

AGENDA

San Juan County Conservation Land Bank Commission

Members of the public may participate in person at
846 Argyle Ave, Friday Harbor, WA 98250
join virtually by [CLICKING HERE](#)
or by phone @ (360)726-3293 Pin# 92880

February 17, 2022

8:30 am	Convene
8:30	General Public Comments
8:40	Approve January 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes
8:45	Chair and Commissioners Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ New Commissioner Acknowledgment
8:55	Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust
9:00	County Council Update – Christine Minney
9:15	Director’s Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Strategic Plan○ San Juan Valley trail project○ False Bay Creek CWAC recommendation
10:00	Break
10:10	Stewardship Report
10:30	Outreach and Volunteer Report
10:50	Future Agenda Items
11:10	Adjourn

Future Agenda Items List

- Staffing – staff to report back at a future meeting
- Traditionally important landscapes and flora and fauna, and access for tribes of the region within current and future preserves
- The Land Bank’s collective big dream/goal for the overall resiliency of the islands and the bioregion
- Wetland mitigation

The Land Bank Commission May Add or Delete Agenda Items and Projects for Discussion. The Agenda Order is Subject to Change. You are invited to call the Land Bank office at 360-378-4402 for more details prior to the meeting. SJC Code 2.116.070 “All meetings and actions of advisory bodies and their subcommittees shall be open to the public, even where such meetings are not within the purview of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 42.30 RCW, except where the meeting is properly closed for executive session, as provided in RCW 42.30.110”

To: Lincoln Bormann, San Juan County Conservation Land Bank
From: San Juan County Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC)
Thru: Kendra Smith, San Juan County Environmental Stewardship
Re: False Bay Creek Preserve Stewardship and Management Plan Revision

3 January 2023

The False Bay Creek Preserve (FBP) Stewardship and Management Plan was written in 2013. It is our understanding this Plan is scheduled for review and revision every ten years and that the lease with the cattle rancher is coming up for annual renewal. We would like to provide some suggestions as you are considering revisions and the lease in 2023 that may affect your future stewardship and management decisions.

CWAC is the citizen advisory committee to the San Juan County Clean Water Utility (Utility). A major goal of the Utility is to improve water quality in San Juan County streams, shifting the paradigm from ditching, impounding, and human uses toward restoring living streams. CWAC's initial focus is on those streams currently on the Department of Ecology's 303-d list because of water quality impairment. False Bay Creek is on that list because of excess temperature and bacteria. For example, 6 of the 11 samples taken over a 2-year period in False Bay and San Juan Valley Creeks exceeded state limits for fecal coliform bacteria, which is a strong indication of contaminated surface water. Bacteria contaminated water flows into False Bay, where it creates a public health hazard for those recreating or conducting research and educational activities in the False Bay Biological Preserve.

CWAC believes this impairment is largely the result of agricultural land uses in San Juan Valley, including on FBP. Past and current agricultural activities have ditched and drained wetlands, stripped native trees and shrubs to promote pasture grasses while impounding and channelizing streams for irrigation, livestock watering, and property management. In portions of the watershed, livestock continue to have unfettered access to surface waters that flow into False Bay Creek, San Juan Valley Creek, and UW's False Bay Biological Preserve. The Utility has funded and collaborated with others (including the Conservation Land Bank) to procure grant funds to fence cattle out of the stream, provide off-stream watering facilities, suppress invasive reed canary grass, and plant native riparian vegetation. New fencing to keep cattle out of the stream has been installed at Red Mill Farm and the Duff farm, which is just upstream of the UW preserve and immediately downstream from FBP. In addition, native plant communities are being established in riparian zones on Red Mill Farm and FBP to restore natural control of invasives and provide shading and filtration to improve water quality.

Much of FBP is a natural depressional wetland. Cattle are grazed west of False Bay Creek, in the center between the creeks, and east of San Juan Valley Creek, which is the only upland portion of FBP. During winter there is extensive flooding in the San Juan Valley lowlands, including the western and central areas of FBP. This flooding allows cattle waste to remobilize and wash into False Bay Creek and False Bay. Water flowing overland from the field in December 2020 had fecal coliform levels 10 to 80 times higher

than the state limits. Hence, although cattle are kept out of the stream by fencing in the summer, winter flooding allows excess nutrients and bacteria from their manure to continue to contaminate the stream. Excess nutrients have detrimental effects on aquatic and marine ecosystems including promoting algal blooms,

To reduce sources of excess nutrient and bacterial contamination in False Bay Creek, CWAC recommends livestock be removed from False Bay Creek Preserve to enable restoration of historical wetlands and native vegetation in formerly grazed pastures. In a presentation to CWAC at its October 20, 2022 meeting, Byron Rot also made that recommendation on the basis of his extensive work on FBP. He stated, "My recommendation is to remove cattle from False Bay Preserve entirely." Rather than replacing the deteriorating fencing, Rot recommends cattle removal. Extensive seasonal flooding in most years renders fencing ineffective in keeping cattle-produced excess nutrients and bacteria out of the stream. The area west of the creek is the heart of a depression wetland. By removing livestock and replanting the area with colonial wetland plants a restored ecosystem in this area would help remove excess nutrients and bacteria from the water. Rather than degrading water quality in the stream as FBP management currently does, these actions would help improve water quality both in FBP and downstream. FBP is in a unique position in the landscape to reduce the amount of pollutants entering False Bay and help protect the nearshore marine habitat for forage fish, juvenile salmon, hundreds of other species, and human uses alike.

The current FBP Plan states that management "will center on protecting and enhancing riparian and in-stream habitat diversity while enabling continued agricultural activity on the uplands." Furthermore, the current Plan states "managing the Preserve for the benefit of anadromous salmon was the primary reason stated by the Land Bank Commission for acquiring the property." Removing livestock from FBP and creating a viable wetland ecosystem are crucial steps for improving water quality that enhances in-stream habitats and benefits anadromous salmon. Livestock removal does not preclude other agricultural activity such as haying in the uplands. Providing a demonstration of successful agricultural activity other than cattle grazing on lands that impact salmon habitat would be a valuable contribution to improved water quality and salmon recovery throughout the county.

CWAC would be happy to discuss these recommendations with you and/or staff at a future meeting.

References Cited

San Juan County Land Bank (2013) False Bay Creek Preserve Stewardship and Management Plan.

Copies

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False Bay Creek Preserve



San Juan Island School District students releasing juvenile salmon in the estuary at the University of Washington's False Bay Reserve, located a half mile downstream from False Bay Creek Preserve.

Stewardship and Management Plan September 2013

San Juan County Land Bank
350 Court Street No. 6
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

The Land Bank's stewardship goal for its False Bay Creek Preserve is to protect and enhance the property's outstanding ecological features while providing continued opportunities for agricultural use and creating limited public access for wildlife viewing and waterfowl hunting.

**False Bay Creek Preserve
Stewardship and Management Plan**

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Preface

False Bay Creek Name

Geographic places and features in the San Juan Islands often lack official names, instead having colloquial names associated with them. This is particularly true with creeks which tend to be small, seasonal drainages due to the relatively low annual rainfall, predominant bedrock geology, generally shallow soils with limited water storage ability, and small watershed areas of the islands. Over time a number of names have been used for the two creeks which meet on the Preserve. The 1999 San Juan County Watershed Action Plan refers to the main tributary as “San Juan Creek.” Elsewhere the creek has been called “Trout Lake Creek” in reference to one of its primary sources, the Town of Friday Harbor’s Trout Lake. A salmon habitat assessment completed in 2012 refers to it as “False Bay Creek” (Cronin 2012). Other names include those of tributaries or land owners such as “Nettle Creek” and “Lawson Creek” while some locals simply refer to it as “the ditch.” Neither early nor current maps are of help as they rarely indicate names for any of the islands’ ephemeral drainages.

Since there does not appear to be an official name for either of the creeks, this plan refers to the main channel as “False Bay Creek” and the smaller secondary one located to the east as the “East Fork of False Bay Creek.” The naming of these drainages and the Preserve after False Bay is intended to draw connections between the watershed and its ultimate connection with the marine environment.

I. Introduction

The False Bay Creek Preserve was acquired in 2008 to “begin the process of restoring the creek as spawning grounds for anadromous fish” (San Juan County Land Bank, 2008). Additional conservation resources include its in-stream and riparian habitats, agricultural lands, and scenic vistas. It is located on San Juan Island on the north side of Bailer Hill Road across from the intersection with False Bay Road. Proximity to the creek’s mouth and estuary at False Bay, a University of Washington owned biological preserve, as well as adjacent land protected by San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT), strengthened interest in acquiring this preserve. Prior to the Land Bank’s purchase, the SJPT acquired a conservation easement on the property to protect its scenic, open space, and agricultural features. It eliminates all development rights, prohibits any structures, and tightly governs allowable activities.

An additional 10-acre property, separated by one parcel to the east, was acquired by the Land Bank in 1998 to protect its scenic and agricultural value. Resale of this 10-acre parcel with a conservation easement in place is a possibility. While the final disposition of this parcel is undetermined, its basic management will be similar in character to the upland agricultural land of False Bay Creek, and it is therefore included in this management plan. Currently, the two parcels are subject to separate use agreements with different farmers.

Preserve management on the False Bay Creek Preserve will center around protecting and enhancing riparian and in-stream habitat diversity while enabling continued agricultural activity on the uplands. Public access for wildlife viewing and provisions for waterfowl hunting are also important considerations. Crafting a management plan for this preserve is challenging because of the potential for conflict between differing conservation values and land uses. The plan attempts to strike a balance between these elements while providing guidance for oversight of the existing and any potential future acquisitions near the False Bay Creek Preserve. While it is intended to serve for years to come, a need for periodic revision is anticipated, especially as environmental and social conditions change over time, and the Land Bank acquires new knowledge.

