Land Protection in the Day Creek Watershed
by Jane Zillig, Land Specalist

In the late 1960's, a group of families looking for a quiet recreational getaway purchased 120 acres along Day Creek, a major tributary of the Skagit River east of Sedro-Woolley. This property was a place of many happy get-togethers as well as quiet contemplation. More than 40 years after they bought the land, representatives for the remaining members of this group approached Skagit Land Trust. Their hope was to preserve the habitat and the beauty of the land that they all enjoyed throughout the decades. In September, Skagit Land Trust purchased 75 acres from the group, which included over ½ mile of frontage along Day Creek, many side channels and mature forested uplands.

This property is an important acquisition for the Trust because of the quality Chinook salmon habitat found in the braided channels of Day Creek. In addition, there are hundreds of acres of mature forestland above the creek. The healthy biodiversity of this land coupled with the connectivity to timberlands provides excellent habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Day Creek is an important tributary for Skagit River salmon recovery efforts. A detailed analysis of Day Creek was done in 2004 by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group and Mount Baker- Snoqualmie National Forest. SFEG has been active in restoration projects in this area since then. Washington State Fish and Wildlife has documented numerous species of salmon spawning, rearing and migrating through this stretch of Day Creek.

The Trust already owns 42 acres nearby and the land steward for that parcel, Stan Zyskowski

Peter Edelson, one of the former landowners, stands on a log jam in Day Creek. The pools created when log jams form create spawning ground for salmon and refuge for fish during low water periods. Skagit Land Trust recently purchased 75 additional acres on Day Creek adding to our existing conservation holdings on the river.