



Conservation Success: Blooms Preserve in the Black River Watershed Protected

Capitol Land Trust (CLT) has conserved Blooms Preserve: 60 acres just east of the Black River, near Little Rock. The property's key feature is 2,000 feet of Blooms Ditch, providing important habitat for the Olympic mudminnow and Oregon spotted frog.

The Oregon spotted frog is a threatened species. The two main causes of their population decline are loss of habitat and predators. Their preferred habitat is slow-moving quiet water, with plenty of vegetation in it, and they don't do well when their environment changes. Bullfrogs and introduced

fish are the predators that have negatively affected them the most. Looking to the future, CLT hopes to acquire a large enough piece of Oregon spotted frog habitat that would make restoration activities impactful for the species.

The property also includes a stand of forest rich in native plant diversity. Together, the ditch and the forest support a wide array of birdlife. Black Hills Audubon Society surveyed the property and spotted 57 bird species, including green heron, pileated woodpecker, and western tanager.

Many thanks to our project partners who made this conservation success possible: WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Black Hills Audubon Society, and private donors. Support for this project also included funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation granted through The Nature Conservancy to identify and protect Pacific Northwest lands that will provide resiliency in the face of climate change.



Photo of a Savannah sparrow by Bruce Livingston





LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Community + Natural World = Happiness

At first glance, it seems like a simple equation. Reflecting deeper, I realize I've been searching for the elements of this equation and have now found them here with Capitol Land Trust. It turns out community and the natural world were the very two elements that shaped me. They reside right here in my home, southwest Washington.

It takes community.

Connection to others is a critical need that can increase our knowledge and provide perspective to the challenges that we face on a day-to-day basis.

It takes nature.

Similarly, time in nature helps us grow, rejuvenate, and build confidence in who we are and who we want to become. I am a firm believer that we are our best selves when we are outdoors.

I have had the opportunity to live and work in many amazing outdoor places, yet there has always been an uncontrollable force that has pulled me back to the Puget Sound region. The lands that surround us here are an essential part of our regional way of life. The landscape drives our economy, provides places to spend time outdoors with family, and sustains beloved keystone species like salmon and orca. It is a critical lifeline, one that has found its way into many of our hearts and has kept us connected to this place and to each other.



Hi, my name is Dave Winter, and I can't tell you how excited I am to be your Executive Director here at Capitol Land Trust.

In our strategic plan, "*Engage Communities and Foster Connections to Our Protected Lands*" and "*Conserve Natural Areas and Working Lands*" are listed as two distinct goals. But really, we can't have one without the other. I believe it is more important than ever that we strive to provide experiences in the outdoors for the next generation.

There are many opportunities to be involved in our work. In this issue, I hope you'll be inspired to join us in building a connection to the natural world for all residents of southwest Washington through conservation of our natural areas and working lands.

This affects the health and quality of life of each one of us.

In partnership,

Dave Winter

*...it's more important than ever that we strive to
provide experiences in the outdoors
for the next generation.*

How did you first hear about Capitol Land Trust?



Odds are, it had something to do with a friend. After 30+ years of conservation and getting people out on the land, CLT's base has grown from a group of friends around a kitchen table to the broad network of today, but there still are many people in our community who don't know what we do or how to get involved. We'd love to have your help! Here are a few ideas.

- ▶ If your friend likes to work in the dirt, bring them to a stewardship party. If using tools isn't their idea of good time, invite them to a property tour. Both are on our website Events page.
- ▶ Take a friend for a hike on one of CLT's preserves. Turn to page 6 for a guide of preserves that are open for recreation.
- ▶ Be a table captain at CLT's Conservation Breakfast. (Details on back panel). Not sure you can fill a table? Find a friend to co-captain with!
- ▶ If you see an article in our e-newsletter or a CLT Facebook post that might interest your friend, share it with them!
- ▶ We're honored to be participating in the Community Foundation of South Puget Sound's Give Local Campaign this year. Donations made to CLT through the campaign will benefit the Inspiring Kids Preserve. It's a great opportunity to reach out to friends who want to help kids get out into nature. The campaign runs from October 31st to November 20th. Donate at: <https://givelocal.thecommunityfoundation.com/campaign/inspiring-kids-preserve>
- ▶ Choose a book from a local author that relates to the PNW landscape for your book club and incorporate a quick intro to Capitol Land Trust in your next book club gathering.



