



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

PROTECT | STEWARD | IMAGINE



LETTER FROM

THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Following the hugely successful year of 2018 when Whatcom Land Trust protected 3,339-acres with projects like Skookum Creek and Galbraith Mountain, 2019 was focused on smaller acquisitions, stewardship of our protected lands and on a big leadership transition.

After giving the Board nine months' notice, our beloved Executive Director, Rich Bowers retired

in February and our long-time Conservation Director, Gabe Epperson, was hired as his successor. In his conservation role Gabe led the effort to define the Trust's conservation vision for the future. He also led successful projects to protect more than twenty properties including California Creek, Galbraith and Skookum Creek. His even-tempered and collaborative leadership style make him a great fit for our organization. With Gabe's leadership the Board is looking forward to continued land protection achievements, to building a Stewardship Reserve Fund that will guarantee a source of funding for stewardship into the decades ahead and to the continued coalescing of our staff, Board and volunteers into a gracefully coordinated team to implement our community's vision for a sustainable future.

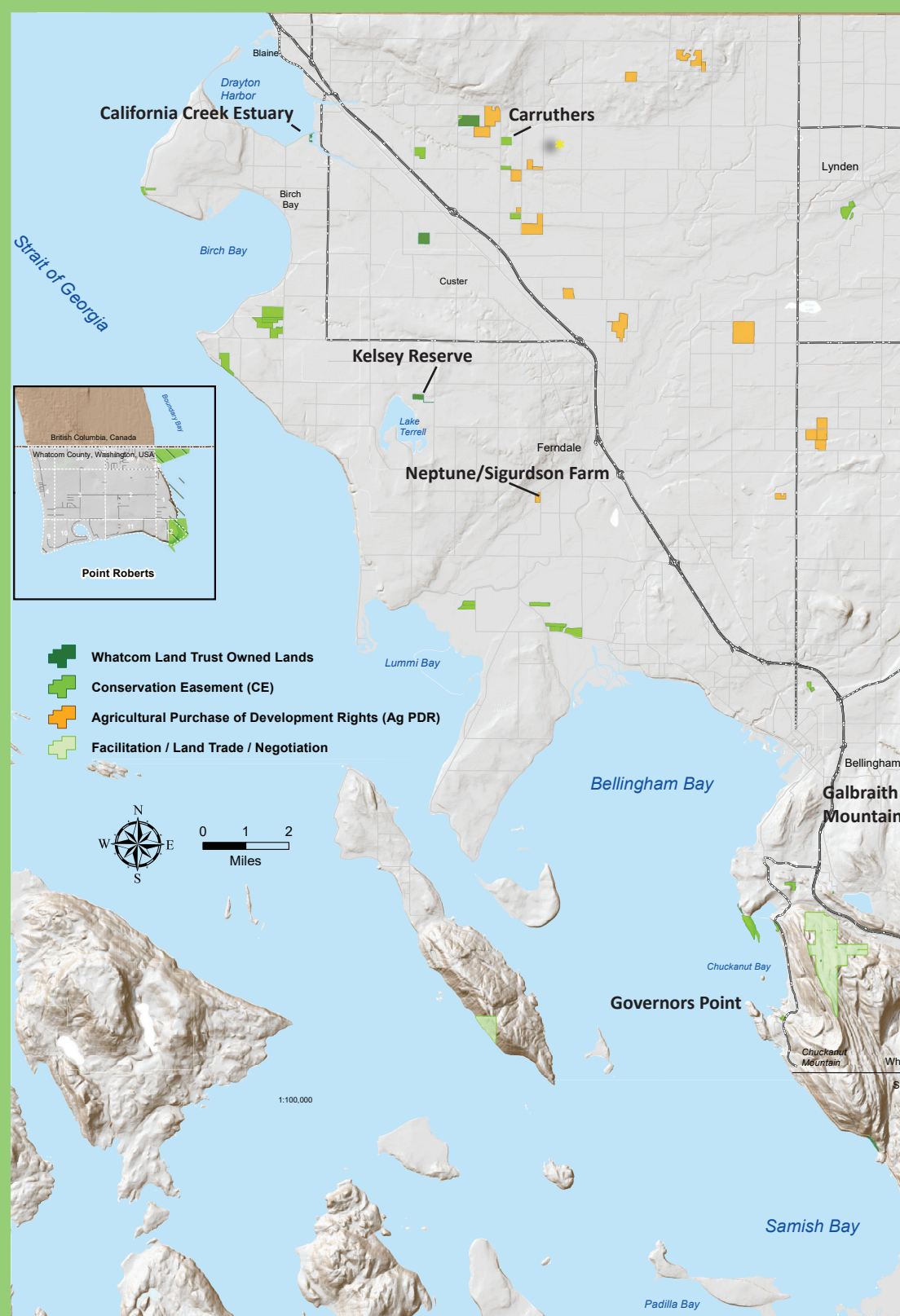
Gabe began his tenure as Executive Director on February 1, 2020 and almost immediately was faced with the challenge of leading in this strange and anxious time of COVID-19.

