

The



Newsletter of Whatcom Land Trust  
Whatcom County, Washington

# Steward

Whatcom Land Trust: Preserving the *Nature* of Whatcom County since 1984

Volume 17 Number 3

Winter 2008/2009

## Samish River Preserve Adds Two New Properties

In September 2008, Whatcom Land Trust acquired 62 acres of forest land from Duane Vander Yacht. The property is along the Samish River in Whatcom County near Wickersham. This acquisition complements an additional bargain sale of 7.8 acres from Piyush Swami completed in August. These properties contain numerous wildlife and are an important addition to critical habitat linkages within the Cascades to Chuckanuts (C2C) corridor. The primary long-term objectives identified in C2C are to protect and restore one of Western Washington's most intact lowland forest ecosystems, and provide ecosystem connectivity and diverse habitat linkages from the North Cascades west to the Chuckanut Mountains and the marine coast south of Bellingham. Linking and restoring these fragmented ecosystems will provide direct benefits to at least 27 listed and sensitive species of wildlife. The Upper Samish River headwaters contain a large complex of forest, open marsh wetlands, and small tributary streams that support multiple fish species. Migratory birds in the Pacific Flyway utilize the wetlands for resting, feeding, nesting, and rearing. The Samish River and its many small tributary streams support coho, chum, winter steelhead, and both resident and sea-run cutthroat. The project area is an intersection of the C2C planning areas that serve to bind together ecosystems; its preservation will alleviate landscape fragmentation.

### Swami Property

Piyush Swami received his property from a close friend in the 1980s while he was a student at Western Washington University. Later, while he was a professor at

*continued on page six*



*photo: Eric Carabba*

*Rich wetlands on the new properties buffer the Samish River, protecting and enhancing the river for fish and wildlife.*

## New Interns Helping Whatcom Land Trust

Carolyn Kinkade grew up in a small farming community in Washington's Columbia Basin. She moved to the Wenatchee Valley in 1994 and continued working in the travel industry. In 2007, she graduated from Wenatchee Valley Community College and moved to Bellingham to earn her Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography at WWU. She is currently fulfilling her internship requirement with Whatcom Land Trust.

Kate Odneal is doing field work for WLT through the winter. Kate has five seasons' experience with forest stand surveys as an employee of the U.S. Forest Service, and will work to complete tree and understory vegetation analyses on several WLT properties and easements.

One project the interns are assisting Whatcom Land Trust with is a beta version of a National Geographic project. Currently being developed under the name LandScope. The project is a web-based dynamic atlas that locates nearly any place on Earth, then provides photographic, historical, weather, population, and other maps of the spot. National Geographic is working with land trusts in 5 states on the project; WLT hopes to feature local conservation and photography on the site.

## Thank You to Point Whitehorn Work Party

On October 10th and 11th volunteers from the BP Refinery, REI and park neighbors worked at Point Whitehorn planting trees and shrubs.

Thank you to all of the generous volunteers who helped prepare the park for opening.

Volume 17, No. 3 - Winter, 2008/2009

The Steward published quarterly by

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# The Lily Point Coven

*“The main goal was to ensure our community feel strongly that they had a hand in this great feat... donating our efforts was a great way to show that these incredible native landscapes are important today and for generations to come.” —Carol Fuegi*

The preservation of Lily Point was a hands-across-the-border project that involved a number of conservation groups and naturalist societies. We wish to focus this Volunteer Spotlight on a group of activists who brought a tremendous amount of enthusiasm to the project. In the Land Trust office, we referred to this energetic group as the Friends of Lily Point but they informally refer to themselves as the Lily Point Coven. Samantha

Scholefield, one of the ringleaders of the group proclaims, “We bring a wicked sense of humour, irreverence, and a touch of magic wherever we pop up!”

Originally motivated by an email from a Canadian friend, this small but dedicated group of local residents actively campaigned to raise awareness about the urgency of last minute financing for the



photo: Meg Olson, Reporter for Northern Lights & All Points Bulletin  
Members of Lily Point Coven gather near the cemetery gate to raise funds and awareness of the preservation project. L to R: George Iddon, Samantha Scholefield & Julie Iddon.

purchase of the environmentally unique Lily Point located on Point Roberts. What started as a single challenge among friends and family to match a \$200 donation quickly grew into a community-wide appeal. Within hours, the original donation was matched and the challenge was on. A core leadership group of Maureen Buckley, Julie and George Iddon, Carol

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Design and Layout.....donated by Roderick C. Burton - Art & Design  
Printing.....Lithtex Northwest  
Contributors..... Rod Burton, Eric Carabba, Connie Clement, Jerry DeBacker, Mary Dumas, Bob Keller, Carolyn Kinkade, Kate Odneal, Steve Walker

Fuegi, and Samantha formed and began reaching out to people all over the Point and lower mainland British Columbia.

