



Nisqually River view from our new Middle Reach Property

NISQUALLY LAND TRUST

Winter 2018-2019

Land Trust, Partners Launch Major River Restoration Project

Nisqually Middle Reach: Three Years, Five Salmon Species, 30,000 Native Plants

This winter it's all hands on deck – or in the dirt! – as a team of Nisqually Watershed partners, volunteers and students launch an ambitious three-year project to plant 30,000 native plants and restore 60 acres of high-priority salmon habitat and floodplain along one of the most dynamic reaches of the Nisqually River.

The Land Trust acquired the site last May. It has long been the critical missing piece in our 520-acre Powell Creek Protected Area, on the Thurston County side of the river, about 12 miles above McKenna.

"I've been looking at that gap for almost thirty years," said Land Trust founder George Walter. The Land Trust purchased the remote property from the Spooner family, which had used it to grow berry cane rootstock but stopped farming it several years ago, in the face of increasing trans-



Kids, students, volunteers, and project partners will help plant native trees and shrubs on our new property.

portation difficulties and other challenges.

"The Spooners were able to make productive use of this land for awhile," Walter said. "And now productivity is being shifted back to growing salmon."

The property is located along what is known as the Middle Reach of the Nisqually River. It is one of the river's most productive zones for all five salmon species native to the Nisqually Watershed, including Chinook salmon and steelhead trout.

Both are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and use the Middle Reach for spawning and rearing.

Native plants were largely removed from the site during its tenure as a commercial agricultural property. Using techniques refined over a decade of habitat restoration on adjoining properties in

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.

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

Website: www.nisquallylandtrust.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Sullivan, President
Mary Gentry, Vice President
Kathy Mix, Secretary
Suzanne Nelson, Treasurer
Roger Andrascik
Lloyd Fetterly
Ann Harrie
Brad Jones
Martin McCallum
Sean Smith
Sunny Thompson
Katie Wilcox
George Walter, Board Emeritus

STAFF

Kim Bredensteiner, Associate Director
Susan Callender, Development Manager
Nikki Dizon, Operations Associate
Sherri Gallant, AmeriCorps
Volunteer Coordinator
Pete Grebowski, Land Steward
Joe Kane, Executive Director
Courtney Murphy, AmeriCorps
Volunteer Coordinator
Addie Schluskel, Stewardship Assistant
Rylee Uhrich, Administrative &
Database Assistant



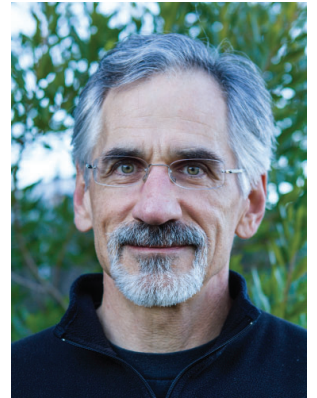
This seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust, and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

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

President's Letter:

The season of books, hikes, and bad clothes

Winter is closing in. Chill winds, short days, and the daily question of *Will it rain?* inspire most of us to choose what book to read by the fireplace rather than where to go on our next hike.



This time of year at the Land Trust we find our workload divided in two directions. In one, our land stewards and volunteers, taking advantage of the cooler, wetter weather and their ethic of “no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing,” are planting native shrubs and trees at our properties.

In the other direction, staff and board members are in “book by the fireplace” mode, reviewing this past year and developing next year’s budget and work plan.

For myself, as our new board president, reflecting back on my first year I would like to thank the board and staff for their support and patience. Through their hard work, combined with your support and generosity, we have had another successful year and look to 2019, our 30th Anniversary, to be a special one.

So between now and the end of the year, while you reflect on 2018 and plan for 2019, we hope you’ll consider the Nisqually Land Trust in your year-end giving. And we invite you to join us in 2019 to celebrate our 30th Anniversary.