History

Background discussion of historical land cover and land use is important in framing the main sections of this plan. The Preserve is at the heart of one of the largest contiguous agricultural areas in the county. Totalling over 3500 acres, the False Bay watershed is regarded as the largest in San Juan County, encompassing the whole of San Juan Valley as well as the hills and mountains which drain to it (Figure 1).

The current landscape of San Juan Valley has been shaped by agriculture. Beginning in the mid to late 19th century, activities associated with agricultural development likely included clearing shrubs and trees, draining wet areas, plowing, crop and pasture seeding, and livestock grazing.

A map produced in 1890 by the U.S. Coastal and Geodetic Survey indicates that much of the western portion of the Preserve was a cultivated field while the eastern part was probably open pastureland (Figure 2). A portion of the creek just north of the Preserve appears to have been ditched and straightened, while the area southwest of the confluence appears to have scrub-shrub and forested land cover. Peas were a major crop in San Juan County during the early part of the twentieth century and were certainly grown on this property. A pea weevil infestation in the early 1940s led to the collapse of this industry. In the 1950s there was a brief revival in growing peas and other agriculture. Since this time, the uplands have been used almost exclusively for seasonal livestock grazing, outside of small quantities of grain planted to benefit the grazing animals.

While the 1890 T-Sheet map indicates the existence of main water channels, the relatively flat topography and seasonal nature of creeks in the islands make it seem likely that broad portions of the drainage may have consisted of braided channels and associated wetlands rather than a single distinct channel (Figure 2). In modern times, water will overtop the creek and saturate surrounding lands during the wettest time of year, in particular following storm events. Accurate contour lines extracted from LiDAR data at five foot intervals show remarkably little topographic change on the Preserve (Figure 3).

Prior to the Land Bank's purchase of the 40.6 acre property, a wetland violation was levied against the previous landowner when the main creek channel was excavated to improve drainage of the adjacent agricultural lands. Remediation required by the enforcing agencies included fencing to prevent access to the creek by livestock, installation of large woody debris in the creek, the installation of two gravel spawning pads, and the planting of willows along the denuded eastern bank of the creek. In 2011 the Land Bank received notice of completion of mitigation requirements by the enforcing agencies (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers).

For organization and clarity, stewardship themes have been classified into four major categories: Ecological Resources, Agricultural Resources, Public Access, and Hunting. Under each major category, sub-headings detail objectives, stewardship tasks, and monitoring protocols. Objectives describe the long-term vision for the resources and uses in each section, while stewardship tasks outline specific actions aimed at achieving objectives. Tasks and objectives may not directly correspond to one another as some tasks will accomplish more than one objective. Methods for measuring the success of these activities are outlined under monitoring protocols. A concluding financial analysis and schedule estimates costs and timing for major activities described in the body of the plan.

II. Ecological Resources

Managing the Preserve for the benefit of anadromous fish was the primary reason stated by the Land Bank Commission for acquiring the False Bay Creek Preserve. Other related and notable ecological resources are its in-stream, riparian, and wetland pasture habitats, including the plant and animal species that utilize these zones. While the focus of ecological management for the Land Bank will be on the in-stream and riparian zones, the obvious connections with the agricultural portions of the property cannot be overlooked. Management of agricultural resources is more fully addressed in Section III, Agricultural Resources.

The Preserve's creek channels and wetlands are far from pristine. Euro-American settlers in the mid 1800's rapidly adapted the landscape to agricultural use, resulting in substantial land cover and hydrologic changes. Land-clearing activities created open fields from what was likely forested and shrub-scrub wetlands, and shrub and forested uplands. Native plants and animals were replaced with non-native crops, pasture, and livestock. Installation of ditches throughout San Juan Valley straightened and otherwise altered the morphology of the drainages. Flow rates and patterns were changed by drainage ditches and in-stream impoundments.

Invasive species have also significantly altered and degraded the habitats. Reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) deserves special mention as it dominates the riparian zone and much of the adjacent wetlands. It excludes other native plants, provides low quality habitat for wildlife, and is generally regarded by local farmers and land managers as difficult to manage. Within the creek bed the reed canary grass constricts flow of water and impedes use by fish by restricting passage and covering potential spawning sites.

Evidence suggests that False Bay Creek has historic and/or current use by chum salmon, coho salmon and/or sea-run cutthroat trout (Habegger, 2009). The 2012 "False Bay Flow and Habitat Assessment" compiled by the Washington Water Trust asserts that the fish currently using the creek are most likely "rogues" as the conditions necessary to support a viable population are marginal at best. The assessment details management activities which would be needed to improve habitat in order to support anadromous fish (see Appendix A). While the Land Bank is capable of making improvements within the bounds of the Preserve, larger watershed scale issues persist, including impoundment of water in ponds and lakes that reduce in-stream flow, drainage of historic wetlands, barriers to fish passage, and overall degraded water quality within the watershed's water bodies. Regardless of its immediate capacity to help restore salmon runs, improvement of riparian and in-stream habitats is expected to provide broad ecosystem benefits. It is hoped that these efforts can function as a model, and may inspire interest and collaboration from adjacent landowners in improving the overall ecological health of the watershed.

It is not an objective of this plan to re-create the pre-settlement landscape. Rather, the objectives for the Preserve's ecological resources center on maintaining and increasing

the Preserve's native plant and animal biodiversity, while acknowledging and working within a much-altered landscape. Further changes to the landscape, such as sedimentation and filling of the creek channels, may impact priorities and methodology for restoration and agricultural activities. It will be important to periodically review and update this plan to reflect changes in the physical landscape over time.

The Land Bank holds protection of conservation values, including ecological resources, as the overarching goal of its stewardship program. To maintain an area's ecological health, scientifically informed management decisions are coupled with a precautionary approach when sound guidance is unavailable. Public access, waterfowl hunting, and other activities are designed to minimize impacts; with the knowledge that they may have to be restricted or discontinued if impacts cannot be controlled.

II. A. Objectives for Ecological Resources

1. Manage to protect and restore priority habitats and species.
2. Maintain, enhance, and restore riparian and in-stream habitat zones so as to maintain or increase native species diversity.
3. Seek opportunities to cooperatively manage the Creek(s) to benefit anadromous fish.
4. Manage agricultural use to be compatible with the overall ecological health of the Preserve.
5. Encourage a greater understanding of the property's natural systems through research and education.
6. Ensure all ecological activities are consistent with the Preservation Trust's Conservation Easement.

II. B. Stewardship Tasks for Ecological Resources

1. *Manage for priority habitats and species.*

The following elements occurring on False Bay Creek Preserve are recognized as Priority Habitats and Species by WDFW. "Priority habitats" are habitat types or elements with unique or significant value to a diverse assemblage of species. As such, they merit special management attention.

Priority habitats:

- Riparian habitat
- In-stream habitat
- Freshwater wetland habitat

Priority Species:

- Coho salmon
- Chum salmon (presence suspected but not confirmed)
- Sea-run cutthroat trout (presence suspected but not confirmed)
- Trumpeter swan
- Waterfowl concentrations
- Bald eagle
- Golden eagle
- Merlin
- Columbian black-tailed deer*

**Deer are arguably overabundant on San Juan Island, and control may be more appropriate than protection.*

Management actions will vary by habitat or species, and will be informed by guidelines from WDFW. Riparian and in-stream habitats are addressed in Objective 2, and anadromous fish are addressed in Objective 3. Bald eagle, golden eagle, and merlin are wide-ranging species that appear to use the Preserve only incidentally, and are not a focus of management actions.

The specific actions below are therefore focused on management of freshwater wetland habitat, trumpeter swan, and waterfowl concentrations. With the exception of the fenced riparian corridor along the creek's main stem, all of the property's freshwater wetlands are currently seasonally grazed by cattle. Grazing of the wetland in the property's southwest corner maintains the winter open-water habitat which is utilized by concentrations of waterfowl including trumpeter swans.

- a. Collaborate with agricultural lessee to implement best management practices on grazed wetland pastures.
 - b. Graze, mow, or otherwise maintain the property's wetlands so as to provide quality winter waterfowl habitat.
 - c. Restrict direct livestock access to creeks, ponds, and other open water bodies by fencing or other methods.
2. *Maintain, enhance, and restore riparian and in-stream habitat zones so as to maintain or increase native species diversity.*
- a. Control invasive species
Invasive species present a serious threat to native species and habitat diversity. The most troublesome invasive species found on False Bay Creek are the noxious weeds reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinaceae*), tansy ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), English hawthorn (*Crataegus*

monogyna), bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), and Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*). Regular inspections will help to detect new infestations.

Manual and mechanical removal will be the preferred methods of control for all species, with biological controls and herbicide use carefully considered on a case by case basis with a general restriction on herbicide use within the in-stream and riparian zones. Methods will vary by species, with the San Juan County Noxious Weed Control Board providing guidance. Control of tansy ragwort, listed as a Class B Weed, is required in San Juan County.

http://sanjuan.wsu.edu/noxious/documents/2012_SJCNoxiousWeed_List.pdf

As previously noted, the non-native plant reed canarygrass merits special mention as controlling its impacts will be critical in achieving other ecological goals. Reed canarygrass is intolerant of shade and could be controlled to some extent within the creek corridor by establishing dense stands of native riparian shrubs and trees along the banks of the creek. Carefully planned and managed grazing in appropriate areas could also be a useful control tool in conjunction with other methods.

