



Caring for People and Land

Lake Whatcom Treatment Center



photo: Rand Jack

Rick Dudley in the mature forest on Treatment Center property.

The Lake Whatcom Residential and Treatment Center is a remarkable organization. Under the resourceful direction of Rick Dudley, the non-profit Treatment Center provides mental health services to the seriously mentally ill. It cares for 350 people, about half of whom are from Whatcom County. Sixty-seven patients stay at the Agate Bay residential facility. Others, who can be more independent, live in five small apartment buildings in Bellingham owned by the Treatment Center. For many years the Treatment Center has provided this extraordinary public service to the seriously mentally ill and the community of Northwest Washington.

The Treatment Center has recently granted to the Land Trust a conservation easement protecting a strategically located seventy-five acres surrounding its Agate Bay facil-

ity in the Lake Whatcom Watershed. The property is adorned with mature forests, streams and sandstone caves.

To obtain funding from a mental health bond issue, the Treatment Center (then the Blue Canyon Foundation) signed an agreement in 1978 with Whatcom County. The County supplied about one third of the money to build the million-dollar Agate Bay facility and the Treatment Center borrowed the rest. Under the fifty-year agreement, the Treatment Center took full responsibility for constructing, operating and maintaining the facility, but Whatcom county retained an option to purchase the facility and surrounding two and a half acres for one dollar in 2028. To buffer its mental health operations, the Treatment Center subsequently expanded its property from the original two and a half acres to the current seventy-five acres.

Last year Rick Dudley approached the Land Trust about the possibility of a conservation easement on the Treatment Center property. In the course of conversations, this agreement with the County surfaced.

The County's 2028 purchase option was a concern to the Treatment Center's volunteer board of directors.

"This is a no brainer. It supports the vital work of the Treatment Center and protects the watershed—at no cost to the County."

— County Executive Pete Kremen

Given the invaluable public service rendered by the Treatment Center and the County's interest in protecting the Lake Whatcom Watershed, the Land Trust approached the County about participating in a three-way transaction. Under our proposal, the county would give up its 2028 purchase option in return for the Treatment Center granting a conservation easement to the Land Trust.

County Executive Pete Kremen's reaction was quick and

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Joseph Peabody

“Joe is very reliable and consistent. He has volunteered in many diverse ways. He’s been a big help to me.”

— Bob Keller, chair, WLT Development Committee



photo courtesy of Joe Peabody

Joe Peabody came to Whatcom County from Rapid City, South Dakota in 1998 to attend Whatcom Community College. It was at WCC that he heard of an opportunity to volunteer at the Whatcom Land Trust. Joe signed on right away, working with Board member Bob Keller with outreach and fundraising events.

Two years later Joe transferred to Western Washington University as a junior. He continues to volunteer with WLT on a regular basis, including regularly visiting stores that sell our book, *Whatcom Places*, to be sure their inventory was adequate.

In the fall of 2002 Joe broadened his commitment to the Land Trust by working at the office, and helping with

such events as the recent forums on faith and stewardship. Joe has become a member of the Outreach Committee, and you may see him staffing the display at places like the Farmers’ Market. Joe will also be helping with the Great Outdoors Auction this year taking pictures, and helping out during the day of the event.

Joe is an example of volunteers who make the Land Trust such a successful organization. His ongoing dedication, and his willingness to do whatever needs doing make him a valuable asset. We hope to have his help for years to come.

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 Editorial Team Carl Batchelor, Rod Burton, Katherine Freimund

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Contributors Katherine Freimund, Rand Jack, Bob Keller, Katie Knight, Daniél Morgan, Gordon Scott

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Keller and Karlberg Easement

WLT board member Bob Keller and his wife Pat Karlberg have signed their fourth conservation easement with the Skagit Land Trust. The easements protect wildlife habitat on private land east of Marblemount near North Cascades National Park. The 44-acre property, containing many species of birds, fish, mammals and trees, has 3,900 feet of frontage on the Cascade River.

Use of the Keller/Karlberg Kabin can be bid on at the WLT Great Outdoor Auction, June 7th at Semiahmoo Resort.

Thanks to Business Partners

Between January and April of this year, these Business Partners have contributed to the Trust:

- BP Cherry Point Refinery**
- Bellingham Cold Storage**
- The Barkley Group**
- ConocoPhillips**
- Louis Auto Glass**
- Pacific Surveying & Engineering, Inc.**
- Ross McClure Cornwall, Architects**
- Skagit State Bank**
- Stewart + King Partnership**

These organizations, and many others, are partners in conservation by donating money or services to help defray our operating expenses. Their contributions allow WLT to spend more on land acquisition and conservation.

