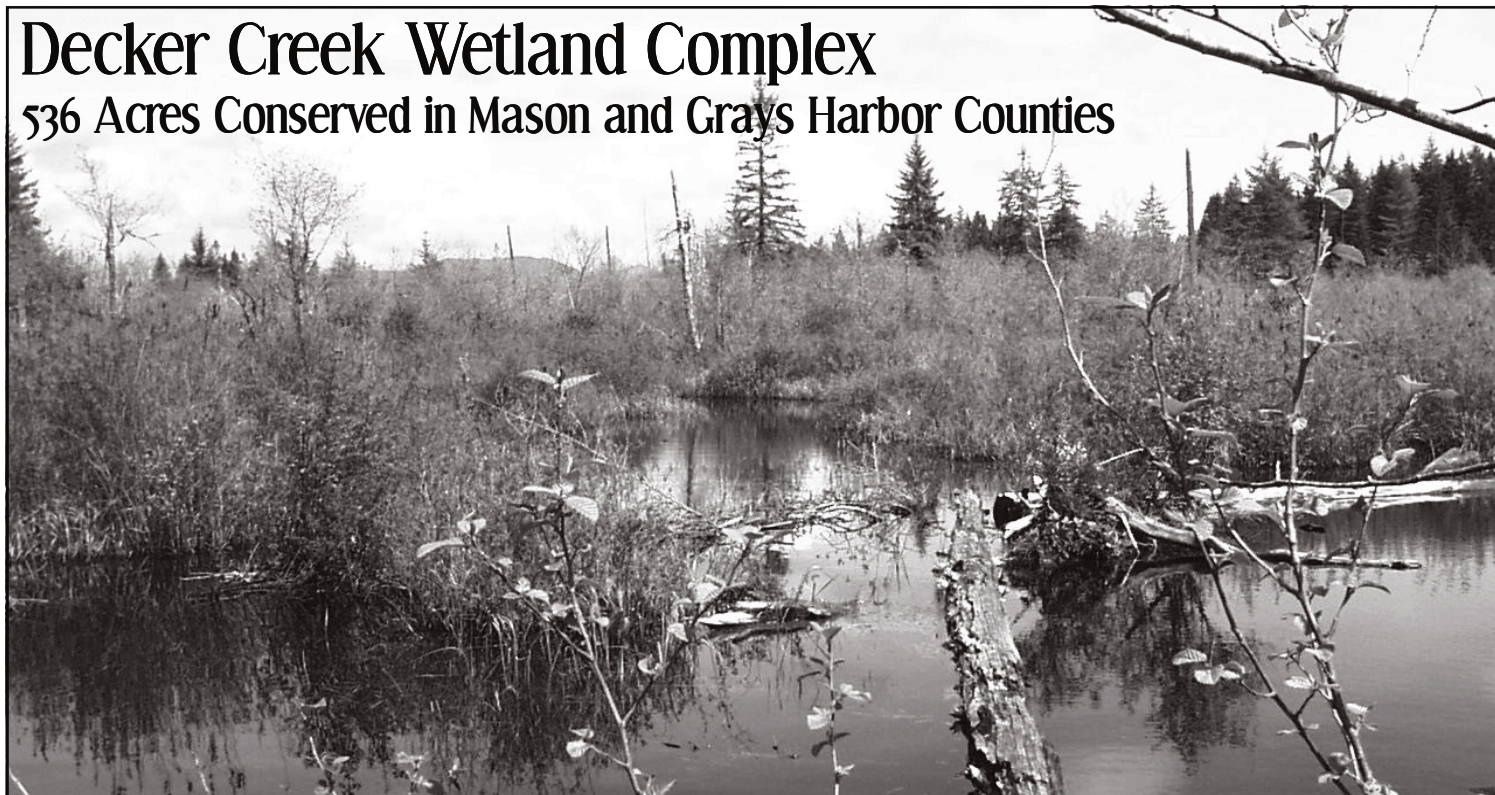


# CAPITOL LAND TRUST NEWS

*Furthering collaborative and strategic conservation of southwest Washington's essential natural areas and working lands.*

ISSUE 48 FALL 2009

## Decker Creek Wetland Complex 536 Acres Conserved in Mason and Grays Harbor Counties



Eric Enter

*By Eric Beach, John Konovsky and Karin Strelloff*

NEAR MATLOCK, MASON COUNTY. If you look at a USGS topo map, it is labeled "Deckerville Swamp." It's a 536-acre salmon "factory" aiding and abetting all three species found in the Chehalis watershed—Chinook, Coho and Chum. And there are many other astonishing things about what we more nerdy types fondly call the "Decker Creek Wetland Complex."