- b. Increase the diversity and structural complexity of the riparian vegetation. Maintain planted willows as necessary, and seek funds to install additional riparian shrub and tree plantings. Species could include Sitka and Pacific willow, red osier dogwood, Douglas hawthorn, Sitka spruce, Pacific crabapple, red elderberry and others.
 - c. Maintain, to the extent possible, high quality fish habitat including gravel bars, large woody debris, and riparian area plantings.
 - d. Manage adjacent agriculture so as to benefit riparian vegetation and water quality, through use of fencing, vegetative buffer strips, and other best management practices (see section III for more detail).
 - e. Seek additional management guidance from knowledgeable agencies, organizations, and individuals.
3. *Seek opportunities to cooperatively manage the drainage to benefit anadromous fish.*

The Washington Water Trust's 2012 "False Bay Flow and Habitat Assessment" summarizes management activities within the watershed that would be needed to improve conditions in order to support fish use. Two of the more significant limiting factors include impoundment of water in ponds and lakes during critical times of year for fish, and poor water quality within the watershed as a whole. While small quantities of salmonids may be using the creek for spawning and rearing, the summertime stream conditions are considered inhospitable due to high temperatures, low dissolved oxygen, high turbidity, and low flows.

Releasing water in the late summer from in-stream impoundments, primarily from Zylstra Lake, will be key to any anadromous fish restoration.

The Land Bank cannot address larger watershed issues through management of a single preserve. However, some improvement of riparian habitat and water quality is possible at False Bay Creek Preserve, as outlined for Objective 1. In addition to demonstrating possibilities to other interested riparian landowners, such improvements are expected to provide broad ecosystem benefits within the watershed.

Additional actions include:

- a. Provide access to the creek for outside groups interested in monitoring, research and restoration.
- b. Continue to contact key landowners about the possibility of late summer water releases
- c. Continue to collaborate with other organizations and individuals on watershed planning to improve salmonid habitat.

4. *Manage agricultural use to be compatible with overall ecological health of the Preserve.*

With the focus of management on the ecological health of the riparian and in-stream habitats, management of agricultural activities will be given careful consideration. This topic is covered in greater depth in Section III – Agriculture. Some agricultural practices, such as promoting appropriately timed grazing of reed canarygrass within the riparian zone, may provide a mutually beneficial tool for managing ecological resources. The most important qualities to consider in managing agricultural uses with regards to ecological resources on this Preserve include improving and protecting water quality, conservation of soil resources, and the control of exotic species.

5. *Research and Education*

The Land Bank will encourage a better understanding of the Preserve's ecological resources through cooperative projects with local schools, scientists, and other groups. Educational and research activities on the property will be conducted on a permission-only basis, and may be limited in size or duration.

Actions to encourage and facilitate research and education may include:

- a. Leading guided natural history walks.
- b. Providing opportunities for educational field trips.
- c. Cooperating and reaching out to university, post-graduate, citizen scientist groups, and other researchers.
- d. Development of interpretive signage describing the ecological and agricultural resources and history of the site.

6. *Restrictions of uses (same as Section IV, Public Access)*

Restrictions are intended to protect the ecology of the Preserve and minimize management costs. Consult Section VII. Restrictions of Use for full list of restrictions for this preserve. They will be posted on site and mentioned in literature as appropriate.

II. B. Monitoring Protocols for Ecological Resources

High priority ecological features on the Preserve will be monitored to evaluate stewardship policies and resource health. In particular, monitoring will be employed to help measure the effectiveness of riparian and wetland enhancements. While it may not be possible to attempt all the projects suggested here, partnership with other research and conservation oriented organizations may provide additional support and resources. Volunteers will be utilized to the extent possible and appropriate in carrying out monitoring.

The following monitoring techniques may be employed:

1. *Ecological Inventory*

An ecological inventory was conducted in 2009. This report will serve as a baseline against which to measure anticipated changes or impacts to the natural features of the land, such as species diversity, late summer water flows, and reed canarygrass control.

2. *Bird Monitoring Program*

A bird monitoring program would be used to assess changing trends in waterfowl, songbird, and other bird use of the property. This could be particularly relevant to proposed enhancements to priority habitats as well as potential impacts from public access and waterfowl hunting. A formalized bird monitoring program was initiated with a volunteer in March 2013.

3. *Photomonitoring*

Photomonitoring points established in 2007 will be periodically reshot to track vegetative changes in the creek corridor. More points may be added over time.

4. *Hydrologic Monitoring*

Nine hydrologic monitoring points were established in 2007. These will be periodically re-monitored. More points may be added over time. Monitoring will track water flow over an extended period.

5. *Water Quality Monitoring*

False Bay Creek has been monitored where the creek passes under Bailer Hill Road since 1999 for standard water quality parameters through a partnership of local organizations including the University of Washington's Friday Harbor Labs, the San Juan Islands Conservation District, and San Juan County. Continuing to provide access and partner with these groups in monitoring at key times of year would help track water quality trends in the drainage. Information such as temperature, oxygen, high turbidity, and volumes are especially important with respect to salmonids.

Additional research will be encouraged and other monitoring developed as needs emerge.

III. Agriculture

Agriculture has been a dominant and recurring land use in the county for over a century. False Bay Creek Preserve, as part of the broad agricultural lands of San Juan Valley, is part of this farming heritage. The original 1874 township and range survey by the General Land Office followed the eastern line of the property, but the surveyor's notes make no mention of agricultural use, instead describing a vegetation community resembling a shrubby wooded wetland. Sixteen years later, the U.S. Coastal and Geodetic Survey's map shows the majority of the western portion of the Preserve in cultivation while the eastern portion was likely open pasture (Figure 2). Oats, barley, and peas were once grown here, but since the late 1950's the property has been primarily used to graze cattle.

Since acquiring the Preserve in 2008 the Land Bank has continued an informal use agreement with the farmer who had been previously using the property to seasonally graze cattle. The Land Bank intends to continue seasonally leasing out the farm fields for agricultural use. Possibilities might include continuing the existing short-term use agreement, a long-term lease, or other yet to be determined options. Assistance from local groups such as the San Juan Islands Conservation District and the Agricultural Resources Committee, advice from organizations that have undertaken farming leases, and community input will be necessary to guide these ventures. At approximately 30 acres, the relatively small size of the agricultural portion of the False Bay Creek Preserve may make the effort of crafting a long term lease unreasonable and it may be best served with a short-term agreement. Collaboration with existing and future lessees as well as neighboring farmers will be critical for the success of this program.

An important requirement of any lease will be that the land be managed to be compatible with ecological goals for the property by incorporating principles of natural resource sustainability. As discussed in Section II, Ecological Resources, the most important items to consider in managing agricultural use are conservation of soil resources, water quality protection, and control of exotic species. These items will be covered in greater detail in a comprehensive farm plan developed in collaboration with lessee(s), The Conservation District, San Juan County Agricultural Resource Committee, and other interested parties. It is expected that the current use of grazing and/or hay production will continue into the near future, but the Land Bank will remain open to consideration to other forms of agriculture in the future.

Despite an outward appearance of an abundance of fresh water, providing adequate water resources for sustainable agricultural use while pursuing goals for ecological health presents the most significant problem for this preserve. Direct access to the creek by livestock is not compatible with the ecological goals for the Preserve, and the seasonal nature of the creek makes it an inadequate source. It is also unlikely that agricultural water rights for the creek or other surface water resources could be acquired. In addition to the ephemeral stream, the property has a small stock pond on the east side of the creek. The Land Bank submitted an application in 2012 for water rights associated with the existing pond, a potential new pond on the west side of the creek, and a new well or

cistern in the vicinity of the corrals. The conservation easement held by the SJPT allows for maintenance of the existing pond and drilling of wells but restricts the construction of new ponds. As the existing pond has silted in over time, the volume has decreased until it presently cannot provide enough water for cattle throughout the grazing season. To supply his cows with water, the current lessee has been trucking water in daily during the summer. This expensive and time consuming practice may need to continue at least temporarily as the primary agricultural water source.

To meet both ecological and agricultural goals for the property some additional infrastructure will be necessary. Fencing may be installed in order to prevent direct access to the East Fork of the creek by livestock. Alternative barriers, such as hedge rows may be considered. Possible solutions to agricultural water supplies include improving the existing pond and drilling a well. Improving the existing pond could provide enough water for the current operation within the same area by digging it deeper and fencing the livestock out. Wells are a more expensive solution, with average well depths in this area greater than 300 feet. The need to distribute the water from whichever source might be developed to the pastures separated by the creek(s) will also be complicated. All of these options are expected to be expensive and the Land Bank may need to partner with the lessee in seeking funding and labor.

III. A. Objectives for Agriculture

1. Seek an appropriate, mutually beneficial agricultural use of the designated agricultural use zones.
2. Maintain the ecological resources in good condition through incorporation of principles of sustainability and resource protection into all farming activities, with a particular emphasis on protecting and enhancing soil fertility, riparian vegetation and water quality.
3. Look for opportunities to collaborate and partner with neighboring land owners and farmers especially in regard to agricultural practices and management of natural resources.
4. Maintain agricultural facilities in good working condition.
5. Develop long-term sustainable agricultural water resources.
6. Ensure all agricultural activities are consistent with the Preservation Trust's Conservation Easement.

