

# **AGENDA**

## **San Juan County Conservation Land Bank Commission**

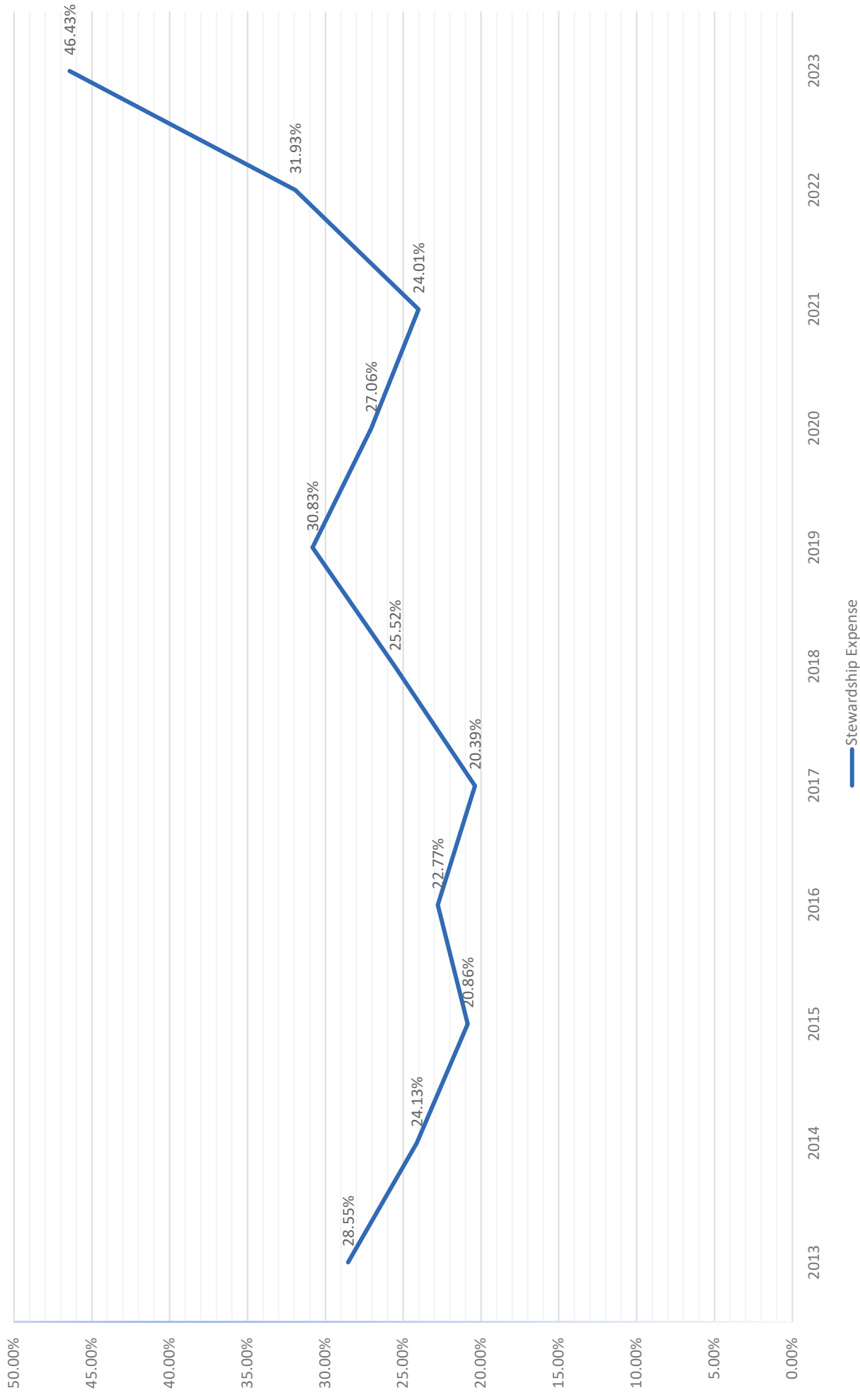
**Members of the public may participate in person at  
152 1<sup>st</sup> St N, Friday Harbor, WA 98250  
join virtually by [CLICKING HERE](#)  
or by phone @ (253)205-0468 Meeting ID: 864 2185 5108**

