



2024 Winter Newsletter & 2023 Annual Report



LAND. WATER. FISH. WILDLIFE. PEOPLE

Pictured: Wildlife Habitat in the Upper Nisqually Mount Rainier Gateway Protected Area. Photo by Anna Mangan.

CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Significant Strategic Progress in the Ohop

“In the last three years, we have made rapid progress in the Middle Reach of Ohop Creek, protecting over 150 acres and almost two miles of critical salmon spawning habitat.”



In 2001, the Nisqually Tribes’ Chinook Recovery Plan identified the protection and restoration of Ohop Creek as a high priority. At that time, I was working for the Tribe’s Salmon Recovery Program, and I remember thinking I had no idea how we would accomplish that goal.

That same year, the Nisqually Land Trust purchased its first property on Ohop Creek – an old 100-acre dairy farm recently on the market – in the heart of the priority restoration area. Suddenly, the distant goal seemed more possible.

Two decades later, the Land Trust has acquired 25 Ohop properties, protecting 970 acres and 11.5 miles of shoreline. In the last three years, we have made rapid progress in the Middle Reach of Ohop Creek, protecting over 150 acres and almost two miles of critical salmon spawning habitat. Read about some of the projects that contributed to this success in this combined 2023 Annual Report and 2024 Winter update.

Our progress in the Ohop Valley is an excellent example of how we do our work: strategic, collaborative, patient, and ultimately significant. As always, we are grateful to all who help us realize our mission - protecting and stewarding important fish and wildlife lands in the Nisqually.

Hope to see you out on the river,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeanette Dorner".

Jeanette Dorner
Executive Director



FORESTED NISQUALLY ESTUARY BLUFF PROPERTY PROTECTED



Land Trust Adds Property to Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

Nisqually Land Trust is pleased to announce that it has acquired and transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) a small but critical parcel of undeveloped land and marine shoreline along the Nisqually Delta, adjacent to the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.

The property was undeveloped but zoned for a residence when it was listed for sale on the commercial real-estate market. Given its strategic location, USFWS had already identified it for potential future acquisition and incorporation into the Refuge.

However, the Service could not move quickly enough to acquire the property, and the Land Trust stepped in to work with the landowners, one of whom, Mary Martin, had been a founding board member and expressed a desire to see the property permanently protected.

Drawing on an internal fund set up for just such emergencies, and benefitting from the Martin family's generous agreement to a bargain-sale price, the Trust was able to secure the property quickly and hold it until USFWS could finish its funding process and acquire the title.

“We appreciate this partnership with the Nisqually Land Trust that enabled us to add this land to the Refuge,” said Refuge Manager Glynnis Nakai. “This property expands our protection of the vegetated bluff along McAllister Creek and the west side of the Nisqually River estuary.”

The property totals 1.4 acres, and about a third of it is level, with a view across the Nisqually Delta and what could have been a ready site for a luxury home. The rest of the property consists of a steep, cliff-like bluff that drops to a rocky shoreline and is forested with mature native vegetation including big leaf maple, red alder, Douglas fir and western hemlock trees, with an understory of sword fern, hazelnut and salmonberry bushes.

Critically, the property's shoreline is unarmored, and the connections between uplands, bluff, shoreline and delta are intact, providing superior habitat for fish and wildlife.

“We are so pleased to have been able to help the Refuge add this small but valuable piece of additional habitat to its holdings,” said Nisqually Land Trust Executive Director Jeanette Dorner.



The 1.4-acre parcel on the west side of the Nisqually estuary, outlined in red, is now a part of the federally protected Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you to our project partner, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



*Ohop Creek Protected Area
For over twenty years the Land Trust has been protecting land along Ohop Creek, including the valley floodplain and forested valley walls.*

2024 NISQUALLY PROJECTS

Protection of the Middle Reach of Ohop Creek took another major step forward while we protected another Nisqually River shoreline parcel.