Erika Stroebel joins Whatcom Land Trust Board of Directors

Born in Bellingham, Erika received her undergraduate degree in 1993 from Huxley College. Erika left the area for her Master of Science degree in Applied Ecology and Conservation Biology from Frostburg State University in Maryland (1997). She has been on the Board of the Whatcom Center for Early Learning for the past three years, and is a Planner in the Water Resources Division of the Whatcom County Public Works Department.

Erika brings her educational background to the Board, as well as her professional experience in watershed management and water resource protection. “We have an incredible array of natural resources in Whatcom County, and I look forward to being part of a group that helps protect some of these special areas for future generations to enjoy.” She likes to hike, play and coach soccer, and be in the outdoors.

New Acquisition Helps South Fork Chinook Habitat

Salmon love big trees, especially when they shade streams and keep water temperatures cool. Salmon also like it when big trees fall into rivers and make good hiding places for young fish. For thousands of years before humans showed up in Whatcom County, salmon co-evolved with big trees in old growth forests alongside our rivers and streams. This year in January, with the help of a state grant, Whatcom Land Trust acquired 76 acres of riverfront forest along the South Fork Nooksack near Saxon.

The Land Trust purchased three parcels of forestland along the river from the Pt. Blakely Tree Farms LLC as part of a Salmon Recovery Grant. The

newly acquired properties protect about 1.5 miles of riparian forest: mature conifers, Douglas fir, cedar and hemlock. Large cottonwood, maple and alder are clustered on lower bottomland areas. Local residents note that elk are often seen in the woods, resting and feeding. In a few places on the newly acquired lands the Lummi Nation, our partner in the project, will plant additional conifers to augment forest habitat.

To date, the Land Trust has helped protect 700 acres of salmon habitat along the South Fork, encompassing nearly 6 miles of riverfront between Acme and Skookum Creek. These forest lands are set like brilliant green

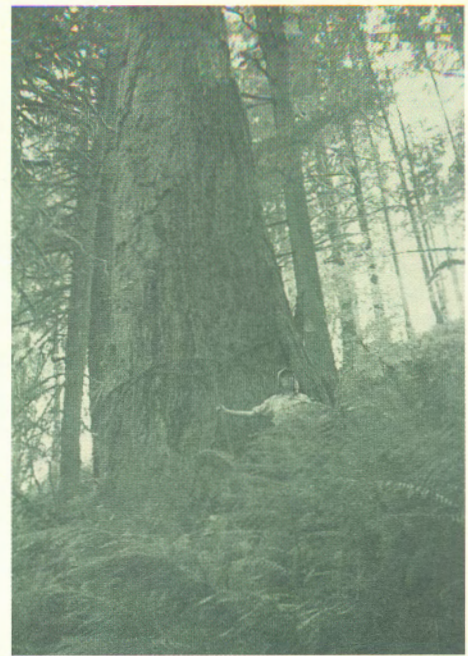


photo: Gordon Scott

Old growth snag on Pt. Blakely tract is an indication of the size of the next forest.

diamonds along the silver necklace of the South Fork.

Lake Whatcom Treatment Center continued from page 1

to the point. "This is a no brainer. It supports the vital work of the Treatment Center and protects the watershed—at no cost to the County." (The right to purchase a then fifty-year-old building in twenty-five years has virtually no present value.) In January, the County Council unanimously approved the transaction. The new agreement leaves the county with a right of first refusal at fair market value on the entire seventy-five acres, subject to the conservation easement and only if the Treatment center stops providing social and mental health services.

One of the side benefits of this transaction was our opportunity to work with Rick Dudley and his dedicated board. Rick is a committed environmentalist whose life reflects his convictions. However, several on the board might not label

themselves "environmentalists." The board clearly understood its primary obligation to protect the right of the Treatment Center to use its property to serve the mentally ill. This obligation guided the drafting of the conservation easement. At the same time, under Rick's leadership, the board recognized the importance of protecting the watershed. At a meeting where the board unanimously approved the deal, one member reported that he had not slept much the night before. "I wrestled with this thing one way and then the other all night. Then, when I woke up this morning, I knew what was right."