**February 16, 2024**

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 8:30am  | Convene   |
| 8:30    | General Public Comment Period   |
| 8:40    | Approve January 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes  |
| 8:45    | Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust  |
| 8:55    | Council Update – Christine Minney <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Introduction of New Commissioners, Anne Marie Shanks and Tim Clark</li></ul>  |
| 9:05    | Chair and Commissioners Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Committee Assignments (Communications, Ag, and Ag leasing, Climate, SP, San Juan Preservation Trust – Coordination)</li></ul> |
| 9:15    | Financial Report – Aaron Rock   |
| 9:20    | Stewardship Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Management Plan/Preserve Opening Update</li></ul>  |
| 9:30    | Guidance on the Open Public Meetings Act and Political Activity<br>Amy Vira, SJC Prosecuting Attorney   |
| 10:00   | Break   |
| 10:10   | Director’s Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Draft Strategic Plan</li></ul>  |
| 10:40   | Outreach/Communications Report – Tanja Williamson <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Communications Plan Outline / Schedule</li></ul>  |
| 11:00   | Future Agenda Items: Wildfire Protection Plan, Update from Reauthorization Committee, Tribal Relations  |
| 11:05   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Public Comment Period   |
| 11:10am | Adjourn   |

*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”*

## Stewardship Percentage of REET



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## STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

FEBRUARY 2024

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### OVERVIEW

In between planting trees and shrubs and clearing windthrow from trails (and then planting more trees and shrubs), staff have exchanged their latest sights and sensations. There's a litany: the croak of tree frogs, the thrum of a bumblebee queen, the open bloom of a red-flowering currant, and the wriggle of both a garter and a short-tailed snake (Photos 1-3). They've also been making lots of plans. A draft schedule for this year's stewardship and management plans (SMP) was created, and by all admissions, it is ambitious. Still, on the horizon are openings for several high-profile and ecologically-significant preserves including, Cady Mountain, North Shore, and Watmough Head. The draft schedule for 2024 SMPs and public meetings is included with this month's meeting materials. Staff also continue to work on outreach with Native Nations. Peter has initiated conversations with Samish Department of Natural Resources about extending the partnership beyond the current LSR site, and Doug is scheduling meetings with contacts from several Tribes to explore grant partnerships and stewardship work. The [Stewardship Network](#) has an established Tribal Engagement subcommittee, with an existing charter, and several sub-working groups. Recently, a co-stewardship sub-group was devised and anticipates focusing on improving coordination and relationships, streamlining efforts, and providing opportunities for education of local agencies.

### OUTREACH

Staff: Tanja Williamson

Tanja continues to keep busy entering events into the calendar and promoting them, as well as brainstorming events with partner organizations county-wide. [Click here to view the calendar](#). Tanja has also been supporting the strategic planning efforts, working on the 2023 annual report, and reviewing the website for future updates. Charlie and other staff participated in the annual Farmer Rancher Listening Sessions that are organized by the Ag Resource Committee on occur on Lopez, Orcas, and San Juan. The Land Bank also continues to sponsor the [Annual Agricultural Summit](#) which is coming up on March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. Several staff and Commissioners will participate in workshops and host an information table at the conference.

### **SALISH SEEDS NURSERY**

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

We've already begun to taking orders for plugs (small container plants) for the Fall and filling a few small orders for seed. The big freeze may have injured some of our plants that overwinter in containers at the nursery. We'll find out for sure in the weeks ahead. Despite the hard freeze, the recent spell of warm weather has some of our most-hardy, overwintered seed starting to germinate (Photo 4).