TWO OHOP CREEK PROTECTION PROPERTIES

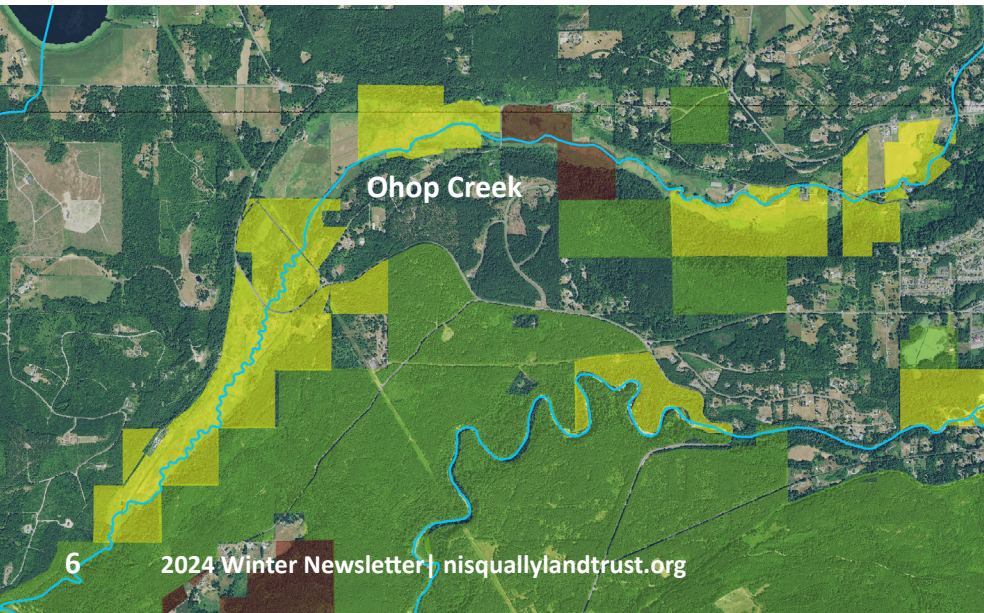
The Land Trust filled one of the last significant gaps in its block of protected land along the middle reach of Ohop Creek with two transactions, a land swap and a land purchase, that eliminated livestock degradation of nearly one-half mile of salmon shoreline and spawning beds.

In the land swap, the Land Trust resolved a dispute between a landowner and the state's Department of Ecology by providing the landowner with pastureland for their horses in exchange for the shoreline acreage they had been using, which endangered sensitive spawning beds.

In a similar transaction, the Land Trust was able to buy out a horse operation whose damage to the creek and its spawning beds had triggered an administrative action by the state. The purchase enabled the seller to move the operation out of the Ohop Valley.

In addition to protecting the heart of the Ohop Valley's spawning beds from further damage, acquisition of these two parcels is central to a proposed restoration of Ohop Creek's entire middle reach led by the Nisqually Indian Tribe, the state- and federally recognized lead for salmon recovery in the Nisqually Watershed, and the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, the lead salmon habitat restoration non-profit in the Nisqually.

*Map of Ohop Creek Valley protection progress:
In this map of the Ohop Valley yellow properties are owned and protected by the Nisqually Land Trust, red properties are owned and protected by the Nisqually Tribe and green are public lands.*



HENRICKSON PROPERTY

This small but vital 1.6-acre shoreline property sits along the Nisqually River floodplain, across from our Powell Creek Preserve, in the river's dynamic Middle Reach. Both the Nisqually Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan and the Nisqually Steelhead Trout Recovery Plan rate the Middle Reach a highest freshwater protection priority.

The property is one of a group of small parcels along the Pierce County shoreline that have not yet been substantially developed for residential use but have been used for shoreline recreation, including off-road vehicle use, that has had detrimental impacts to habitat.

However, the habitat on this property remains in excellent condition, and acquisition, which included a generous donation from the landowners, provided an opportunity to eliminate the potential for adverse impacts from both recreation and development.