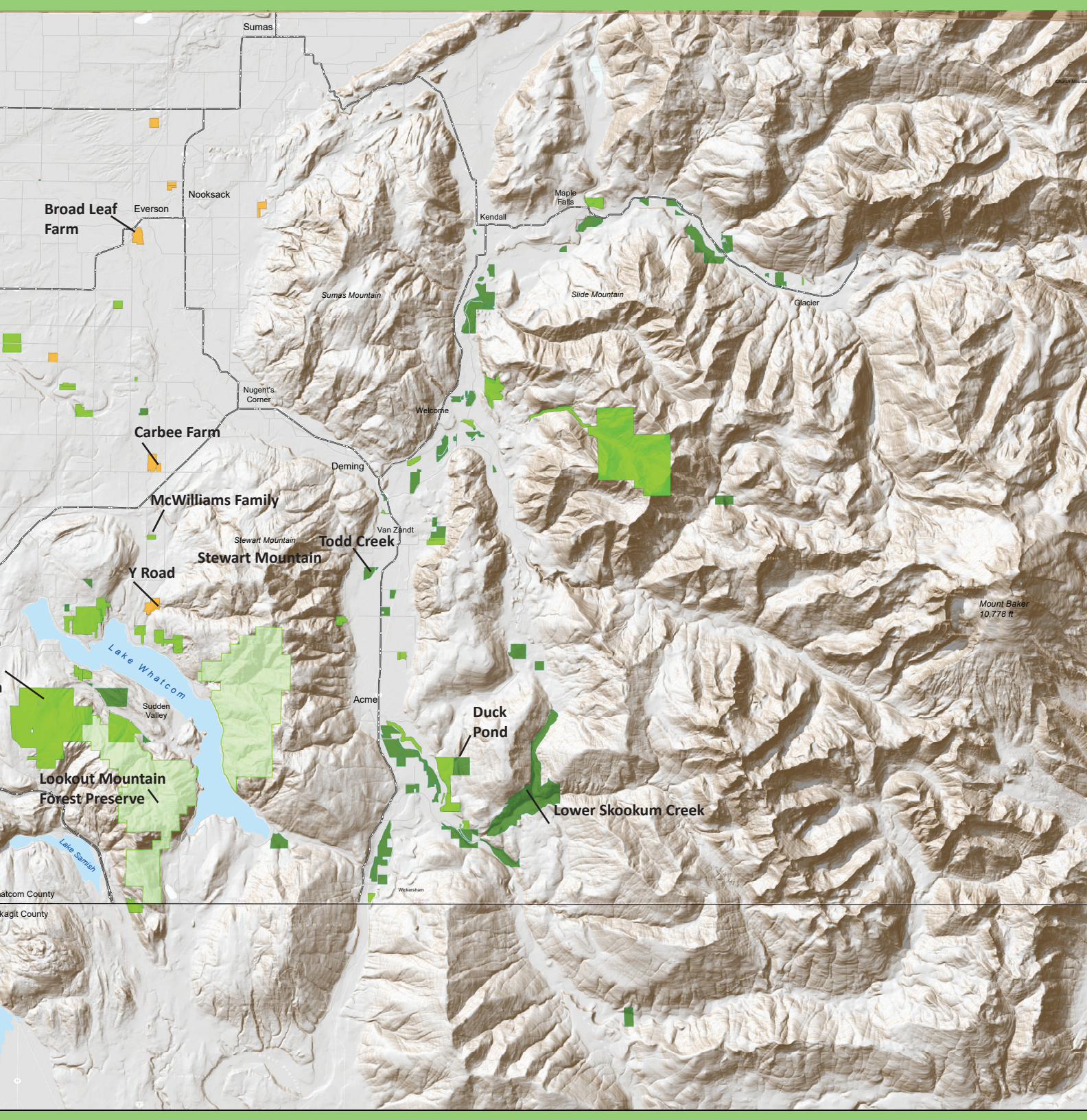
We are fortunate to have Gabe's thoughtful, collaborative pragmatism at the helm in these uncharted waters. The implications of this crisis for your Land Trust are significant. Working together, the Board, Gabe and staff will safeguard the resiliency and sustainability of the Trust and honor our core commitments to the lands we hold. We must maintain the trust and good will of our community. We will remain responsive to conservation opportunities as they arise.

Working in collaboration with you, our partners in government, the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, and many businesses, your Trust has set aside more than 24,000 acres of parks and protected forests, river floodplain, stream corridor, saltwater shoreline and rich farmland. What we have created is enduring and important to so many in this precarious season. Together we have conserved land to which we can return again and again to be immersed in beauty, to be nourished in body and to be filled in spirit now and for generations to come.

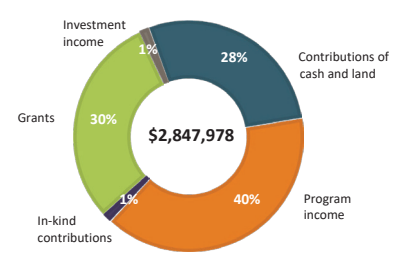
We look forward to working with each of you to conserve, protect and steward our shared natural heritage.

Chris Moench, President Board of Directors and Gabe Epperson, Executive Director

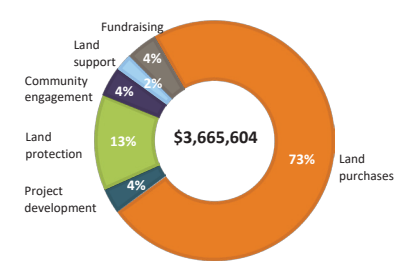




SOURCES OF FUNDS



USES OF FUNDS



Statement of Activities sources and uses of funds represent the fiscal year ending June 2019. This financial information is excerpted from Whatcom Land Trust's audited financial statements and includes property acquisitions and transfers completed by June 30, 2019. To obtain a copy of the complete audit by Bellingham public accounting firm Larson Gross PLLC, please contact Whatcom Land Trust at 360-650-9470.