What was right was to add another good deed to the exemplary community service of this wonderful group of people and the remarkable organization they guide.

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Ed Stone and Michelle Schraeder Donate Valuable Conservation Easement

If you are a duck, a fish, or a salamander in central Whatcom County you'll want to reserve a place at Ed Stone and Michelle Schraeder's beautifully restored habitat for wildlife along Ten Mile Creek. Not only would you find 25 acres of wetlands, ponds, meandering streams and quiet forests, you can rest assured that this native habitat area will remain forever wild. That's because Ed and Michelle donated a perpetual conservation easement over their 25-acre property to Whatcom Land Trust in December 2002.

Throughout its meandering way Ten Mile Creek is receiving a habitat re-make thanks to the help of many caring landowners. Nowhere is this effort more evident than on Ed and Michelle's place. Just a couple of years ago Ten Mile Creek was an arrow-straight, grass-choked ditch. With the help of the Whatcom Conservation District Ten Mile Creek now wends and bends across the newly conserved property, flowing through a large rearing pond before continuing its travels towards the Nooksack. Thousands of young trees and shrubs have been planted



photo: Gordon Scott

Restoration in process at salmon rearing pond on Stone/Schraeder property.

along the banks of the newly formed channel to give shade to salmon that return each year to the property. The salmon will also find several large log-jams placed in the creek to give their small fry protection from heron, kingfishers and other natural predators.

Thanks to Michelle and Ed's vision of a healthy Ten Mile Creek the birds, fish and mammals of central

Whatcom County will find a small refuge in our growing community. This should come as no surprise really, since Michelle and Ed are local animal doctors and the caring owners of Mountain Veterinary Hospital on the Mt. Baker Highway. The birds, fishes wildlife and people of Whatcom County say "thank you."



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Success Brings New Demands

15 years of organizational growth without professional help in fundraising, the obligation to manage nearly 50 parcels of land, pay for office space and staff, and a desire to increase our membership, led the Development Committee to recommend creating a full-time position devoted to fundraising and community relations. To that end we hired Trish Navarre in the late summer of 2001. We were fortunate in finding a person considered one of the best local experts in this business.

Despite an economic downturn following 9/11, Trish has increased our Business Partners from 33 firms to more than 50. Last year's Great Outdoors Auction, which she managed, increased the previous year's net income by 50%. After ten months with Trish on the job, our annual budget finished

\$30,000 in the black—the basic bottom line test for any development officer (this does not count a \$75,000 bequest).

In the process she brought in new, enthusiastic volunteers and built good will in the community. And despite that bottom line dollar sign, fundraising is mainly about meeting and liking other people. In this Trish excels. So it is with regret we report that Trish resigned from the Trust in April in order to accept a position with the North Cascades Institute. Our consolation is that, ultimately, NCI and WLT share the same goal: to inspire a sense of place while transforming our society's relationship with forests, rivers, topsoil, animals, wetlands, and the magnificent North American continent. We wish her well.

Stories Build Sense of Place

Remember the fun and excitement of being held spellbound by a really great story? Members of the Bellingham Storytellers Guild recreated this kind of experience for audiences in storytelling events in support of the Whatcom Land Trust.

The stories, told at the Ferndale Library and the Bellingham Senior Center, were connected by themes of a sense of place and an appreciation for the natural heritage of our community.

In Ferndale the teller was Marie Honrud. Marie Honrud's grandparents homesteaded in Whatcom County and both sides of her family are listed in the early History of Whatcom County. Her great-great grandfather was a store-keeper in the early days of Ferndale and ran the Mayfield Mercantile.

Marie's stories dealt with local history. She told about how her grandmother first came to Ferndale and about Phoebe Judson, the mother of Lynden. She also told about Blanket Bill Jarmon and ended with a tale of Dirty Dan Harris and a grand piano.

Brian Lee Flowers wove the enchantment for the audience at the Bellingham Senior Center. His stories ranged from his early memories of growing up the Whatcom County to a cautionary tale about adopting a grizzly bear named Oscar.

Land Trust volunteer board member Rod Burton was on hand during the storytelling events to answer questions about the Trust. The events also coincided with the placement of the Land Trust display at the locations.



photo courtesy of Brian Lee Flowers

Brian Flowers weaves a tale.