Happy holidays to you and your family from your Nisquamilly,

Brian Sullivan

Nisqually Land Trust Conservation Dinner and Auction

March 16, 2019 | 4:30 - 9:00 pm

South Puget Sound Community College—Lacey Campus

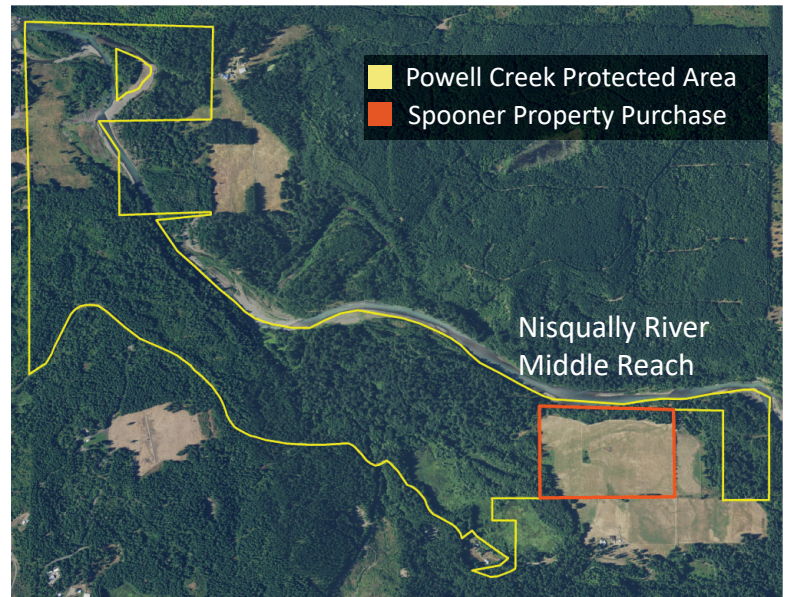
Register, donate an item, and learn about sponsor opportunities at nisquallylandtrust.org.

Middle Reach Restoration Project

continued from page 1

the Powell Creek unit, the Land Trust and its longtime partners – the Nisqually Indian Tribe, the Nisqually River Education Project, and hundreds of student and adult volunteers – will remove invasive species such as Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry and install native trees and shrubs.

This site is sandy, and reestablishing native forest will require planting species that can tolerate short periods of high groundwater during high river flow but are also adapted to droughty conditions that will occur during summer. The planting will likely include shore pine, snowberry, Oregon grape, ocean spray, bitter cherry, western white pine, Douglas fir, and western-Ponderosa pine.



The Spooner property was the critical missing piece in our Powell Creek Protected Area.



Over time, the Nisqually team will restore the new Middle Reach property to naturally functioning forest.



A nearby property in the Powell Creek Protected Area after a decade of habitat restoration.

Over time, the Nisqually team will restore the site to naturally functioning forest, which will provide shade, shelter, nutrients, and habitat complexity. “This is a big deal for the long-term,” said George Walter. “I may not see it happen, but eventually this reach of the river will return to its natural ways. The salmon are smiling!”

The Nisqually River’s Middle Reach is 6.5 miles long, running from the Ohop Creek confluence downstream to Tanwax Creek. Almost 90 percent of the Middle Reach, on both sides of the river, is now in permanent conservation status.

Join Us for a Restoration Party

Would you like to help restore a Land Trust property? Join us for a Wednesday or Saturday morning work party.

For more info, please contact Sherri Gallant at 360.489.3400, ext. 106 or volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org.

2018 Nature Walk Highlights

In 2018 many of you spent weekend mornings with us out in nature – pursuing rare fungi, quietly observing the sparrow and the thrush, learning about native plants, photographing the captivating landscapes of the Nisqually Watershed. Thanks for joining us!

With over 800 participants since 2013, our Nature Walk program creates opportunities for everyone to explore the special places that you are helping to protect. We hope you'll keep joining us for these in-the-field events. See you next year!



Mycology Walk participants learning about local fungi at the Land Trust's Mount Rainier Gateway Protected Area, near Ashford.