III. B. Stewardship Tasks for Agriculture

1. The following will be pursued in developing long term, mutually beneficial agricultural use of the False Bay Creek Preserve:

- a. Consultation with local farmers, agencies, organizations on lease models and strategies.
 - b. Research of agricultural land lease models.
 - c. Determine extent of infrastructure needed to support agricultural use and what portion of the responsibility for installation, maintenance, and replacement is born by the lessee and lessor respectively.
 - d. Determine type of lease or use agreement best fitting False Bay Creek Preserve.
 - e. Define the parameters of a lease or use agreement including legal and financial analyses.
 - f. If leasing, establish clear procedures for soliciting, evaluating, and selecting lease proposals.
 - g. Encourage a broad range of applicants in order to find the most compatible agricultural user.
2. Principles of sustainability and resource protection will be encouraged by:
 - a. Development and implementation of a farm plan in collaboration with San Juan Island Conservation District and agricultural lessee(s).
 - b. Collaborating with lessee(s) in controlling timing of entry and removal of livestock in correlation to seasonal soil saturation and vegetation growth.
 - c. Collaborating with lessee(s) in setting sustainable stocking rates.
 - d. Limiting livestock access to the creek, pond, and other open water bodies through installation and maintenance of fencing or other methods.
 - e. Annual review of farm practices in collaboration with agricultural lessee(s).
 - f. Maintaining water quality of agricultural water source(s).
 3. Collaboration with neighboring property owners will be encouraged by:
 - a. Meeting with land owners to look at current practices and desired outcomes.
 - b. Looking for opportunities to collaborate with neighbors on management and maintenance.
 - c. Encouraging lessee(s) to maintain relationships with neighboring land owners.
 - d. Providing opportunity for site visits, workshops, and project review with neighboring property owners and local farmers.
 4. Maintenance of agricultural facilities will be achieved by
 - a. Collaborating with farmer on determining basic infrastructure needs and setting responsibility for maintenance.
 - b. Annual review of lease and inspection of farm infrastructure with farmer.
 - c. Incorporating maintenance and replacement schedules into leasing agreements.
 5. Development long-term sustainable agricultural water resource.

- a. Assessing what water resource(s) makes the most sense in terms of cost efficiency, long term sustainability, legal permissibility, and meeting farm needs.
- b. Collaborating with farmer and other interested parties to find funding for the development of water resources.
- c. Include construction of infrastructure as a possible compensation for use.

III. C. Monitoring Protocols for Agriculture

Monitoring protocols will depend on the type of agricultural use and will be specified in any lease agreement. Monitoring will aim to evaluate best management practices and resource protection. The Land Bank will solicit assistance from The San Juan Islands Conservation District or other organizations with expertise in evaluating farming operations.

Monitoring of agricultural resources may include:

1. Baseline and periodic survey of vegetation diversity and distribution, especially of legumes.
2. Baseline inventory of noxious weed populations estimating distribution and density as well as tracking annual control efforts.
3. Collection and analysis of baseline soil conditions and vegetation composition along with periodic re-sampling and analysis to track nutrient levels and trends.
4. Periodic testing and review of water quality from stock ponds as well as creek.
5. Tracking overall production in vegetative quantities, measured as tons of vegetation harvested or days of grazing.

IV. Public Access

Hand in hand with protecting remarkable lands, the Land Bank aims to make its preserves accessible to the public whenever appropriate and feasible. The False Bay Creek Preserve's easy access from Bailer Hill Road, pastoral landscape, scenic vistas, and wildlife viewing opportunities make it appealing for low-intensity public use. The Preservation Trust's conservation easement on the property may limit or restrict capacity to develop public access as laid out in this plan. The Land Bank will work with the Trust to ensure any and all developments are consistent with the conservation easement. In the event that activities conflict with the easement, an amendment may be pursued if both parties agree the planned developments are within the intent of the original easement and of significant long term value to merit changes.

Under this plan a 0.75 acre portion of the Preserve will be developed for public access, shown as the "public access zone" in Figure 4. In addition to its other attributes, this portion of the Preserve is well suited for public access by drier soils afforded by its slightly elevated topography. It is notable that this area closely matches what appears to be an undeveloped wooded portion of the property on the 1890 T-sheet map (Figure 2).

Developments would include the following:

- Construction of a driveway off Bailer Hill Road
- Small (3 to 4 vehicle) parking area
- Short accessible trail
- Wildlife viewing platform
- Installation of native plants to provide screening and improve biodiversity
- Fencing (with a vehicle gate for farm access) to separate agricultural activities from public access zone
- Installation of direction and interpretive signage.

While other areas may someday be considered for public access, management of ecological and agricultural resources are higher priorities for this preserve. An exception to this would be potential participation in non-motorized trail efforts paralleling Bailer Hill Road initiated by other groups or agencies. Due to potential impacts to wildlife, wildlife viewing opportunities, and livestock, dogs will not be permitted on this preserve except as allowed under provisions for hunting and farming.

In addition to general public access to a small portion of the Preserve, the Land Bank is interested in making provision for waterfowl hunting, an activity which has continuously occurred here under different ownerships within long term islanders' living memories (see Section V, Seasonal Waterfowl Hunting). During the periodic and limited hunting openings the Preserve would be posted as closed to general public access. Well-designed and low-key public access would be compatible with maintaining neighborhood character and protection of the Preserve's ecological and agricultural objectives. However, the Land Bank reserves the possibility of restricting or discontinuing public access if it ever proves unmanageable or has deleterious impact to agricultural or ecological resources.

IV. A. Objectives for Public Access

1. Develop and implement plan for safe, low-intensity recreational access at the False Bay Creek Preserve that does not detract from its outstanding aesthetic, natural, and agricultural characteristics.
2. Maintain an appropriate level of use, protecting natural resources and neighborhood character, and ensuring visitors have a quality outdoor experience.
3. Ensure all public access activities and developments are consistent with the Preservation Trust's Conservation Easement.

IV. B. Stewardship Tasks for Public Access

1. The following elements are part of the concept plan for public access:

Parking

A small parking area will be created off of Bailer Hill Road, within the public access area shown in Figure 4. A gate in line with the perimeter fences currently exists at this approximate location. Parking for approximately 3 to 4 vehicles will be provided. The parking area will be designed with dual functions to provide safe truck and trailer access to the agricultural part of the property. Parking spaces will be of sufficient size to accommodate full size trucks and ability to pull in and out. Location and design of parking area will attempt to mitigate impacts from vehicle pollution entering the creek.

Trails

There are currently no trails on the property. The majority of the proposed public access area is within an elevated portion of the Preserve with comparatively drier soils, but may still become seasonably wet and muddy due to the relatively flat topography. A short elevated gravel surfaced walkway is proposed to provide sustainable all season access, especially considering the prime bird viewing season occurs during the wettest times of the year.

The direct access off a main road, flat topography and relative scarcity of this type of recreational opportunity elsewhere on the island makes this project appealing for incorporation of accessibility designs for people with disabilities. Basic concepts would be to keep the average trail grade less than five percent, a clear trail width of a minimum of 36 inches, and a firm and stable surface such as compacted crusher fines. Additional items might include resting or passing zones along the trail, benches, and tactile interpretive signage. These ideas and others will need to be evaluated individually based on cost, need, and potential impacts.

While this project does not directly overlap with priorities laid out in their island wide trail plan, the Land Bank foresees cooperation with Island Rec's San Juan Island Trails Committee on the design and construction of this project.

Actions will include: Working with the student groups, the San Juan Island Trails Committee and other volunteers on trail design and construction. Designing trails so as not to interfere with agricultural activities. Directing trails away from sensitive property boundaries and hazardous areas. Designing trails to minimize impacts on wildlife and vulnerable habitat. Evaluating seasonal closures with respect to agricultural activities, wildlife breeding, and waterfowl hunting openings.

Wildlife viewing platform(s)

Wildlife viewing platforms can serve a focal point for recreational access. Careful and thoughtful designs can help blend infrastructure into the natural environment, provide excellent bird and wildlife viewing opportunities and simultaneously minimize disturbance. Specific designs for this site have not been developed. Platforms would likely have little to no elevation, and be constructed of natural materials such as stone or wood. Platforms would be developed in partnership with volunteers including outside groups such as Wolf Hollow Animal Rehabilitation Center and the San Juan Chapter of the Audubon Society.

Signage

Directional signage at property boundaries, road junctions, or other key locations will be installed to help encourage appropriate behavior and discourage trespass onto neighboring private lands. Such signs might include location of trails, parking, boundaries, public use guidelines, and other features. Additional signage may be developed to help educate the public about the Land Bank, the ecological resources and agricultural history of the property, or similar themes.

Controlling level of use

The following approaches will be used to keep visitation levels at an appropriate level:

- a. Limited signage to avoid overexposure.
- b. Limited parking to restrict number of visitors.
- c. Limited facilities to discourage unwanted activities. Seasonal closures (if necessary).
- d. Regular monitoring by Land Bank staff and volunteers.
- e. Closure of recreational access during hunting openings.

As this is anticipated to be a site that is generally used for short periods of time and by generally small groups, no restrooms are planned at this time. This will be periodically evaluated as use trends are established and change over time.

Maintenance

Routine maintenance activities will generally include litter pick-up, trail maintenance, signage upkeep, noxious weed removal, and other tasks as needed. Occasionally repairs and/or replacement to fencing, parking, and other infrastructure may be necessary. Land Bank staff, volunteers, and contractors will perform this work.

Volunteer Preserve Stewards

The Land Bank will recruit interested neighbors and citizens to serve as volunteer stewards for the Preserve. Volunteer stewards will help the Land Bank meet its stewardship goals through regular visits to the property to observe its condition and level of use, and assist with visitor education, noxious weed species control, basic maintenance tasks, and other stewardship activities.

