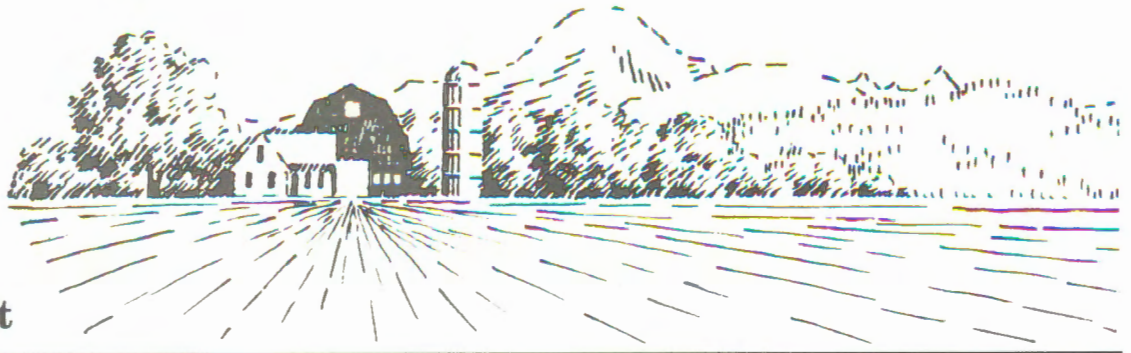


Whatcom County Land Trust



Volume 2, Number 1.

Newsletter

Spring 1992



A View for the Future . . .

(Photograph by Mark Bergsma)

For the past ten months the *Whatcom County Land Trust* has orchestrated negotiations for a colossal land transaction that would catapult Whatcom County into the future of conserving our natural heritage. The discussions have included the Department of Natural Resources, the State Parks Department, Whatcom County, the City of Bellingham, the Trust for Public Land, and the Trillium Corporation. Though the transaction is far from certain, significant progress has been made in developing a plan for moving critical properties owned by the Trillium Corporation into public ownership. Three areas of Whatcom County are involved in the proposal:

Chuckanut Mountain: Approximately 1200 acres atop Chuckanut Mountain would be transferred from private to public ownership. This land protrudes like a finger into the heart of Larrabee State Park and offers spectacular views in every direction — the San Juan Islands, Mount Baker, the Twin Sisters, Bellingham and the Canadian Cascades. In addition to the ridgetops, the property includes rich habitat and well used hiking trails which many people falsely assume are already part of Larrabee State Park.

Lake Whatcom Watershed: Between 4,000 and 5,000 acres of timberland in the Lake Whatcom Watershed would come under public ownership. This includes property in and south of the Smith Creek drainage including shoreline on the east side of the Lake and property in the Austin Creek drainage above Sudden Valley. In addition to boosting protection of the public water supply, this would also provide wonderful recreational opportunities in the watershed.

South Fork of the Nooksack: Included in the transaction are two parcels on the South Fork of the Nooksack River — the Goodyear/Nelson property adjacent to the Nessel farm and the old Galbraith homestead farm. As you may recall, the *Land Trust* negotiated a conservation easement and an eventual gift of the 108 acre Nessel homestead to Whatcom County through the generosity of Tom and Ingeborg Nessel. The Goodyear/Nelson parcel provides access to the Nessel farm, a precondition of the gift. When combined, the Galbraith homestead, the Goodyear/Nelson property and the Nessel homestead will make a county park with approximately two miles of frontage on the South Fork of the Nooksack.

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Thoughts From Our New President:

1991 was a banner year for the WCLT. We acquired conservation easements on three new properties. These protect significant shoreline and woodlands on Birch Point, river bottom elk habitat in Welcome, a greenbelt parcel adjacent to Lake Padden Park on Padden Creek in Bellingham and 20 forested wetland acres near Lake Terrell.

1992 started with the successful purchase of Teddy Bear Cove by the County, for addition to the County Park system. The *Land Trust* engineered this transaction and is grateful for the willing participants who made the process succeed. A conservation easement was also granted to WCLT on this newest of County Park property. These properties bring our total to over 450 acres.

With all the success and growth of the organization has come the increased task of monitoring the protected lands, a responsibility that is perpetual. It is in this context that the word *trust* in our name really begins to have meaning. These lands, which we have vowed to protect, are the heritage of all who live here. This open space, farmland, shoreline and forest will be here, as it is today, for the children of the grandchildren of all who call this county home.