Thank you to our generous sponsor

**Olympia
Federal
Savings**



*Signs of wildlife are everywhere:
Here, discovering beaver tracks on
the Nisqually River shoreline.*

Thank you to our partners and volunteers!

Black Hills Audubon, Bonnie Wood
Tahoma Audubon, Jerry Broadus
Kayak Nisqually
Nisqually Valley Farm, Petersen Family
Olympia Camera Club, Meredith Rafferty
Puget Sound Mycological Society, Kim Traverse
Site Stewards: Crow Vecchio and Etsuko and Jim Reistroffer
Volunteers: Becky Andrade, Brian Kerr, Renee Buck, Kathie Torgison
WA Native Plant Society, South Sound Chapter



*Mount Rainier looms into view as hikers visit one of the Land Trust's
Mount Rainier Gateway properties.*

Nature's Cupid: The Pacific Sideband Snail

By Pete Grebowski, Land Steward

Hardly studied and often overlooked, the Pacific sideband snail (*Monadenia fidelis*) is one of the most interesting species you've never thought much about. From their anatomy to the extreme pressures they face from warming climates and human development, these little gastropods are far more complex than you'd expect.

Last month we had a planting party at a Land Trust property along the Mashel River. Throughout the day we saw eagles, deer, salamanders, and signs of beaver and elk. While these creatures quickly dispersed upon our arrival, one remained – a Pacific sideband snail slowly making its way across a leaf near our snack station.

It made me think that while most species have a relatively agile response to human influence or natural events like fire or falling trees, some, like this snail, are basically trapped in their surrounding environment.

Pacific sidebands are endemic to the Pacific Coast of North America, where they typically reside in cool, moist, shaded forests. They feed on fungi and plant material and provide prey for raccoons, shrews, and mice, among others.

But with rising temperatures, intensifying wildfires, continuous human development, and decreasing rainfall, their suitable habitat is be-

coming increasingly marginalized. Other, more mobile species can shift home ranges in response to these pressures, but terrestrial snails don't move anywhere fast. And their mobility is being further impeded as the traditionally moist substrates they travel on dry up.



Pacific sideband snails shoot "love darts" during a courtship that is elaborate...but slow.

They might move slowly, but Pacific sidebands (like many terrestrial snails) give a different meaning to the phrase "darting across the landscape." They are hermaphrodites, with both male and female reproductive organs.

As if that anatomy isn't complex enough, they shoot what are called "love darts" during an elaborate courtship process, virtually playing cupid with each other before they mate! (Although separate from the copulation process, these love darts are thought to enhance reproductive success after mating.)

While we typically focus our interests on large mammals, birds of prey, and salmon, it is important to remember that nature exists at all levels, and that seemingly unexciting species may have a much more interesting and ecologically important life cycle than we'd expect.

Next time you come across a Pacific sideband, just think: You are looking at nature's version of the Roman god of love!

Staff Transitions

In September Land Steward **Charly Kearns** and his wife, Anna Mangan, decamped for a year-long trek through Asia and Africa. No one knew our properties – and the plants and critters that call them home – like Charly. And no one cared for them more deeply, described them more elegantly or shared their knowledge more generously.

Charly joined the Land Trust in 2011, through the Washington Service Corps AmeriCorps Program, as our first Volunteer Coordinator. A year later he became our Land Steward, managing lands that doubled under his watch, to over 7,000 acres.

Charly's office ran from Mount Rainier to Puget Sound. His wry, warm-hearted tutelage inspired hundreds of volunteers, interns, and students to plant trees, pull weeds, and haul supplies through sun, rain, wind, and snow, often fueled by little more than Land Trust fig bars, coffee, and Charly's great stories.

We'll miss you, Charly. Travel well!

Like Charly, **Addie Schlussel** came to the Land Trust through AmeriCorps, serving as our Volunteer Coordinator from September 2017 through last July. After nearly a year of keeping our volunteers on time, on target, and fueled up, Addie is now our first Stewardship Assistant.

Addie will take on a wide range of stewardship tasks for our growing roster of conservation lands. She'll



also support the volunteer program and our new AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinators. Pass the fig bars, Addie!