2. Restriction of uses (same as under Ecological Resources section)

Restrictions are intended to protect the ecological, scenic, and agricultural resources of the Preserve and minimize management costs. Consult *Section VII. Restrictions of Use* for full list of restrictions for this Preserve. They will be posted on site and mentioned in literature as appropriate.

III. C. Monitoring Protocols for Public Access

The most important issues to monitor are the level of public use and the impact of that use on the Preserve. To help determine appropriate use levels, the Land Bank will rely on regular site visits, feedback from volunteer stewards, agricultural users, interested citizens and neighbors, and information from ecological monitoring protocols. In addition the following specific items may be used to monitor or mitigate impacts from public access:

1. Formal and informal surveys of migratory birds and other wildlife to inform potential closures in order to minimize disturbance of rare or endangered birds or other wildlife with emphasis on breeding and nesting seasons.
2. Periodic surveys of plant biodiversity, distribution, and density noting any potential impacts from public access such as trampling or removal.
3. Regular inspection of infrastructure for safety, vandalism or inappropriate use with special emphasis on agricultural infrastructure.

V. Seasonal Waterfowl Hunting

The seasonal wetness of False Bay Creek Preserve attracts large and diverse groups of residential and migratory waterfowl. This attribute coupled with its ease of access from Bailer Hill Road made it a popular destination for waterfowl hunting, an activity that continued until the Land Bank's acquisition in 2008.. In the 1980s a group of islanders cooperatively managed the land for hunting and it colloquially became known as the "Hunt Club" property — a local name that persists to this day.

In addition to the history of use on this specific property, hunting has been a staple of rural life and is a way in which many people experience and establish deep-rooted connection with the natural world. This appreciation of the natural world is fundamental to furthering a conservation ethic and is the primary reason hunting has been supported by organizations such as the Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, and Sierra Club. Following a national trend, local hunting opportunities have decreased as the population of the county has increased, through diminished property sizes and limited access to land.

Shortly after acquiring the Preserve the Land Bank received a petition from local hunters asking for continued hunting access to the land. Staff met with hunters and the farmer using the land on several occasions to learn more about the history of use on this parcel as well as consulting with Audubon Society members, Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and others about waterfowl conservation, safety, and overall compatibility. Based on this research the Land Bank is interested in exploring continuation of this traditional use of the property with some restrictions for the purposes of conservation, protecting agricultural resources, and minimizing disturbance to neighboring property owners.

It is important to note that the target waterfowl species utilizing the Preserve (Canada goose, green-winged teal, mallard, Northern pintail, Northern shoveler, American Wigeon, red breasted merganser) are protected through the North American Migratory Bird Act. Within North America the populations of these species are considered stable with their greatest identified threat being loss of habitat, especially for breeding. Regionally, there is less known about population trends and critical habitat, in part due to the migratory nature of most of these species. The Land Bank intends to use data from hunters and ongoing bird surveys as well as consulting with WDFW and other experts to adaptively manage hunting including consideration of whether it is appropriate at this site as whole. For example, encouraging hunting of Canada goose, which is generally understood to be over-populated and negatively impacting natural areas, would be encouraged. In contrast, if observations and/or catch records demonstrate that Northern pintails (a species that is currently among the least stable) make up a large proportion of the annual take, the hunting plan could be adapted to focus on other species or times when they are not present.

In exploring compatible options for waterfowl hunting the concept of providing access for mentored youth hunts emerged. Local hunters were in broad agreement that encouraging youth to engage in the outdoors is critical for cultivating a conservation ethic

within modern generations who have less and less connection with the natural world. This idea dovetails with the Land Bank's general desire for local youth to have access to and learn about the unique natural setting of the San Juan Islands. Lacking experience, resources, and capacity to provide mentored hunts by staff members, the Land Bank hopes to work with local hunting groups or clubs to collaboratively manage this activity. The intent is to have the hunting organization be responsible for organizing and overseeing the activity within the parameters set by the Land Bank. The Land Bank would work with the group to set annual rules and would function as the enforcing agency for preserve rules as well as coordinating with WDFW and the San Juan County Sheriff on enforcement of existing hunting rules and laws..

Management of waterfowl hunting is a new activity for the Land Bank and will initially be pursued on a trial basis. Issues including as insurance and liability coverage will need to be resolved prior to initiating the program. The intent of this management plan is to provide a conceptual framework for creating an agreement and hunting plan with a local hunting club or similar group. During the first season Land Bank staff and commission members will monitor the program and discuss any changes or cessation of the program at the end of the hunting season. As with our general public access policy, the Land Bank reserves the possibility of restricting or discontinuing seasonal waterfowl hunting if it proves incompatible with the Land Bank's mandate, becomes unmanageable or has deleterious ecological impact.

V. A. Objectives for Seasonal Waterfowl Hunting

1. Provide opportunity for seasonal waterfowl (ducks and geese) hunting access by San Juan County residents which is compatible with ecological, agricultural, and public access objectives, preferably through partnership with local hunting club or similar organization.
2. Emphasize access for youth as a means to learn safe hunting techniques, outdoor and natural history skills, and conservation values, preferably through partnership with local hunting club or similar organization.
3. Cooperate with WDFW, local hunting club, and other interested parties to sustainably manage resources.
4. Ensure that all seasonal waterfowl hunting activities are consistent with the Preservation Trust's Conservation Easement.

V. B. Stewardship Tasks for Seasonal Waterfowl Hunting

1. *The following tasks will be implemented to provide opportunity for safe seasonal waterfowl hunting access:*

- a. Work with agricultural lessee, WDFW local hunters, and local hunting club or similar organizations to annually develop, implement and review an annual waterfowl hunting plan as well as evaluate and adapt restrictions of use to improve overall compatibility of program.
 - b. San Juan County based hunting club will be responsible for co-managing use to be compliant with Land Bank's use restrictions.
- 2. *Youth access for hunting will be encouraged through:*
 - a. Collaborating with local hunters and hunting groups to foster youth hunting program with emphasis on safety and conservation.
 - b. Consideration of restricting hunting to youth (age 12 to 17 years), accompanied by licensed adult mentor (25 years or older).
- 3. *Conservation of bird and other natural resources will be accomplished by:*
 - a. Temporary closure of hunting if the Preserve is known to be in use by rare, threatened, or endangered species.
 - b. Land Bank will work with San Juan County based hunt club on annual basis to set calendar for hunting days with a maximum of 12 days per year.
 - c. Hunters and mentors will be encouraged to focus hunting efforts on species of understood to have greater abundance and resilience such as Canada geese and mallards.
 - d. Hunters and mentors will be required to commit at least one day of volunteer stewardship activities in reciprocation for hunting access, with activities focused on habitat enhancement, agricultural infrastructure, wildlife monitoring, and/or public access infrastructure.
 - e. Hunters and mentors will be responsible for recording species, date, and approximate times which animals were taken and submitting information to the Land Bank within two weeks of the close of hunting season.
- 4. *Restrictions of Use for Waterfowl Hunting*
Hunters will be responsible for following the general preserve restrictions of use (see section VII. Restrictions of Use) as well as further restrictions of use intended to insure the activity is compatible with neighborhood character, conservation values, and overall safety.

The following additional use restrictions will be in place for seasonal waterfowl hunting on the False Bay Creek Preserve:

- Hunters and mentors must comply with all WDFW laws.
- Total number of hunters on the Preserve will be limited to a maximum of six people including youth hunters and their mentors, and with a ratio of no more than two hunters per mentor.
- Hunters and mentors must have certificate of passing firearm safety course.
- Hunters will post the Preserve as closed to general public access and close entrance gate while hunting.

- Hunting within 300 feet of Bailer Hill Road is prohibited.
- Hunting will be restricted to zones as determined in annual waterfowl hunting plan.
- Hunting permitted only on days determined in annual waterfowl hunting plan and posted on site.

V. C. Monitoring Protocols for Waterfowl Hunting

The most important considerations for waterfowl hunting monitoring protocols are whether hunting is occurring at a sustainable levels, it is reasonably compatible with community values and neighborhood character, safety issues are adequately addressed, and use is compatible with ecological, agricultural, and public access resources of the Preserve. The following items may be tracked to insure these qualities are maintained in the short and long-term.

1. General Monitoring and Review

General observations by Land Bank staff and volunteers, neighboring property owners, agricultural lessee(s), hunters, and other interested parties will be tracked and considered during annual review by staff and commission.

2. Bird Monitoring Program (same as Ecological Resources Section II. B. 2.)

A bird monitoring program would be used to assess changing trends in waterfowl, songbird, and other bird use of the property. This could be particularly interesting in relation to proposed enhancements to priority habitats as well as potential impacts from public access and waterfowl hunting. A professionally designed procedure that could be implemented largely by volunteers would be ideal.

3. Rare and Endangered Species

Monitoring the Preserve for use by rare, threatened, and endangered species and adapting or postponing hunting activities to minimize disturbance and otherwise promote conservation of these species.

4. Annual Review of Hunting Results

Review of annual catch by species, quantity, and date in collaboration with WDFW, hunters, and other interested parties. Number of hunters and hunter hours will also be tracked.

5. Mentor and Hunter Certification

Collection and maintenance of list of qualified mentors and youth including certificate of passing gun safety course. All hunters must have current and up-to-date information on file with the Land Bank prior to hunting.

6. Volunteer Activities

Tracking and review of annual volunteer hours and outcome of efforts.