Washington Conservation Corps staff Rose Richardson and Stewardship Director Jenn Mackey inspect a washed up cedar tree at Todd Creek.



Coho fry in Todd Creek

TODD CREEK: PROTECTING WATER FOR THE FUTURE

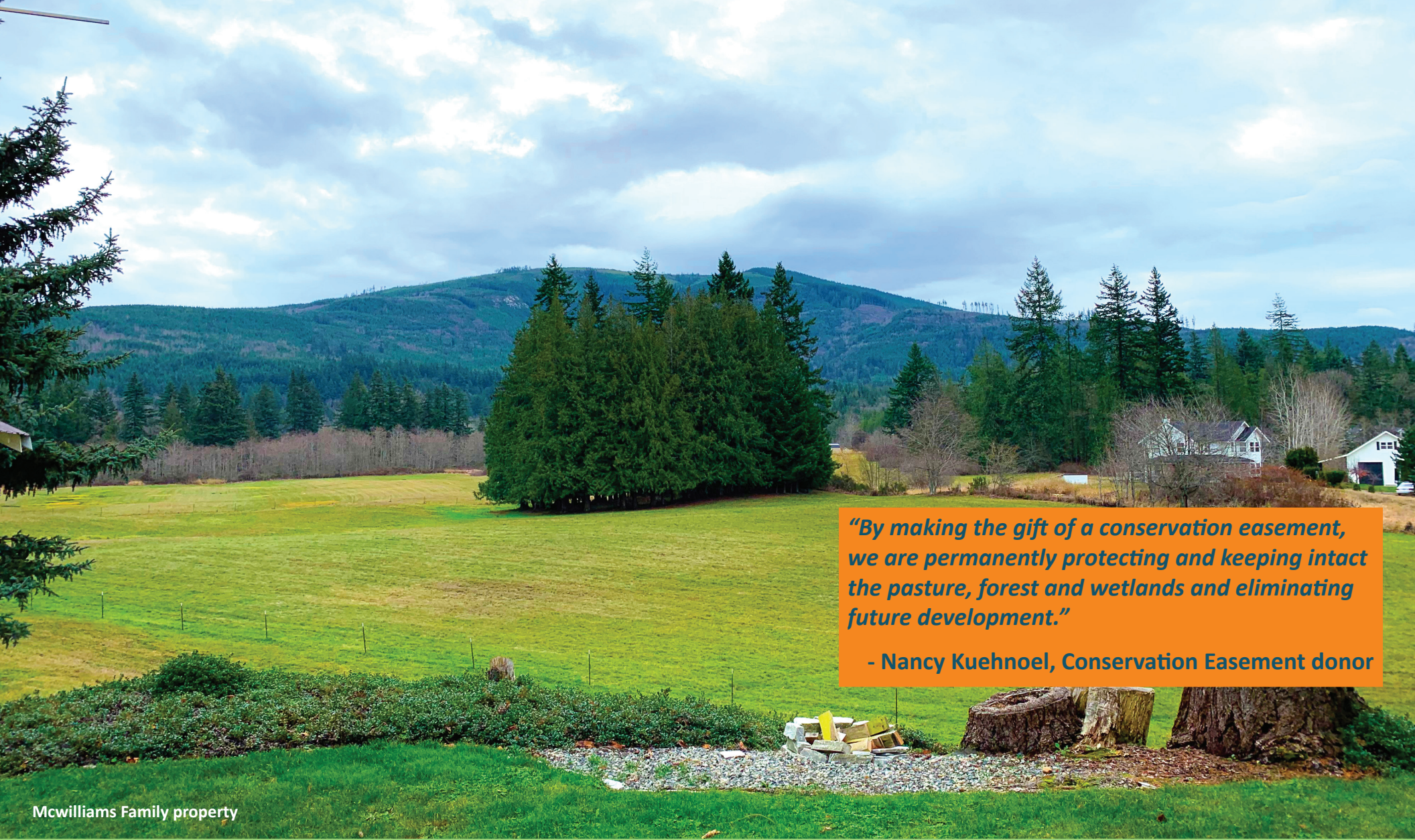
Whatcom Land Trust's new 59-acre property protects a section of Todd Creek, one of many South Fork Nooksack River tributaries that run east from Stewart Mountain through steep-sloped forests, wetlands, farms and rural properties. This 2019 acquisition near Van Zandt is a patchwork of forests, pastures, and wetlands bisected by the salmon-bearing Todd Creek, and is part of the Land Trust's strategy to connect key landscapes to maintain the integrity of their water resources. The impact of this strategy is perhaps most evident in the South Fork Valley, where wild fluctuations – from seasonal flooding to summer drought – stress watershed health. This long-awaited purchase is a key piece of the property puzzle the Land Trust is growing to safeguard future health in the South Fork Nooksack, which is home to all five Pacific salmon species, including the federally-listed Chinook, and a vital shared resource for farmers and the rural community. In the coming year, Whatcom Land Trust will be partnering with the Nooksack Indian Tribe to remove invasive plants and restore Todd Creek, including volunteer work parties for community members.