Land Steward **Pete Grebowski** joined the Land Trust in September. Pete graduated from the University of New Hampshire in 2015 with a degree in Wildlife Biology and Outdoor Education.

He's since lived in Mazama, where he worked for Outward Bound and discovered his love for our Evergreen State; southern New Hampshire, as Land Steward for The Nature Conservancy; and Juneau, as the Southeast Alaska Land Trust Stewardship Coordinator.

Pete's excited to be back in Washington and looks forward "to exploring all that western Washington has to offer!"

Rylee Uhrich joined the Land Trust staff in September, as our Administrative and Database Assistant. Rylee moved to the Pacific Northwest in 2005 to attend Evergreen State College, where she studied alternative health systems. She first connected with the Land Trust as a volunteer, through the Nisqually Stream Stewards program.

Since graduating, Rylee has worked as a project manager, event organizer, and volunteer coordinator, and she is now pursuing a Master of Divinity degree through Starr King School for the Ministry.

Welcome aboard, Rylee!



Volunteer Spotlight

John Blair:

Dedicated Tree Planter, Blackberry Puller, and (Work) Party Animal

By Addie Schlussel, Stewardship Assistant

Wednesday might not be everyone's favorite day of the week, but for me, it's always a pleasure. That's because Wednesday mornings are dedicated to our weekly volunteer work parties, a time to get out on Land Trust properties

with new volunteers and familiar faces alike. For the past couple of years, one of those familiar faces has been John Blair.

John moved from Maryland to the Nisqually River Watershed in 2016, and he has been attending our work parties ever since. These parties are crucial to our habitat

restoration efforts. Volunteers plant trees, remove invasive weeds, and much more. It's this diversity of projects that John enjoys most about volunteering.

"The work parties vary so much," he says. "You're pulling blackberry and Scotch broom, or

salvaging native trees for re-planting, or planting new trees. That's what I like more than anything."

But John appreciates the social aspect of the work parties as well. "I've really enjoyed the people," he says. "I remember coming into my first work party and meeting three Jims and two Johns. It made remembering names easy!"

John's sense of humor and ready smile have brightened up many of our Wednesday mornings, and he is always one of the first to welcome new volunteers—even if they aren't named Jim or John.

Our work parties can get messy, as we slog through mud and snow and prickly blackberry bushes for the sake of habitat restoration. But John is always game to tackle new projects with us, and we're so grateful for his help. Thank you, John, for everything that you do for the Land Trust and the Nisqually Watershed!

Interested in our restoration work parties? For more information, contact us at 360.489.3400, x106 or volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org.



John brings a smile to everyone he works with in the field.



Site Stewards Workshop

Saturday, February 2, 2019, 9 a.m. – noon

Join Land Trust staff and volunteers for an informational session about our site stewards program. Learn how you can "adopt" a Land Trust protected area to visit while providing valuable information to inform future stewardship efforts. We'd love to have you join us in the field!

Send an email to volunteer@nisquallylandtrust.org or call (360) 489-3400, x106 to register or for more information.



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 #107

2018
Conservation
Appeal

Boxcar Canyon, Mashel River: Now permanently protected critical habitat for threatened Chinook salmon and steelhead trout.

The Nisqually Needs You!

Please consider a year-end gift to help protect land, water, and wildlife in the Nisqually River Watershed.

In the Nisqually River Watershed, we're blessed with abundant "natural capital" – our rivers and streams, our mountains and forests, our marine waters and shoreline. **Please help us protect this rich natural legacy** – now and for generations to come – with a year-end gift. You can easily make your donation online at nisquallylandtrust.org. Call us at 360.489.3400 for more information. Thanks!

Become a Watershed Steward

This year, we are launching our "Watershed Stewards" program to recognize generous donors who make a one-time or cumulative gift of \$1,000 in 2018.

Our 2018 Watershed Stewards will be invited on a sunset cruise of south Puget Sound to see our ambitious new marine shoreline projects. Hope to see you there!