

## Cascades-to-Chuckanut Corridor Protection

The Chuckanuts, rocky ramparts that rise suddenly out of the Samish River in northwest Skagit County; host all that remains of a forest once connecting the saltwater of Puget Sound and the glaciers of the Cascade Mountains. This summer Skagit Land Trust and Whatcom Land Trust are collaborating on an exciting initiative to save a substantial piece of this landscape.

In 2002, Skagit Land Trust completed its first *Conservation Strategy*, a document that continues to help the Trust identify important landscapes within Skagit County where pro-active conservation work is most urgently needed. In the *Conservation Strategy* the Chuckanut Foothills were noted for their importance to wildlife, as the low elevation forest provides refuge for many forest-dwelling species. The *Strategy* also noted the Chuckanuts are important to the community for recreation and open space. The Cascades-to-Chuckanuts Corridor straddles two counties and is an important focus to many conservation groups. This past year, Whatcom Land Trust, together with Skagit Land Trust and the North Cascades Corridor

Project (A Bellingham based nonprofit) worked to identify specific conservation values that exist in this corridor and the most effective tools for their protection. This analysis was recently completed, and the resulting plan will help guide Skagit and Whatcom Land Trusts in the identification and protection of key properties in the Chuckanuts. This work was completed in large part through a grant provided to WLT by the Paul G. Allen Foundation.

This summer, Skagit Land Trust, and Whatcom Land Trust will launch a special outreach and education initiative to meet landowners in the Chuckanut Foothills and introduce them to the work of land trusts. Interested and qualifying landowners will receive a free inventory of the plant and animal species that are present on their land plus information on land protection, habitat and forest management options, and restoration possibilities for their property. The landowners will learn first hand from a Trust representative about conservation easements and other methods for protecting their land. There are no



*Chuckanut Range*

requirements for pursuing any conservation option, although the Trust would, of course, also work with interested and qualifying landowners on land protection if desired. If you own 10 acres or more in the Chuckanuts or know of someone who does and would be interested in learning more about Skagit Land Trust and how they can protect their property, please have them contact us at (360) 428-7878 or email [trustbc@fidalgo.net](mailto:trustbc@fidalgo.net) or PO Box 1017, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. We would be happy to set up an appointment to discuss the options available to private landowners.



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## Skagit Update

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Drawings by Brenda Cunningham

# Letter from the Executive Director

## A Tribute to Volunteers

By Molly Doran

I have always been impressed with the level of volunteerism in America. Even the framers of the Constitution, creators of one of the most resilient documents ever, were distinguished volunteers. I'm not sure whether they were elected or appointed, but of course the job took longer than they thought and they wrestled with conflicting choices. Yet they kept at it until they finished the task.



Fast forward to Skagit Land Trust where volunteerism is our own backbone. The Trust was founded by volunteers whose vision of protecting the diverse landscapes of this county for future generations is alive in our work today. We have a volunteer board that lends wisdom and leadership as our organization grows and matures. In every encounter it is evident to me that these volunteers love Skagit County and want to make a positive difference for our community and for the land. Some enjoy wrestling with land protection issues, some enjoy envisioning possibilities, some enjoy creating ways to thank our generous members, and some enjoy putting on gum boots to inspect a new property. This same passion can be seen in the people who serve on our committees. Then we have our volunteer land stewards. Their eyes light up when they tell stories of Day Creek, the Raymer property, or the return of the herons to March's Point. We are thankful for the loving attention to the Trust's protected properties. And then there are our members who volunteer for work parties and restore heath to our protected lands. One day last month one of these hearty groups planted over 1000 saplings in three hours. And of course we have our office volunteers who roll up their sleeves and do whatever needs doing to assure the Trust keeps ticking. We are blessed with a wealth of talent and commitment at Skagit Land Trust.

We appreciate our volunteers every day. On page four of this newsletter is a list of all the incredible people who are active volunteers at Skagit land Trust. Please join me in thanking them for the gift of their time and many talents that every day, help to protect lands we love in Skagit County.

Molly Doran  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature of Molly Doran in black ink. The signature is cursive and reads "Molly D." followed by a long horizontal flourish.

We welcome volunteers. If you would like to learn more about volunteering for Skagit Land Trust, please call the Trust offices or visit our website [www.skagitlandtrust.org](http://www.skagitlandtrust.org)

## New Protected Lands



### Day Creek Property Protected Through Middle Skagit Program

In January 2004 Skagit Land Trust purchased The Day Creek Slough Conservation Area, 21 acres of very significant fish habitat located along the Skagit River and Day Creek Slough. This is the third such acquisition that Skagit Land Trust has made using a Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant designated for protection of fish habitat between Sedro-Woolley and Concrete. Purchase of this property, together with adjacent US Forest Service lands along the river and a 110-acre property Skagit Land Trust acquired last year with this SRFB grant, has created a reserve of contiguous protection on approximately 8,000 feet of Skagit River shoreline and 12,000 feet along Kosbab and Day Creek Sloughs. These sloughs provide critical habitat for salmon rearing, sheltering young fish from the high flows and predators found in the mainstem of the Skagit River.