In order to guarantee that the *Land Trust* will be here to fulfill its mandate in future years, we begin 1992 by becoming a membership organization. Becoming a member means you have a full and vital commitment to the long term stewardship of Whatcom County.

Please join us in preserving the natural gifts of this beautiful and fertile place on earth. A better investment can not be found.

Sincerely,
Chris Moench

A View for the Future (Continued from Page 1)

This treasure trove of property would be acquired by the public through a combination of land trades involving the Department of Natural Resources, Whatcom County and Trillium. Part of the Chuckanut property will be purchased by Washington State Parks, Whatcom County and Bellingham. A portion of the property will be a gift from Trillium Corporation.

In the past few months, some important steps have been taken on the journey from dream to reality. In December, the Washington State Parks Commission voted to add the Chuckanut property to its acquisition list. The Department of Natural Resources has made a firm commitment to pursue the land trade aspects of the transaction. Ann Anderson accomplished the Herculean task of getting the State Senate to agree to a \$500,000 capital appropriation to apply toward the purchase of the Chuckanut property. Harriet Spanel worked diligently on the House side to keep the appropriation in the budget. The Trust for Public Land agreed to keep the transaction on track at the state level.

All local legislators have been supportive, as has Bellingham Mayor Tim Douglas. Shirley Van Zanten has shown stellar leadership in this major step toward implementation of the Whatcom County Natural Heritage Task Force report. We are now preparing for a public meeting of the Whatcom County and Bellingham City Councils to present details of the proposal.

Years ago a growing Vancouver had the foresight to set aside the land that is now Stanley Park. Today we have the opportunity to exercise the same foresight to protect *our* brilliant jewel. The *Whatcom County Land Trust* has been deeply involved in mediating the transaction between the Trillium Corporation and public agencies. There may never be another opportunity to do so much so quickly to preserve our natural heritage. We urge your support.

By Rand Jack

**Please show your support by attending the Public Meeting
April 23, 7:00 p.m. at Pacific First Bank**

Home at the Welcome Confluence

*A heady musk rises from the plants and wet.
Winter wren beckons from a meadow copse.*

Ouzel bobs on a rock in the creek,

Kingfisher rattles in an alder.

Great Blue Heron lumbers aloft

from a cedar roost.

Eagle soars against a blue sky.

Beaver dives from the moonlit dam.

Salmon eggs sleep in the gravelly stream.

Elk prints emboss the winter grass.

The air is clean. Here is our home.

Hugh and Judy Ansely, 1991

New Board Members Welcomed

Three outstanding community members have joined the WCLT Board of Directors in 1992. The new board members are Judy Ansley, Carl Batchelor and Mark Taylor.

Judy is long time citizen activist, poet, artist and dependable *friend* of the *Land Trust*. She and her husband Hugh are the donors of a precious conservation easement at the confluence of the Middle and North Fork Nooksack. Additionally, Judy has accepted the demanding job of Publicity Chair for the WCLT.

Carl is planner for Whatcom County and provides a professional asset to the *Land Trust*. He has provided valuable advice and assistance in the Teddy Bear Cove and other transactions. Carl is a member of the Monitoring Committee.

Mark is Executive Director of Big Brothers – Big Sisters of Whatcom County and brings to the board non-profit organization expertise, grant writing experience and a business perspective.

**WE WHOLE HEARTEDLY WELCOME
JUDY, CARL AND MARK
TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!**

Ruth Kelsey Donates

A Little Piece of Paradise

Ruth Kelsey, Associate Professor Emeritus of Art of Western Washington University, has generously deeded her 20 acre farm to the WCLT. The property is located between North Starr Road and the Lake Terrell Game Refuge west of Ferndale.

Although WCLT holds the deed for the Kelsey place, it will be managed as part of the State Refuge following the terms of a management plan drafted in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Wildlife and the *Land Trust*.

The Brinn Family Grants Easement — Donates Land for Greenway

On December 27, 1991 the Brinn family, Steve, Joan and children Mark, Paul and Lucy, granted a conservation easement on a portion of upper Padden Creek Gorge in Bellingham. The property is part of a beautifully forested stream corridor extending from Lake Padden west.

The land was donated to the Bellingham Greenways program and will remain in its natural state. The Brinn's gift is exemplary and will be appreciated by those of us who cherish upper Padden Creek Gorge.