Carol stated that “The main goal was to ensure that our community feel strongly that they had a hand in this great feat. We felt that donating our efforts was a great way to show that these incredible native landscapes are important today and for generations to come.” The group organized an awareness campaign that included door-to-door promotion in Point Roberts, four Sundays at the entrance to Lily Point, flyers, posters, and advertising. They put together a media awareness campaign that resulted in the Lily Point story being covered in the *All Points Bulletin*, *The Delta Optimist*, *The Delta Leader*, and on-camera interviews on Delta Cable. The culmination of the fundraising was a walk and “Eco-Tour” designed to encourage the public’s support for turning this spectacular site into public parkland and an ecologically protected heritage site. Whatcom County Parks and Land Trust staff were on hand to take over 100 members of the general public through an exploration of the history of the Lily Point landscape, the native plants, marine, bird, and animal residents, and the future vision for the park.

“We asked people to tell us stories about Lily Point,” says group member Julie Iddon. “While we manned the gate on the weekends providing information on the project, we met a couple who had their first date at Lily Point, another couple who were married on the beach, and a man who just celebrated his 80th birthday accompanied by his family from around the world and his dog Tiggy! And the long-time residents of the Point have such vivid recollections. We discovered it really is a special place.”

The group is quick to point out the efforts and give credit to a number of folks who were involved in a variety of ways and over a long period of time. “We helped, but more importantly, the whole community



photo: Rod Burton

### *Explorers of the lowest tide of the year at Lily Point.*

joined in,” said Samantha. She continued, “With all of the Trust’s work, Lily Point can now make the transition to parkland and we are thankful to everyone who stepped up to help make this extraordinary opportunity a reality.”

Lily Point is now open to the public and there is never a bad time to spend

a day visiting it and the other county parks in the area. If you visit in July, be sure to take in the Point Roberts Garden Tour; there is a distinct possibility you will visit a garden of one of the members of the Lily Point Coven—be on the alert for whatever magic their green thumbs conjure up!

## **New Board Member, Simi Jain**

Simi Jain moved to Whatcom County in 2005. She was raised in Albany, NY and graduated with a B.A. in government and environmental studies from Bowdoin College in Maine. A love for the water and mountains brought her to Seattle after college where she worked for a media consulting non-profit organization which focused on northwest environmental issues. It was during this time that she learned she wanted to work on environmental legal issues and returned to New England to attend Vermont Law School. There she earned her J.D. and Masters in Environmental Law. Simi is a local attorney practicing in the areas of land use, municipal, real estate, and environmental law at Zender Thurston, P.S. in Bellingham. She enjoys reading, skiing, hiking and running on the many trails around Whatcom County. Simi is looking forward to helping WLT in its efforts to preserve this community’s diverse and precious lands.



# Point Whitehorn Marine Reserve is Open!

Whatcom Land Trust has completed the development of the 54-acre Point Whitehorn Marine Reserve, which has 1,900 feet of saltwater shoreline

Whatcom County purchased the property for \$375,000. A REI grant from their REI-Gives program was combined with generous support from **Cloud Mountain Farm** to purchase and plant trees and bushes throughout the reserve. **SouthFork Construction** built the trail and donated a bench. **British Petroleum**, a neighbor to the reserve, gave financial support and **HB Hansen** was general contractor for construction. We appreciate everyone's support and cooperation to bring this remarkable marine reserve to the public. A grand opening and dedication is planned for spring.

The ¾-mile trail is barrier-free and leads to four stunning viewpoints overlooking the Strait of Georgia. A hiker-only trail leads to the beach. Please leave your pets at home.



photos: Jerry DeBacker, Rod Burton

Upper right: Texture of the beach at Pt. Whitehorn.

Center: WLT staff Steve Walker and Eric Carabba look out on Georgia Strait from one of the viewpoints.