Dakota Creek flowing through the Carruthers property

CARRUTHERS EASEMENT

Fulfilling a prospective donor's last wish can be bittersweet. Bob Carruthers turned to Whatcom Land Trust to protect the natural value of his 30-acre farm property in Custer, which includes a portion of Dakota Creek, beautiful views of Mount Baker, horses and pasture land. In addition to the conservation easement, the Trust helped to facilitate a retained life estate and caretaker before Bob's passing, fulfilling a wish to protect his animals during their lifetime and his land in perpetuity. Eventually, the estate gift will transfer to the Land Trust. In the meantime, we will protect the riparian areas for water quality and quantity with a goal to improve the Drayton Harbor Watershed which lies downstream.



“By making the gift of a conservation easement, we are permanently protecting and keeping intact the pasture, forest and wetlands and eliminating future development.”

- Nancy Kuehnoel, Conservation Easement donor

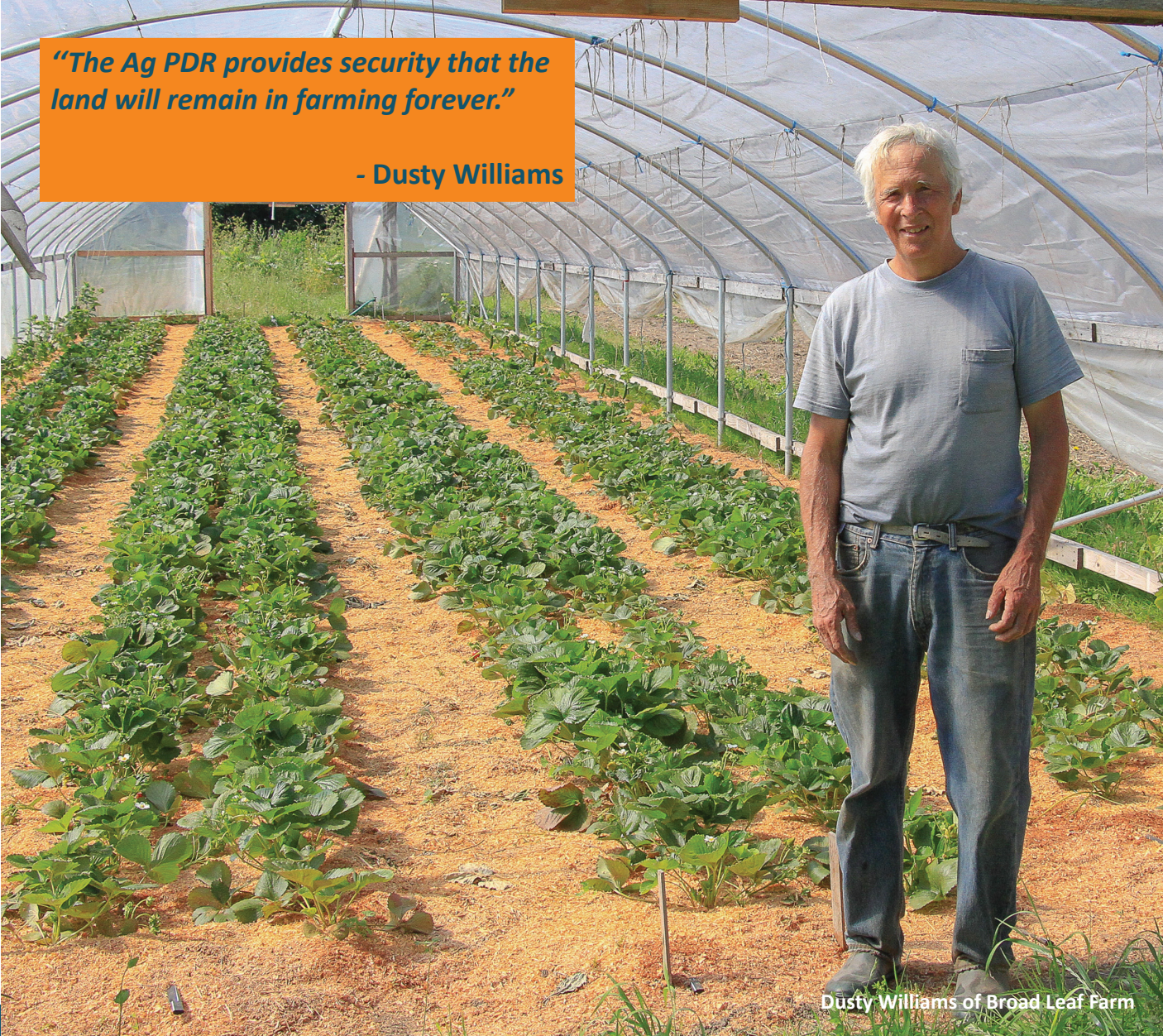
McWilliams Family property

**MCWILLIAMS EASEMENT:
CONSERVING RURAL
CHARACTER**

Nancy Kuehnoel wanted to make a gift of a lifetime – a gift honoring the lifetime of her grandparents, Elsie and Charley McWilliams. Nancy’s great-grandfather and Charley’s father, Walter J. McWilliams, purchased the property in 1902 and gave the 19.5-acre farm between Stewart and Squalicum Mountains to his only son. The property passed through the generations. For many years, Nancy and her family have cared for and maintained the land – its open pasture, forest and wetlands – while witnessing the rural character of its surrounding landscape slowly give way to development. Nancy and her husband, Mark Proulx, sought out Whatcom Land Trust and learned that they could permanently protect the conservation value and rural character of the property. “If we ever decide to sell the property, the easement keeps alive the conservation values my family worked so hard to preserve.” said Nancy.