### **DISTRICT 1**

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

**American Camp Trail:** Annual monitoring was recently completed on a beautiful sunny day.

**Beaverton Marsh:** Winter storms downed numerous trees and branches. Thom Pence assisted in clean up. Charlie continues to field questions about the agricultural lease's [Request For Proposals](#). The deadline is at the end of the month. A review committee, comprised of Land Bank staff and Commissioners, is being assembled. Materials to replace perimeter fences are also being gathered. The wells are being tested for contaminants, with none expected, and the solar water system is staged for installation. The permit from the Town of Friday Harbor for trail construction at Linde Park is anticipated by the end of month. Work continues on the management plan, and Doug will provide a project update to Town Council on March 7th.

**Cady Mountain:** Field work for the cultural resource assessment is complete. A bottle cache was investigated and determined to date to the early 1940s. It was documented and given a determination of "non-significance." Shauna met with neighbors who are interested in oak restoration and are excited to work collaboratively across boundary. Windthrow from winter storms was reported within recent oak restoration areas.

**Driggs Park:** Frog Song Landscaping has begun the process of converting a portion of the front lawn to beds, which we'll plant with native shrubs and perennials this fall (Photo 5).

**False Bay Creek:** The warmer temps and heavy rains filled the fields and wetlands with freshwater, but not enough to overtop Bailer Hill Rd (this time). The waterfowl seem to have ample standing water. Staff from the Land Bank and Conservation District are making progress on an Individual Stewardship Plan that will provide considerations for future agricultural

activities. Surveys were conducted, including wetland delineations, and markers have been placed around the Preserve to define the future expansion of Bailer Hill Road.

**Frazer Homestead:** Charlie continues to field questions about the agricultural lease, as the [RFP](#) deadline is at the end of the month. A lease proposal review committee is being assembled.

**King Sisters:** Overwintering cattle and sheep have been haybale grazing around the Preserve's higher and dryer areas. Cattle will soon be restricted from these areas to allow for regrowth and overseeding with additional forage species. Charlie is working with lessee Rob Waldron to renew his lease. The hedgerow along the trail was recently brushed.

**Limekiln:** Graffiti was discovered near one of the quarries around the same time as National Park staff at American Camp discovered graffiti and a broken window. Staff were notified by a friendly trail user that the reservoir at Lime Kiln appeared higher than usual, and after a visit to the site, staff concurred. It was determined that the lake's outfall was clogged – the cause has yet to be identified -- and water levels were dropped by utilizing the backup valve. Winter weather downed numerous trees and limbs along trails, including "widow makers," which Shauna and Jacob were able to clear with some creative rigging.

**Mount Grant:** A couple of trails were reshaped after heavy runoff caused drainage issues.

**Third Lagoon:** An abandoned vehicle has been periodically parked overnight, and the sheriff was notified. We report annually on a precocious red flowering currant from this preserve as it is consistently one of the earliest known bloomers, which emerged the last week of January.

**Zylstra Lake:** Volunteers from Trails Committee assisted with winter storm cleanup!

## **DISTRICT 2**

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman

**Coffelt Farm:** It's baby season on the farm, and the first goat kids and lambs are appearing. The Lums have recently made upgrades such as dairy improvements, an egg-cleaning facility, and other general organization. Fencing projects are also being prioritized and planned. The Lums will give a farm tour (for registered attendees only) during the Ag Summit on Friday March 8<sup>th</sup>

and Land Bank staff will be present. Recent repairs and maintenance of the water system were performed by Coldspring Pumps, Inc.

**Coho Preserve:** Staff will join with a few volunteers to plant some native trees and shrubs along the boundary with Artworks Gallery. The plants are intended to raise awareness about the Preserve's boundary and the importance of buffering critical areas from adjacent development. Sitka spruce trees and skunk cabbage plugs will enhance the adjacent wetlands.

**Crescent Beach:** A draft Stewardship and Management Plan is out for staff review. It will go to the Commission next and then out for public comment. We anticipate holding a public meeting in March to discuss the proposed forest management work and other elements of the plan.

