



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 25 Years of Engaging the Community
in Conserving Land for Future Generations



MILESTONES FROM THE PAST 25 YEARS

- 1992 – Skagit Land Trust (SLT) is founded by Keith Wiggers, Harold Christenson, Gene Murphy, and 32 Charter Members.
- 1993 – SLT receives its first Conservation Easement on the Wells property on Mill Creek, Skagit River. Discussions begin on SLT holding Conservation Easements in Anacortes on forest lands (ACFL).
- 1994 – SLT's first Conservation Area - 3.5 acres of the March Point Heronry donated by Kinney family.
- 1995 – Conservation Easements begin on Samish Island with a donation by Landry and Susan Corkery. Today there are five CE's on Samish Island encompassing 57 acres of mature native forest.
- 1996 – 73 acres of property on Barney Lake are donated by Don Parry and Vicki Soderberg Parry. Today SLT's Barney Lake Conservation Area encompasses 361 acres.
- 1997 – First land on Little Mountain donated in a Conservation Easement from Fred and Ginny Darvill.
- 1998 – 26 acres on Cascade River protected by Bob Keller and Pat Karlberg. SLT now protects 149 acres on this river.
- 1999 – SLT's first capital campaign takes place to buy Hurn Field. Over 150 donations received.
- 2000 – Conservation Easement protects 450 acres of Fidalgo Bay; the first non-profit CE with WA DNR.
- 2001 – SLT develops a Conservation Strategy to direct its work. Six landscapes are rated as high priority including the "middle Skagit River". SLT purchases 900 acres of habitat, most of it in the middle Skagit.
- 2002 – SLT and The Nature Conservancy form a decades-long partnership to protect upper Skagit River lands and floodplain habitat.
- 2003 – 596 acres of SLT land is transferred to the Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest under the Skagit Wild and Scenic River program, thanks to the Land & Water Conservation Fund.
- 2004 – SLT negotiates an agreement with T. Bailey and the City of Anacortes to protect the March Point Heronry.
- 2005 – SLT partners with Seattle City Light to secure a Conservation Easement on Iron Mountain Ranch, protecting two miles of Skagit River shoreline and farmland. Many cooperative projects follow.
- 2006 – The Heron Cam is installed at March Point with assistance of Leadership Skagit Team 'Spare Time'. The first Cumberland Creek property is purchased. In 2014 this creek is returned to its historic channel.
- 2007 – SLT is introduced to Guemes Mountain and begins working with the local community and the San Juan Preservation Trust to save it. Guemes Mountain is bought in 2009 after over \$2,000,000 was raised.
- 2008 – The largest in-holding on Cypress Island is conserved by three generations of the Fahey Family.
- 2009 – SLT earns national land trust accreditation. Natural Skagit published and is a huge success, selling three times the number of books expected. Stop by the Trust to get one today!
- 2010 – SLT partners with the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, the Skagit River Systems Cooperative, Seattle City Light and WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board to conserve 178 acres on the Sauk River.
- 2011 – The Ralph Heft Stewardship Fund is established to ensure SLT can manage lands in perpetuity. Youth engagement activities begin to connect kids in Skagit County to SLT's lands.
- 2012-2015 – SLT completes 25 conservation projects and develops a new Conservation Strategy.
- 2016 – Big Lake Wetlands saved; John Tursi Trail completed in partnership with County and State Parks.
- 2017 – 1,000 acres of Skagit River lands are transferred from The Nature Conservancy to SLT.