“The Ag PDR provides security that the land will remain in farming forever.”

- Dusty Williams



Dusty Williams of Broad Leaf Farm

BROAD LEAF FARM

Owner Dusty Williams added a third easement this year to his 65.5-acre farm which borders the main stem of the Nooksack River in Everson. Dusty is well known for cultivating a diverse array of organic crops, installing a solar array that generates 25% of farm energy needs, and leasing land to and mentoring the next generation of farmers.

CARBEE FARM

73-acre dairy farm east of Bellingham owned and operated by the Harold and Ellen Carbee family. A portion of salmon-bearing Anderson Creek borders its open pastures and forested wetlands. Conservation efforts focus on balancing the health of the creek, pastureland and forest with maintaining a thriving dairy business.

NEPTUNE/ SIGURDSON OPEN SPACE

15-acre agricultural open space in Ferndale, historically in corn production, is not currently in active cultivation. The Ag PDR removes three development rights and preserves the property's agricultural value and potential in perpetuity.

Y ROAD FORESTRY EASEMENT

88-acre recreation land bordering Lake Whatcom Park, abundant with multi-use trails popular with equestrians. Historically managed for active forestry and recently purchased by the Department of Natural Resources, a forestry easement now connects recreational access to Stewart Mountain while conservation efforts aim to protect and improve the health of salmon-bearing Olson Creek riparian zone and tributary streams.

FARM AND FORESTRY EASEMENTS

Whatcom Land Trust added four easements to its portfolio in 2019, for a total of over 1,700 acres of working lands protected in perpetuity since our start in the 1980s. Since 2002 the Trust has managed Whatcom County's Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights (Ag PDR) program in partnership with private landowners and other resource and forestry managers. The Ag PDR program provides one-time compensation to farmers and foresters for the value of the property's development potential. In exchange property owners benefit from more working capital, more opportunities for the next generation of farmers and foresters, and a robust, diverse, and well-supported local farm economy. The community benefits from the permanent value of farmland and forests, their soils and water resources, the preservation of our agricultural heritage and way of life, and availability of local food grown by local farmers.

List of attendees and affiliations.

Photo from Left to right:

Ted Morris – Director, Blaine-Birch Bay Park and Recreation District 2

Shelli Moore – Commissioner, Blaine-Birch Bay Park and Recreation District 2

Luanne Van Werven – WA State Representative, 42nd District

Barry Wenger – Rose Foundation Puget Sound Stewardship & Mitigation Fund Advisory Committee Member

Caitlin Guthrie – Conservation Fund

Kaylee Galloway – Community Liaison, Mt Vernon office for U.S. Congresswomen Susan DelBene

Rich Bowers – Executive Director, Whatcom Land Trust

Sharon Shewmake – WA State Representative, 42nd District

Nick Norton – Executive Director, Washington Association of Land Trusts

Jennifer Mackey – Stewardship Director, Whatcom Land Trust

Michael Penuelas – Legislative Assistant for Sharon Shewmake

Betsy Robblee – Outreach and Policy Manager, Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition

Gabe Epperson – Conservation Director, Whatcom Land Trust



August 2019 Legislative Tour to learn about the benefits of the future California Creek Estuary Park.

**CALIFORNIA CREEK ESTUARY:
PREPARING FOR A PARK**

In 2019 the Blaine-Birch Bay community’s dream of a new marine park came closer to becoming reality, thanks to Whatcom Land Trust, Blaine-Birch Bay Park and Recreation District #2 (BBPRD2), and support from our Washington State congressional delegation. Since the initial land purchase in June 2017 and second adjacent parcel purchase in December 2018, the Land Trust has completed significant salmon habitat restoration, invasive species removal, and other improvements on 12.5 acres of lower California Creek in partnership with Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, and Whatcom Conservation District, in part with a grant from the Rose Foundation’s Stewardship & Mitigation Fund and USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service Funding. Concurrently, BBPRD2 applied for and was awarded two grants from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office to assist in park infrastructure and public access, including a boat launch, parking, restrooms, and trails. In recognition, BBPRD2 and the Trust co-hosted a property tour for legislators and funders in August. Now, this beautiful and ecologically important place where people meet nature is permanently protected, and closer to beginning the next phase of its life as BBPRD2’s California Creek Estuary Park.



Volunteer Land Steward Vic Knox looks out over lower Skookum Creek during a Field Friday event.

IMPACTS

Total Acres Protected = **24,413**

Total Conservation Easements = **93 properties totaling 9,275 acres**

Total Land Trust Owned = **93 properties totaling 4,275 acres**

Recorded Volunteer Hours for 2019= **5,551.75**

Total Number of Volunteer Land Stewards = **120**

Total Number of Volunteers = **770**

Native Trees and Shrubs Planted in 2019= **10,431**

Invasive Species Removed in 2019= **4,131 square feet**

If you would like to learn more about our Field Fridays, Work Parties, Volunteer Land Steward Program, or other volunteer opportunities, visit our website at: whatcomlandtrust.org



Alcoa employees and families get involved at the Trust's Kelsey Reserve.

“Partnering with Whatcom Land Trust is a great way for Alcoa Foundation and Intalco to give back to the community.”

- Carryn Vande Griend, Alcoa Intalco Works’s public relations coordinator.

