

## Forest Land Rescue at Cascadian Farm

*“So much of my life has flowed from that land –  
I don’t feel like I really ‘own’ it”*

Once-in-a-while there really is a happy ending. Such is the story for a 29-acre parcel of land next to Cascadian Farm near Rockport. Several years ago this land was for sale – threatened with commercial logging and development. Harlyn Meyer, who co-manages Cascadian Home Farm, went to work searching for a conservation-minded buyer for the property. But, after several months the sellers could no longer wait and gave permission to local loggers to harvest the timber.

Even as the chainsaws worked the hillside, Harlyn kept dreaming about protecting the land. In desperation, she and her husband Jim took a hard look at their finances and decided to try to borrow the money to purchase the land themselves. This caught the attention of Gene Kahn, founder of Cascadian Farm and CEO of Small Planet Foods, who was so impressed with the Meyers’ commitment that he offered to buy the land himself. The chainsaws were stopped, and the land was added to Gene’s ownership at the farm. By then, about a third of the second growth stand had been logged, but some big firs and maples remain – enough to help the forest recover.

In December of 2004, Gene took the farsighted step of permanent protection for this land by donating a *Conservation Easement\** to Skagit Land Trust. This is the second such donation by Gene. He protected the adjacent 28-acres of forest in 1995 with his first Conservation Easement donation to the Trust. Fifty-seven acres total on the hillside have now been protected in perpetuity by Gene’s efforts. No residential development or commercial timber harvest can occur.

*Continued on page 3*



*Organic Pioneer Gene Kahn*

*photos by Don Smith*

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*Cascadian Farm, founded in 1972. This farm stand is just east of milepost 100 on the North Cascades Highway.*



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## Skagit Update

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Drawings by Brenda Cunningham

# From the Executive Director

## Making a Difference

*“Every successful land project demonstrates that there are choices about how land is used.”*

Recently a board member dropped off a worksheet he had done in 1996 estimating Skagit County’s population 20 years, 50 years, and 60 years hence. We shook our heads, as even a low estimate showed a forecast of 420,000 people in 2055. Wow!

I am sure you have seen how quickly our valley has changed. Skagit County’s population has grown by 30% in the last 10 years, 90% in the last 25 years. Even while celebrating a new property protected, our impact can be difficult to measure when placed against the growth. It’s hard to ignore the forest grove being bulldozed for new homes or the farm that is now a mall. And as competing needs increase and land values move upwards it becomes harder to keep pace and protect all the land we’d like to. But our impact is not measured in acres alone. By itself, a single protected property does not preserve a watershed or ensure the health of a forest, but every time we protect a property, we are making a difference.



Acres tell us one part of the story, but we must also measure our progress through intangibles such as knowing our children’s children will delight as we do in watching the Great Blue Heron grace our shorelines and smelling the pungent scent of cedar forests. How much poorer would we be without having extensive river habitat protected where generations of Skagitonians can watch or fish for wild salmon? Without the fertile farmlands or preserved marine areas?

Every successful land project demonstrates that there are choices about how land is used. In this issue you will read about how Gene Kahn has made that decision, three times. Three times he has chosen to leave a natural legacy to future generations. These are places where it is now guaranteed the forest will again bear the badge of “old-growth”. Each protected property becomes a sanctuary. And each protected property becomes an example that inspires other landowners to take steps toward preservation.

Will we lose sensitive natural areas despite our best efforts? Yes. That is inevitable. But can we really make a difference? You bet and we must. Just imagine what Skagit County would look like in 2055 without our collective land protection work today!



Low elevation forest in the upper Skagit valley is under increasing development and logging pressure. Protecting this land helps maintain connectivity to the adjacent Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest to the north, and WA State Dept. of Natural Resources lands to the east. Several small creeks flow down the hillside increasing the diversity of the plant and animal life on the hillside, and providing enough energy to drive a small-scale hydroelectric power plant at Cascadian Farm.

Protection of this land also contributes to the greater Skagit River Bald Eagle Natural Area, a land area designated by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to help encourage land protection and management conducive to wintering bald eagles and the river ecosystem they depend on. Bald eagles are often seen soaring over head at Cascadian Farm, and the big trees on the hillside serve as important night roost areas for them. Gene donated a nearby 12-acre riverside parcel to TNC, in 1992, to be included in this protected area.