Above: One of many boardwalks that pass over the wettest portion of a wooded wetlands at Pt. Whitehorn Marine Reserve.



## Memorial Bench for Carl Batchelor

*"There are some who can live without wild things,  
and some who cannot."* —Aldo Leopold

Honoring Carl Batchelor, conservationist, Planner and  
Whatcom Land Trust board member. He cared for the land.

The text above, installed near a bench in one of the viewpoints at Point Whitehorn, will help us remember the contributions Carl made to conservation in Whatcom County. In his work for the Whatcom County Planning Department, as a board member of Whatcom Land Trust, and as a property owner in the Lake Whatcom watershed, Carl cared for the land and helped others do the same.

If you would like to honor Carl's effort, please consider making a bench contribution to Whatcom Land Trust in his memory.

# Motivations for Preservation

Whatcom Land Trust is privileged to meet countless people who have a deep regard for the land. This land may be a working farm in our fertile agricultural area, a marine shoreline on Puget Sound, or a quiet, shaded riverbed in the forested uplands of the Nooksack River. The 9,700+ acres of preserved land in Whatcom County are equally as diverse as the Whatcom Land Trust supporters who work with us to create a precious legacy—lands preserved in perpetuity. Together, we share an awesome responsibility sustained by personal, and often private, motivations and reverence for the land.

Take for instance Whatcom Land Trust's recent conservation project—preservation of 90 acres of forested bluff and 40 acres of tidelands at Lily Point. This project in Point Roberts, WA, was truly a collaborative enterprise involving enthusiastic participation from people on both sides of the border. Samantha Scholefield shared what motivated her to serve as a volunteer: "When I saw that my simple email pledge multiplied a personal donation by 5 in the first evening after circulation, I knew I had to make sure people were informed about this amazing opportunity to preserve the character of Point Roberts. With the help of friends, we hosted a walk of the area raising \$5,000 and a lot of awareness. We continued to greet visitors on those cold spring mornings to let them know about the opportunity at hand. We got so much out of the experience, such as meeting a regular walker in the area out celebrating his 80th birthday with family and friends visiting from all over the world. Or the two teenage visitors who emptied their pockets, eager to chip in." Samantha's initiative, positive spirit, and skill proved indispensable in honoring guests at the Lily Point Dedication Ceremony.



photo: Jerry DeBacker

Samantha Scholefield offers a gift to a Lummi Nation representative during the celebration of the successful purchase and protection of Lily Point.

At Whatcom Land Trust, we rely on the good company of an unlikely cast of collaborators. While our walks in life vary, we leverage a common regard for the land as the springboard for land preservation activities in Whatcom County. For some, this motivation may arise from a personal connection with a specific place in

Whatcom County. For others, the impetus may arise from the need to preserve a few wild places to remind us of what quiet really feels like. We'd like to hear about what motivates you.

In the coming issues of the *Steward*, we will share the stories and quiet hopes of Whatcom Land Trust supporters.

## Beautiful Picture Books Support Local Land Protection Efforts

*Whatcom Places* now has a new soul-mate, a partner, a sister to the south: *Natural Skagit: A Journey from Mountains to the Sea*. Released in hard and soft cover on November 13th by the Skagit Land Trust, this 126-page book excels in every aspect. Pictures, of course, tell a story that cannot be conveyed with words, yet the Foreword by Tom Robbins and Epilogue by Bill Dietrich come close. The Lee Mann photos alone are worth the price of this book.

Unlike *Whatcom Places*, the Skagit story follows the third largest river on the U.S. Pacific Coast downstream from North Cascade snowfields to the brine of the Salish Sea, its course flowing past a mix of loggers, farmers, artists, fishers, small hamlets, cities, Indian tribes, nature-lovers and dedicated conservationists. "A river runs through it," as Norman McLean and Robbins have written. Everywhere on earth rivers tell the stories of the land.

We congratulate project leader Renata Hoyle Maybruck and her large army of volunteers who have produced a powerful tool for protecting Skagit's unique natural heritage. There will be a reading from *Natural Skagit: A Journey from Mountains to the Sea* on December 10 at 7pm at Village Books in Fairhaven.