View of Nisqually River Shoreline from the Henrickson Property. The protection of the Nisqually River shoreline is the Land Trust's oldest habitat initiative. Together with public land owners that have pledged to protect the river, we now have protected almost eighty percent of the salmon producing shorelines of the river.



The property outlined in yellow was acquired by the Land Trust in September for permanent protection. It contains part of the Middle Reach of Ohop Creek with spawning gravel for Nisqually salmon as well as forested wetland along the valley wall, an important source of water for the creek. The structures on the property are slated for demolition in 2025 to make way for habitat restoration.

OUR IMPACT - 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The funds we receive from government grants and from the generosity of our community are invested into protecting and stewarding the Nisqually. We continue to acquire more valuable fish and wildlife habitat lands. We are grateful to our partners that help us steward our lands, restoring their resilience. Our commitment is forever - caring for these lands for the health of the water, fish, wildlife, and people of the Nisqually watershed.

\$1,114,836
raised for conservation projects

\$34,564
raised for stewardship and restoration

One mile
of salmon-producing shoreline permanently protected

2,285
hours donated by **276** volunteers to restore protected areas

124 acres permanently protected in 2023; and over **10,600 acres** protected to date

6,000 native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers planted; over **400,000** planted to date

Thank You To Our FOUNDATION & AGENCY FUNDERS

Amazon, Bonneville Environmental Foundation / One Tree Planted, Community Foundation of South Puget Sound, Dawkins Charitable Trust, Nisqually Charitable Fund, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Patagonia, Thurston County Conservation Futures, US Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, WA Department of Ecology: Streamflow Restoration Program, National Coastal Wetlands Conservation, WA Department of Fish & Wildlife, WA State Recreation & Conservation Office: Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration Fund, Salmon Recovery Funding Board, WA Department of Fish & Wildlife: ALEA Volunteer Cooperative

2023 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Condensed Balance Sheet

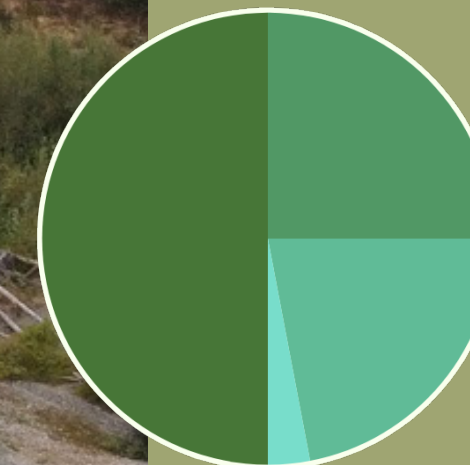
Cash	\$579,348
Conservation Land & Equipment	44,871,820
Investments & Other Assets	3,081,572
Grants & Other Receivables	220,507
Prepaid	8,874
Total Assets	\$49,762,121

Current Liabilities	\$142,496
Net Assets	\$49,619,625
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$40,762,121

Condensed Statement of Activities

Support and Revenue	
Grants	\$1,419,995
Contributions	588,336
In-Kind Donations	59,000
Earned Income	257,932
Interest and Investment Revenue	270,162
Other Revenue	81,470
Total Support and Revenue	\$2,677,244

Expenses	
Conservation Program Services	\$538,336
Management and General	466,575
Fundraising	78,983
Total Expenses	\$1,083,894
Change in Net Assets	\$1,593,350
Additional Land Acquisition Expenditure	\$1,071,000
Net Result	\$522,350



Percentage of Total Expenses

- Land Acquisition 50%
- Conservation Program Services 25%
- Management and General 22%
- Fundraising 3%



“My introduction to the Land Trust was a work party on Anderson Island and I quickly got hooked. I love working with this great group of people. Seeing the progress we make each week is very satisfying.” —Kris Speir

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

4,424 hours donated
by **451** volunteers
in 2023 & 2024

Our dedicated volunteers contribute their time and energy to land stewardship, annual events, and much more, supporting our mission and making this work possible.