The most recent event happened as the *Steward* was in production. On Tuesday, May 13 at 12:30 Marie Honrud told her stories of early settlement. The storytelling was at the Lynden Community Center

We would like to thank the Bellingham Storytellers Guild for their support of the mission of the Whatcom Land Trust. Their stories help build stewardship and a sense of place in the people of Whatcom County.

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Craver Cleanup Continues

In the spring of 1999, Ernest Craver gifted 105 acres to the Land Trust to protect his families' land from subdivision and development. Under agreement with the Land Trust, Ernie lived out his remaining years on this land until his death last August.

While Ernie was still alive, we began to restore the prime forest habitat located on the gently rolling upland that comprises his property. By 2000, the Land Trust had overseen the planting of 20,000 seedlings of Douglas fir, Western Red cedar, and Western Hemlock. In 2002, a Land Trust volunteer removed 87 vehicles from the property.

The clean-up

With Ernie's death, WLT began restoring the portion of the property where he lived, to its natural state. This clean-up project is a first for the Land Trust. Thanks to some key individuals, a laundry list of chores has been accomplished.

Carl Batchelor, a WLT board member, arranged to have several abandoned vehicles removed and contributed to the hands-on clean-up effort that began this winter. Mark Beckwith of Beacon Tire helped us remove some 300 tires from the property with a free-haul donation; Sanitary Services Company donated \$3,000 worth of dumpster hauls; and Z-Recyclers hauled several metal recycling dumpsters, free of charge.

Who's filling the dumpsters?

A Washington Conservation Corps crew led by Frank Corey of the Department of Ecology has been responsible for the hands-on labor necessary to restore Ernie Craver's property to its natural state. The WCC crew is committed to getting this property cleaned up. On rainy days this winter, they showed

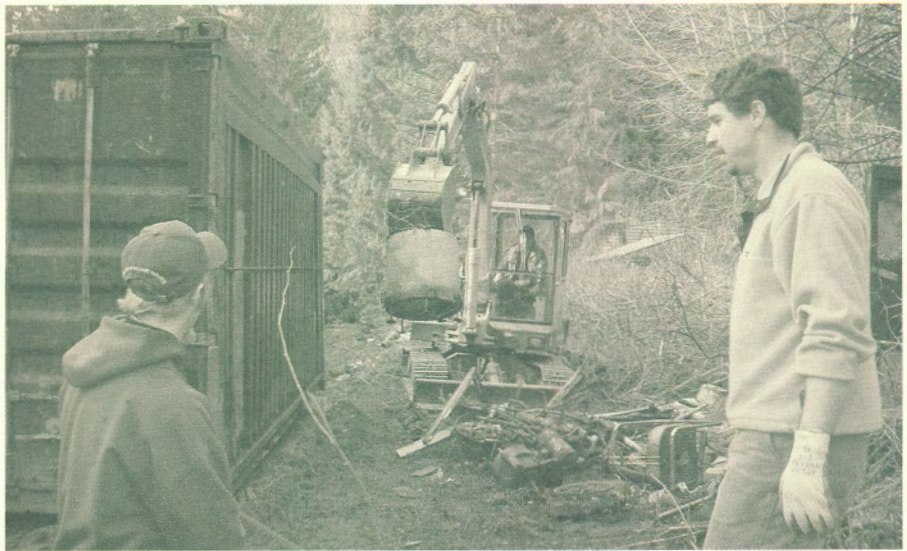


photo: Katie Knight

WCC crew member Erik Logsdon-Hughes and crew chief Frank Corey watch Land Trust volunteer, Dennis Vander Yacht, load the metal recycling dumpster.

up ready to work, filling dumpsters, separating garbage, recycling metal and wood, and sorting out any hazardous materials. The crew also loaded all 300+ tires onto trucks and helped move some 60+ appliances out of the woods.

Loading the appliances into the metal dumpster took the help of Dennis Vander Yacht and his excavator. Denny happened upon the Craver site one day when he came to help a friend remove an abandoned vehicle off the property. Denny had no idea what he was getting himself into when he agreed to help us load appliances into the metal dumpster. We sat back, amazed, to witness the efficiency and grace of his machine compared to our slow and clumsy maneuvering of the appliances.

Denny returned to help us with the "big stuff," donating 50% of his labor and time. What a gift! With his excavator, Denny has demolished three of the four trailers, crushed a burned up bus that was on the property, and loaded several vehicle and trailer frames. Tim Lockerby came out with his acetylene torch to donate his services, cutting up large metal frames too big for Denny to move.