7,974 Acres of Land Protected

2,780
Trust Owned
Property Acres

1,587
Trust Facilitated
Property Acres

3,608
Conservation
Easement Acres

38.4
Miles of River &
Saltwater Shoreline
Protected

781
Acres of
Agricultural Land

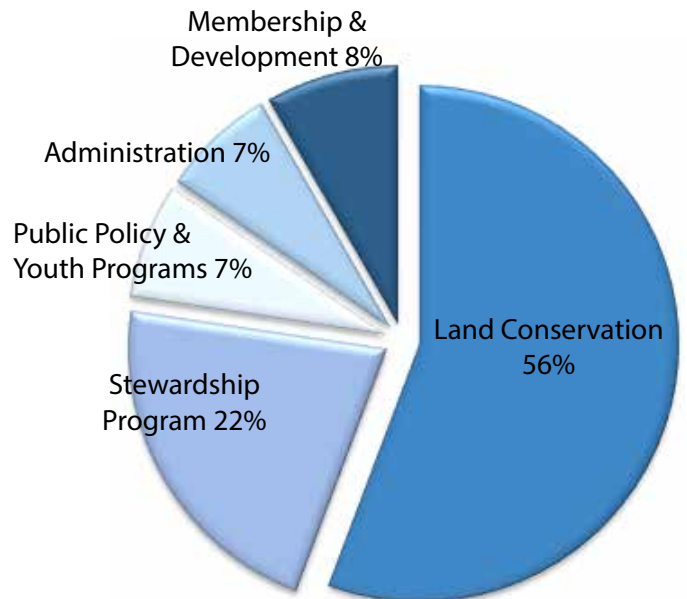
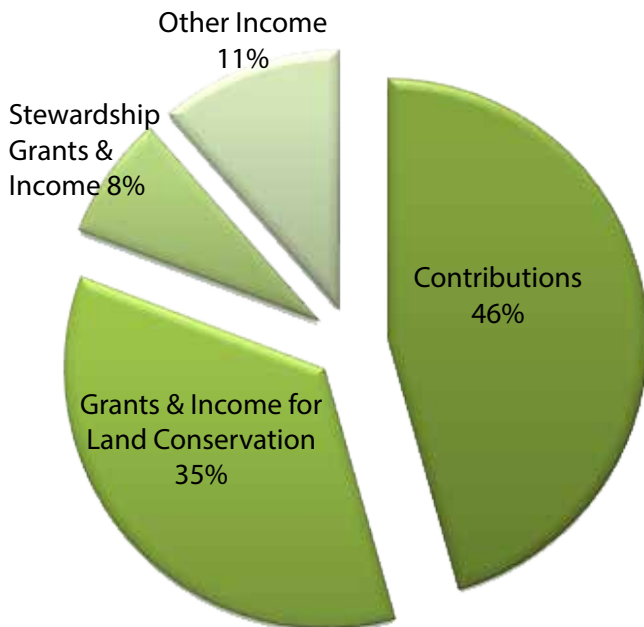
790
Acres of
Wetlands

FINANCIALS 2016-17

April 1, 2016 - March 31, 2017

Revenue \$1,204,036

Expenses \$1,202,883



The Trust also received:

- a) over 1000 acres of land and restricted stewardship reserve funds, together valued at \$2,185,100.
- b) Donated professional services and in-kind donations valued at \$59,224.
- c) Time restricted donations for specific projects and future land acquisitions valued at \$176,135.
- d) Over 5,000 hours of volunteer time, greatly assisting the Trust in reaching its goals .

Land Conservation

Skagit Land Trust rang in the new year with the addition of nine new properties totaling 1,000 acres in the Upper Skagit area. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) transferred the nature preserves to the Trust to ensure long-term, community-based conservation on the sites. The properties feature a mix of mature forests, river corridors, wetlands, and a diversity of wildlife habitat.

“Skagit Land Trust is honored to accept responsibility for these wonderful preserves from The Nature Conservancy,” said Skagit Land Trust Conservation Director Michael Kirshenbaum. “These nine properties are sterling examples of what makes the Skagit special. We look forward to stewarding these properties for the benefit of future generations.”



