

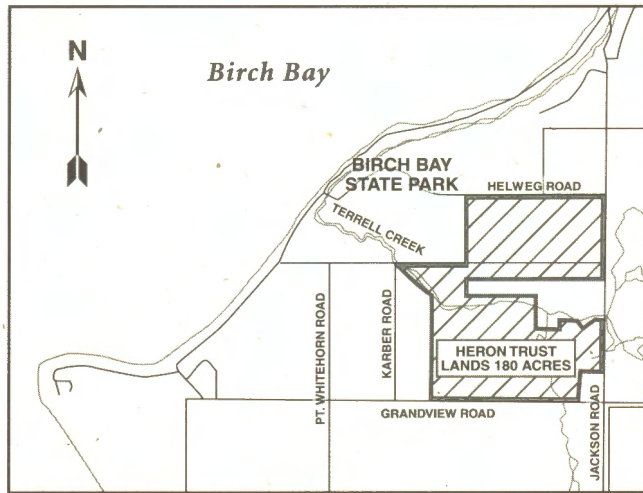


# the Steward

Volume 10 Number 1

Newsletter of the Whatcom Land Trust, Bellingham Washington

Winter/Spring 2000



## ARCO Expands Heron Heaven

*Reprinted from the Winter 1999 "Bay Neighbors" courtesy of ARCO Products Company.*

For a baby Great Blue Heron of the Birch Bay colony, the view from the nest must be spectacular. On the north and east are tall trees on the original 77 acres protected by ARCO in 1996 in a conservation easement with the Whatcom Land Trust. On the west is Birch Bay State Park, hosting huge cedar trees and rich feeding grounds along the park beach. All of this is protected for the future as a wildlife habitat.

The view to the south is no less

spectacular. It includes the meandering Terrell Creek and the marshes formed by the saltwater intrusion during high tides. There are other large forested areas, a pond full of creatures and open field areas necessary for the winter when the heron's diet changes from marine life to rodents. However, the birds had no promise that human development wouldn't continue to encroach on their heron heaven.

Now that has changed. In November the ARCO Cherry Point

Refinery added an additional 103 acres to the Land Trust easement, bringing the total in permanent protection to 180 acres. The zone encompasses all of the nesting sites and feeding grounds at Terrell Creek.

ARCO began acquiring property in the early 90's to create a buffer zone around the refinery south of the easement. Most landowners offered a chance to sell, did. Now, nearing the millennium, ARCO completed the

*continued on page 3*

## North Fork Salmon Habitat Protected

A long time goal of the Trust came to fruition late last year with the acquisition of two important North Fork Nooksack riverfront properties. With the help of the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) and a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Land Trust purchased from two Baptist Church organizations two properties, totaling 56 acres, near Boulder Creek. Under the terms of the grant, the properties must be kept in perpetual conservation status to benefit wetlands and wildlife.

The newly acquired properties are undeveloped and located in historic salmon and eagle habitat areas. A small salmon stream flows across one of the properties and into the North Fork. The other property, located across the river, contains a wetland complex and wooded island. The properties

join another parcel previously donated to the Land Trust by the Pitts-Sportsman Association. According to Land Trust Conservation Director Gordon Scott, "The Baptist properties are located in a strategic reach of the North Fork for habitat protection. In this area the river flows across a broad floodplain with shifting channels and gravel bars. This type of habitat is ideal for salmon and eagles." The properties are currently undeveloped. The Trust will be investigate the feasibility of salmon restoration.

We would like to thank Jerry Wittenmyer of the Mt. Baker Baptist Camp and Jeff Iorg of the Northwest Baptist Convention, the property owners, for their patience in concluding this transaction. We would also thank Bruce Barbour of the Department of Ecology for his help in facilitating the acquisitions. ●

## Volunteer Profile Joe O'Keefe

### Board Members

A warm welcome is extended to Betty Kiner and Rod Burton who have recently joined our Board of Directors. Two board members, Joan Casey and Chris Moench have moved on to other endeavors. Joan will be devoting her energy to many of her other causes. We wish her luck! Chris served on our board for eight years, three of those as President. We will surely miss him as he pursues new ventures. Thanks to both Joan and Chris for their work and dedication to WLT.

### Volunteers

Thanks to the following volunteers who help us out in so many ways:

#### Port Christmas Festival

Del Lowery, Barbara Davidson, Migo Biciunas, Sue Willis, Rod Burton, Carl Simpson, Alice Litton, and Bob Keller.

#### Refining the Mailing List

Aimee Trebon, Jane Raney, Susie Davis, Del and Brenda Lowery, Sue Willis, Connie Clement, Pat Karlberg, Mardi Solomon, and Darol Strieb.