Gene Kahn is now Vice President at General Mills Corporation, overseeing General Mills Sustainability Council. But he says he owes much to the pretty little farm east of Rockport

where his long productive relationship with sustainable agriculture began:



*Gene Kahn donated 28 more acres of forestland bringing his total protection at Cascadian Farm to 57 acres.*

*“So much of my life has flowed from that land – I don’t feel like I really ‘own’ it – but it provides meaning, and instills a deep sense of responsibility in me. [This Conservation Easement] helps me express and define my values.”* The Trust is honored to help dedicated citizens like Gene, Jim and Harlyn give back to the land.

*\* A Conservation Easement is the legal term for a permanent land preservation agreement. The land stays in private ownership, and the land can be bought or sold, or passed on to heirs, but the conservation features of the property are protected in perpetuity by the agreement.*

## Skagit Land Trust, Scott’s Bookstore and the Lincoln Theatre are bringing Dr. David Suzuki to Skagit County

**Dr. David Suzuki will be speaking at the Lincoln Theatre on May 9<sup>th</sup> - 7pm.**

A world-renowned geneticist, conservationist and broadcaster, Dr. David Suzuki has spent the past 40 years educating the public about environmental issues. He is recognized as a world leader in sustainable ecology, and has received a UNESCO Prize for Science, as well as the United Nations Environmental Medal.

Suzuki is well known to millions as the host of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation’s popular science television series, *The Nature of Things*, where he mixes education with entertainment to get his ideas across to the public.

He is the author of more than 30 books and the founder of the David Suzuki Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to finding innovative solutions to help conserve the natural world.

Tickets will be \$15 each or; 1 free ticket with the purchase of Suzuki’s book *Tree* (\$20) and the option to buy another ticket at \$7. Ticket sales start March 1st at Scott’s Bookstore and the Lincoln Theatre. Proceeds from this event will go to the Lincoln Theatre and Skagit Land Trust.

*Event Sponsors are Scott’s Bookstore, Skagit Land Trust and the Lincoln Theatre.*

## Tree A Life Story

by Suzuki and Grady

In this lovely book Suzuki and Grady tell the tale of one Douglas-fir tree that lived for more than five centuries. Each stage in the tree’s life is placed within the context of human and natural history. Wonderful stories are intertwined with interesting facts about the Douglas-fir. This melding of history, natural history, and biography is further enhanced by Robert Bateman’s beautiful illustrations.

# Skagit Land Trust 13th Annual Meeting - Auction



You are Invited to  
Skagit Land Trust's Annual Meeting and Auction  
to be held at  
Maple Hall, La Conner  
Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup> / 6 - 9pm

Please join us for a social evening of fun and  
the fellowship of like-minded individuals in celebrating another year of  
Skagit Land Trust achievements.

Enjoy food and refreshments with a colorful,  
year in review, pictorial presentation.

Bid on exciting silent auction items and indulgent desserts  
made by local bakeries and Skagit Land Trust friends.  
Bring your family and friends to share in the vision your membership makes possible.  
All proceeds will fund land conservation in Skagit County.

Mark your calendars and look for an invitation in the mail.



## We Need your HELP

**Skagit Land Trust needs volunteers  
for the Annual Meeting & Auction / March 18th.**

There are a variety of areas where you can participate - including  
pick up and transport of auction items throughout the next month  
and help the day and evening of the auction.

To volunteer, please call Diane at the Trust office, 360-428-7878.

## A Sampling of Annual Meeting Auction Items



- All day interpretive hike guided by North Cascade Chief Park Naturalist
- Cavity nesting bird boxes
- 4 tickets to Seattle Mariners game – plus parking pass
- Art work
- Professional Tango Lessons
- Painting of one interior room (15 x 15ft) – includes labor & materials
- Hand carved and painted wooden frog bowl
- Wildlife photography note cards
- Dinner and slide show for 4 on Africa or Patagonia with SLT Executive Director
- SAGE 5wt, 9ft flyrod
- Gourmet dinners; chocolates; & fine wines
- Weekend stay at mountain cabin in Skykomish
- One half day field sketching lessons for two people
- Sunday afternoon tea for 8 with an assortment of treats, provided by SLT Board member & much more

## THANK YOU

–Thank you to Josh Greenberg for instructing Brenda on a computer mapping program.

–Thank you to Linda Hunt for cataloging our digital photograph collection.