**Judd Cove:** Planning and permitting for the grant-funded shoreline restoration project continues. Staff are cautiously optimistic about implementing the habitat enhancements this summer. Mary Gropp has a new role with the Orcas Island School District, and she plans to bring an elementary class to the preserve on March 6 and March 13. Youth will learn about the history of land uses in the area, including the Lime Kiln.

**North Shore:** For the past two weeks, there's been a pulse of habitat enhancement projects on site and an estimated 11,000 new trees and shrubs are now in the ground. Many, many hands have helped to (almost!) complete these restoration projects including the Island Conservation Corps (ICC), the hard-working crew with Blackcap Restoration, and dozens of hearty volunteers (Photos 7-8). The large effort was planned and approved in the [Interim Management Plan](#), and involves planting shoreline areas where buildings were removed as well as an upland field full of nonnative grasses and thistles. Most of the plants are within the newly fenced-in field to protect them from deer browse. No fencing was installed along the shoreline, and though some damage is anticipated, these areas were planted predominantly with browse-tolerant shrubs. Both the Land Bank and Orcas Island Fire & Rescue issued [press releases](#) announcing plans for a fire training exercise on February 24<sup>th</sup>. We're hoping the weather conditions are perfect to pull it off.

A slide has developed along a portion of the bluff above the beach road, following recent snow and rain events. The Land Bank's geotechnical consultant warned of additional slides in this area. Repairs will be pursued next summer, and staff are considering various ways to infiltrate or divert winter runoff. The property is very wet, and instability along the bluff is exacerbated by multiple pipes, installed by previous owners, to drain the wetlands. Volunteers

Mary Gropp and Laurie St. Aubin are making a variety of nest structures for the future preserve (Photo 9). Peter is coordinating with SJPT on their plans to hold a summer social event on site and ensuring that it doesn't conflict with other efforts that are planned but not assigned a calendar date, such as the final building demolition, grading, and parking lot construction. The automated gate is working well and the adjacent neighbor, who uses it to access their property through a driveway easement, gave it a thumbs UP (Photo 10).

Lastly, the Preserve needs an approved, formal name that can adorn signs and more. Staff reviewed the Naming Policy and drafted a proposal that North Shore be finalized (Exhibit A). Discussion and approval by the Commission is expected at the February meeting.

**Turtleback Mountain:** A field crew from the Samish Indian Nation, one of our partners with the LSR project, joined Tyler and the ICC crew in forest thinning and pile building. We're also preparing to ease up on thinning -- prior to the start of nesting season -- and transition into weed management. A second-year ICC member, Maggie Long is conducting her graduate research on the pile burning process to establish baseline data and measure charcoal yields. Staff installed several new signs related to recent trail changes, and the first of several commercial grade 'Rambler' bicycle racks at the South Entrance (Photo 11). Additional racks will go in at the North Entrance and at other Orcas preserves.

### **DISTRICT 3**

Staff: Amanda Wedow

**Channel:** Amanda performed general maintenance including filling potholes and cleaning up debris from the recent storms.

**FB Spit:** Commissioners Peggy Bill and Tim Clark helped to protect the habitat enhancement project by surrounding existing plantings with wire cages to prevent rabbit browse. And even more plugs were planted.

**Hummel Lake:** Shauna joined Amanda on Lopez and helped with storm clean-up and general trail maintenance.



**Lopez Hill:** Shauna and Amanda teamed-up to clear a tangle of fallen trees at the trailhead (Photo 12).

**Richardson Marsh:** The draft Stewardship and Management Plan is under review by staff, Commissioners, and partners at SJPT. Many have already provided thoughtful comments, and revisions are being incorporated. The draft plan will soon be released for a 30-day public comment period. Amanda partnered with the Lopez Library and Beth St. George to lead a bird walk. The event was well attended by people and ducks.

**Upright Head:** The Youth Conservation Corps planted over 400 plugs of wildflowers and grasses at the trailhead (Photo 13).