# Adding to Samish River Preserve continued from page one



the University of Cincinnati, it was left wild. This spring, when Piyush decided to sell the property and had it listed, his agent Mike Hill urged Piyush to consider working with the Land Trust. Piyush was supportive of protecting the wildlife habitat on the property and agreed to sell it for substantially less than the appraised value. We can now use the purchase price plus the donated value as leverage for grant funds to protect more wildlife habitat in the Cascades to Chuckanuts corridor along the Samish River.

## Vander Yacht Property

Duane Vander Yacht purchased property along Innis Creek Road as a woodlot around 30 years ago. Several times he considered harvesting the timber, but never got around to it. Over the years, Duane was approached by several different people who were interested in buying the land, but he never completed a transaction. The land sat and the trees grew. The property will be permanently set aside to provide clean water and wildlife habitat. Duane Vander Yacht agreed to sell his 62 acres of mature forested wetlands, marsh, bogs, and Samish River frontage for appraised fair market value. The acquisition of this intact site is a critical component to building a larger Samish River Preserve.

Please support Whatcom Land Trust as we continue our effort to protect this important habitat linkage and apply for grant funding to expand on these successes. Whatcom Land Trust continues to work throughout Whatcom County to protect special wildlife habitat and working landscapes.

*photos: Eric Carabba*

*Upper left: Vine maples on the Swami property.  
Left: WLT board member Rand Jack examines pristine forested wetlands on the Vander Yacht property.*



## Partner Spotlight

North Cascades Audubon volunteers are helping conduct bird surveys on Whatcom Land Trust properties. For example, over fifty bird species were identified on the Innis Creek property this past summer. The photo to the right shows NCA members Tom Pratum, Paul Woodcock, and Lila Emmer who helped with the survey.





photo: Eric Carabba

Aerial view of the Samish River Preserve. Protected properties are forested areas in the right foreground.

## Agricultural Preservation and the Protection of Working Landscapes

Whatcom Land Trust is a partner with Whatcom County for the purchase of development rights on farmland. The County recently completed the purchase of development rights on three more farms for a total of eleven projects protecting 610 acres.

Additionally, we are working with Farm Friends to promote voluntary conservation of farmland. There are currently excellent tax incentives for qualified farmers and ranchers when they donate conservation easements. Working forests can be protected just like farms. Essentially, development is limited while the use of these lands for growing crops and harvesting resources continues.

Farm Friends, financial advisors, and Whatcom Land Trust recently hosted a luncheon to provide information about conservation easements, financial plan-

ning, and potential tax incentives for voluntary conservation.

## Lake Whatcom Watershed

In October, the Whatcom County Council (by a vote of 4 to 3) approved the reconveyance of approximately 8000 acres in the Lake Whatcom Watershed. It will take approximately two years to complete the reconveyance. Whatcom Land Trust will work to ensure long-term protection of this land through a conservation easement.

Whatcom Land Trust is working with the City of Bellingham to protect properties acquired for watershed protection like Three Creeks Preserve and Agate Bay Preserve. Whatcom Land Trust holds conservation easements that restrict future uses of such properties with the

purpose of protecting water quality in Lake Whatcom.

## Salmon Recovery

Whatcom Land Trust is a partner with Nooksack Salmon Recovery team working to protect and restore critical salmon habitat along the Nooksack River. WLT is currently working on land acquisitions on the South Fork and the North Fork of the Nooksack River. Since 1984, WLT has protected some 22 miles of riverfront.

## Puget Sound Partnership

The Puget Sound Partnership is developing an Action Agenda: Our Roadmap to Restoring the Sound. Across the Puget Sound region, the Puget Sound Partnership is mobilizing communities, agencies, and organizations to work together to create a comprehensive Action Agenda to restore Puget Sound.

# Great Outdoors Auction 2009

Circle Saturday May 2nd on your calendar because the Great Outdoors Auction 2009 takes center stage that day! Plan on joining us as we commemorate our 25th anniversary with a Silver Celebration. The function begins at 5 pm at the Lakeway Inn and you won't want to miss it. You will find your friends and neighbors mingling over the silent auction items, enjoying a delicious meal, and bidding up the Best of the Live Auction! Trips, excursions, and outdoor gear will be auctioned. A great time will be had by all. Save the date and help us celebrate!



photo: Passing tourist

John and Stacie Matthews take a moment to pose after completing the descent of Leggett Pass in Northern California.