VI. Financial Analysis

This analysis is intended as a financial planning tool, with all numbers approximate and subject to future adjustment. The Land Bank will seek outside funding sources and contributions, including state and federal grants, for some of the site enhancement options listed below. False Bay Creek Preserve expenses will be reconsidered annually as part of the Land Bank's regular budgeting process.

The Land Bank has added a total of \$50,000 to its Stewardship Fund for the False Bay Creek Preserve. The income from the Stewardship Fund is intended to cover long-term management costs for all Land Bank properties in perpetuity. Currently, separate allocations from the Conservation Area Fund are also made to cover specific, one-time expenses for properties such as site planning, site enhancement, and ecological restoration.

This financial analysis considers five components of False Bay Creek Preserve management: priority habitat enhancement; agricultural infrastructure enhancement; recreational site enhancement; hunting site enhancement; and annual property management. Hourly staff time rates include benefits. Agricultural leasing is not included due to uncertainty around this element.

Priority Habitat Enhancement:

Fencing, materials only (<i>shared cost</i>)	\$ 3,000
Research and monitoring set-up	\$ 250
Land Steward staff time (20 hours @ \$36.09/hr)	\$722
Preserve Steward staff time (40 hours @ \$34.24/hr)	\$ 1,712
Field Assistant staff time (25 hours @ \$16.30/hr)	<u>\$408</u>
Subtotal	\$ 6,092

Agricultural Infrastructure Enhancement

Fencing, materials only (<i>shared cost</i>)	\$ 2,500
Water System enhancements	\$12,500
Preserve Steward staff time (100 hours @ \$34.24/hr)	\$ 3,424
Field Assistant staff time (40 hours @ \$16.30/hr)	<u>\$652</u>
Subtotal	\$19,076

Recreational Site Enhancement:

Driveway and parking area (<i>shared cost</i>)	\$ 2,000
Signage	\$ 3,500
Trail Construction	\$ 2,500
Fencing, materials only(<i>shared cost</i>)	\$ 1,250
Bird Blind/Viewing Platform	\$ 2,500
Benches/Picnic Tables	\$ 950
Site Enhancement/restoration plantings	\$1,000
Preserve Steward staff time (100 hours @ \$34.24/hr)	\$ 3,424
Field Assistant staff time (40 hours @ \$16.30/hr)	<u>\$652</u>

	Subtotal	\$ 17,776
<i>Seasonal Waterfowl Hunting Site Enhancement:</i>		
Driveway and parking area (<i>shared cost</i>)		\$ 2,000
Signage		\$ 1,200
Preserve Steward staff time (50 hours @ \$34.24/hr)		\$ 1,712
Field Assistant staff time (8 hours @ \$16.30/hr)		<u>\$ 130</u>
	Subtotal	\$5,042
TOTAL SITE ENHANCEMENTS:		\$47,986
 <i>Projected annual property management:</i>		
Signage, trail, and misc. property maintenance		\$ 750
Parking maintenance		\$ 100
Weed control/mowing		\$ 200
Ecological monitoring		\$200
Preserve Steward staff time (96 hours @ \$34.24/hr)		\$ 3,287
Land Steward staff time (7 hours @ \$36.09/hr)		\$253
Field Assistant staff time (18 hours @ \$16.30/hr)		\$196
Water system maintenance		<u>\$600</u>
	ANNUAL TOTAL	\$ 5586

VII. Use Restrictions

Restrictions are intended to protect the ecology of the Preserve and minimize management costs. They will be posted on site and mentioned in literature as appropriate.

The Land Bank generally relies on signage and periodic contact from staff or volunteers to educate visitors about use restrictions. When necessary, enforcement actions may be carried out through the San Juan County Sheriff's office. These restrictions apply to public visitors to the property, not to farming lessees. The following general use restrictions will be in effect for the False Bay Creek Preserve:

- No camping
- No fires
- Hunting by permission only
- No discharge of firearms*
- Daytime use only
- No dogs **
- Pedestrian access only***
- No vehicles
- No bicycles***
- No horses***
- No commercial use
- No collection of botanical, zoological, geologic or other specimens except on a permission-only basis for scientific or educational purposes

* Discharge of firearms allowed by permission during waterfowl hunting access.

** Dogs will be permitted for use by agricultural lessees for herding or other activities and hunters during seasonal waterfowl hunting.

*** These restrictions would be reconsidered in the context of a non-motorized transportation trail paralleling Bailer Hill Road along the Preserve boundary.

VIII. Figures

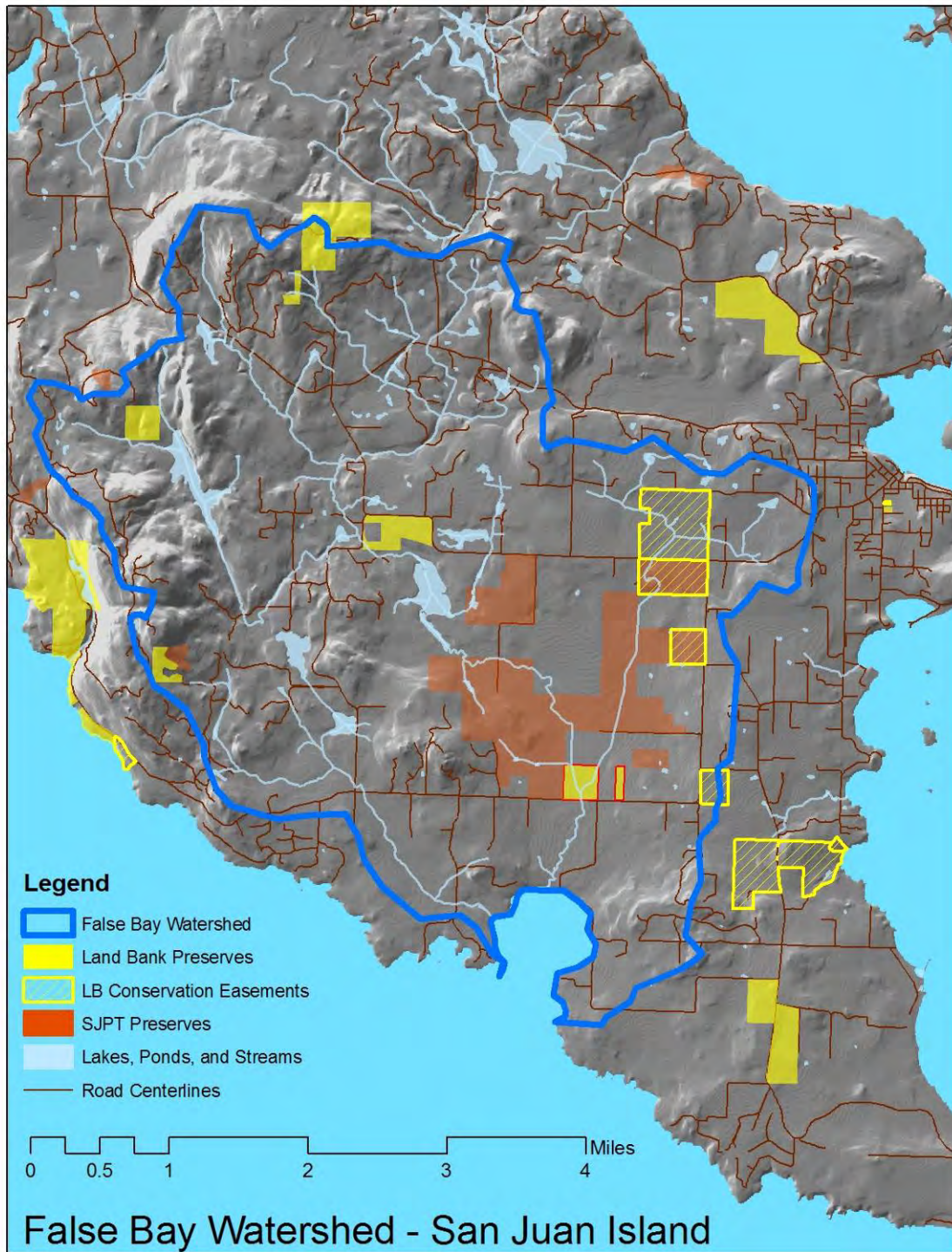


Figure 1. False Bay Creek Preserve context within False Bay Watershed



Portion of U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey
1897 Topographic Map of San Juan Island
Eagle Point to Deadman Bay

Figure 2. Late 19th century topographic and land cover map with current Preserve shown in yellow.



Figure 3. False Bay Creek Preserve management zones.

VIII. References

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IX. Appendix

False Bay Flow Assessment Project Summary Recommendations

The following recommendations for improving habitat within the False Bay watershed are extracted from the Washington Water Trust's 2012 "False Bay Flow Assessment" executive summary.

- Current efforts to establish/restore salmonids in False Bay Watershed may benefit by prioritizing flow restoration in May and June, followed by efforts to gain consistent flow throughout the entire summer – a condition which may never have existed for many reaches in the watershed.
- A flow restoration target of a minimum 0.25 cfs into July is recommended in order to mimic historic timing of dry spell onset, followed by 0.1 cfs through October. Sustaining the 0.25 cfs throughout the entire summer would be optimal. Flow restoration will most likely be achieved via working with upstream landowners to modify impoundments to release more water during the spring, summer and fall.
- Throughout the watershed, restoration efforts should be targeted at resident cutthroat trout which are the optimal salmonid species for the watershed given natural history and hydrology. Lower in the watershed, sea-run cutthroat trout could be targeted for restoration. In addition, attention to restoring chum salmon in the lower reaches may bring community attention and funding.
- Construct wider, denser, and more effective woody riparian buffers, especially in the agricultural areas north of Bailer Hill Road, to reduce nutrient loads (especially ammonia), moderate summer water temperatures, and sequester contaminants.
- Remove fish passage barriers, especially at constructed ponds and private crossings.
- Educate landowners on the importance of fencing cattle out of the stream. This may take funding to construct alternate water sources and appropriate crossings.
- Ensure that all county roads are equipped with appropriate vegetated ditches that drain to natural or constructed wetlands sufficient in soil depth and vegetated areas to impound and degrade motor oils, motor fuels, road tars and asphalts.
- Reduce outdoor home and garden use of products containing pyrethroids and nonionic surfactants within the False Bay watershed, in particular the pyrethroid species that are most toxic to salmonids. This includes pesticides and herbicides that are sold in hose sprayers, or as concentrates to be mixed with water for use with a hose sprayer.
- Coordination with private landowners will be key to achieving any of the above opportunities.