WHERE EMPLOYEES COUNT: BUSINESS AND LAND CONSERVATION

A strong community is a healthy, connected community, one that reflects diverse and shared values that help to define our quality of life. Safe, clean drinking water. Farmland for local healthy food and farmers. Open space and wild places for employees and their families to enjoy. This shared vision links Whatcom Land Trust with members of our business community whose giving priorities reflect those of their employees. Since 2018 Ferndale’s Alcoa Intalco Works has been an integral Land Trust partner, providing both funds and employee power to restore acres of property to improve wildlife habitat and watershed health throughout Whatcom County. Additionally partnered with American Forests over the last two years, more than two acres along Butler Creek, northeast of Lake Terrell at the Trust’s Kelsey Reserve, were planted with native trees. This year, the Alcoa Foundation provided funds, and an employees day of volunteer work to help restore more than an acre of habitat along Canyon Lake Creek at the Trust’s Lower Middle Fork Complex near Welcome. “At the end of the day we can step back, see the impact of the work we’ve done, and know we’re investing in our environment for years to come.” said Carryn Vande Griend, Alcoa Intalco Works’s public relations coordinator.



Galbraith Mountain Work Party Partnered with Whatcom Mountain Bike Coalition and City of Bellingham

SHARING A VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Whatcom County is filled with beauty, and many people value our community's access to the outdoors. For years, Galbraith Mountain has been utilized by mountain bikers, hikers, runners, and others to immerse themselves in the woods on a large network of trails near Bellingham. In 2018, Galbraith was permanently protected with recreation and conservation easements on over 2,000 acres of the mountain in partnership with the City of Bellingham and Galbraith Tree Farm. Once its protection in perpetuity was ensured, partnerships not only expanded but they also strengthened towards our common goal of protecting the places we all love for future generations. Galbraith is just one success story demonstrating the collaboration with members across our community. Year after year, we continue to steward lands we helped to protect and lend a helping hand in summer trail work with several organizations including Whatcom County Parks & Recreation, Whatcom Mountain Bike Coalition, Washington Trails Association, and REI. When members of the community come together and work cooperatively to achieve their vision, we can accomplish many things. The Whatcom Land Trust strives to bring people together so that we can preserve the land we love, now and into the future.

BUSINESS PARTNER'S BREAKFAST

Whatcom Land Trust awarded the 3rd annual Bob Keller Leadership Award to **The Conservation Alliance** in recognition for its support of the Skookum Creek acquisition in 2019 and permanent protections for Galbraith Mountain in 2015. Local Conservation Alliance members **American Alpine Institute, NuuMuu, REI, Runner Girl Races** and **Superfeet** were on hand to accept the award and celebrate the Land Trust's 100+ business supporters. Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz served as keynote speaker at the annual breakfast in October. Learn how your business can support land conservation in Whatcom County.



Eric Brown, Whatcom Mountain Bike Coalition, Hilary Franz, WA Commissioner of Public Lands, Rich Bowers, Whatcom Land Trust, Rob Janicki, Janicki Tree Farm, Leslie Bryson, Bellingham Parks & Recreation celebrate the wins for Galbraith Mountain in 2019



Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz answers audience questions following her keynote address as former Executive Director Rich Bowers looks on.

BUSINESS PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION



Acme Farm & Kitchen
Alluvial Farms
Applied Digital Imaging
Arborwright Tree Services
Aslan Brewing
Avenue Bread
Axis of Hope Prayer Wheels
The Bagelry
Barkley Company
Bay City Supply
Bellewood Acres
Bellingham Cider Company
Liz Vennos, MD,
Bellingham Dermatology
Birch Equipment
Black Drop Coffeehouse
Boundary Bay Brewery
Brandywine Kitchen

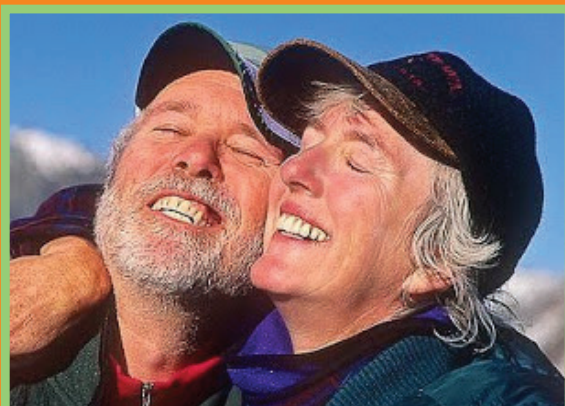
Brett Baunton
Photography
Broadview Farms
Cascade Joinery
Cascade Joinery
Cedarville Farm
Chrysalis Inn
Coldstream Farms
Community Food Co-op
Community Strength
Painters
Courtney Excavating
Culligan of Bellingham
Diehl Ford
Edaleen Farm
Evolve Chocolates
Fairhaven Village Inn
Family Care Network
Fidalgo Coffee

Tim Fischer, IFG, LLC
Greenbean Bookkeeping
Hardware Sales
Healthy Pet
Herrera Environmental
Consulting
K'ul Chocolate
Kulshan Brewing
Kulshan Services LLC
Larson Gross
LTI/Milky Way
Lummi Island Wild
Lummi Island Heritage Trust
Mount Baker Imaging
The Mount Bakery
Northwest Surveying
Old World Deli
Outer Island Excursions

RMC Architects
Regenis, an Andgar Company
San Juan Preservation Trust
Southern Exposure
Environmental
Consulting
Stockton's Paint
Stone's Throw Brewery
Taylor Shellfish
Turner Photographics
Twin Brooks Creamery
Village Books
Wandering Waters Farm
Wilde World
Communications
Wild & Scenic River Tours

JOAN CASEY:

A LEGACY OF COMPASSION AND GENEROSITY



John and Joan in mountain bliss.

