Top Rung beer, musical entertainment, and bidding on silent and live auction items.

Thanks

to our generous friends, sponsors, and donors—we raised over \$145,000 to help conserve the Nisqually River Watershed...*forever.*

Thank You Sponsors!

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Change in the Woods

By Cris Peck, Outreach Coordinator

March 20th officially marked the first day of spring, but indicators of seasonal change have been present for months, if you know where to look.



The first shrub to bud and flower every year, without fail, is Indian plum.

Typically appear before its leaves – a unique quality for any shrub species.

With the flowers come the pollinators. The gorgeous flowers of red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*), a hummingbird delicatessen, start to bloom shortly after Indian plum. This is when we begin to see terri-

The first shrub to bud and flower every year, without fail, is Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*). We've noticed buds as early as the first part of January, and its bright green leaves are a beautiful spectacle in a mostly leafless understorey. The same can be said for Indian plum's hanging white flowers, which typically appear before its leaves – a unique quality for any shrub species.



Rufous hummingbirds return to the Pacific Northwest when the blooms of early spring arrive.

torial displays and hear the wiry vocalizations of these small migrants. The rufous hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) can travel over 4,000 miles from its winter-

ing grounds in Central America to its breeding grounds, which range from Oregon to Alaska. Every year its arrival is precisely timed for the blooms of early spring.

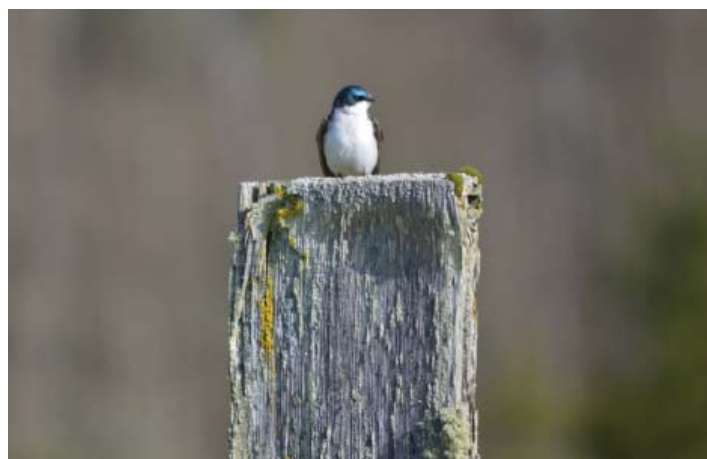
Spring also brings the sound of familiar songs not heard for many winter months. The mating calls of song sparrows, American robins, red-

winged blackbirds, and Pacific tree frogs are welcomed tunes indicative of warmer weather to come. Bug-eating specialists, like swallows and some wood warblers, usually return to the Northwest later in the season after a harrowing four to six thousand mile journey from Central or South America.

Soon, animals will be competing for audio air space in their search for mates, and the forests will be filled with nature's orchestra.



Pacific tree frogs begin their mating calls in the early months of spring.



Tree swallows are the first swallow to return in the spring and can be found in areas with abundant flying insects.

Land Trust Transfers Ohop Property to Nisqually Tribe

The Land Trust is pleased to announce that it has transferred ownership of 49 acres in the Ohop Valley to the Nisqually Indian Tribe for management by the Tribe's Parks Department.

"'Transfer' isn't really the right word," said Land Trust Executive Director Joe Kane. "We see this as a repatriation of lands that the Nisqually Tribe used for centuries. These lands still retain deep cultural significance for the Tribe and critical natural resources that the Tribe is well positioned to manage."

"It's the right thing to do, and we're happy to be able to do it."

The property adjoins a 20-acre parcel that the Tribe already owns. Together, the properties include over one-half mile of Ohop Creek and secure it for future restoration. After the Mashel River, Ohop Creek is the most important salmon-producing tributary of the Nisqually River and is particularly critical for the recovery of threatened Chinook salmon.



The Nisqually Indian Tribe, the Land Trust, and their many partners hope to restore this ditched section of Ohop Creek back to a meandering, salmon-friendly stream.

Over a century ago, several miles of the lower and middle creek were straightened and ditched and the valley was drained for dairy farming, which severely impacted salmon.

Led by the Nisqually Tribe, on land owned by the Land Trust, a consortium of Nisqually partners recently completed the first stage of the creek's restoration, turning 1.8 miles of ditch in the lower Ohop Valley back into 2.4 miles of meandering, salmon-friendly stream. The Tribe's Native Plant Restoration Crew led the planting of over 150,000 native trees and shrubs.