#### Office Support

Robin Dexter, John Harriman, Alice Litton, Dorothy Sherwood, Sarah Baake, Jamie Emerson, Corinne and Katie, Sally Hansberry, Anne Hayden, Debbie Lafferty, Pam Went, and Wanda Boyd.

#### Membership database

Greg Brown

#### Press Releases

Hugh Fleetwood

#### Business Partners Dinner

Thank you to Jean Gorton, Charles and Phyllis Self for hosting the dinner.

#### Whatcom Places Distribution in Eastern Whatcom County

Dennis Smith

### Receive WLT News more frequently via Email!

If you have email and are interested in receiving WLT News more frequently, please share your email address with the office: [wltrust@nas.com](mailto:wltrust@nas.com). We are starting a new initiative towards communicating timely announcements of WLT events and property acquisitions to our members via email. Also check out our web site at [www.whatcomland.com](http://www.whatcomland.com) for updates.

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photo courtesy of Joe O'Keefe

*"There's community out there that you never knew existed without volunteering."*

Joe O'Keefe

Some of you may already know Joe, who distributes the *Whatcom Places* books and notecards to your store. In fact there are over 15 retailers in the greater Bellingham area that Joe frequents regularly filling book orders. Between deliveries, Joe remains mobile and enjoys the great outdoors by ocean kayaking, mountaineering, and riding his bicycle daily through Larrabee State Park. After several years of traveling extensively, and sailing on the Atlantic and the Caribbean sea, Joe became enchanted with the beauty of the Bellingham area and the San Juan Islands, and has made his home here for 11 years. A graduate of Fairhaven College, Joe designed his own major in screen writing. He now works on video and photographic productions in northwestern Washington.

While Joe provides us a great service by distributing *Whatcom Places*, WLT could use some additional help in marketing the book and notecards to new retailers. If you are a retailer interested in selling *Whatcom Places*, or a volunteer who would like to assist us in exploring new outlets for book sales, please contact us!

### Opportunities for volunteering your skills and talent to WLT include:

**Web Page Design and Update**

**Computer Networking**

**Office Support - - flexible times and projects**

**Internships-Marketing**

Phone Tina in the office at 650-9470 to discuss your interests.

*The Mission of the Whatcom Land Trust is to preserve and protect wildlife habitat, scenic, agricultural and open space lands in Whatcom County for future generations by securing interests in land and promoting land stewardship.*

Newsletter Committee Chair ..... Chris Moench

Design and Layout ..... Donated by Roderick C. Burton - Art & Design

Contributors to this issue ..... ARCO, GBA Design Group, Rand Jack,

Pat Karlberg, Bob Keller, Tina Mirabile, Gordon Scott

## Heron Heaven

continued from page 1

program for long-term protection and conservation use. ARCO Refinery Manager Glenn Butler said, "This is one of those decisions that makes everyone happy. Our employees are proud of our environmental record. They appreciate placing the welfare of our natural neighbors above the \$2 million value if we had developed the land. We've helped the Land Trust meet its goal of saving our natural heritage. I don't know if herons smile, but knowing the next thousand generations of their offspring will have a home makes me smile."

Included in the parcel is an arboretum that ARCO began last year on a former home site. Professionally designed and landscaped to mirror the five climate zones of Washington state, the site will be used after full growth as an opportunity for school children who take refinery tours. Plants are from alpine to coastal zones, including a food plot of species used by native peoples for food and medicine.

"This is a unique opportunity," said refinery External Affairs Manager Scott Walker. "In my 25 years with ARCO I have been part of many things that exemplify the culture and spirit of the company toward the environment. But the legacy this easement gives to this beautiful natural area will outlive all of us. We at Cherry Point should never forget that on our watch we made a difference." ●



# Conservation Analysis Nears Completion

Have you ever wondered where the most important habitat for salmon, eagles and elk in Whatcom County is located? Is it the rugged shoreline of Chuckanut Bay, the broad reaches of the South Fork Nooksack, or deep in the forests of the Lake Whatcom Watershed? The answers to that simple question are the purpose of a recent Land Trust project known as the GAP Analysis.

A GAP analysis compares the location of wildlife habitat and currently conserved properties, and then identifies the "gaps" in habitat protection. Using the best existing scientific research available and the power of computer mapping, the Trust has worked with a local consultant to identify regions of Whatcom County where land conservation would most benefit wildlife.

With simple questions, however, the answers tend to be more complex than we would like. A lack of fundamental scientific research on the habitat needs and locations of salmon, eagles and elk has limited our results. To offset this problem the Trust conducted a half-day workshop with local experts to tap into their local knowledge about salmon, elk and eagles. With the help of state, county, and tribal biologists, as well as local consultants, we significantly improved our knowledge of habitat use and needs.