Joan Casey loved life. Her bright smile and joyful laughter were a glimpse into her generous heart. “Joan had her values straight,” said John Watts, Joan’s partner of 33 years and husband since 1990. “Her love of nature and social justice, her independent spirit and Buddhist beliefs all came together in the way she lived her life and the causes she supported.”

John and close friends were Joan’s passions. Throughout her successful career as a pioneer in computer science in California’s Bay Area, to her active retirement in Whatcom County since 1990, Joan generously supported organizations dedicated to conservation and preservation of the natural world.

Whatcom Land Trust was high on her giving priorities, in life and in her untimely passing in April 2016. Joan’s gifts have helped to purchase and protect the lands, waterways, birds and nature that brought Joan joy and meaning. A bequest from Joan’s estate will keep the special places that Joan loved thriving for generations.

LEGACY GIFTS

Legacy gifts keep conservation values dear to you and your loved ones alive in perpetuity. Have you thought about including Whatcom Land Trust in your will, retirement plan, or life insurance policy? It’s one of the simplest steps you can take to protect the Lands You Love for future generations, and is as easy as signing your name.

Let us show you how you can plan today to help nature tomorrow and make a world of difference for our community. **Contact Jill Clark at jill@whatcomlandtrust.org and (360) 746-3423.**

“We’re all connected. How can you say you care about nature and not about your fellow human beings?”
- Joan Casey

A DEEP BOW OF GRATITUDE

There is a gift within this trauma of pandemic, the beauty and solace of the land. We go outdoors to gardens, parks, trails and wild places.

The Land Trust’s Board and staff celebrate all of you who have so generously given to the Land Trust’s work! It is said that the health of a community can be measured by the health of the land on which it lives. By taking part in the work of the Land Trust you are taking direct action to root that relationship in reciprocity. The land gives us clean water, fresh air, nutritious food, places to exercise our bodies and feed our spirits. In the face of relentless pressure from humanity, through the Land Trust we pledge to the land our stewardship. Together we have conserved land to which we can return again and again to be immersed in beauty, nourished in body and filled in spirit. Now and for generations to come. Thank you.

Chris Moench – President, Board of Directors

HONORARY & MEMORIAL GIFTS

IN HONOR

In honor of Sara Stimpson Bremmer
Anonymous

In honor of Jill Clark
Amy Melvaine

In honor of the Clark family
Laurie Satushek, Satushek Real Estate

In honor of Dennis Conner
Walt Burkett & Jill Clark
Lee Christie & Tom Keffer
Cathi & Steve Lecocq

In honor of Elaine Erickson & Carla Galloway
Albie & Kathryn Jarvis

In honor of my family
Angela Shambaugh

In honor of Julie Hubner
Barbara Gilday

In honor of Janet Lightner & Ed Bennett
Roberta Vollendorff

In honor of Rand Jack
Anonymous
Susan Holland & Anthony Ickes
Robert Jack and family

In honor of Janet Lightner & Ed Bennett
Roberta Vollendorff

In honor of Chris Moench & Jenny Hahn
Katherine Lawrence

In honor of my parents
Laura Ellis

In honor of Andrew Perkins
John Frey & Debra Anderson-Frey

In honor of Annie Prevose & Bob Lemon
Margaret Vanderberg

In honor of Michelle Schraeder
Robin Barker

In honor of Roger Weiss
Janice & James Dougherty
Cherie Rock

In honor of John & Margaret Woll
Doug Salkeld & Holly Woll-Salkeld

In honor of Richard and Elsie Zarnowitz
Julie Carpenter

IN MEMORY

In memory of Tony Arntson
Helen Arntson & Paul Campbell

In memory of Jerry Bajema
Karen & Jerry Gilliam

In memory of Marilyn Ballard
Jennifer Ballard

In memory of John Belisle
Marie & John Gillies
Leah Belisle Hertl
Joanne & Dennis Paradise
Kevin Pawlowski, Farmers Equipment Co.
Karen & John Steensma

In memory of Eric Braun
Maureen & Rick Braun

In memory of Jerry Brownfield
Beth Brownfield

In memory of Don Jensen
Elizabeth Brown
Rosemary Esser

In memory of Bob Keller
Leslie Conton
George Lawson
Pat Karlberg
Merrill Lewis
Trish Navarre
Mary Lou Stern & Kenneth Fox

In memory of Nathan Kronenberg
Kathryn Utter Batchelor
Corrine Gimbel-Levine & Henry Levine
Sara & Robert Watson
Sylvia & John Williams

In memory of John Lewis
Gwen E. Parker

In memory of Cynthia Millar
Helen & David Millar

In memory of Dorothy & Robert Meyer
Denise Meyer

In memory of the Orcas
AnnaLaurie Wattson Lamb

In memory of Richard Parker
Gwen E. Parker

In memory of Rebecca Reich
Sandra Bartle
Kathryn Utter Batchelor
Rich and Stephanie Bowers
John Binns & Julie Fleetwood
Walter Brodie and Linda Versage
Mary Chaney & Michael Maier
John Davies & Carol Kumekawa
Jo Ann Fjellman
Sara Hill & Rod Burton
Addie Jacobson
Dana & Rand Jack
Dale Johnson
Elizabeth Kerwin
Virginia & Mike MacBride
Sue Marshall
Joyce & Robert Myhr
Mary & Keith Nelson
Shannon & Gordon Neufeld
Less Osborne
Dianne Rappaport
Reich Family Trust
Doris & Gene Reich
Andrea Schmidt & family
Melanie & Henry Shearer
Rebecca’s friends at Whatcom Land
Title
Jennifer Wright