"I began volunteering for the Wednesday Work Parties 6 years ago. We are involved in habitat restoration projects throughout the watershed. It has been a rewarding experience collaborating with this group of dedicated volunteers."
— Butch Hennings

- Emma Abston
- Lesia Alexander
- Angela Anderson
- Bree Anderson
- Lane Andolsek
- Dre Aparicio
- Jane Appling
- Brandon Arellano
- Jackie Ashley
- Connor Austin
- Landon Austin
- Charles Autio
- Aaron Babbel
- Kaleen Babbel
- Mark Baker
- Morgan Baker
- Jeannette Barreca
- Scott Batiuk
- Paul Battan
- David Baublits
- Johanna Bauman
- Zhiane Beaney
- Mia Beaver
- David Beers
- Shelly Bentley
- Ann Berney
- Barbara Bevacqna
- Jennifer Bixler
- Cynthia Blair
- John Blair
- Gale Blomstrom
- Josh Boisvert
- Dan Bode
- Roberta Bode
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- Michele Buckley
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- Sean Smith
- Cynthia Camel

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- Connie Campbell
- Justine Capra
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- Cassandra Carpenter
- Nina Carter
- Zurisadai Case
- Marisa Caughlan
- April Cerio
- Jon Cerio
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- Trese Chaboya
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- Patrick Clancy
- EC Cline
- Howard Coleman
- Alexis Colon
- Liam Conat
- Owen Connaughton
- Michelle Cornwell
- Izabella Costanza
- Evelynn Courneya
- Kirstin Craig
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- Joan Crane
- Jeanne Crawford
- Tim Crawford
- Steve Cross
- Jacqueline Crouch
- Jackie Culoth
- Susannah David
- Denise Davis
- Craig Davison
- Anna Dearybury
- Teana Deatrich
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- Zahn Delgado
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- Dennis Ehlers
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- Elizabeth Ellis
- Natalee Erkelens
- Isaiah Fahey
- David Feliciano
- Lloyd Fetterly
- Catherine Fish
- Emily Fisher
- Sabina Fleming
- Margaret Foran
- Maddox Fossum
- Michelle Fossum
- Taylor Fossum
- Coltan Foster
- JW Foster
- Logan Foster
- Nicki Foster
- Roy Fowler
- Peggen Frank
- Kaylin Furry
- Megan Garcia
- Kate Gentry
- Mary Gentry
- Frank Gentry
- David Gerdes
- Rosa Beth Gibson
- Sarah Gillenwater
- Amalia Gladhart
- Delphine Gladhart
- Russel Gladhart
- Emily Gladhart
- Peter Gladhart
- Joshua Godinez
- Tyler Goodspeed
- Grady Graham

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- John Grettenberger
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- Lena Kowalski
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- Kira-Beth Mount
- Logan Mount
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- Kathleen Newcomer
- Samantha Newcomer
- Alise Newman
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- Courtney Nieves
- Grace Nieves
- Jaxx Nieves
- Jocelyn Nieves
- Juan Nieves
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- Tawni Norothy
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- Ed O'Brien
- Brooke Oloughlin
- Tristan Olson
- Daniel Oney
- Allison Osterberg
- Alex Otto
- Steven Otto
- Eric Owen
- Chuck Paeth
- Brandon Palmer
- Richie Parlato
- Peter Paul
- Adam Pearson
- Ayla Pearson
- Cris Peck
- Keilaynah Erickson
- Lucas Perez
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- Meghan Peters
- Ameon Piersing
- Derek Piersing
- Kitty Piersing
- John Plair
- Kyla Poland
- Maile Poland
- Carlan Pontious
- Blake Pool
- Chuck Pool
- Kristin Pool