Not least among them is the extraordinary effort it takes to get there. A dimly lit forest of Douglas-fir, cedar, hemlock and alder transitions into a dense thicket of riparian vegetation. Tightly woven branches shift and give way, revealing a subtle wildlife path through the brush. A few more twists and turns and the scene opens into a broad vista. Pools of tannic water empty into rivulets that braid through mounds of golden sedge and reddened moss. Every so often the landscape is interrupted by hummocks of burnt stumps and old logs thick with upland vegetation like salal.

There is a feeling of quiet magic in this scene that has existed undisturbed for decades. It will continue to do so forever, thanks to a remarkable partnership enabling its permanent protection.

The natural history of the area was shaped by glaciers and fire. The current ecological character of the area began with events that occurred 17,000 years ago. As the last glaciers retreated, large amounts of melt water captured sediments that

*continued on page 2*

### Inside this issue:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Protected Areas in Black River Watershed Grow | 3  |
| Steamboat Conservation Partnership Launched   | 4  |
| Rare Beetle Discovered at Springer Lake       | 4  |
| CLT Welcomes Caitlin Guthrie                  | 5  |
| Habitat Restoration Work Parties              | 5  |
| Creating a Legacy                             | 6  |
| Cowlitz River Habitat Conserved               | 6  |
| Thank you to our Supporters                   | 7  |
| Ninth Annual Summer Gala                      | 10 |





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Masthead photograph courtesy of Thi Dang  
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*"Decker Creek" continued from page 1*

had been transported by the glaciers, distributing these across the landscape. The newly deposited sediments buried previous glacial tills in a patchwork fashion. The result produced a hodgepodge of well-drained soils interspersed with impervious clays supporting wetlands.

Conifers took up residence on the well-drained soils, occasionally to be torched during warmer centuries by vast forest fires sweeping the region. This cycle of growth, fire and regeneration accentuated the forest-wetland mosaic seen today.

The effort to protect this landscape has been as arduous as a trek across the land. It takes a lot of sweat to penetrate the dense riparian vegetation but, once accomplished, the vista breaks open to reveal a sweeping panorama full of color and life.

### Decker Creek

Conservation of the site took more than five years to complete, but we now see a beautiful future. Capitol Land Trust guided the project from its inception, building partnerships, securing funding and overseeing complex negotiations. Property owner Green Diamond Resource Company supported the effort by halting a planned timber harvest and patiently working with the Land Trust to ensure the permanent preservation of this unique setting. Mason County Commissioners and staff helped to secure all of the funding. Mason County now owns the property and Capitol Land Trust will act as long-term stewards to ensure the site retains its natural character and exceptional habitat.

Funding was provided through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, and a group of committed citizens who dedicated personal funds towards the project at a critical juncture. Together this dedicated group made it possible to protect a very unique wetland complex where salmon, elk, black bear, and countless other creatures will always have a home. ❧



Eric Erler

### Pacific Tree Frog



Eric Erler

*Eric Beach, a biologist with Green Diamond Resource Company, is responsible for habitat conservation on the company's Washington forestlands.*

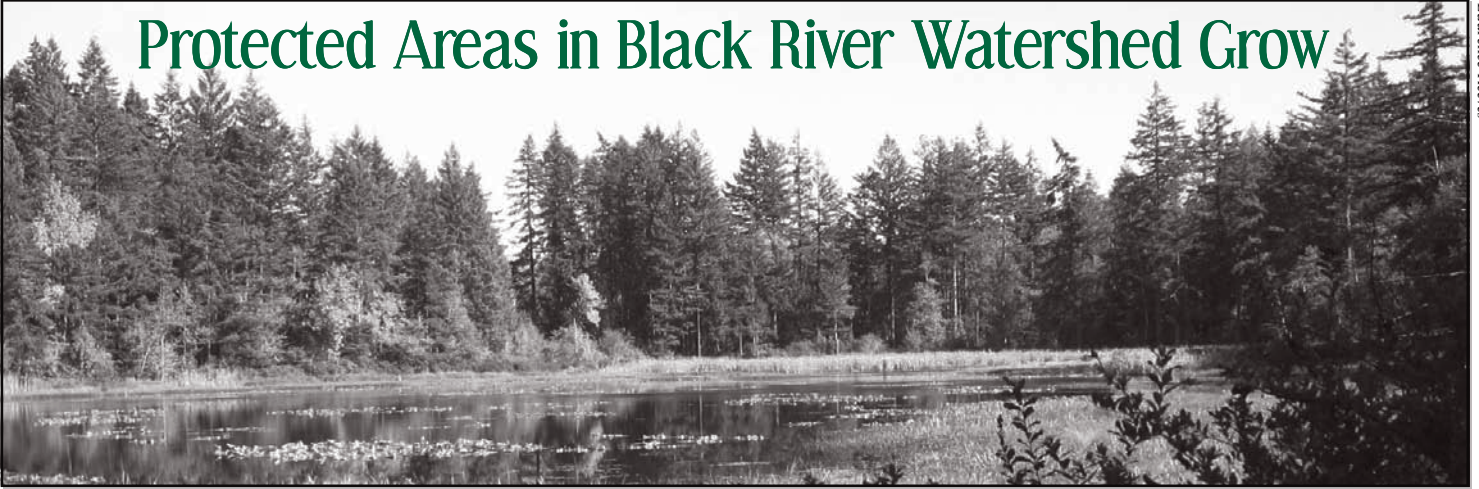
*John Konovsky is an Environmental Program Manager with the Squaxin Island Tribe and a member of Capitol Land Trust's Board of Directors.*