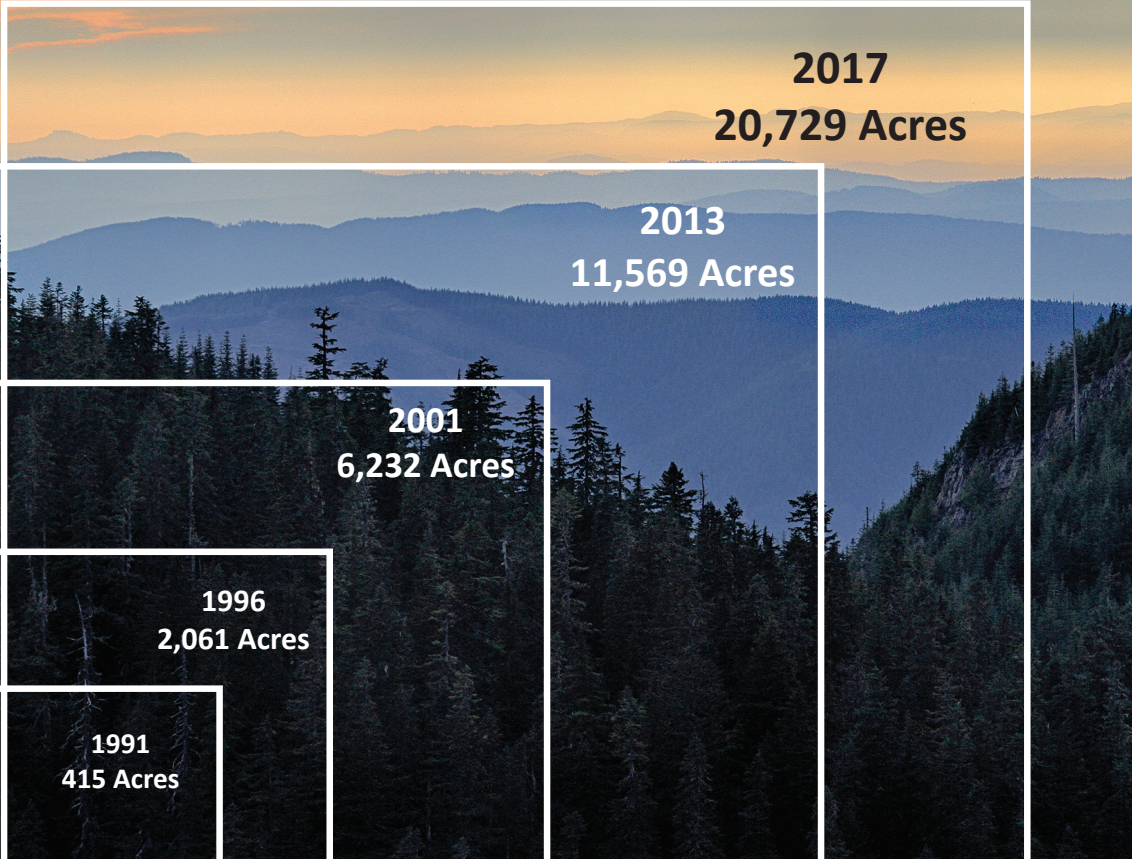
In memory of Judy Russo
Sal Russo

In memory of Bruce Smith
Dean & Mary Brett
Connie & Tim Buckley
Joyce & Terry Busch
Carter Case
Pam Kiesner
Michelle Kopcha & Susan Wright
League of Women Voters Bellingham
Whatcom County
Emma & David Maas
Ann Morris
Jeanette & Robert Morse
Patricia Morse
Joan and Michael Moye
Martha Mulholland
Carol & Don Salisbury
Carolyn Scott
Mark A Taylor
Richard Taylor
Janene & Homer Tice

Remember or honor a loved one with a memorial or honorary gift in recognition of their love of the land. Contact Jill Clark, Philanthropy Director at (360) 746-3423 to learn more.



Today: 24,413 Acres Protected



The mission of 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.

Photo Credits: Rich Bowers, Cheryl Crooks, Alan Fritzberg, Jennifer Mackey, Karen Parker, Lauren Sacket.



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

It is because of your strong support that new land protections for the Lake Whatcom Watershed, upper Skookum Creek, east Stewart Mountain, Governors Point, and the future California Creek Estuary Park in Birch Bay will move toward completion.

GROWING A NATURAL LEGACY OF WHATCOM'S SPECIAL PLACES

Each of the many successes enjoyed by the Whatcom Land Trust were made possible by each of you.

Of the total acres protected to date through conservation easements, land purchases and facilitations – including 349 new acres in 2019, you have made the following possible:

- » 47 miles of protected marine, river and lake shorelines
- » 11,473 acres in the Lake Whatcom watershed
- » 1,438 acres of working agricultural lands
- » 13,837 acres of parklands

Thank you for making this, and so much more possible.