The new Day Creek Slough Conservation Area was purchased from Dawna White. Ms White had owned the property for many years, using it for recreational camping with her children. Several small side channels to the slough run through the property, making it especially rich habitat for fish, amphibians and songbirds. Skagit Land Trust is very excited to have the opportunity to protect this additional piece of critical habitat in the Middle Skagit.



### Samish Island Conservation Easement adds to Squires Family Legacy

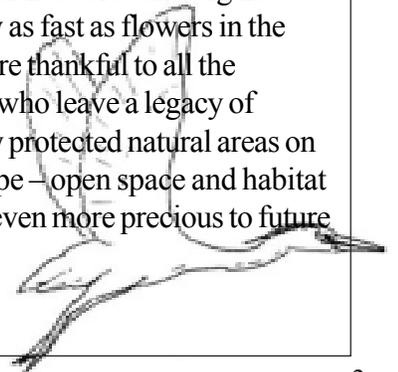
In 1995 James Squires Jr. donated a conservation easement on eleven-acres of his family land at the entrance of Samish Island. Mr. Squires was 97 at the time, and lived to be 102. He was the son of pioneers, and attended a one room school house on the island as a boy. He farmed there most of his life, and lived on the family's Samish Island homestead until his "early retirement" at age 94. He didn't want the family property to be logged or further developed, and so decided to leave a protected oasis on this rapidly changing island.

This spring, Mr. Squires' legacy was celebrated by his son with an addition to the Conservation Easement of another 2 3/4 acres, and by strengthening the restrictions

in the easement. This brings the protected area in the Squires easement to nearly 14 acres. Many of the big cedars and firs on the Squires property are more than 70 years old and are host to numerous native species, and buffer a great blue heron nesting site on adjacent property.



There are now 5 conservation easements on Samish that have been donated to the Trust, amounting to more than 39 protected acres. In this part of rural Skagit County, zoning allows for one house per 2½ acres and big new houses grow as fast as flowers in the spring. We are thankful to all the landowners who leave a legacy of permanently protected natural areas on this landscape – open space and habitat that will be even more precious to future generations.



## Volunteer who makes a difference - Ralph Heft



Back in 1998 Ralph Heft joined the ranks of Skagit Land Trust's volunteers saying, "I 'd like to try to make a difference with land protection here in Skagit County". Ralph was born in western Washington and studied forestry at the University of Montana. After a career with the Bureau of Land Management in several western states, Ralph returned to Washington to help his family manage Big Lake Trees, a local Christmas tree farm.

In the ensuing years Ralph has become an integral part of the Trust's work. In 2002 Ralph was knighted as

"Honorary Staff Member and Volunteer Land Steward Coordinator". He is such an exemplary volunteer that this year the Trust's board said "we should just make a *Ralph Award*". Ralph has brought his professional experience to help the Trust in so many ways; he coordinates the volunteers who care for Trust lands, he drafts management plans for the properties, he makes sure the Trust has all the appropriate policies in place, and when new issues arise, Ralph takes the initiative to research Trust options. "I like working with such a good group of people on a wide variety of projects". Without a doubt, yes, Ralph does make a difference.

Thank you Ralph!

## Thank You Volunteers

### We are very grateful to the following individuals

Thais Armstrong	Ann Dursch	Jim Johnson	Karen Raisler	Bailey Tanaka
Grady Baker	Gene Earnest	Nan Laney	Teresa Rappe	Gene Tanaka
Jenny Baker	Jerry Eisner	Robin LaRue	Gary Richardson	Jan Wiggers
Jim Bishop II	Britta Eschete	Cort Liddell	Herb Sargo	Keith Wiggers
Feryll Blanc	Brad Furlong	Tim Manns	Jim Scheltens	Ken Willis
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Robert Butterfield	Jeanne Glick	Patsy Martin	Schwertner	
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Ned Currence	Sheila Haegele	John Milnor	Marlies Slostad	
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Catherine Dostart	Fred Hodge	Don Norman	Carolyn Sutton	
Tom Dostart	Paul Ingalls	John Osborn	Nancy Swalling	
Judy Dudley	Peter Jepson	Don Parry	Les Swalling	
Lyman Dudley	Trevor Kyle	Dick Raisler	Ray Taipale	

### Thank You

Thais Armstrong  
For donating the proceeds of her note cards to Skagit Land Trust.