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- Sonja Prilo
- Jakob Rapacz
- Jonah Rapacz
- Kimberly Rapacz
- JayCee Rehse
- Matt Reider
- James Reistraffer
- Etsuko Reistroffer
- John Ridgway
- Alexa Riggins
- Josh Riggins
- Thorin Riggins
- Richard Riales
- Nancy Riordan
- Travis Rivers
- Patrick Robbins
- Devin Rodriguez
- Ronald Rodriguez
- Eileen Rollins
- Glenn Rollins
- Nori Ros
- Neville Rosario
- John Rosenberg
- Jaiylee Ross
- Henrique Rosso
- Belinda Rotton
- Isaiah Roy
- Sharon Rue
- Mykal Rycroft
- Natasha Rycroft
- Michelle Ryder
- Kennedy Sadler
- Barbara Samora
- Allison Sanders
- Debra Sankovitz
- Christian Sartin
- Erin Savoy
- Gregory Schaefer
- Jabeth Schaffer
- Grayson Scheefers
- Cindy Schorno
- Vincent Schueler
- Donald Seely
- Diego Seira Silva-Herzog
- Nita Sell
- Brayden Shannon
- Lydia Shaw
- Diann Sheldon
- Aaron Shively
- Amanda Silber
- Suzanne Simons
- Laura Simroth
- Rachel Simroth
- Steven Simroth
- Victoria Sims
- Rellen Skelton
- Jennifer Smith
- Kelly Smith
- Norm Smith
- Slater Sorensen
- Greg Sorlie
- Susan Southwick
- Mason Speer
- Kristen Speir
- Nathanial Stephanik

2023 NISQUALLY PROJECTS

We completed protection of an important off-channel wetland in the Nisqually floodplain and increased our protection of the middle reach of Ohop Creek.

YOUNGBLOOD PROPERTY

We significantly expanded our Powell Creek Preserve wetland complex, in the Nisqually Floodplain, with the purchase of a 32.5-acre property along the creek that includes nearly one-quarter mile of salmon-producing shoreline. The Preserve now totals 555 acres and provides vital habitat throughout for coho and chum salmon as well as Chinook salmon and steelhead trout, which are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

PFPOST-JOHNSON PROPERTY & BARRETT

We acquired two properties totaling 88 acres along the middle reach of Ohop Creek, increasing our protected lands in Ohop Valley to over 900 acres.

The properties include nearly a mile of salmon-producing shoreline, including gravelly spawning sites for threatened Chinook salmon, which Land Trust staff have observed using the area. Since protecting our first mile of Ohop Creek in 2001, the overall shoreline miles we and our partners have protected in the valley has now grown to almost eleven miles.

Conservation of the two properties is also directly tied to the hydrology of the steep valley slopes along the south part of them, which contain significant seeps and springs that run into small slot canyons and ultimately feed into Ohop Creek. Protecting these water sources is essential to maintaining good streamflow for Chinook and other salmon.



Powell Creek Preserve. Another 32 acres of the Nisqually River floodplain was protected including wetlands along Powell Creek as it flows into the Nisqually.



Ohop Creek Middle Reach. Another mile of valuable Ohop Creek salmon spawning habitat was protected by two projects completed in 2023.

LOSING TREES TO TIMBER POACHING

In 2024 the Land Trust lost more than 20 bigleaf maple trees, ranging from 60 to over 100 years old, as a result of maple theft. These trees have been targeted not for firewood or burls, but for a rare “figured” or “flame” maple wood grain, which is sold on the local black market.

The Land Trust has responded with increased security and property monitoring, involving local partners and law enforcement. We have also educated ourselves on “Specialized Forest Product” laws to provide the correct information to prosecuting attorneys and agencies.

Adding hidden game cameras has provided insight into maple theft on our properties, as well as the added bonus of some great wildlife footage on our conservation lands. With over 6,000 acres to care for, our site stewards and neighbors are essential partners in our work. Thank your for help and care.



A bigleaf maple tree. Tree poachers scrape bark from its surface to reveal the figured grain pattern that is coveted to make guitars.