*Karin Strelhoff is an Environmental Specialist with Mason Conservation District and a member of Capitol Land Trust's Board of Directors.*



# Protected Areas in Black River Watershed Grow

Laurence Keever



*By Lisa Johnson*

The beautiful Black River watershed hosts an extraordinary ecosystem – a diverse complex of riverine, wetland, swamp, bog, prairie, oak woodland and forested habitats. Capitol Land Trust has been working to conserve this unique watershed in southern Thurston County since 1989. Our very first conservation project was a donated easement on 120 acres south of Maytown by private landowner William Aldridge. Today, more than 5,500 acres of wetlands, forest and farmland on 40 separate sites in the Black River watershed have been conserved by many different partners. The newest additions to this growing mosaic of protected lands are the Tilley Wetlands East and Tilley Wetlands West properties.

The two new Tilley acquisitions compromise 115 acres next to William Aldridge's conserved land, just west of Tenino and south of Millersylvania State Park. They contain extensive freshwater systems of ponds and wetlands as well as forested habitat. Second-growth Douglas-fir, western redcedar and hemlock shelter an understory of huckleberry, snowberry, salal, Oregon grape and ferns. The western edges also contain meadow grasses and Oregon white oak.

The wetlands drain into two regionally significant streams: Beaver Creek, which flows into the Black River, and Scatter Creek, which flows into the Chehalis River. Beaver Creek hosts one of only four Oregon Spotted Frog populations known in Washington and Scatter Creek provides important salmon spawning habitat.

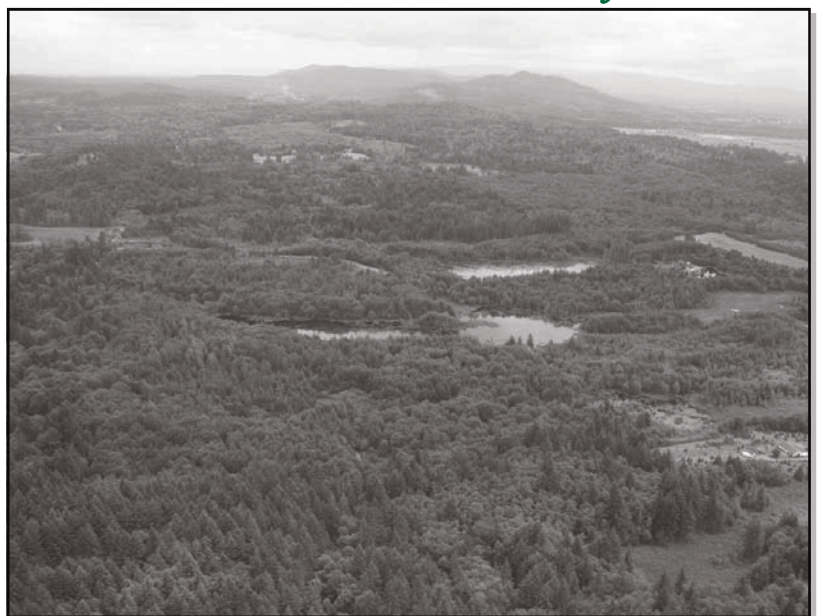
Diverse waterfowl species such as great blue heron, kingfisher, mallard, and common merganser all thrive in the clean, cool water of both these streams. Bald eagle, osprey, an occasional pileated woodpecker, purple martin

and western bluebird also cruise the skies here. Many other species of birds and amphibians make their home in this rich habitat. These properties also provide seasonal habitat for a large elk herd. Beyond supporting abundant wildlife populations, these properties play a vital role by retaining significant volumes of water, thereby preventing flooding of nearby farms, residences and roads.

Thank you to our project partners: Thurston County Commissioners and staff, John Drebeck of Tilley Road LLC, the Hicks family and the Schock family. Their foresight and dedication to conserving our region's natural areas mean that the Tilley Wetlands will remain undisturbed and continue to provide high quality wildlife habitat for many, many years to come. ☼

*Lisa Johnson is a family physician and member of Capitol Land Trust.*

## Tilley Wetlands



Greg Richards



## Steamboat Conservation Partnership Launched

In the late summer of 2009, Capitol Land Trust and the Griffin Neighborhood Association announced a new collaborative effort to conserve special natural areas in the Eld and Totten watersheds: The Steamboat Conservation Partnership. The Partnership's mission is "to conserve the rich and diverse natural landscapes of the Steamboat Peninsula region." The Partnership set an ambitious goal of raising \$15,000 per year for the next five years. Only five months after launching the new initiative, more than \$9,000 has been raised.