**Watmough Bay:** Monthly work parties kicked-off with clearing out the “overgrown orchard.” The group of volunteers helped to cut blackberry canes, which were then loaded into the trailer and brought to the compost facility (Photo 14). The scoping meeting is moved to March 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### Photos



Photo 1. A Red Flowering Currant at Third Lagoon; this is always the first plant SJI staff see in bloom.





Photo 2. A Sharptailed snake encountered on the southside of Turtleback Mountain.



Photo 3. A Garter snake basks in the sun at Deadman's Bay Preserve





Photo 4. *Lomatium nudicaule*, barestem lomatium, or q'exmin seeds are germinating after overwintering outdoors.



Photo 5. Future native plant beds at the Driggs Park front yard.





Photo 6. The 13,600 bare root trees and shrubs that were happy to have found new ground at North Shore.



Photo 7. Hearty (and hardy) volunteers take a break from planting at North Shore.





Photo 8. Barn swallow nest cups made by volunteer Laurie St. Aubin for the future North Shore nesting structure.



Photo 9. Automated gate at North Shore





Photo 10. The new commercial grade bicycle rack at Turtleback Mountain.



Photo 11. Inter-island teamwork at Hummel Lake and Lopez Hill





Photo 12. Lopez YCC plants over 400 plugs at Upright Head



Photo 13. Volunteers successfully clear blackberries from the overgrown orchard at Watmough Head.

**EXHIBIT A****Preserve Name Proposal - North Shore property, Orcas Island**

<b>Preserve Name Review Worksheet</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Notes (optional)</b>
<b>1. Name Origin or Source (3 Points Possible)</b>		
The proposed name, “North Shore Preserve” originated with staff shortly after acquisition as an interim name. This name is generally descriptive of the location and is not in use for other properties. The SJPT previously had a property with this name but changed it recently.	2	
<b>2. Compatibility with Preserve Naming Policy criteria and Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion goals (3 Points Possible)</b>		
This name meets the criteria outlined in the Land Bank’s Preserve Naming Policy. It is not linked to previous owners or donors and is unlikely to be offensive or to generate significant opposition.	2	
<b>3. Community Support (3 Points Possible)</b>		
The Land Bank’s multiple public communications since acquiring the property in 2022 have described it as the North Shore property or the former Glenwood Inn property. “North Shore property” has been used repeatedly by staff over the last year and a half to describe the property to members of the public during tours as well as in many discussions about the future of the property. There appears to be public support for the name and a lack of opposition.	3	
<b>4. Proposal Quality (1 Point Possible)</b>		
Due to the decision to propose that the interim name become permanent, it seemed unnecessary to draft a separate naming proposal.	0	
	<b>7</b>	<b>10 Points Total</b>



<b>MONTH</b>	<b>PROPOSED STEWARDSHIP &amp; MANAGEMENT PLAN (SMP) ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
FEB	<p>D2: Crescent Beach first internal review; initial CLBC/Partner review</p> <p>D3: Richardson Marsh revisions from initial staff and CLBC review; Public comment opens</p>	<p>1 Public Comment Period Opens: Richardson Marsh</p> <p>1 Internal Review: Crescent Beach</p>
MARCH	<p>D1: Beaverton Marsh first internal review</p> <p>D2: Crescent Beach public comment opens; Public meeting North Shore first internal review Judd Cove first internal review</p> <p>D3: Richardson Marsh public comment closes; second internal review; County Council/Manager (County) update Watmough Bay public scoping meeting (3/19)</p>	<p>2 Public Meetings: Crescent Beach &amp; Watmough Bay</p> <p>1 Public Comment Period Opens: Crescent Beach</p> <p>1 Public Comment Period Closes: Richardson Marsh</p> <p>3 Internal Reviews: Beaverton Marsh &amp; North Shore &amp; Judd Cove</p>
APRIL	<p>D1: Beaverton Marsh initial CLBC/Partner review; Public comment opens; Public meeting Cady Mountain public meeting</p> <p>D2: Crescent Beach public comments close; Second internal review; County update North Shore initial CLBC/Partner review Judd Cove initial CLBC review; Public comment opens; Public meeting</p> <p>D3: Richardson Marsh CLBC approval 4/19 Watmough Bay first internal review, Initial CLBC/Partner review</p>	<p>3 Public Meetings: Beaverton Marsh &amp; Cady Mtn &amp; Judd Cove</p> <p>2 Public Comment Periods Open: Beaverton Marsh &amp; Judd Cove</p> <p>1 Public Comment Period Closes: Crescent Beach</p> <p>1 Internal Review: Watmough Bay</p> <p>1 CLBC Approval: Richardson Marsh</p>