Nisqually tribal member and Nisqually Land Trust Board Member Hanford McCloud peeling the inner bark from the outer bark of a cedar tree. Hanford uses the bark to weave traditional hats and baskets.

STEWARDED TRADITIONAL NATIVE PLANT MATERIALS

Western Red Cedar Groves

Western Red Cedar trees are an important local forest species. They also hold great cultural significance as a source of traditional materials for Coast Salish peoples.

This spring, the Land Trust hosted cedar bark pulling demonstrations by Nisqually Tribal member and Land Trust Board member Hanford McCloud. Attendees learned about the cultural importance of the cedar tree.

For these events, Hanford worked with Stewardship Manager Jake Pool to find sites suitable for traditional cedar bark harvesting. Only cedar trees that do not have branches low on the trunk can

produce the long strips needed. These trees are typically found in groves.

“That was an ah-ha moment for me,” said Jake. “A cedar tree growing by itself in a newer restoration planting will likely be branched all the way to the ground and will never lend itself to traditional gathering.”

Consequently, Jake has now changed his planting plan species layouts: grouping cedar plantings to create dense groves. This is a 100-year investment that will expand indigenous access to culturally important plants while restoring salmon habitat.



CONTINUING TO PUT ROOTS IN THE GROUND
CELEBRATING ON THE LAND



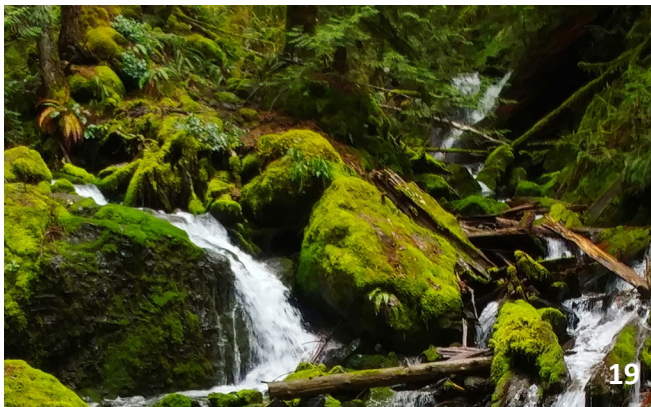
This story is your story, too. We wouldn't be here without you.

The Land Trust's 35 years of conservation work has only been possible through the relationships we have with people who care deeply about nature and the Nisqually. Thank you to our incredible community—you are the heart of our mission.

Another good friend and supporter of our work Nancy Hanna passed this year. Many of her friends and her husband Eric Slagle recognized her by making a gift to the forests, streams, and wildlife of the Nisqually. Stories were shared of her kindness, joy for life, and how her warmth touched the lives of everyone that was lucky to have known her. Nancy enjoyed nature and loved to bird watch and listen to their songs. We are always greatly honored and inspired by the generosity of these gifts and know that they will create a beautiful natural legacy.



ROOTS IN THE GROUND, left photo. The Land Trust is grateful for this effort in honor of Kathleen Newcomer's birthday, which raised funds to help plant 530 native trees and shrubs to restore the Nisqually River shoreline and its tributaries. Thank you to everyone who came out to plant and gave incredible gifts for stewardship. Happy Birthday, Kathleen!





Nisqually Land Trust

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Support a wild Nisqually! Your year-end gift will help preserve the forests, rivers, and streams of the Nisqually River Watershed. Together, we can protect this rich natural legacy for generations to come. **Our incredible community is at the heart of this work.** Please help us reach our goal of \$150,000.

You can donate online at nisquallylandtrust.org, by mail, or contact us at 360.489.3400 for more information.

Thank you.

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OUR MISSION

Founded in 1989, the Nisqually Land Trust protects and stewards lands to permanently benefit the water, fish, wildlife, and people of the Nisqually River Watershed.

Photo by Gemini Discover



Affiliated
Organization