Funds raised from the initiative will provide much needed support for conserving the shorelines, wetlands, forested uplands and other important natural places in this rapidly developing area. Capitol Land Trust has already conserved nearly 1,000 acres and 5 miles of shoreline habitat in the Eld and Totten watersheds. The Land Trust is on track to conserve another 1.5 miles of shoreline in the next few months.

Contributions to the Partnership will directly benefit our work in these two key watersheds. You can make a tax-deductible gift online at [www.capitollandtrust.org](http://www.capitollandtrust.org). You can also send a check or your visa card information. Thank you for your support! ☘

## Rare Beetle Discovered at Springer Lake

*By Chris Maynard*

This summer, a rare beetle, Beller's Ground Beetle (*Agonum belleri*), was discovered at Capitol Land Trust's Springer Lake property.

Beller's Ground Beetle requires constant moisture, tolerates a wide range of temperatures and needs open ground to forage. The bog areas where it lives are mostly made up of sphagnum moss growing out over the water in a floating mat. Since this mat rises and falls with lake levels, it is a unique place that maintains constant wetness. This part of Springer Lake bog is also festooned with cranberry and sundew, a carnivorous plant.

It is a pretty and tiny beetle that varies from bronze to red to blue metallic colors. During warm days in the summer, it actively pokes in and out of the sphagnum and sundews looking for insects to eat. Little else is known of its habits or life history

including what the larvae looks like or where it overwinters.

Beller's Ground Beetle is on the Washington State list for species of concern. The beetle is only found in one

other bog in Thurston County - Sheehan Lake - which is about two miles from Springer Lake. Outside Thurston County in Washington, it has only been found in two bogs in King County and several bogs in Kitsap County. There are also records of this beetle in the Burns wetland/bog complex near Vancouver, British Columbia, on the Queen Charlotte Islands, and one record near Mount Hood in Oregon. These lakes are remnants from the ice-age glaciers which left big chunks that later formed isolated lakes with little or no drainage. They remind one of more northerly tundra landscapes.

One hopeful thing about the presence of these beetles is that they thrive quite nicely and abundantly on the edges of both Springer and Sheehan Lakes. However, the edges of these bogs are incredibly prone to destruction. A single step smashes the vegetation below the sphagnum moss. The imprint lasts for many years. More activity on these edges can destroy them - the floating mat can completely disappear.

The protection that Capitol Land Trust provides at Springer Lake is currently this beetle's best hope for a secure continuance in Washington State. ☘



*Chris Maynard*

**Beller's Ground Beetle**

*Chris Maynard works for the Washington Department of Ecology's Water Resource Program, is a photographer, and has a passion for the natural world.*



## Capitol Land Trust Welcomes Caitlin Guthrie

Caitlin Guthrie joins Capitol Land Trust as our new AmeriCorps Stewardship Coordinator. She will be with the Land Trust until August of 2010, running our Stewardship Program. Though a Washington native, Caitlin traveled south to Los Angeles for college, a decidedly ironic place to discover her love of the great outdoors. She graduated from Pomona College with a degree in Environmental Analysis - Biology, spending her summers researching marine fisheries conservation efforts, conducting a sustainability audit of her college campus and researching the effect of climate change on forest ecosystems.



After graduation, Caitlin sought environmental ecology jobs in the Pacific Northwest. She spent the last year in a Washington Conservation Corps position at the Department of Ecology in which she conducted marine restoration projects and topographic monitoring of the Washington outer coast. Caitlin is excited to spend the upcoming year with Capitol Land Trust. When not at work, you can find Caitlin playing ultimate frisbee around town, rock climbing at the Warehouse Rock Gym or playing board games with her friends. Following her year at Capitol Land Trust, Caitlin plans to pursue a M.S. in restoration ecology.

You can reach Caitlin at (360) 943-3012, [caitlin@capitollandtrust.org](mailto:caitlin@capitollandtrust.org). ☞

## Habitat Restoration Work Parties

Join Capitol Land Trust as we pull up weeds, plant trees and spread mulch at various restoration sites around the South Sound this fall and winter. To sign-up for any of the dates below, contact Caitlin Guthrie at [caitlin@capitollandtrust.org](mailto:caitlin@capitollandtrust.org), (360) 943-3012. You can also find more detailed information about each work party, at our website ([www.capitollandtrust.org](http://www.capitollandtrust.org)).