Coordination of efforts to restore habitat, mitigate contaminant runoff and restore flows will maximize opportunities for salmonid restoration.

STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

FEBRUARY 2023

OVERVIEW

Funding to restore riparian areas was recently secured by the SJI Conservation District, and Orcas staff has been putting it to use across four different preserves. The abundance of species planted creates a rather long and euphonious list: bitter cherry and buffaloberry, elderberry, gooseberry, black twinberry, osoberry, snowberry and serviceberry, mock orange, crabapple, Nootka rose, native hawthorn, black cottonwood, alder and red-osier dogwood. But of course, the hope behind the effort is that these native plants will survive and give rise to even greater melodies, such as the trill and hum of songbirds and bees.

Aaron supported stewardship staff this past month in a variety of ways. He accessed Landscape software and corrected numerous maps of conservation easement areas, and he supplied documentation needed for Council to approve the long-term lease at Coffelt Farm Preserve. Several Conservation Land Bank staff participated in the recent county-wide listening sessions for farmers and ranchers, organized by the Agricultural Resources Committee, and several will also attend WSU Extension's upcoming [Agricultural Summit](#), of which the Land Bank is a sponsor. The Terrestrial Managers Group (TMG) annual meeting is scheduled for the end of March, and Erin is working within a subcommittee to arrange sessions on long-range planning like the BLM's Resource Management Plan and climate initiatives. And, as a reminder, the [Climate and Sustainability Committee](#) is looking for a liaison from the CLB Commission.

OUTREACH

Staff: Tanja Williamson

[Events](#) continue to blossom in the 2023 calendar, and there are guided field tours on all three islands: birdwatching on Lopez, a tour of the new North Shore preserve on Orcas, and interpretive hikes on San Juan Island. Shauna led another well-received walk at Beaverton Valley Preserve and she is collaborating with Limekiln State Park staff to develop a cross-boundary interpretive walk, scheduled for Saturday, March 4th.

Tanja provides a lot of behind-the-scenes support for all events that are offered, ranging from the TMG annual meeting to the Ag listening sessions, and from the Lopez [Open House](#) (February 15th) to the preserve-specific tours. She'll also participate in the upcoming open house, which will feature three different preserves, and is looking forward to receiving "live" feedback. Tanja is working within the communications subcommittee to develop a media calendar, and themes for this year's annual report. Send your ideas!

DISTRICT 1

Staff: Doug McCutchen, Charlie Behnke, Jacob Wagner, Shauna Barrows, Gabriel Conway

Beaverton Marsh: Council Member Christine Minney accompanied Doug on site for an orientation to the proposed Linde Park public access plan. The plan proposes to develop and link a 400-foot trail within Linde to other proposed trails in the Preserve. Karen Vedder is working to finalize an interlocal agreement with Island Rec and San Juan Island School District which would allow Linde Park to serve as the primary trailhead. Doug met with Island Rec staff including the director, Kerry Jack and superintendent, Tracy Roberson, and he also presented the project to the Town of Friday Harbor Council, which was received with enthusiasm. Additional planning work involves cultural resource assessment, Tribal consultation, trail alignments and infrastructure (signs, puncheon, viewing area, surfacing), and permitting with the Town. Members of the Islands Conservation Corps (ICC) spent a day clearing salal and oceanspray from a future trail corridor (Photo 2).

Cady Mountain: In preparation for a future management plan, Doug spent several days exploring the steep and complex topography of the mountain's north side to develop proposals for building trails and to map vegetation communities. While he conducted most if this work solo, he was assisted at times by neighbors, volunteers, as well as staff. Rozewood Environmental provided an initial assessment related to trailhead suitability and permits.

False Bay Creek: Waterfowl are enjoying the inundated wetland, though it contains less standing water than previous winters. Discussions regarding poor water quality and the sustainability of seasonal grazing continue.

Frazer Homestead: A pasture-prairie planting trial was initiated fall of last year, and staff and WSU Extension have scheduled a site visit to see if any early native seedlings have arisen. A collaborative effort to develop a second Island Marble Butterfly enclosure, on the north end of the Preserve, is underway with SJI Conservation District. Staff are developing a request for proposals for a new long-term agricultural lease.

Mount Grant: Staff placed waxed paper on burn piles in preparation for burning and creating biochar. The Friday Walkers, an informal group of SJI residents, will visit the Preserve and Doug will serve as their interpretative guide.

Westside: New signs have been assembled and installed (Photo 3). Staff will lead a field trip for the Whale Museum's Marine Naturalists Training, and they intend to provide both site-specific information as well as more general information on origins of the Land Bank.

Zylstra Lake: County Council and personnel, staff from Parks and Fair, Environmental Stewardship and Public Works, gathered with Representative Rick Larsen on site. The occasion was in recognition of funds being secured for a San Juan Valley greenway project, which is currently proposed to extend from Friday Harbor to the Preserve. The event attracted neighbors, members from the local Trails Committee and the press. The Preserve's annual swan survey boasted 49 swans on the lake. And, agricultural lessees, Adam Greene and Sarah Pope, generated a wonderful [annual report](#) for their community hay project.

DISTRICT 2

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Andrew Jansen

Coffelt Farm: Waterfowl dabbled in the marsh as staff and members of the ICC planted a total of 800 riparian plants within the fenced, freshwater corridor (Photo 5). It's the season of lambs and kids, and the barns are kicking and bleating with new life. Peter replaced the water heater in the farm manager's house. A long-term lease is now in place, and the [Lum Farms blog](#) is a good place to read up on farm happenings over the last year.

Coho: Staff and the ICC planted an array of riparian species along Cascade Creek, and there are plans next month, for another round. Peter met with adjacent landowners to discuss their wish to grow a native hedgerow along the boundary, and he provided them with a sample plant list. Erin

and Peter met with representatives of the Strawberry Council (owners of the Artworks property) to resolve an unintentional encroachment into the Preserve. Future plans for restoring native vegetation along this boundary were also hatched.

Deer Harbor: Blackcap Restoration, an Orcas-based natural resources company, helped to clear an extensive blackberry patch and to plant bareroot species such as alder, elderberry, bitter cherry and gooseberry in the forested gaps.

Eastsound: Staff cleared English ivy from several large junipers and yew trees.

Fowler's Pond: The stream corridor that winds between the outlet of the pond and into Coffelt Farm Preserve has a narrow strip of mature alders, a few native understory species, and a lot of invasives such as blackberry, holly and English hawthorn trees. Peter met with neighbors and outlined his plan to use available grant funding and revitalize the riparian corridor with native hawthorn, black cottonwood, red-osier dogwood and black twinberry. And it's already underway. Staff worked beside the crew from Blackcap Restoration to perform an initial round of blackberry removal and planting, and they will return later this month for another round.

North Shore: Public tours have resumed, and planning continues. Following January's field meeting with the consultant Natural Systems Design, Peter submitted a pre-application package to Community Development and initiated review of the land use and the permits necessary to advance a variety of planned activities (Photo 6). Commissioner Brian Wiese joined Fire Chief Scott Williams, and Peter, on the property to converse about emergency vehicle access and parking layout. Peter re-issued a request for quotes for an automated entry gate after receiving inadequate responses in late 2022.

Turtleback Mountain: A productive month was wrapped up under Andrew's watch. The ICC continued to thin, and target oaks to release, throughout the LSR grant area. Blackcap Restoration, a few staff from SJI, and volunteers, together accomplished planting 2,400 seedlings. And 300 Garry oaks! Most of the species were flowering and fruiting shrubs like osoberry, mock orange, serviceberry and buffaloberry and are intended to bolster the biodiversity on site and enhance food webs. Unfortunately, some of the recently planted wildflower plugs show signs of herbivory by a rapidly rebounding deer population, and signs of the return of non-native rabbits to the mountain are similarly troubling. Peter and Eliza met with Dan Grosboll,

USFWS, to discuss the potential for a reintroduction of the Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly. Although such work seems increasingly likely, implementation would take many years (Photos 7-9).

DISTRICT 3

Staff: Amanda Wedow

FB Spit: Staff finished planting plugs, and six volunteers joined for a beach clean-up.

Upright Head: Friends of the San Juans and Coastal Geological Services prepared a feasibility report, which includes a partial design for how to remove concrete rubble and a ramp and restore a small shoreline beach.

Hummel Lake: Amanda performed general trail maintenance and deconstructed the old, collapsed gate.

Lopez Hill: The 2010 Stewardship and Management Plan (SMP) will be updated this year to include the lease purchase (2018) and the new 75-acre addition (2021). A conservation easement on the addition is expected to be conveyed to the SJPT later this month; and a contract with Ecostudies is underway for a plant survey of the addition. The open house meeting on February 15th will seek input on priorities for the Preserve and include a proposal to build a trail within the addition.