Photo opposite page: Dave Winter, by Greg Mennegar.

Photos this page, top: Friends enjoying CLT Conservation Breakfast, Bruce Livingston. Middle: Young hikers examine Bayshore Preserve saltwater channel. Lower right: Hikers, Greg Mennegar

One step closer to the Inspiring Kids Preserve

Earlier this year, Capitol Land Trust purchased Harmony Farm on Henderson Inlet. Harmony Farm originally was conserved in 1992 when Harmony Glover donated a conservation easement to CLT. Harmony held a deep desire to protect the land for future generations of wildlife and people, which was probably at least partially instilled in her by her father. When he purchased the property in 1929, he posted several signs that said: “No hunting. . . No shooting. . . Wildlife Sanctuary.”

While the conservation easement protected many of the conservation values of the property, CLT was interested in obtaining full ownership so that we could pursue restoration efforts and eventually open it for public use, focused on schools and other organizations that provide education and enrichment programming for youth.

The 56-acre property is home to many different habitat types, including 1,300 feet of shoreline, two pocket estuaries, wetlands, and mature forest. The pocket estuaries, fed by streams that seep from the hillside, are frequented by kingfishers and provide important salmon habitat. The upland parts of the property have stands of western redcedar, Douglas-fir, big-leaf maple and red alder. Old fruit trees line the edge of an agricultural field under restoration, giving a glimpse into the land’s homestead history.

Just to the south of Harmony Farm is the former Stillman Tree Farm which CLT purchased in 2016. Together, the two properties will combine to make the 108-acre Inspiring Kids Preserve. The idea for CLT to own a preserve focused on the kid-experience in nature was born many years ago. We were grappling with two big questions.

► *Who will become the conservation leaders of tomorrow and protect our conserved lands forever?*

► *Beyond clean air and water and wildlife habitat, how can our conserved lands fulfill the needs our community, both today and in the future?*

When you ask someone passionate about conservation how their interest in the natural world started, they almost always tell a story from their childhood. Whether it was collecting tadpoles from a pond, building a fort in the woods, or skipping a rock for the first time across the bay, these experiences have the potential to cement in children a respect for nature that will stay with them throughout their lives. The Inspiring Kids Preserve will be our way of giving more kids the opportunity to have that kind of experience.





**MANY THANKS
TO
OUR PARTNERS
WHO MADE THIS
MILESTONE
POSSIBLE:**

Becky & Jeff Sobel

*WA Recreation &
Conservation Office*

*WA Department
of Ecology*

*US Fish &
Wildlife Service*

Thurston County

*Squaxin Island
Tribe*

*Taylor Shellfish
Farms*

*Dawkins
Charitable Trust*

*Inspiring Kids
Campaign Donors*



And while we hope to cultivate the next generation who will carry our mission forward, we also know that time in nature will help these kids in many other ways. It isn't surprising that kids who spend time in nature are less stressed, more active, and excited to learn. From our own experience, we know nature has the power to restore the heart and clear the mind. And couldn't we all use a little more balance in our busy, technology-focused lives?

This is when the vision begins to expand beyond being a place where kids come as part of a field trip once or twice while they grow up, to a place they return to with their families, and decades later bring their own children to. This is when the vision opens up to include not only kids and becomes a place where people of all ages and walks of life can come to engage with nature in a way that fills them up. This is when we begin to see that the Inspiring Kids Preserve is really a place that will inspire the kid in all of us.

Photos, opposite page: Students at Bayshore Preserve. Photo this page top: Harmony Farm shoreline on Henderson Inlet, Teresa Gypin. Middle: Tree hugging at Bayshore Preserve. Bottom right: Volunteers spread bark on Randall Preserve trails.