South Cascade River



Jackman Creek



WA Eddy



White Creek



Suiattle River

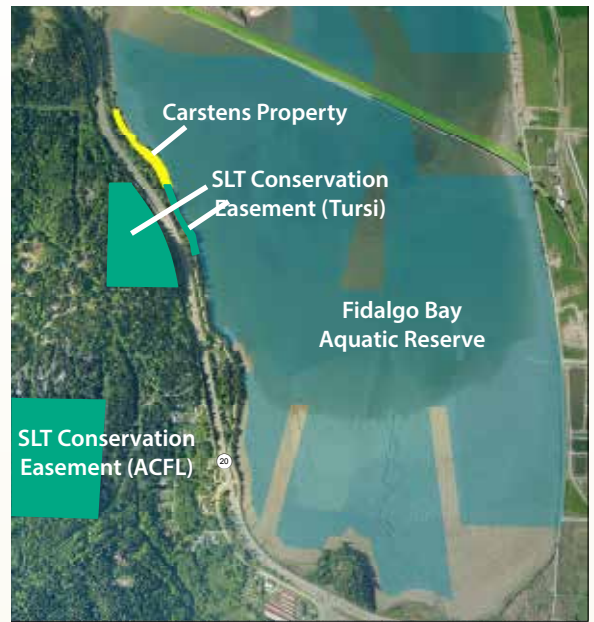


Trillium

Preserving Fidalgo Bay

In 2017 the Trust added to the protection of Fidalgo Bay and its shorelines with a donation from the Carstens family. This property connects to the Tursi Conservation Easement and hugs the Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve.

The land contains a mixed ecosystem of upland trees and shrubs as well as marine foraging and nesting habitats. Skagit Land Trust now protects 540 acres of Fidalgo Bay.



Patching Together a Pathway, Protecting a Town



Over the last two years Skagit Land Trust has partnered with the Skagit Watershed Council, Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and the Town of Hamilton on a project that benefits salmon and the citizens of Hamilton alike.

The Trust has worked with willing land owners to purchase their properties, which lie in the frequently flooded pathway of the Skagit River. The Trust then gives this land to the town of Hamilton to permanently steward as open space and salmon habitat.

This ongoing project is great example of how the Trust works to improve the lives of all those who live in Skagit County, whether our name ends up associated with the property or not.



Stewardship

Stewardship staff and volunteers worked with 50 landowners, their neighbors and our community partners to care for 2,739 acres of property owned by the Trust, and 3,569 acres of land protected by conservation easements. Together we planted 14,000 plants, removed over 100 trash bags of invasive species and garbage, and maintained four miles of trail on our properties.



Trust volunteers helped salvage fence posts and installed a new beaver fence along 10 acres at Barney Lake, thanks to funding from the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

Plants installed at Green Road Marsh in 2015 are doing extremely well, thanks to continued care from volunteers and Skagit County Natural Resources Division.



A Washington Conservation Crew member helped clear a patch of blackberry, preparing the Minkler Lake Conservation Area for winter planting parties.

Dedicated Trust volunteers prepared to plant at Minkler Lake on a snowy day.



During an annual trail maintenance work party, Trust volunteers worked hard to bring a beautiful bench up the Guemes Mountain Trail and install it at the perfect resting point.

Engaging Youth and Our Community



Next Generation Land Stewards

Every two weeks, Emerson High School science teacher Carly Feiro brought her class to different conservation areas we own. They helped steward properties by planting trees and removing invasive species. This past year we also added an element of fun and time for reflection. Emerson is an alternative high school for students who experience challenges in their life. "A lot of them don't have an opportunity to go outside when they get home. They might have siblings to take care of or no access to transportation. But after visiting these sites, many of them have asked, "Is this a place where we can return on our own?" Trust staff has been very excited to let them know that yes, these places have been preserved for them and future generations to enjoy.