Restoring the land to its natural state

The clean-up phase of the restoration is nearly complete and a forest will soon cover the land where Ernie once lived. The effort has been daunting, but on a recent day as the WCC crew completed handpicking a large area where two trailers once stood, an eagle flew overhead. Frank called out with a smile, "wildlife returns."

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Great Outdoors Auction

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and exciting presentations for your private parties, and celebrity dinner guests. And let's not forget the llama hike and art excursion!

Out of a desire to foster connections throughout Whatcom County, we will hold our 3rd annual auction in Blaine, at Resort Semiahmoo. A quick twenty-minute drive from downtown Bellingham, Resort Semiahmoo features a spacious ballroom, fantastic catering and a relaxing atmosphere. In addition to fresh salads, three entrée choices and fine wines from Salishan Vineyards and the Fairhaven Market, dinner will be accentuated by an auction of irresistible desert delights from kitchens throughout the county.

The most wonderful thing about the Whatcom Land Trust's annual auction is not the delicious food, the beautiful location or even the auction items. The most wonderful thing about this special event is the *people*. The Great Outdoors Auction is a place for our members to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

We hope to make the trip to Semiahmoo for the auction as convenient as possible. With rooms at the resort available at a special rate and complementary shuttle service from Bellingham provided by Bellair Charters, we hope you find it a trip worth making.

For more information visit our website at www.whatcomlandtrust.org or call our office at 360-650-9470.

From Bellingham to Bar Harbor, Maine—by Bike!

The Whatcom Land Trust will sponsor a 3,500 mile tandem bike trip across the country by John and Stacie Mathews of Bellingham. Our members and supporters will pledge pennies, nickels and dimes per mile, with all proceeds coming to the Trust as Stacie and John pedal across the USA, ocean to ocean. Everyone can join this amazing, adventurous couple in spirit—and effortlessly promote land conservation at the same time.

Watch for details!

Bellingham Traverse: Sweat for Stewardship

This year's Traverse will be held Saturday, September 13, 2003. The race starts at the Farmers' Market. There are six legs: a 6-mile run, 6 miles of mountain biking, 16 miles of road biking, a 2.5-mile trail run, a 6-mile sea kayak paddle, and a 2-mile trek. The race finishes in front of Boundary Bay Brewery. Individuals, tandems, and teams may compete, with 75% of the money raised by each team going to the "spawnsor" (a local environmental organization). Last year's race netted over \$900 for the Whatcom Land Trust as a designated "spawnsor."

The Land Trust will also participate in the Eco-Expo, a fair of local environmental organizations, which is held near the finish as the race is occurring.

Online registration for the Traverse begins June 1, 2003. People interested in participating on a Land Trust team should contact Katie Knight at 650-9470.

Wood Stone Hosted Event Honoring Our Major Donors and Supporters

This year's event to honor our Business Partners, major donors, and long-time supporters was moderated by Chuck Robinson at Wood Stone on Friday, April 25. The film *Creek Story* was presented, with local filmmakers Dan Hamill and Sukhi Sanghera on hand to answer questions after the showing. Executive Chef Frank Milward graced the guests with hors d'oeuvres and desserts made in Wood Stone ovens. Tony's donated coffees and teas, and Zemel's Foods donated food for the event. It was a fun evening. Thanks to all who attended!

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98 Central Ave.
Bellingham, WA 98225

Phone: 360-650-9470

Fax: 360-650-0495

E-mail:

info@whatcomlandtrust.org

website:

<http://www.whatcomlandtrust.org>



Hello to the Great Outdoors



June 7, 2003 marks the date of our third annual Great year's auction is shaping up to be a memorable event on all of last year's auction, which raised over \$40,000 for land County, we face the challenge of making this year's event

There are many auctions in Bellingham, but no other array of unusual items as the Great Outdoors Auction. Where else can you bid on a tour of the Mount St. Helens blast zone, explore Germany's Black Forest, convert your vehicle into a lean, green biodiesel machine, or learn how to read the subtle signs of the forest with internationally know tracker Joel Hardin?

Some of the other experiences that will be auctioned off include: guided hiking, backpacking, and kayaking trips by local authors and land activists; gourmet dinners prepared by gracious hosts at Wood Stone Corporation and aboard the *Tahoma*; talented musicians

Outdoors Auction. This accounts. With the success conservation in Whatcom even more spectacular.

event can boast such an