LET'S GO FOR A HIKE!

On a CLT Preserve

Opening select preserves for recreation was a goal we set out to achieve in our latest strategic plan, and several of those efforts came to fruition earlier this year as we completed trail development at three CLT preserves. A variety of experiences in nature can be had at these preserves, from a place to rest and bird watch at Randall Preserve, to miles of trails at Darlin Creek Preserve. These three preserves are made possible through the support of our dedicated donors and volunteers, so grab a friend and enjoy the places you've helped protect.

Darlin Creek Preserve

8910 Lake Lucinda Dr. SW, Olympia, WA 98512

Darlin Creek Preserve, located to the east of Capitol State Forest, is a true treasure. Thanks to help from the Washington Trails Association, three miles of trails provide three loop options through 312 acres of forest, streams, and wetlands. Two beaver dams create wetland areas great for watching wildlife. You may even see a bear rambling down the trail! Restoration efforts here have included invasive removal, plantings, and the removal of two fish-blocking culverts over Darlin Creek.



Randall Preserve

4939 Mud Bay Rd. NW, Olympia, WA 98502

Conserved in 1997 by the generosity of Marjorie Randall, Randall Preserve has gone through a complete transformation over the years. The short, interpretive trail at this preserve will give you an overview of the history of the site and how restoration efforts have brought it to the condition it is today. There is also a bench overlooking Mud Bay to enjoy the myriad of birds who visit here.

Hilburn Preserve

West Hurlbert Rd., Shelton, WA 98584

Goldsborough Creek has been a focus of conservation efforts since the Goldsborough dam was removed in 2001 after being in place for 100 years. Today, the wetlands adjoining Goldsborough Creek are referred to as "coho factories" due to the food and protection they provide increasing numbers of coho salmon before they head out to sea. A visit to Hilburn Preserve provides an opportunity to see a section of Goldsborough Creek just before it enters downtown Shelton. You'll also get to see the results of the CHOICE High School CAP 21 program's hard work last year, sprucing up the trail, and building a parking area, kiosk, and footbridge.



Bayshore Preserve – Interim use

3800 WA-3, Shelton, WA 98584

(Parking next to coffee stand on Highway 3)

While trail improvements have yet to be made on this 74-acre property, visitors are still welcome to come and enjoy views of Johns Creek and Oakland Bay while witnessing Bayshore's transformation from golf course to nature preserve. The bridge over Johns Creek is a great place to watch the salmon run in early November. Long-term plans for the preserve include an ADA accessible trail, viewing platforms, and covered structures to support environmental education programming already taking place here.

Are you interested in helping maintain CLT's public preserves? Join one of our budding "Friends Of" groups! Contact Daron Williams for more information: daron@capitolandtrust.org

These preserves are open from dawn until dusk. For more information and trail maps, go to: CapitolLandTrust.org

Photo opposite page, far left: Strolling at Darlin Creek Preserve, Bonnie Liberty. Near left: Randall Preserve overlooking Mud Bay.

Photos this page: Below: Curious youngsters at Darlin Creek Preserve. Top right: Saltwater channel restoration at Bayshore Preserve, Bruce Livingston. Right: Hikers on new Hilburn Preserve bridge, Bruce Livingston.





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SAVE THE DATE!

Capitol Land Trust's 15th Annual CONSERVATION BREAKFAST Connecting with our Community

Tuesday, February 12, 2019

7:00 - 8:30 AM

Marcus Pavilion at Saint Martin's University

Join Capitol Land Trust for a complimentary breakfast and fabulous program which will highlight the connections we have with the communities of wildlife, agriculture and recreation.

The event is free to attend, and a donation will be requested during the program – donations support Capitol Land Trust's mission to further collaborative and strategic conservation of southwest Washington's essential natural areas and working lands.

Would you like to be a Table Captain and help bring 7 friends to the event? Please contact Alison Beglin:

alison@capitollandtrust.org ♦ 360.943.3012