Conservation Classrooms

Skagit Land Trust wanted to make it easy for educators to bring students outside to learn, play, and steward the land. This past year we launched our Conservation Classrooms program with kindergarten and 5th grade students from Lyman Elementary. Teachers brought their classes to the property, which is walking distance from the school, six times during the year for hands-on science lessons on the land. Students not only learned about this important waterway and fish habitat in their backyard, they also worked on interpersonal skills as the 5th grade students assisted kindergarten students through the cross-grade lesson plans.



Taking Action in Our Community

Our Public Policy group was very active this past year, helping our community be informed, and involving participants in shaping Skagit's collective future. Hundreds of supporters helped advocate for the full funding of Blanchard Mountain. Supporters also helped ensure that Skagit County included non-motorized trails in the 2016 comprehensive plan. The Trust advocated



for Skagit County to continue working with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors.



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PO Box 1017
1020 S Third Street
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
www.skagitlandtrust.org

Skagit Land Trust conserves wildlife habitat, agricultural and forest lands, scenic open space and shorelines for the benefit of our community and as a legacy for future generations.

2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Warren Walz , <i>President</i>
<i>Anacortes</i> | Rusty Kuntze
<i>Bay View</i> |
| Anne Winkes , <i>Vice President</i>
<i>Conway</i> | Harold Lee
<i>Mount Vernon</i> |
| John Hunt , <i>Treasurer</i>
<i>Anacortes</i> | Mark Linnemann
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| Carolyn Gastellum , <i>Secretary</i>
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<i>(Past President)</i>
<i>Conway</i> |
| Steven H. Johnson
<i>Anacortes</i> | |
| Karen Krub
<i>La Conner</i> | |



From our entire staff, thank you for your continued support. From left to right, Molly Doran, Martha Frankel, Lisa Miller, Stacy Dahl, Regina Wandler, Michael Kirshenbaum, Hannah Williams, Kari Odden, Laura Hartner. Not pictured: Jane Zillig, Michele Onorato, and Debbie Ensey.

STAFF

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Molly Doran
<i>Executive Director</i> | Kari Odden
<i>Conservation Project Manager</i> |
| Michael Kirshenbaum
<i>Conservation Director</i> | Jane Zillig
<i>Conservation Project Manager</i> |
| Laura Hartner
<i>Development & Outreach Director</i> | Martha Frankel
<i>Membership & Office Administrator</i> |
| Regina Wandler
<i>Stewardship Manager</i> | Hannah Williams
<i>Conservation Assistant</i> |
| Lisa Miller
<i>Outreach Programs Coordinator</i> | |

CONTRACTORS

- Michele Onorato**
Accountant
- Debbie Ensey**
Auction Coordinator
- Stacy Dahl**
AmeriCorps Member

GENERAL COUNSEL

Bradford E. Furlong, P.S.

Volunteer Land Stewards

- Barney Lake** - Brenda Cunningham, Tim Manns, and Janet Cray
- Barr Creek** - Russ Dalton
- Butler Creek** - Jim Owens
- Cascade River South** - Bob Boudinot
- Cumberland Creek** - Jim Johnson
- Day Creek Berquist and Forest** - Stan Zyskowski
- Day Creek Slough & Minkler Lake** - Hal Lee
- Day Creek Kosbab** - Jim Fukuyama
- Grandy Creek** - John Freeman
- Green Road Marsh** - Heidi Nichols
- Guemes Mountain** - Ian Woofenden,
- Carolyn and Ed Gastellum, & Kit Harna
- Hurn Field** - Steffany Raynes and Lin Skavdahl
- Lyman Slough** - Richard Raisler
- March Point** - LaVerne & Jim Scheltens
- Mud Lake** - Mike Olson
- Pressentin Ranch** - Ranae & Jim Watson
- Samish Island Ochs** - Pete Haase
- TNC Preserves - Dupuis, Rankin, and Wilcox** - Phil Kincare
- Sumner Lake** - Tami Thomas & Tom Mayes
- Tope Ryan** - John Day
- Utopia** - Kinsey Shilling