### Oakland Bay Invasive Plant Removal & Tree Planting Work Party

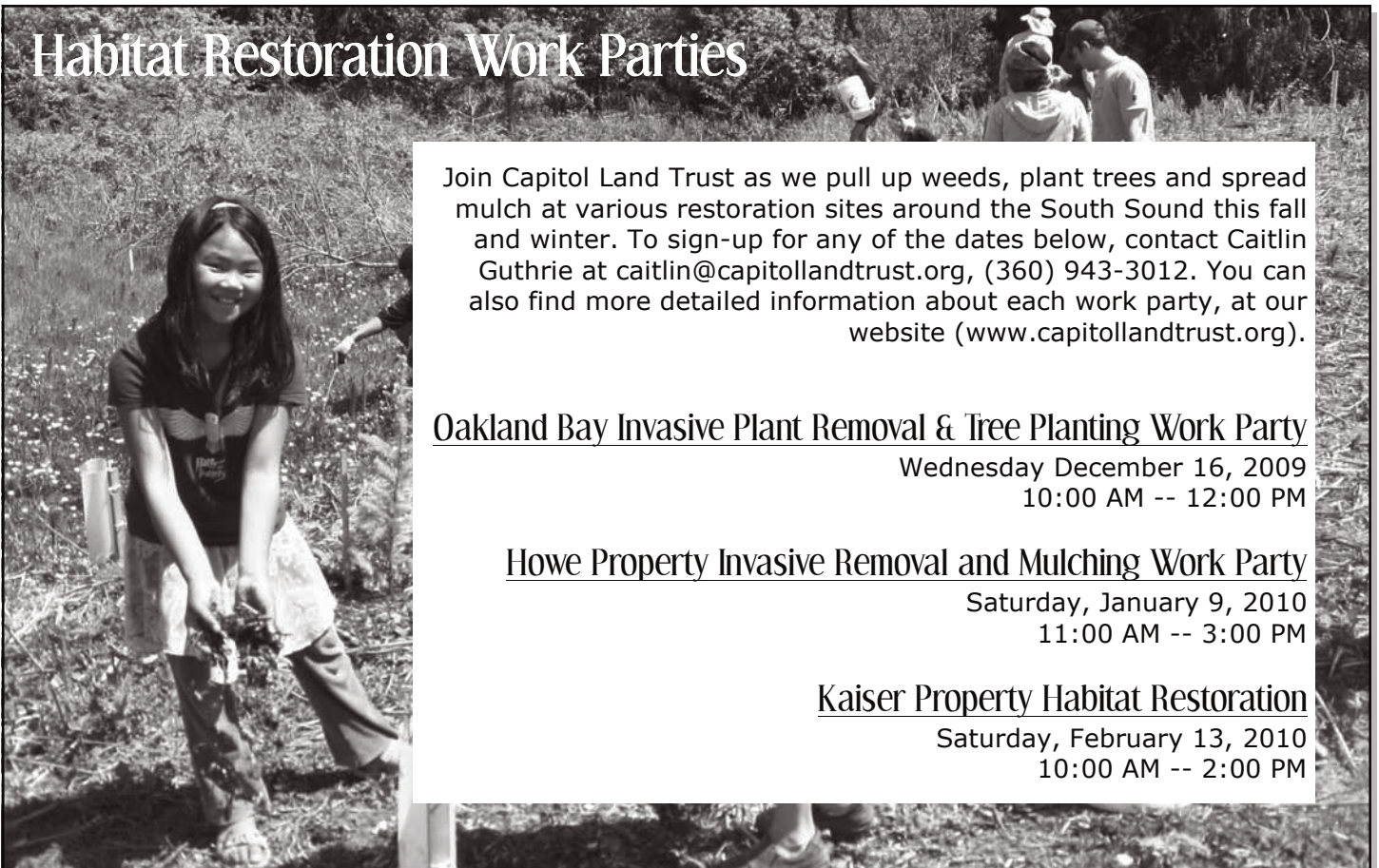
Wednesday December 16, 2009  
10:00 AM -- 12:00 PM

### Howe Property Invasive Removal and Mulching Work Party

Saturday, January 9, 2010  
11:00 AM -- 3:00 PM

### Kaiser Property Habitat Restoration

Saturday, February 13, 2010  
10:00 AM -- 2:00 PM





## Creating a Legacy

By Tom Terry

All of us have known special places from our childhood, young adulthood, or even within recent years that have changed dramatically. We have seen the landscape significantly altered and as a result, the loss of functional habitats and open space. Most of us are Capitol Land Trust members because we want to conserve what remains of these places in our local and regional community. We know that our contributions to the Land Trust are well used to preserve shorelines, wetlands, riparian areas, working farms and forests and oak-prairie habitat. As a Capitol Land Trust member, it is satisfying to know that the organization aims to conserve a significant number of these areas, not only in our lifetime, *but for perpetuity*.