One result has been not only an increase in salmon usage but also an explosion

of wildlife throughout the lower valley, including a dramatic increase in the local elk herd and the first resident black bear in more than half a century.

The Tribe's land ownership is located just upstream of the restoration's completed first stage and in the heart of the projected second stage.

Land Trust Wins Big Support from Pierce County

We're happy to report that the Nisqually Land Trust has the three top-ranked projects in the 2017-2018 round of Pierce County Conservation Futures (PCCF) funding.

The projects include support for acquisition of 640 acres of forestlands and 13.1 miles of salmon-producing shoreline for the Nisqually Community Forest (described in this newsletter); acquisition of 78 acres and over one-half mile of marine shoreline on Anderson Island, in the Nisqually Aquatic Reserve; and acquisition of one mile of salmon-producing shoreline in the Ohop Valley.

All told, the PCCF funding totals just over \$1 million. With it we will be able to leverage an additional \$4.1 million in landowner donations and state and federal grants.

All of the projects include provision for public access.

Our thanks to the Pierce County Parks and Recreation staff, which manages the Conservation Futures program; to the all-volunteer Citizens Advisory Committee, which put in long unpaid hours evaluating and ranking proposals; and to the Pierce County Council for its unanimous approval to fund our projects.

Thank You

Our 2017 Interns - Thanks!

The Land Trust has been developing its internship program over the past few years. Last year, we were lucky enough to host seven college students, from five different schools, in both stewardship and administrative internships. Combined, they contributed 1,407 hours of volunteer time!

Stewardship interns helped us with land management and restoration projects, including site monitoring, tree planting, invasive weed control, and many other activities. Office interns helped us with database management, record keeping, and other administrative tasks.

A huge thank you to these seven – and we wish them the best in their future endeavors!

Luke Smith – Pacific Lutheran University
Jim Sluman – Clover Park Technical College
James McKinlay – Clover Park Technical College
Diana Esperanza Lloyd – The Evergreen State College
Dena Fromberg – University of Puget Sound
Shawn Harrington – University of Washington
Adam Schweitzer – The Evergreen State College

Interested in a Nisqually Land Trust internship?
Contact Charly Kearns at 360.489-3400, ext. 111, or
landsteward@nisquallylandtrust.org.



Eagle Scout Project at Lackamas Flats Protected Area

Cody Johnston, pictured above (front row center with tan hat), completed his Eagle Scout project at the Land Trust's Lackamas Flats Protected Area. Cody recruited the help of his fellow Boy Scouts for two days of work at the property. They pulled invasive plant species, cleaned up garbage, and removed plant protectors from restoration plantings. Many thanks to Cody and his troop, and congratulations on achieving the Boy Scouts' highest award!



Former Intern Adam Schweitzer photographing the Nisqually River at the confluence of Toboton Creek.

Funding Awarded for Land Trust Stewardship Activities



The Pierce Conservation District Green Partnership Fund is providing funding this year for the Land Trust's stewardship volunteer activities in Pierce County. These activities engage community volunteers and students in maintaining and restoring thriving natural habitats on Land Trust properties. Activities include planting native trees and shrubs and controlling invasive weeds.

Join Us on the Water This Summer

Kayak the Nisqually Reach

Kayak Nisqually, a local ecotourism company, is generously offering Land Trust supporters two opportunities to kayak the Nisqually Reach (on Puget Sound) at discounted rates. Enjoy premier wildlife watching, sea-kayaking safety, and interpretation of the marine environment with professional biologist guides.



Sunset and Bioluminescence Tour

Friday, June 15, 2018 - 7:45 pm

Cost: \$49 per person

Kayakers will enjoy an evening tour as the day transitions to an Impressionist painting and the sky illuminates in orange and purple. After dark we can expect to see the glow and glitter of bioluminescence as marine organisms flash their lights for us.

Day Tour of the Nisqually Reach

Sunday, September 9, 2018 - 10:15 am

Cost: \$69 per person

Spend the day learning about the largest salt marsh restoration on the West Coast. Enjoy world-renowned bird watching as you paddle. Keep your eyes open for seals and sea lions with their pups, teeming salmon

runs, and porpoises. You might even see a whale. Each trip includes a tandem kayak, paddles, life jacket, spray skirt, safety gear, and an expert naturalist and sea kayak guide. A boat lantern is also included for the sunset trip.