Teddy Bear Cove *A DONE DEAL!*

In successful culmination of more than a year and a half of planning and negotiations, the *Whatcom County Land Trust* achieved preservation of Teddy Bear Cove. The property, located just south of Bellingham City limits on Chuckanut Drive, consists of approximately 11 acres of steep forested hillside and 1430 feet of waterfront. Once the site of a brick factory, in recent years the cove has been enjoyed by the public for picnics and sunbathing.

For more than 30 years the property was owned by John Cox, David Ireland and Judy Ireland. With its expansive, coveted views of Chuckanut Bay and accessible waterfront Teddy Bear Cove seemed to be prime for residential development. However, the owners wished to see its natural values preserved.

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Teddy Bear Cove A *Done Deal!* (Cont'd from Page 3)

In late 1990 they contacted local realtor Chet Mathison who, searching for conservation minded buyers, contacted the *Land Trust*.

Then, through the ingenuity and hundreds of hours of hard work by the *Land Trust's* board member Rand Jack, a deal was engineered. With funds loaned by several private citizens, the *Land Trust* purchased an option to buy the waterfront and trail corridor up the hillside to Chuckanut Drive. This was followed by the purchase of the property by Whatcom County for inclusion in the county parks system. The *Land Trust* continues its involvement with Teddy Bear Cove by monitoring the conservation easement on the property and its development as a park.

This transaction is an example of the type of cooperation between private property owners and local government that the *Land Trust* strives to foster. In the words of John Cox, "*the other evening . . . I drove down Chuckanut, it seemed to me as though we really had not sold anything. My feelings were extremely good and I felt comfortable that everyone, including the Ireland and Cox clan can now enjoy Teddy Bear Cove even more.*"

The *Land Trust* is indebted to those individuals from the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, and private citizens who's time, dedication and generosity ensured a successful outcome. Now, Teddy Bear Cove is for all to enjoy for generations!

By Chris Moench

During the few years allotted to each of us, we are the guardians of the earth — we are the custodians of our heritage and of the future.

— James Michener

WHATCOM COUNTY LAND TRUST BECOMES A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION

Since 1984 the *Whatcom County Land Trust* has worked to preserve our priceless natural heritage. Over the past eight years we have protected over 450 acres in Whatcom County through donations of land and conservation easements. Today, you have the opportunity to join us in this demanding task and help us further our accomplishments. The *WCLT* Board Of Directors have recently voted to invite friends and supporters of the *Trust* to the organization as non-voting members.

This is an exciting time for the *Land Trust* as we grow and become involved in more and more conservation projects. The increased need for our services by land owners wishing to preserve their land, the land trade and other activities have become demanding on our volunteer board and part-time coordinator. We need a supportive membership base to meet adequately these demands.

Become a part of the *Land Trust*. — Join us as a member and participate in accomplishing the *WCLT* mission:

. . . to preserve and protect unique natural, scenic, agricultural and open space land in Whatcom County through acquisition of perpetual conservation easements or other land interests that insure the protection of the resource value.

As a member you will also receive our newsletter, be invited to special events, workshops and field trips. In addition numerous volunteer opportunities will be available for those members who wish to be more active in the work of the *Land Trust*.

If we are to continue to succeed at our mission, we must have your help. Your vision, commitment and grassroots support is the foundation upon which a lasting legacy of open space, farmland, wildlife and recreation areas will be assured for our children, grandchildren and generations to come.

*Please join us and help preserve
the beauty and heritage of Whatcom County.*

NOTIFICATION OF PUBLIC MEETING

WHATCOM COUNTY LAND TRANSACTION

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 1992

7:00 P.M.

PACIFIC FIRST FEDERAL BANK BLDG.

(corner of Cornwall and Magnolia)

Please join the City and County Councils as representatives from DNR, State Parks, the Trust for Public Lands, and the Whatcom County Land Trust share information about:

1200 ACRES ON CHUCKANUT MOUNTAIN

4000 ACRES IN THE LAKE WHATCOM WATERSHED

THE GOODYEAR/NELSON PROPERTY AND A 200 ACRE FARM NEAR
ACME

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED!

WE NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THIS LAND TRANSFER. PLEASE ATTEND AND HELP WHATCOM COUNTY GAIN VALUABLE NEW ADDITIONS TO ITS OPEN SPACE, GREENWAYS, AND PARKLANDS.



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WHATCOM COUNTY LAND TRUST

NEWSLETTER

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