Joseph D. Bowen,  
Attorney at Law  
For the donation of office furniture.

## Skagit Land Trust 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Held at Shelter Bay Club House, La Conner WA



In a packed house, we had the opportunity to thank our members and partners for their invaluable assistance in protecting Skagit County lands and habitat. Brenda Cunningham put together a delightful overview of the year through pictures to music.

Our members and donors who sustain our work can never be thanked enough. Without you, land protection would not be possible. We were honored that 120 members and guests attended this meeting.

Marc Duboski, was awarded Exceptional Conservation Partner. Marc is a Project Manager for the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and has served as the liaison between the Trust and the SRFB since May of 2000. He has bent over backwards to help cut through bureaucratic 'red tape', and has helped us complete important projects against formidable odds.



*Speaker Eugene Kozloff*

Conservation Easement Donors Kristen and John Boyes, The City of Anacortes and Friends of the Forest, and Bob Keller and Pat Karlberg were presented with certificates thanking them for their far-sighted generosity that will leave a legacy of land for future generations.

We were delighted to have renowned zoologist, Eugene Kozloff, speak on symbiosis and show us images of the amazing inter-connections you would otherwise only see if you were down on your hands and knees crawling under the salal.



John Milnor was re-elected President and Jeanne Glick was elected Vice President with Catherine Dostart elected as Secretary and Jim Bishop II as Treasurer. Four board members were re-elected: Jeanne Glick, Catherine Dostart, Glenn Bordner and Curt Miller. Thank you to Robin LaRue who completed his term on the board. Robin will continue to serve as a volunteer land steward.

### *A special thank you to those who donated items for the Annual Meeting Silent Auction.*

*Diane Bednarz - Pottery  
Glenn Bordner - Bird feeder  
Glenn Bordner, Lavone Newell, and Dick Reim - Art and garden tour with salmon dinner  
Burke Museum - Guest passes  
Molly Doran and Andy Cline - Sea kayaking lessons and picnic lunch  
Catherine Dostart - Carpenter Creek Wine  
Regan Gust - Hand made beaded necklace  
Trevor Kyle - Leatherman Tool and Pocket knife  
Peter Jepson - Duck nesting boxes  
Lee Mann - Original photograph by Lee Mann  
Anne Middleton - Hand made Quilt and Exotic Chicken eggs  
James Moore - Hand carved wood bear  
Museum of Northwest Art - Family membership  
John Osborn - Custom flyrod  
People for Puget Sound - Book: Orcas, Eagles & Kings  
Salon 29 - Hair products, haircut and tanning minutes  
Skagit Land Trust - Wildlife boat trip and Book: Seashore Life of the Northern Pacific Coast  
Pat Sneeringer - Event tickets, McCall Hall  
Andrea Xaver - Gourmet picnics*



*photos by Trevor Kyle*



## Administrative Assistant

If you have stopped by our office recently you may have noticed a new face. In April Diane Bednarz officially joined the Trust staff as Administrative Assistant. Diane actually started working for the Trust back in October 2003, filling in when the previous assistant, Molly Smith, took another position. Diane's availability and willingness to jump into the job, bringing her knowledge of computers, graphic design and cheerful attitude is a great boon to the Trust. With her help the Trust was able to continue publishing the newsletter and managing the membership database without a gap.

Diane moved to the Northwest in 1976, after growing up in Wisconsin and earning a BFA at the University of Chicago and the Art Institute. She and her husband, Peter Jepson, built their home in the Bow area while Diane created and sold her hand built pottery in galleries across the US. Diane has also worked in graphic design, both on the computer and in print, she was a medical photographer and she has published scenic photographs in national magazines. Diane has been active in her community for many years, volunteering for the Trust and a number of other community organizations in Skagit and Whatcom County. She has served as a board member for Skagit Audubon and now compiles the bird sightings report for the chapter newsletter.



Skagit Land Trust is truly fortunate to have Diane on board. In the short time she has been on staff she has brought a new level of professionalism to the Trust's publications and events. Her experience and talents are greatly appreciated and she is a joy to work with.

Welcome aboard Diane!

## Wildlife Cruise Spots 48 species of birds!

On April 3 Skagit Land Trust took 44 people on a boat tour around Fidalgo Island. The day could not have been more beautiful. The sun was shining, the air was calm and the views were spectacular. In addition to the 48 species of birds (complete list available on our website), we also saw Harbor Porpoises and Harbor Seals several times. Keith and Jan Wiggers and Tim Manns volunteered their time as naturalist guides, pointing out many interesting birds and facts about their life histories. Brenda Cunningham was also aboard to answer questions about the Trust and what role it plays in the protection of the views and habitats we saw. We are considering making this an annual event and may have two cruises so more people can enjoy the wonders of Skagit County's waters.

## OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND ROCKPORT STATE PARK AND PROTECT SAUK MOUNTAIN

Skagit Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy have been working with Washington State Parks to support a funding proposal to purchase a 645-acre tract of land on Sauk Mountain. This is an unprecedented opportunity that would almost double the size of Rockport State Park. It would connect the Park to National Forest land to the north and to State DNR land on the west. This purchase would provide continuous public ownership from the 5000' foot peak of Sauk Mountain to the mainstem of the Skagit River at 200' elevation.

The land is currently for sale by Trillium Corporation and includes much of the popular Sauk Mountain Road. The State Parks regional office has recommended funding the purchase through a proposal to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) this spring. The expected acquisition cost is around \$900,000.

You can express your support for this important land acquisition by writing to:

Rex Derr, Director \* \*  
Washington State Parks  
P.O. Box 42650  
Olympia, WA 98504-2650

& cc to:

Terry Doran, NW Regional Manager  
Washington State Parks  
PO Box 487  
Burlington, WA 98233

\* \* *IMPORTANT-Please also cc. your letter to Bill Koss, Planning Program Manager, at the same Olympia address*

## Sares Bluff Protected

Skagit Land Trust thanks San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) for their hard work that has led to the protection of 37-acres to Sares Bluff on Fidalgo Island. This property will be transferred to the county for inclusion in Sharpe Park. Skagit Land Trust donated \$5,000 to the SJPT Sares Bluff Campaign and sat on a local steering committee. "I am certain future generations will be grateful our community worked to protect Sares Bluff" said Molly Doran, Executive Director of Skagit Land Trust. "We applaud San Juan Preservation Trust's leadership in protecting this important landscape."

## Thank You to the Following Supporters

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#### **Major Donors (\$5,000 and up)**

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#### **Conservator (\$1000-\$2,499)**

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 City of Anacortes  
 Ralph & Ruth Heft

### Sustaining Members

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 Jerry & Sheila Haegele  
 Rae Kozloff  
 Sue & George Mehler  
 Gene & Ginny Murphy  
 Elsa Gruber & Charles Pruett  
 Erynn E. M. Stephan  
 Sharon & Richard Stewart  
 Ann & Ken Winkes  
 Ben Winkes  
 Andrea Xaver

Thanks to all new and renewing members. Members will be listed in the Summer and Winter Newsletter and our Annual Report.

Please note that for the first time in three years, there has been a small increase in some of our membership giving levels. Certain membership categories have also been changed. These changes help us better meet the rising costs of protecting threatened local lands. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call. Of course any amount you donate will be welcomed and put to immediate use preserving Skagit County's natural heritage.

## **Yes! I want to protect Skagit County's natural legacy!**

Thank you for supporting land conservation!

Donations to Skagit Land Trust are tax deductible.

Please remit to:  
 Skagit Land Trust  
 PO Box 1017  
 Mount Vernon, WA 98273

[www.skagitlandtrust.org](http://www.skagitlandtrust.org)

Name _____ Business* _____ Address _____ Phone _____ email _____ Please charge \$ _____ One Time Monthly Pledge \$ _____ Quarterly Pledge \$ _____ VISA/MC _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____ * Business memberships only	<b>Membership Categories</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Friend \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Partner \$40 <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter* \$60 <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor* \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> Patron* \$250 <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor* \$500 <input type="checkbox"/> Conservator* \$1000 <input type="checkbox"/> Steward* \$2500 <input type="checkbox"/> Major Donor* \$5000
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## Saving Land for Tomorrow

### Upcoming Volunteer Events & Tours:

**May 1** – Day Creek: Join us for a “clean up party” and tour of a beautiful new Trust property. The day will include a hike out to the gravel bars on the Skagit River. Come help us give this habitat a fresh start.

**June 19** – Chuckanut Walk/Tour: Join Skagit Land Trust for a walking tour of the Chuckanuts. We’ll explore the natural history and talk about this unique greenway between the Cascades and Puget Sound and why we need to protect it.

If you are interested in these events, please call the Trust’s Stewardship Director, Brenda Cunningham at (360) 428-7878 for details and to let her know you are coming. It is a great opportunity to get outside with a wonderful group of people, learn more about our region’s natural history, and see what types of properties the Trust protects.

### **Skagit Land Trust Hats For Sale that make the right statement**

**Baseball Caps** Classic and new contemporary Skagit Land Trust logo.

Plus we have **Note Cards** for sale with Watercolor landscapes of Skagit County, original artwork by Thais Armstrong



Look for our new green and white Skagit Land Trust signs.

#### Mission Statement

To Protect wildlife habitat, wetlands, agriculture and forest lands, scenic open space and shorelines throughout the mainland and islands of Skagit County for the benefit of our community and as a legacy for future generations.