To better prepare for the future and to provide members with an option for creating an even greater personal legacy, Capitol Land Trust has established two new funds—the **Rapid-Response Fund** and **Endowment Fund**. The Rapid-Response Fund will only be used to purchase easements or properties that meet our strategic plan objectives. The Endowment Fund will be managed to provide annual operating funds to carry out day-to-day activities of Capitol Land Trust and make sure that we can meet our stewardship responsibilities in perpetuity.

In addition, a **Capitol Land Trust Legacy Membership** category has been added for those

members who make one or more of the following gifts to Capitol Land Trust: (1) donate \$1000+ to the Rapid-Response Fund or Endowment Fund, (2) include Capitol Land Trust in their estate plan, or (3) donate a conservation easement or property to Capitol Land Trust.

If you make a bequest or deferred gift to Capitol Land Trust, please let us know by giving us a call or by submitting the Legacy Membership form. The forms are on the website or can be picked up at Capitol Land Trust's office. The form does not ask how much is being bequeathed to Capitol Land Trust, nor about other provisions of your estate plan. We encourage donors to discuss any special designations with us - though this is not mandatory - to make sure we can comply with your wishes. If you do not wish to be recognized as a Legacy Member, we will gladly honor your request for anonymity. All information provided to the Land Trust will be held as strictly confidential.

Few things can provide more personal satisfaction than knowing that your gifts have played a major role protecting special habitat areas within the local and regional community for the long haul (perpetuity)!

For more information contact staff at (360) 943-3012, [info@capitollandtrust.org](mailto:info@capitollandtrust.org). ☼

*Tom Terry is a member of  
Capitol Land Trust's Board of Directors.*

## Cowlitz River Habitat Conserved

Kathryn Moore



17 acres in Lewis County

Capitol Land Trust has acquired a small but strategic segment of shoreline habitat along the Cowlitz River in southern Lewis County. The project is the result of a 1995 agreement between the National Park Service, Washington Department of Ecology, Tacoma PUD, Capitol Land Trust and Western Rivers Conservancy to mitigate adverse impacts to salmon resulting from dam construction on the Cowlitz River. Capitol Land Trust worked with local partners including the Cowlitz Tribe, Columbia Land Trust, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Lower Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group to identify and acquire the site. The site was ranked in the top 6 of more than 83 projects identified for their salmon benefit on the Cowlitz River. ☼



# Thank you to our supporters!

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 Heath Packard

Lisa & David Palazzi  
 Lisa Paribello  
 Mark & Jessica Peternell  
 Marco Pinchot  
 Patricia Pyle  
 Michal Rechner  
 Larry & Linda Remmers  
 Greg & Anne Reub  
 Darin Rice  
 Connie Ruhl  
 Kris Schoyen  
 Glen & Lynn Scroggins  
 Keith Simmons  
 Jean Soliz Conklin &  
 Bruce Conklin  
 Lee Stacie  
 Janice Sterner  
 Dale Stubbart  
 Lon & Virginia Sullivan  
 Janet Swanson  
 Preston & Mary Lee Troy  
 Mike & Nancy Walsh  
 Steve Wang &  
 Kathryn Hamilton Wang  
 M. John Way  
 Mimi & Don Williams  
 Paul Wing

### Friends \$35 -- 49

Kathleen Atwood &  
 Donald Lennartson  
 Rick Bacon  
 Greg & Diana Bargmann  
 Shannon Beigert  
 Ann & Nigel Blakley  
 Anne Buck  
 Jean Caldwell  
 Claudia Clark-Engstrom  
 Sonia & Bob Cole  
 Keith Cotton  
 Rich Doenges &  
 Mary Beth Brown  
 Don & Vida Farler  
 Sean Flynn  
 Roger Giebelhaus  
 Norma Green  
 Sarah Hamman  
 Simona Hancock  
 Linda Heckel  
 Charles & Beverly Heebner  
 Lynn Helbrecht  
 Cheryl & David Heywood  
 Nicole Hill  
 Jennifer Hopper  
 David Howard & Melinda Bell  
 James J. Stewart Design  
 Beth Johnson  
 Gordon King  
 Don & Carol Kraege  
 Caitlin Krenn  
 Nathan Lubliner  
 Dana & Alan Lynn  
 William Lysak  
 Bernadene Main  
 Leslie Morris  
 Scott Morrison  
 Sean Murphy  
 Erin Murray  
 Dave & Maria Peeler  
 Christina Peterson



Brian Phipps  
John Pool  
Chris & John Sabo  
Paul & Rosa Sargent  
Jim & Jean Schafer  
Donna Snow  
Alison Styring  
Joe Taller  
Bruce & Priscilla Turcott  
WA Forest Protection Assoc.  
Keitlyn Watson  
Wayne Williams &  
Melanie Stewart  
Burt Zipperer