Spencer Spit: The [draft SMP](#) is posted on the website, and the public comment period extends until February 28th. Feedback on the plan, its proposed trail and cooperative agreement with State Parks for future maintenance, will also be sought at this week's in-person meeting (Photo 10).

Richardson Marsh: The open house will also seek to gather public input on which activities are to occur on this 25-acre preserve. Activities under current consideration include seasonal grazing of livestock, installing fencing, creating a short trail and overlook, and constructing a blind for wildlife viewing.

Photos



Photo 1. Commissioners: Please save-the-date and join us at the TMG annual meeting.



Photo 2. ICC members Libby and June (can you spot her?) clear area for a new trail at Beaverton Marsh Preserve



Photo 3. Red flowering currant is consistently the first to bloom on San Juan Island each year, and almost always during the first week of February.



Photo 4. The Westside preserve received new signage. The old sign (left) was vandalised and was replaced with an updated version (right).



Photo 5. The ICC plant bare root species within the riparian corridor of Coffelt Farm Preserve.



Photo 6. A shot of the Natural Systems Design team, on the ground, at the North Shore Preserve.



Photo 7. A before-and-after of a Garry oak within the LSR project area on Turtleback Mountain Preserve.



Photo 8. Blackcap Restoration enhance Turtleback Mountain with bareroot plants.



Photo 9. New plants also made it into the road cut at the base of Turtleback Mountain



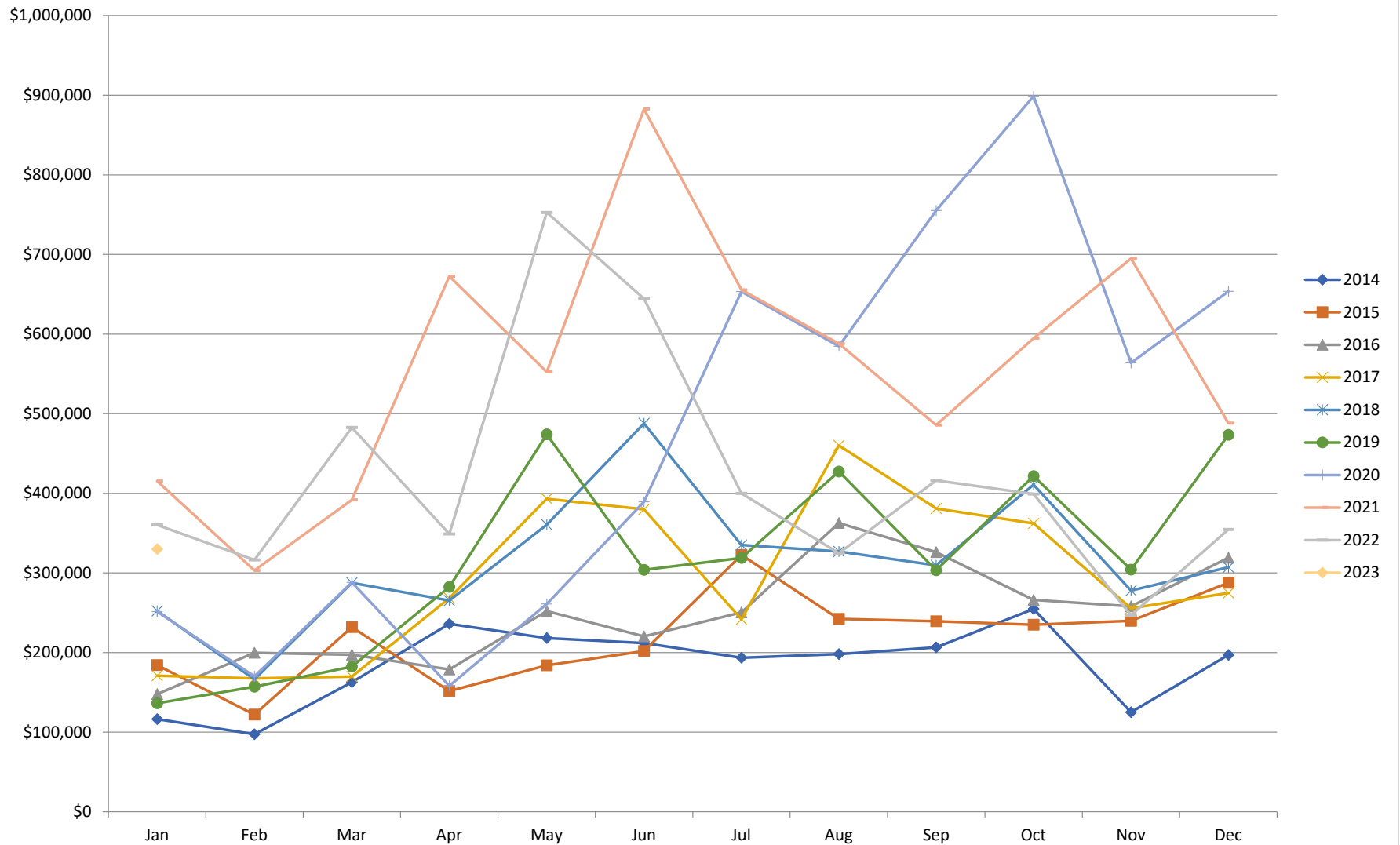
Photo 10. A potential view from the proposed trail at Spencer Spit Preserve.

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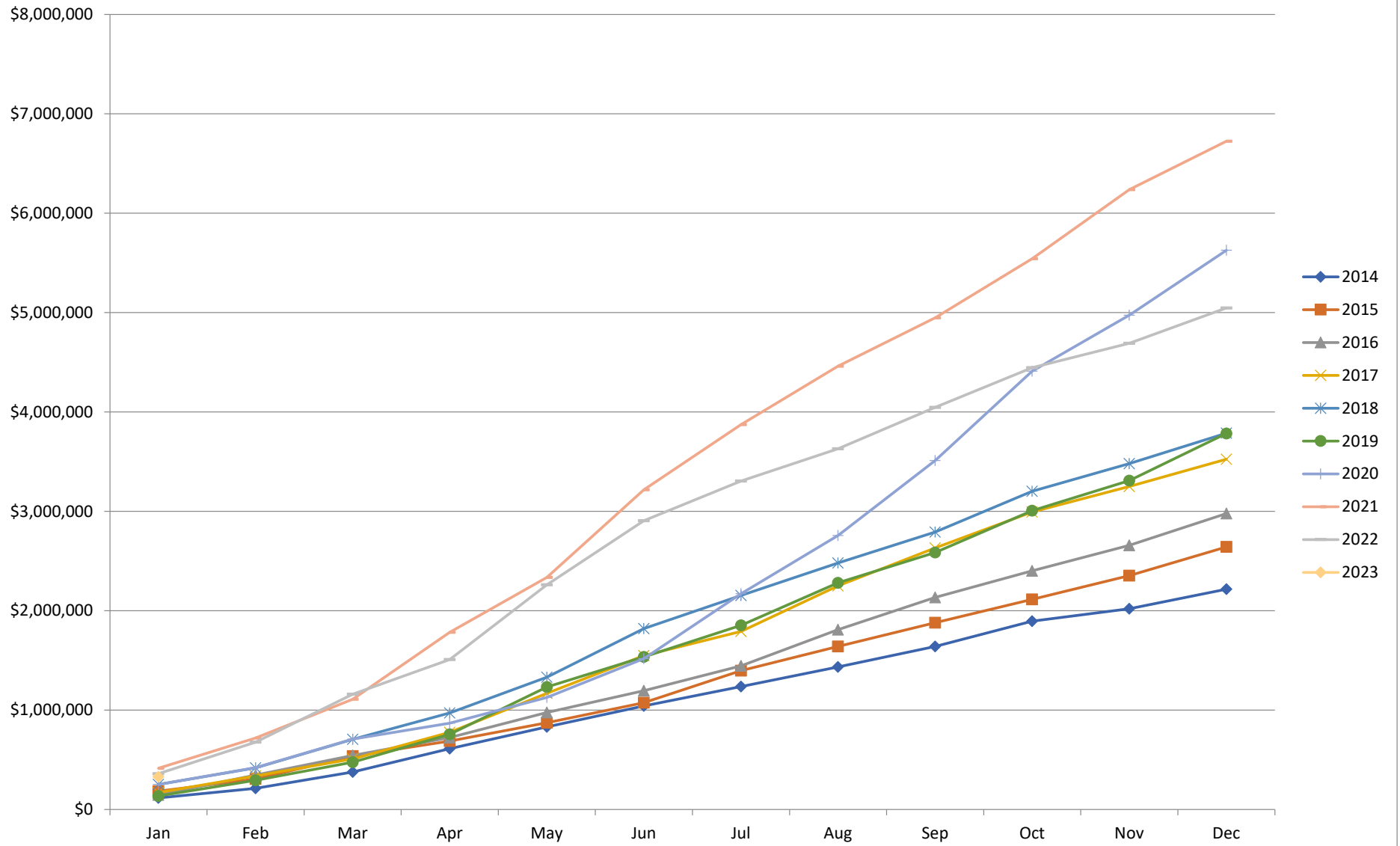
Avg % Recvd	5.56%	10.32%	17.04%	24.17%	33.75%	43.65%	52.85%	62.72%	72.18%	82.66%	90.58%	100.00%
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Min	\$4,619,503
Max	\$9,160,823
Average	\$5,929,420
Budget Amt	\$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000 \$3,960,000
YE Budget Proj(%)	149.73%

REET By Month



REET by Year



REET by Year Column