An important result of this study is clarifying the vital role of rivers and streams have as habitat. Elk use river and stream corridors for travelling from one feeding area to another. Eagles depend on spawning salmon for food during critical winter months. And of course the Nooksack is spawning, rearing and resting habitat for several species of Pacific Salmon, including the Chinook recently listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The GAP Analysis reinforces a long held intuitive belief in the multiple benefits of river and stream conservation.

The study will be completed soon and the final results reported in future issues of *The Steward*. ●

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Rick Dubrow, First Hammer

# Maple Beach Donation - A New Pa

By Rand Jack

In 1894, the *Victoria Daily Colonist* wrote about Point Roberts: "The land at the end of the promontory is completely isolated. It is in the United States, but not of it. As a piece of territory it is really not worth considering." The *Daily Colonist* did not realize that three years earlier Patrick J. Whalen and his son Michael had settled at Point Roberts, having purchased the northeast corner of Point Roberts on Boundary Bay, which would later become known as Maple Beach. Over the next hundred years the Whalen clan would help make Point Roberts "a piece of territory ... worth considering."

Now, three great grandchildren of Patrick Whalen have donated 2000 feet of saltwater frontage on Maple Beach to the Whatcom Land Trust. The Trust will transfer the beach to Whatcom County for use as a public park.

When the tide is out, Maple Beach is hard packed sand stretching over a quarter of a mile beyond the bulkhead. It is a wonderful place for children to wade in shallow tidepools, build sand castles, fly kites and play volley ball. The incoming tide warmed by sand bars provides great swimming and water sports. The tidelands are also important marine habitat, particularly for the large heron colony on Point Roberts.



photo courtesy of the Point Roberts Historical Society

## Maple Beach in the 30's, a recreation destination

The Trust is deeply grateful for this generous gift from Michelle Pomada, Peter Whalen and Kim Pringle and her husband Gary. They write, "We and our families are happy to donate the tidelands to the Whatcom Land Trust for the County to use and maintain as a beach for safe, family fun. We are happy to make a move that ensures the tidelands' preservation in their natural state, for the enjoyment of all."

Patrick Whalen made his way to Point Roberts from County Wicklow, Ireland. Widowed, Patrick earned a living working construction with draft horses in Vancouver while his teenage son Michael established the family farm on Boundary Bay.

Michael cleared the land and built the first bulkhead along Maple Beach. The Ellet Report, filed in 1904 with the



Panoramic view of Maple Beach today.



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# ark For Point Roberts

Commissioner of the General Land Office in Washington, D.C. (found in *Point Roberts, USA* by Richard E. Clark), noted that Patrick had a two-story frame house 26 x 30 feet worth \$800 and a barn worth \$200. Though they owned 160 acres, only 12 were "cleared and under cultivation." The report observed that "there are no lawyers, doctors or preachers on the Point, which may or may not account for the peace, health and happiness, which seems to reign in this remote community."

Early on, Michael recognized the recreational potential of Maple Beach and began selling vacation lots with beach access to people from Vancouver and New Westminster. The Whalens built rental cottages, and

in 1920 opened a general store, including a soda fountain. Later an outdoor skating rink was added to the family resort. In 1951 Michael's son Pat built a harness race track at the site where the Whalen RV Park is now located. That year *The Vancouver Daily Province* reported that "next to swimming, the biggest attraction at the Bay is Pat Whalen's harness racing track, opened in the middle of July. Some 2000 people come every Sunday to bet and cheer the trotters. The races share equal honors with the summer's long stretch of good weather for boosting border crossing figures more than 20 percent. An average of 1800-2000 cars cross each Sunday..."

The race track is gone but Maple Beach remains a prime recreation site.

Roger DeSpain, director of the Whatcom County Parks Department, is delighted about the new beach property. "Increasing saltwater access has long been a County priority. Maple Beach is a tremendous recreational resource, a wonderful addition to our existing facilities at Point Roberts. It will be well worth a drive from lower Whatcom County to spend a summer day with County Parks at Point Roberts. This is the sixth county park to be established with the help of the Land Trust, a legacy for which the people of Whatcom County are deeply grateful." The Maple Beach Park will be protected by a conservation easement held by the Land Trust. ●

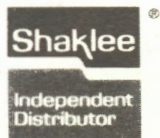


the end of the beach in the distance is the border station.

photo courtesy of Gordon Scott

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# The Bridge Project

The Land Trust conservation plan for the Canyon Lake Creek Community Forest allows for low impact public access, much like the highly successful county park at Squires Lake. In accordance with this goal, logging roads within the Forest will be converted to trails, including the road from the lake to the higher southeastern ridge of the basin. This in turn requires removal of culverts which, in times of heavy run-off, can clog and cause severe erosion or wash-outs.