## Other

Regine Aleksunas  
Mark Anderson  
Jacquelin Barrett  
Rebecca Christie  
Susan Cierebiej-Kanzler  
Lauren Danner  
Janet Franks  
Vicky Friend  
Sue Gunn  
Saif & Jennifer Hakim  
Jim & Carolyn Harmon  
Rockelle Hauer  
Bill & Terra Hegy  
Gene & Linda Heiser  
Rudy & Tiffany Horton  
David Kozora  
Barbara Kuenstler  
Suzanne Malakoff &  
Jan Cnossen  
Anand Maliakal  
Linda Martin  
Janet McArthur  
Steve & Linda McCormick  
Pat McLachlan  
Wendi Meador  
Cheryl Metcalf  
Sarah & Jim Moran  
Peter Moulton  
John Newman  
Joanne Nichols  
Jon Peterson  
James Reddick  
Blain Reeves  
Deborah Ruggles  
Meri Russell  
Sandra Salisbury  
Andrea Schmitt  
Saima Scott  
Jill Severn  
David Skinner  
Lois Smith  
Keith Snow  
Shelley Spalding  
Steve Tilley & Christine Parke  
Reed Tindall &  
Barb Walker-Tindall  
Jonathon & Pam Turlove  
Chris van Daalen  
Ann Vandeman  
Lee Walkling  
John Wray & Janette  
Singley-Wray  
Marcella & Richard Yates  
Chris Zipperer

## In-Kind Donations

Adesa, LLC  
The Alpine Experience  
Anthony's Restaurants  
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Batdorf & Bronson  
Jean Bishop  
Penny Black  
Blue Heron Bakery  
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McMenamins  
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Bakery  
South Bay Press  
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Squaxin Island Tribe  
Taylor Shellfish  
Tom Terry  
Wagner's Bakery  
Leonard Young

## Black River Conservation Property for Sale

## Memorial Donations

### In Memory of Mike Ash

Pama Joyner  
Patty Kennedy  
Bernadette Kniebusch  
Elisabeth Long  
Mark & Pam Roden  
Laura Stephen-Gier  
John & La Verne Tedeski  
Burt Zipperer  
Chris Zipperer

### In Memory of Gayle Broadbent-Ferris

Jerome Parker  
Mary Skelton



Capitol Land Trust  
CFD #314950

*Thank you to the  
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conservation in your  
community.*



In 2006 Capitol Land Trust worked with Bill & Barbara Berquist to permanently protect their property along the Black River. The Bergquists are now ready to move closer to town and their lovely house on 75 acres is for sale. The property contains extensive wildlife habitat - forest land, prairie, wetlands and more. If you are interested in living on an incredible estate with a conservation easement, contact realtor Lisa Quaade of Re/Max: (360) 701-5222, lquaade@msn.com. ☼



# Ninth Annual Summer Gala August 22, 2009 Triple Creek Farm

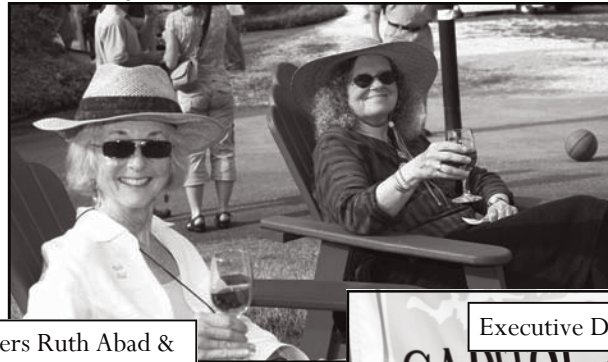


Hosts Ralph & Karen Munro wish Arden Olson a Happy Birthday.

Terry Liberty

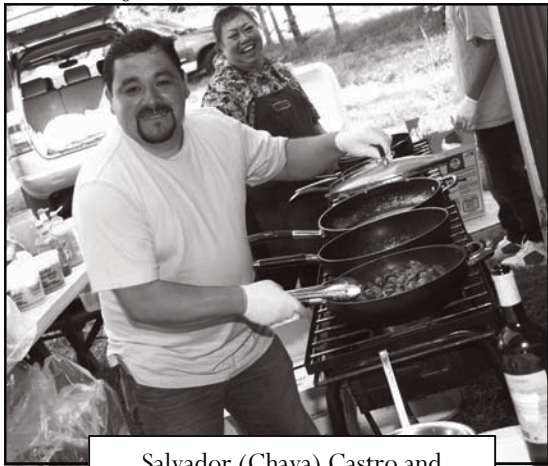
Terry Liberty

Martin Kimeldorf



Volunteers Ruth Abad & Polly Taylor take a break.

Martin Kimeldorf



Salvador (Chava) Castro and Xinh Dwelley preparing a feast.

Executive Director Eric Erler



Martin Kimeldorf



MC Joe Hyer

Terry Liberty

Martin Kimeldorf



Jazz Nuvo entertains guests.