–Thank you to John Allen for delivering cedar trees and helping plant them on a property protected by Skagit Land Trust.

–Thank you to Pamela David for including Skagit Land Trust in her donation of pine trees.

–Thank you to Skagit River System Cooperative for planting trees and helping the Trust manage its Day Creek Kosbab Slough property.

–Thank you to Andy Cline for his donation of technological equipment.

–Thank you to Bob Knowles for making a new office display board & field pamphlet boxes.

–Thank you to Lee Mann for donating a beautiful photo, “Our Valley” & all proceeds of sales to the Trust.

–Thank you to the Stratum Group for their consulting work.

–Thank you to all our volunteers who helped with land management in the past quarter, planting trees, counting heron nests and checking on the Trust properties.



## Skagit Land Trust By-Law Amendments

At the Annual Meeting, March 18, 2005, Skagit Land Trust's board of directors will propose a set of by-law amendments for approval by the Trust's membership. These amendments will increase SLT's ability to make decisions through the use of technology, clarify the duties of officers and committees, and expand our use of external expertise. To review the proposed by-law amendments, please visit <http://www.skagitlandtrust.org/events.asp>. Alternatively you may email or call our office and we will send you a hard copy of the proposed changes.

## **Bob Boudinot - New Board Member, up for Election at March Annual Meeting**

Hi, I'm Bob Boudinot. My wife Nina and I arrived in Skagit County in 1973. We enjoy traveling, long walks, books and activities with our children and grandchildren. I am a partner in Leonard, Boudinot & Skodje, Inc. a local civil engineering, land surveying and planning company. The focus of my career has been hydraulic engineering, which includes the planning and design of water, sewer and drainage systems. Our company has been established in Skagit County for over 60 years

My interest in the Land Trust and in conservation derives from childhood. My childhood home in Davenport, Iowa was on a small creek. I spent many hours in the woods along the creek enjoying the rich variety of birds and small mammals. My father and grandmother were avid bird watchers and I

received a Christmas present membership to the Audubon Society each year.

As a civil engineer I have focused on improving the human habitat. As I have matured in my profession I have become more and more sensitive to the interaction of the human habitat with the natural environment. I have also been fortunate to witness the environmental revolution during the course of my career. Our company is now doing stream restoration, habitat enhancement, and wetland mitigation projects. Environmental concerns are incorporated in all of our projects.

I am honored to be asked to be on the Land Trust Board of Directors and look forward to meeting more people involved with the Trust.

## **Skagit Land Trust Board Members Seeking Re-Election**

Jerry Haegele • John Milnor • Marlene Moore • John Osborn • Pat Sneeringer • Ray Taipale • Andrea Xaver

**If a Trust member would like to be considered for election to the Skagit Land Trust Board of Directors, or would like to nominate another member, please call Molly Doran at the Trust office (360) 428-7878.**

## **Welcome Skagit Land Trust Advisory Council**

Skagit Land Trust's board of directors is inaugurating an Advisory Council to assist in promoting the Trust's mission and goals through community partnership. The Advisory Council is composed of highly respected community members who support the Trust's goals - saving this precious heritage for generations to come - by assisting Skagit Land Trust with their ideas and expertise. We are continuing to build the Council. We thank the current members for their time and talents:

**Jim Ford • Jan Hersey • Jeff Muse • Diane Morton • Dave Scott • Lee Mann • Carl Molesworth • Terry Stevens • Paul Calver • Gene Murphy • Harold Christenson • Jay Ham • Ken Willis.**



# Stewardship News

## Heronry Update: 600 Nests!!!

On January 8<sup>th</sup> a hardy group of Skagit Land Trust volunteers braved the snow to trek into the heronry on March's Point to take a census of the Great Blue Heron nests used last summer. It was a cold day, but the snow made the ground bright and it was a great excuse to get outside and enjoy the precious light of winter. We did not count the nests in the entire heronry, but took a sampling by counting the nests on approximately 1/3 of the area. Each tree is tagged with a number, enabling us to go back year after year and track the use of



*Levy Sheltens and Kay Glade amaze over numbers.*



individual trees and areas of the heronry. In the area we sampled this year we counted 255 nests in 117 trees. In this same area last year we counted just 244 nests in 109 trees. Last year the entire heronry contained 575 nests. If this same increase is extrapolated to the entire heronry we can expect that the heronry is now just at 600 nests! This heronry is the largest in Washington and continues to grow in size

and importance to the heron population. This summer when you see all those herons out on the mud flats of Padilla and Fidalgo Bays, keep in mind how dependent they are on that one little island of forest. For more information about the heronry and to hear the heron chicks clucking, **join us for the Spring Bus Tour**. A sample of the heron chicks clucking can be heard on the Trust's website at [www.skagitlandtrust.org](http://www.skagitlandtrust.org).