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>PROPOSED SMP ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>MAY</b>	<p>D1: Beaverton Marsh public comment closes; Second internal review; County update Cady Mt first internal review; initial CLBC/Partner review; Public comment opens</p> <p>D2: North Shore public comment opens; Public meeting (Potential Crescent Beach CLBC approval 5/17) Judd Cove public comments close; Second internal review; County update</p> <p>D3: Watmough Bay public comment opens; Public meeting</p>	<p>2 Public Meetings: North Shore &amp; Watmough Bay</p> <p>3 Public Comment Periods Open: Cady Mt &amp; North Shore &amp; Watmough Bay</p> <p>1 Internal Review: Cady Mt</p> <p>(Potential CLBC Approval: Crescent Beach)</p>
<b>JUNE</b>	<p>D1: Beaverton Marsh CLBC approval 6/21 Cady Mt public meeting; Public comment closes</p> <p>D2: North Shore public comment closes Crescent Beach CLBC approval 6/21 Judd Cove CLBC approval 6/21</p> <p>D3: Watmough Bay Public comment opens; Public meeting; Public comment closes</p>	<p>2 Public Meetings: Cady Mt &amp; Watmough Bay</p> <p>1 Public Comment Period Opens: Watmough Bay</p> <p>3 Public Comment Periods Close: Cady Mt &amp; North Shore &amp; Watmough Bay</p> <p>2-3 CLBC Approvals: Beaverton Marsh &amp; Crescent Beach &amp; Judd Cove</p>
<b>JULY</b>	<p>D1: Cady Mt second internal/partner review; County update</p> <p>D2: North Shore second internal/partner review; County update</p> <p>D3: Watmough Bay CLBC approval 7/19</p>	<p>1 CLBC Approval: Watmough Bay</p>
<b>AUG</b>	<p>D1: Cady Mt CLBC approval 8/16</p> <p>D2: North Shore CLBC approval 8/16</p>	<p>2 CLBC Approvals: Cady Mt &amp; North Shore</p>
<b>SEPT</b>		
<b>OCT</b>	D3: Lopez Hill first internal review	
<b>NOV</b>		
<b>DEC</b>		

LEARN

## **Land Bank Preserve Naming Policy**

### **Introduction**

The act of naming can be significant and meaningful. It can conjure powerful images or emotions and help to recall history. The name of a San Juan County Land Bank preserve is intended to be permanent and should be informed by the land's location, physical features, historical significance as well as its anticipated future function and services. The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for naming Land Bank Preserves. An ad hoc committee, comprised of two staff and one Commissioner, will be appointed by the Chair of the Land Bank Commission. This three-person committee will review and rank proposals for preserve names, consider public comment and provide recommendations for final Commission approval.

### **Naming and Renaming Considerations**

Preserves will not be named after property owners or sellers.

#### Interim Names

After acquiring a new property, the Land Bank will assign an interim name. For consistency, an interim name could consist of the street address of the parcel(s), the Land Bank District number and tax parcel (e.g., District 3-2000) or some other identifying feature.

#### Permanent Names

The intent of naming is for permanent recognition. Generally, when parcels contiguous with an existing preserve are acquired, they are considered an addition and they will take on the name of that preserve. For consistency, a permanent name will be determined as soon as possible.