It is wise to build footbridges for ease and safety to span these open creeks. But once the culverts are removed, delivery of construction materials would be difficult and expensive. Recognizing this, the Trust asked various members and business partners to "buy a bridge" during October—seven bridges to be exact. Due to immediate response, the campaign lasted but three weeks. Our appreciation to REI, Morse Distribution Co., Brett & Daugert Law Firm, the Tosco Refinery, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Hamilton, Bill Carroll, and another donor to be announced in March.

Thank you, friends. You've made a very nice statement about Canyon Lake being a "community forest." ●



photo courtesy of Rand Jack

One of the creeks crossing the Canyon Lake Community Forest trail that will be bridged.

## Business Conservation Partnerships

Throughout its history, the Trust has cooperated with various local businesses in achieving mutual conservation goals. A half-dozen different firms helped Squires Lake become a county park. ARCO has donated two conservation easements on 180 acres of its land to protect a heron colony. Trillum's eagle night roost easement provides a model of creative ecological thinking, and Crown Pacific has protected Canyon Lake Creek for two miles below its source at the lake.

With such positive cooperation in mind, we have asked various businesses in the county to help defray our general overhead and operating expenses by donating money or services, in effect becoming long-term "partners" in conservation. We are proud to be officially associated with the following firms:

- |                             |                       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| ARCO                        | Homestead Development |
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| Anvil Corporation           | Morse Distribution    |
| Bellingham Cold Storage     | Northwest Propane     |
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| Brenthaven                  | River Oak Properties  |
| Brett & Daugert             | Tosco Refinery        |
| Cascade Joinery             | Village Books         |
| Copies Now                  | Waycross Investment   |
| Harmony Motorworks          |                       |

We hope to double the number of partners this year. If your firm would like to join the program, or you know a business committed to our goals, please call Bob Keller at 360-734-9641. ●

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# Members Support Annual Fundraising Campaign

"We raised more money, spent less administratively, and maintained a base of loyal supporters," summarizes Bob Keller, Development Committee Chairperson of the successful 1999 fundraising campaign. Total funds raised were \$32,100. These donations surpassed the results of the 1998 Campaign by 14%.

Loyalty to the Trust is increasing. Thirty percent of membership renewals received this year were new members last year. Another one-third

of our renewing members have been contributing to the Land Trust for 5 years or more! The Trust continues to grow as well, with new members accounting for thirteen percent of the donations received.

The hat, book and tour incentives offered during the Annual Campaign were popular this year. This year's average donation increased from \$98 to \$128 last year. Tours to the Nettet Farm for Guardians - those who contributed \$250 or

more, will be scheduled later this year. Please contact Tina Mirabile in the office if you have any questions regarding incentives.

Gordon Scott, Conservation Director declares "The tremendous support of the Land Trust by community members strengthens our resolve to conserve the rivers, woods and open spaces of Whatcom County."

The Land Trust thanks our continuing and new members for their generous support. ●

## Congratulations To The Alliance

When Mitch Friedman, Director of Bellingham-based Northwest Ecosystem Alliance set out to raise more than \$13 million over a few months to save the Loomis Forest, it was easy to label the effort a pipe dream. Where could they find that much money to save a large stand of old trees and a few lynx in eastern Washington?

It would have been easy for the Alliance to fold its tents at any point in the campaign. It would have been easier not to try in the first place. But they did. They knew the public support was out there, they went after it, and, working overtime on raw nerve, they won a magnificent victory for land conservation in our state.

**Congratulations!**

## \$220,000 for Watershed Protection given to WLT

Through the diligent, hard work of Sherilyn Wells and the Watershed Defense Fund, now known as the Clean Water Alliance, the Land Trust has received \$220,000 to purchase land in the Lake Whatcom watershed. The money is from a settlement of a lawsuit brought by Wells and the Watershed Defense Fund, claiming Whatcom County Water District No. 10 violated the federal Clean Water Act by allowing sewage overflows into Lake Whatcom. The Whatcom Land Trust was not involved in the lawsuit.

As part of the settlement, the Watershed Defense Fund and the Water District agreed to donate the funds to the Land Trust "for purchase and permanent protection of environmentally sensitive, undeveloped land in the Lake Whatcom watershed" (Federal District Court Consent Decree). The Trust has agreed to use the \$220,000 for acquisition of land in proximity to significant streams flowing into Lake Whatcom in order to protect water quality. Scientists who have worked with the Watershed Defense Fund are working with the Land Trust to examine land for potential purchase.

President Sharon Digby said: "We appreciate the confidence shown in the Land Trust demonstrated by the Watershed Defense Fund and Water District 10, entrusting us with these settlement funds. This will be a small but significant step in the huge challenge of protecting water quality in Lake Whatcom." ●

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*New Donation - Story on Page 4*

# Public Beach Returns to Pt. Roberts



*photo courtesy of Michelle Pomada (Whalen)*

*Maple Beach in the 1970's, before private property posting.*