## Bike Trip Benefits Land Trust

Looking to spend a little time day-dreaming of life out on the open road? You can find tales of our intrepid excursionists, Stacie and John Matthews at [www.twoargentina.whatcomlandtrust.org](http://www.twoargentina.whatcomlandtrust.org) or simply visit our home page and click on the bike wheel icon. Stacie and John are well into their trip to Argentina and are posting photos and updating their travel journal on a regular basis. You can follow their bike tracks, or you might wish to pledge a donation in support of their effort to raise awareness and funds for the Land Trust.



photo: Bill Wright

## New Year's Day Eagle Tour

New Year's Day—a day to recover from late night celebrations, to watch football in a stuffy room while eating high-fat foods and yelling at the television, OR a day to go outside. Yes, outside where beautiful evergreens put things back in perspective, where it's quiet except for the sounds of birds or water, where open space invites the mind to ponder past and future... Ah...!

This New Year's Day, would you like to go outside with us? Once again, Doug Huddle will share his wildlife expertise by leading the New Year's Day Eagle Tour. You will visit a popular eagle fishing site protected by Whatcom Land Trust. Learn about the local recovery of this endangered species and of current threats to its food source. See local places where eagles roost and watch the birds in action! The tour begins at 1:30 pm. Call the office to register, 650-9470.

## Tax-Free Giving from your IRA

For older donors and nonprofits that rely on their generosity, a glimmer of good news emerged from October's economic turmoil: Congress extended the IRA charitable rollover as part of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008. The newly extended IRA rollover provision permits you to use your IRA to help accomplish your philanthropic goals with no federal tax impact. If you are 70½ or older, you may make a gift of up to \$100,000 to Whatcom Land Trust or our endowment fund held at Whatcom Community Foundation from your IRA with no federal income tax impact, and your gift will be counted toward your required minimum distribution. To obtain this benefit, you must instruct your IRA administrator to transfer funds *directly* to Whatcom Land Trust or the Community Foundation. If you withdraw the funds from the IRA first and then contribute them to the trust/foundation, you will lose the tax benefit.

## Annual Appeal for Support Is Vital

By now you should have received our annual appeal letter. Your support is vital to the success of this organization. We devote a great deal of time and effort to securing multiple sources of funding for conservation projects. We strive to see that your investments are not only stretched to the limit, but are matched or increased whenever possible. We come to our supporters but once a year to ask for organizational donations. Please take the time to return your envelope today. You may also make a safe and secure donation through our website.

## Business Partner Breakfast

Our Business Partner breakfast takes place at Boundary Bay Brewery & Bistro Tuesday December 9th at 7:30 am. If you are interested in how your business might partner with Whatcom Land Trust to preserve the best of Whatcom places, please contact the office at 650-9470.



# Terry Tempest Williams

## Special Opportunities for Whatcom Land Trust supporters

- Catered reception with Ms. Williams at the Roeder home, preceding her presentation
- Reserved seats for Ms. Williams' talk at First Congregational Church

Come help us begin our Silver Anniversary with one of America's most eloquent voices for the cause of conservation! Renowned author Terry Tempest Williams comes to Bellingham on Monday, January 26, to talk about her latest book, *Finding Beauty in a Broken World*. The event begins a year-long celebration of Whatcom Land Trust's 25th anniversary. Ms. Williams, who recently packed the main auditorium at Benaroya Hall in Seattle, will be at the First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Avenue, at 7 pm that evening. A special opportunity for Land Trust supporters exists as a limited number of seats are reserved for those wishing to attend both a pre-event reception with the author at the Roeder Home and the reading.

Terry Tempest Williams over the course of her life has focused on land stewardship. She has a love of the desert environment and other naturally beautiful places, and has opposed resource destruction, especially when affecting human health. She has long been an advocate of land trusts. In an interview in 2003 she stated: "Democracy requires our participation. The land trust movement in this country is a beautiful example of how we can find hope within our



photo: Ted C. Brummond

*"The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time."*

own communities because it bypasses government and creates a diverse and truly bipartisan conversation on behalf of the land."

A former naturalist-in-residence at the Utah Museum of Natural History, Williams is perhaps best known for her book *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (Pantheon, 1991) in which she chronicles the epic rise of Great Salt Lake and the flooding of the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in 1983. It relates her mother's diagnosis with ovarian cancer, believed to be caused by radioactive fallout from the nuclear tests in the Nevada desert in the 1950s and 60s. *Refuge* is now regarded as a classic in American nature writing, a testament to loss and the earth's healing grace. The author of fifteen books, early reviews of

her latest work are suggesting that it may well be her most original, provocative, and eloquently moving book since *Refuge*. The Land Trust is deeply appreciative of the support of Dee & Chuck Robinson and all of the staff at Village Books for making this event happen!