Both trips depart from Luhr Beach.

Float the Nisqually River

Join us for our annual float trip and view several of our properties from a rarely seen perspective.

Full Day Nisqually River Float Trips

Saturday, July 28 and Sunday, July 29, 2018 - 9 am

Cost: \$120 per person for one day

Both trips depart from Wilcox Farms in Roy. The cost includes rafting gear, professional guides, and lunch.

Space is limited and there are age restrictions for each trip. For more information and to register, visit our website at www.nisquallylandtrust.org, send an email to staff@nisquallylandtrust.org, or call 360.489.3400.



Kayakers will enjoy an evening tour of the Nisqually Reach as the day transitions to an Impressionist painting and the sky illuminates in orange and purple.

Barb Craven, an Expert Site Steward with a Sense of Curiosity

By Cris Peck, Outreach Coordinator

For the past five years, Barb Craven has been one of our most consistent site stewards – “super volunteers” who “adopt” Land Trust properties and become our eyes and ears on the ground. We like to say the program is mutually beneficial: Volunteers get to hike and explore unique places, and we get help monitoring our protected lands. And we get to spend time with folks like Barb.

Barb’s adopted property is our Yelm Shoreline Protected Area, which totals 240 acres and two miles of Nisqually River shoreline, and she’s become an expert on it. “I wanted to do something worthwhile outdoors,” she says, “where I could feel the breeze on my face, and the earth under my feet.

“And I like finding unusual evidence of living things. I’ve found a bright white opossum skull so tiny it fit

in the palm of my hand; dozens of beautiful banded snails, on the trail one day; raccoon tracks; a ten-foot-tall weed; and beaver dams.”



Barb is a long-time site steward for our Yelm Shoreline protected area.

She sends us photographs of species or tracks she cannot identify, and sometimes we’re stumped. In fact, it took us a few weeks to identify the ten-foot-tall weed. (Milkweed, as it turned out.) She writes detailed field reports that make great reading, and she connects others to Yelm Shoreline by inviting them to join her on monitoring visits.

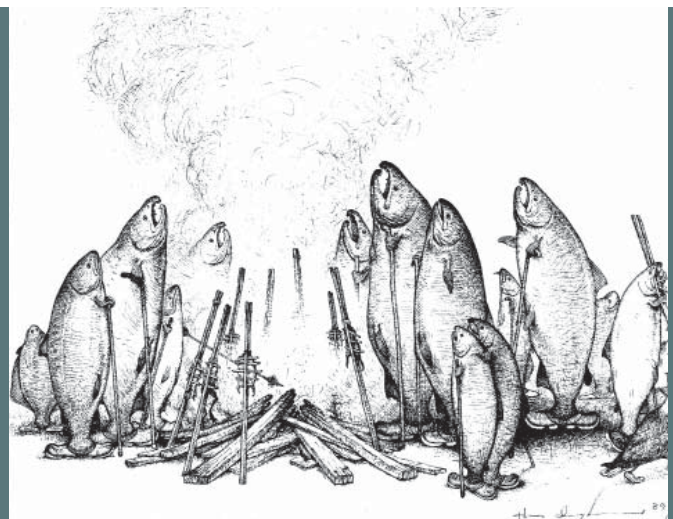
We can’t thank Barb enough for her dedication and service to the stewardship of our protected lands. So we’ll just say: Thanks, Barb! See you on the river!

Interested in becoming a site steward?

For more information, contact Volunteer Coordinator Addie Schluskel at volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org or 360-489-3400 x106.

Please Save the Date
Annual Meeting & Salmon Bake
Sunday, September 16, 2018
4:00 - 7:30 pm

You won't want to miss this much-anticipated community event. Guests will enjoy a delicious picnic dinner featuring Nisqually grilled salmon.



Board and Staff Changes

Welcome, Ann



New board member **Ann Harrie** is passionate about the environment, the outdoors and fisheries issues. Originally from Oregon, she's happy to be back in the Northwest after being gone for more than twenty years.

Ann is an attorney in Olympia specializing in environmental, land-use and real-estate law. Before attending law school, at the University of Montana, she earned an M.S. in Environmental Health from the University of South Carolina and worked as an environmental scientist.

Ann enjoys traveling, hiking, kayaking and getting outdoors with her two dogs. She says she's excited to help conserve the Nisqually Watershed for future generations – and we're glad she is! Welcome, Ann!

JW: Thanks for Nine Great Years

In March **JW Foster** retired from the our board of directors, having finished his second three-year term as president and his ninth year on the board overall.