*Thank You for  
Your Support*

### Trust Builders

#### Major Donors

(**\$5000 and up**)

Robert Brown &  
Patricia Hegg Brown

#### Steward (**\$2500 - \$4999**)

Anonymous

#### Conservator (**\$1000-\$2499**)

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(**\$60 - \$99**)

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#### Organizations

Evergreen Islands  
Fidalgo Fly Fishers  
Friends of the Anacortes  
Community Forest Lands  
Skagit Conservation District  
Skagitonians to Preserve  
Farmland

#### Granting Organizations and Foundations

The Burning Foundation  
The Dudley Foundation  
Horizons Foundation  
The Linnemann Family Foundation  
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

## Skagit Land Trust Spring Bus Tour

**May 14<sup>th</sup>**

Welcome Spring and  
**Join SLT for a Bus Tour!**

See Fidalgo and Samish Islands from the perspective of land conservation. Hear the March's Point Heron chicks begging for food and see the Garry Oaks of Samish Island. Thanks to the generous support of several landowners, the tour will include opportunities to walk on private lands protected with Conservation Easements. Come meet others interested in land conservation, bird watching and enjoying Skagit County's natural beauty. Cost is \$25 for members and a \$35 donation for non-members. Lunch is provided. For specifics and to reserve your space on the bus, please call Diane at (360) 428-7878.



## Wish List

**Digital Camera** – 2004 or newer /  
minimum of 3 Megapixels /  
extra memory cards

**Vacuum Cleaner** with HEPA filter  
for the office

**Small Inflatable Raft** for monitoring  
lake properties

## Mission Statement

**Skagit Land Trust protects wildlife  
habitat, wetlands, agriculture and  
forest lands, scenic open space and  
shoreslines throughout the mainland  
and islands of Skagit County for the  
benefit of our community and as a  
legacy for future generations.**

# Thanks to New and Renewing Members whose donations were received between July 1 and December 31, 2004

## Stewardship Fund

City of Anacortes  
Brenda Cunningham & Tim Manns  
Ralph & Ruth Heft  
Gene Kahn  
James C. Squires Jr.

## Additional Contributions

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Safeco

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Judi Munn - *In honor of John Munn, Naturalist & Nature Missionary*  
Susan Richardson - *In honor of Floydene Myers & Ester Zimmerman*  
Mary Augusta Stapp - *In honor of Eleanor Gandy*



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Al & Sue Berger  
Jim Bishop II  
Carol Bohmbach  
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## In-Kind

Art by Thais  
Dave Shaw  
Skagit Watershed Council





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325 Pine Street, Suite B  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
www.skagitlandtrust.org

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## Saving Land for Tomorrow

### Upcoming Events:

*(Details Inside)*

**March 18<sup>th</sup>**: Skagit Land Trust Annual Meeting and Auction  
Maple Hall, La Conner, 6-9pm

**May 9<sup>th</sup>**: Dr. David Suzuki speaks at the Lincoln Theatre – 7pm

**May 14<sup>th</sup>**: Bus Tour of Skagit Land Trust Properties

### **Volunteer Events:**

**March 5<sup>th</sup>**: Planting trees along the Nookachamps Creek. Skagit Land Trust volunteers are needed to help restore trees to 1,600 feet of riverbank along Nookachamps Creek. Join the Trust and volunteers from Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group as we work together to improve this valuable fish habitat.

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>**: Planting trees on Trust property near Mud Lake. Join Skagit Land Trust volunteers as we restore songbird habitat next to this scenic spot in Clear Lake. Help us shade out the reed canarygrass by planting water-loving trees and shrubs for the benefit of birds and other wildlife.

Please call the Trust at (360) 428-7878 for more details on the Volunteer Events and to let us know if you are coming.



*A duck nesting box is just one of the many items you'll be able to bid on at the Skagit Land Trust Annual Meeting & Auction.*