The reception at the Roeder Home with Terry Tempest Williams includes appetizers, beer, wine, light refreshments, and a reserved seat at the Congregational Church. The price is \$50.00 and must be purchased from the Land Trust office at 650-9470.

Tickets for the Congregational Church event are \$12.50 and are available now at Village Books, 671-2626, and are also available on-line at [Brownpapertickets.com](http://Brownpapertickets.com). All proceeds from the presentation will benefit Whatcom Land Trust.

# What's Happening on the Land

WLT has again partnered with Whatcom County Planning to expand agricultural properties under the Purchase of Development Rights program. The new properties under protection total nearly 70 acres. A 39-acre portion of the Tjoelker dairy farm northwest of Lynden is now preserved forever for agricultural use. The other two properties, Bouchard and Bauthues, are adjacent on Loomis Trail Road northeast of Custer. One is currently in restoration for seed potato production and the other contains an extensive hay field.



photo: Steve Walker

Tjoelker farm joins over 600 acres of Whatcom county agricultural lands protected by the PDR program.



“Engineered” log jams have been placed along the North Fork of the Nooksack River on portions of the Whatcom Land Trust’s Mt. Baker Baptist complex of riparian properties. The Nooksack Tribe secured funding to construct a series of enormous man-made log jams using pilings that are driven into the riverbed and then interlaced with up-rooted trees and enhanced with rocks and organic debris. These structures modify the course of the river and create conditions more favorable to salmon survival.

photo: Eric Carabba

Man-made log jams will affect the flow of the Nooksack River in ways that will benefit salmon.

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photo: Eric Carabba

Fenton Nature Preserve pond reflects the image of the Make a Difference Day volunteer crew.

Twenty-five volunteers gathered at the Fenton Nature Reserve on Make-A-Difference-Day, October 25th, to clean up debris and remove invasive plants. The Whatcom Volunteer Center, which coordinated events throughout Whatcom County, offered a hearty breakfast to all volunteers before they headed out for several hours of labor for environmental and social service organizations. The volunteers at Fenton included members of the Western Washington University chapter of **Beta Alpha Psi**, and employees of **Starbucks Coffee** and **Conoco-Phillips**. Sunshine and pleasant weather aided volunteers as they battled pesky blackberry brambles. The beautiful 80-acre Fenton Nature Preserve, not yet enhanced with public facilities, was purchased by Whatcom Land Trust in 2006. The property includes an open field, a reservoir, and mature second growth forest.



photo: Connie Clement

## WLT Gifts for Holiday Season

Looking for a unique gift this holiday season? Whatcom Land Trust has several special ideas. There's the award-winning *Whatcom Places II* in paperback (\$30) or hard cover (\$45), packages of 8 note cards featuring Whatcom County scenes (\$8.50), WLT coffee mugs (\$12), and WLT tote bags (\$12). Of course, you could purchase a gift membership to Whatcom Land Trust for \$35. If you'd like to purchase a \$45 gift membership, you'll get a coffee mug or tote bag, too. For a \$55 gift membership, you get both! Look for these items on our website, our Allied Arts Holiday Festival booth, or call the office at 650-9470.

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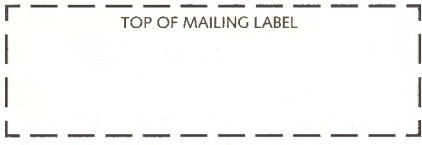
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**Whatcom Land Trust • By the Numbers**

Land protected through the efforts or assistance of Whatcom Land Trust:

<b>Total Acres .....</b>	<b>9,734</b>
<b>Miles of Riverfront .....</b>	<b>22.5</b>
<b>Miles of Salt Water Shoreline .....</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Public Parks Created .....</b>	<b>14</b>

*The Mission of Whatcom Land Trust is to preserve and protect wildlife habitat, scenic, agricultural and open space lands in Whatcom County for future generations by securing interests in land and promoting land stewardship.*

**I'd Like to help Whatcom Land Trust. I want to:**

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