Under JW's watch the Land Trust grew tremendously. We tripled our land holdings, staff, volunteers and budget, achieved national accreditation, and gained widespread recognition as a regional leader in the land-trust movement.

JW's service to the Land Trust goes back even further. In the decade before he joined the board, he and his wife, Nicki, and their children volunteered for many Land Trust events and work parties.

"Someday my kids will be showing their kids and grandkids the trees we planted and sharing the experiences we had together," he says. "We're always thinking about who is going to enjoy the trees when they grow up. Serving on the board meant I could help more people have that feeling."

As JW says, he's not leaving the Land Trust. He's just changing roles. He'll still be out planting trees and pulling weeds, and he'll still be taking the stage as emcee of our annual auction.

And the Land Trust will continue to work closely with JW, and his staff, in his role as mayor of Yelm, developing conservation projects that benefit the watershed and the city's residents.

Thanks, JW. We'll see you on the River – the one you've done so much to protect and restore!



Cris: Thanks for the Good Times



Cris Peck is leaving the Land Trust after six years as our Outreach Coordinator. We'll really miss his contagious enthusiasm, quick wit, high energy, and love of all things Nisqually.

Cris has been the mentor-in-residence for our AmeriCorps members, after serving three terms himself. And he has inspired and led hundreds of volunteers and students, who have donated thousands of hours planting trees, pulling weeds, hauling debris, and generally giving a tremendous boost to our work.

But Cris isn't going far – he'll continue as a caretaker at the Nisqually Reach Nature Center, and he'll be training as a sea-kayaking guide with a new local outfit, Kayak Nisqually. Meanwhile, keep an eye out for the Kenny Peck Band – that's Cris on the drums, backing up his dad.

Thanks, Cris!

Land Trust Volunteer Opportunities

Want to get involved and explore Land Trust protected areas for yourself? We have plenty of opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

Stewardship work parties occur every Wednesday and occasional Saturdays at locations throughout the Nisqually Watershed. We tackle different habitat



Volunteers of all ages help maintain and restore our properties and protect important habitat.

restoration projects every week, such as controlling invasive weeds, planting native species, and cleaning up our sites.

Site stewards “adopt” Land Trust protected areas to visit periodically, providing valuable information to inform future stewardship efforts.

Site stewards have the chance to explore beautiful sites in the watershed while acting as an extra pair of Land Trust eyes and ears out on the land.

Trail sweeps assist with our Nature Walks, which

give community members a chance to learn about our watershed through guided walks on Land Trust conservation lands. These volunteers play an essential role by supporting our Nature Walk leads and serving as ambassadors of the Land Trust.

Interested in any of these opportunities? For more information, contact Volunteer Coordinator Addie Schluskel at volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org or 360-489-3400 x106.



Nature Walk trail sweeps assist in leading the walks and also enjoy exploring our properties, such as Powell Creek, pictured above.

Become a Nisqually Natural Legacy Partner

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.

For more information, contact Susan Callender at scallender@nisquallylandtrust.org or (360) 489-3400.



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NATURE WALKS

2018 SPRING | SUMMER | FALL

Join us for one of our nature walks and enjoy the beauty of our natural areas. Learn how collaborative conservation is making a lasting difference in the Nisqually Watershed.

May

Bird Walk with Tahoma Audubon
Red Salmon Creek near DuPont
Saturday, May 19
7:30 am - 9:30 am

Native Plant ID with WA Native Plant Society
Nisqually River Shoreline near Yelm
Saturday, May 26
10 am - noon

June

Bird Walk with Tahoma Audubon
Jacobs Point, Anderson Island (ferry ticket needed)
Saturday, June 23
8 am - noon

Photography Walk

Ohop Valley near Eatonville
Saturday, June 30
8:30 am - 10:30 am

August

Nisqually Valley Farm Tour
Yelm Shoreline
Saturday, August 25
10 am - 12:30 pm

September

Photography Walk
Nisqually River Shoreline
Saturday, September 29
8:30 am - 10:30 am

October

Mycology Walk
with Puget Sound Mycological Society
Mount Rainier Gateway Reserve
near Ashford
Saturday, October 13
10 am - noon

Join us on the water!
See page 8 for information on our
Summer float trips and kayaking
excursions on the Nisqually Reach

For more information and to register, visit
nisquallylandtrust.org, call 369.489.3400,
or email staff@nisquallylandtrust.org.