Terry Liberty



Karen Munro unveils a gift from sculptor Ross Matteson.



## Thank you to our Gala Sponsors:



**Olympia Federal Savings**



**Scottrade**



Terry Liberty

Raffle volunteers Alison Fisher & Bobbi Hickox

Getting ready to tour the dig.



Martin Kimeldorf

Special guest speaker Jim Lynch



Bonnie Liberty



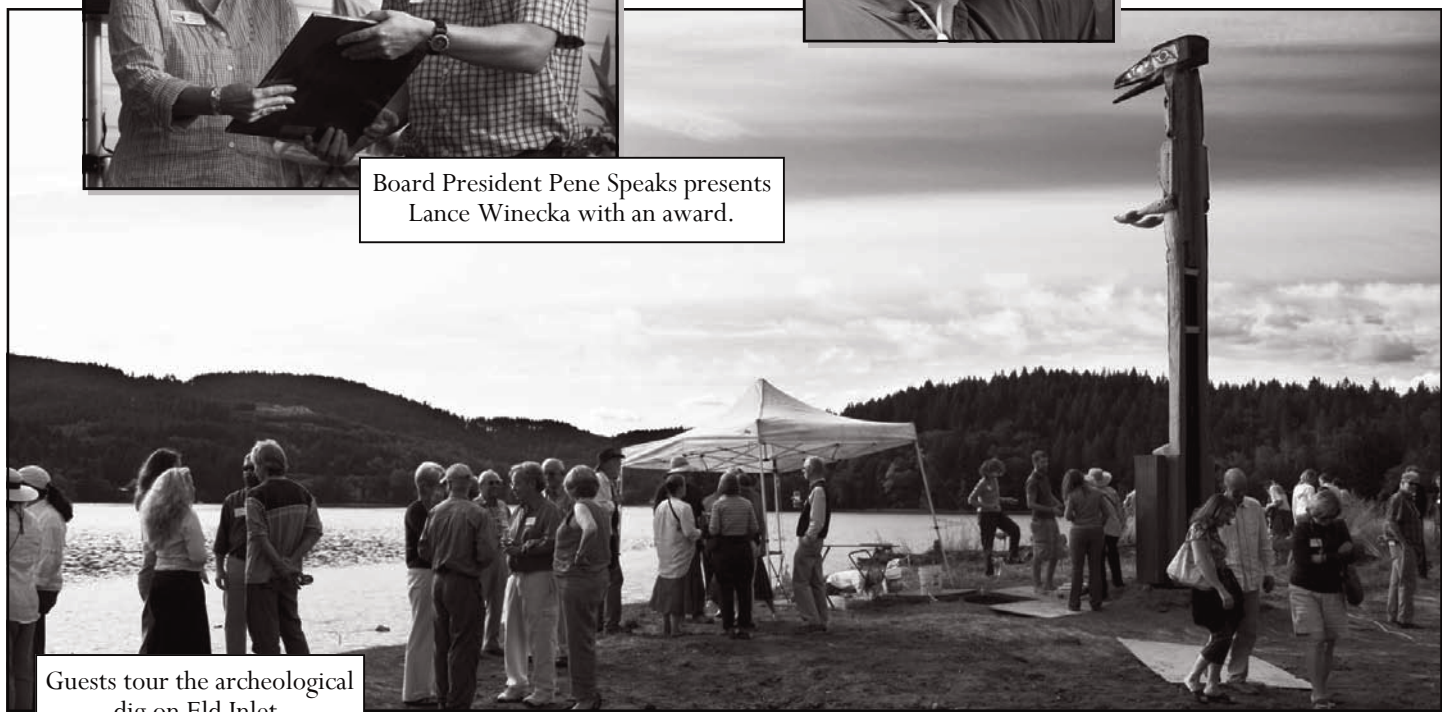
Terry Liberty

Board President Pene Speaks presents Lance Winecka with an award.

Bonnie Liberty



Archaeologist Dale Croes



Guests tour the archeological dig on Eld Inlet.

Terry Liberty



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# SAVE the DATE

## Fifth Annual Conservation Breakfast

*Brad Manchus*



Thursday February 4, 2010  
7:00 - 8:30 AM  
The Worthington Center  
St. Martin's University  
Lacey, Washington  
Keynote speaker to be announced.

Each year Capitol Land Trust hosts an early morning breakfast to celebrate conservation leaders from throughout southwest Washington and raise vital funds for our work. Please join us this February as we honor community members who have shown exceptional dedication and leadership in preserving our region's essential natural areas and working lands.

Sponsorships Available.  
Register online at  
[www.capitollandtrust.org](http://www.capitollandtrust.org),  
or contact Kathleen at  
(360) 943-3012,  
[kathleen@capitollandtrust.org](mailto:kathleen@capitollandtrust.org)