#### Renaming

The process of naming and renaming preserves often requires significant resources in terms of signs, maps and literature. In addition, name changing can be the source of confusion to the public. Therefore, renaming of preserves will be reserved for exceptional cases, and subject to a critical examination that includes the original justification for the name and honors the value of prior contributors.

### **Naming Criteria**

It is the policy of the Land Bank to consider the following criteria when naming or renaming preserves:

#### Geographic, Ecological or other Common Usage identification

The Land Bank will give preference to names that reflect prominent or significant geographic features. This includes names of easily recognized ecological features or functions on the Preserve, as well as geological features or prominent local landmarks.

#### Historical, Cultural or Social Significance

When a preserve is associated strongly with events or places with historic, cultural or social significance, the Land Bank will consider naming a preserve that commemorates events or places. However, context must be demonstrated adequately through research findings or other documentation, and preference will be given to names that promote inclusiveness, particularly of Indigenous communities or historically overburdened members of society.

#### Major Gifts

The Land Bank sometimes benefits from the significant generosity of individuals, or partners with other

organizations in order to acquire property. Donors or contributing organizations that seek naming rights for major gifts will be asked to follow the naming criteria principles described above. The Land Bank will consider exceptions on their own merits and, as an alternative to naming, may elect to acknowledge a significant donation or fundraising effort through signage or other media.

### **Naming Procedures**

Any individual, group or organization may submit a naming proposal for a preserve.

When reviewing proposals, the Land Bank will especially consider the relationships of indigenous peoples to San Juan County lands and waters. The ad hoc committee will (1) attempt to ascertain whether any proposed names might be considered offensive or conflict with any names that Native Americans have already applied to the feature and (2) demonstrate effort to acquire input or feedback on names. Demonstrated efforts include direct communications with local tribal governments, their designees or others who may have pertinent specialized knowledge or expertise<sup>1</sup>, and research of the relevant literature. The Land Bank acknowledges that information from Tribes may be privileged (i.e., names may refer to protected gathering grounds or ceremonial sites, etc.) and, therefore, shared with others only as necessary and appropriate. Proposed names, especially those referencing events or places of historic, cultural or social significance should be thoroughly researched. Some resources include:

- Historic Plat Maps and Sanborn Maps
- Washington State Archives
- Library or internet search for documents or references
- Washington State Historical Society
- Area tribes and native community groups
- Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Washington Committee on Geographic Names US Census Archives
- National Archives: <http://www.archives.gov/index.html>

Naming proposals must contain the following information:

- Name of applicant
- Proposed preserve name
- Background and support for the proposed name
- Demonstrated community support for the proposed name

Upon receipt of a naming proposal, the Land Bank ad hoc committee will:

- Review and score the proposal using the scoring worksheet (Exhibit A)
- Ensure that supporting information has been authenticated
- Take into consideration the comments of stakeholders, elected officials and community members

Upon completion of the naming review, the ad hoc committee will present recommendations to the Commission in writing. The public, including all who submitted names, will be notified of the final decision via email and the information will be posted online.

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<sup>1</sup> This may change as the County works to improve communication with Coast Salish Tribes.

## Exhibit A

Preserve Name Review Worksheet	Score	Notes (optional)
<b>1. Name Origin or Source (3 Points Possible)</b>		
Describe the origin or source of the proposed name and why you believe it is appropriate for the Preserve. Names describing physical, ecological, historical or cultural features will be given greater weight than names of people.		
<b>2. Compatibility with Preserve Naming Policy criteria and Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion goals (3 Points Possible)</b>		
Describe how the proposed name meets the criteria outlined in the Land Bank's Preserve Naming Policy. Describe how the name promotes inclusiveness, particularly of Indigenous communities, other people of color or historically overburdened members of society.		
<b>3. Community Support (3 Points Possible)</b>		
Describe the avenues through which you have sought and received community support for the proposed name. Specifically, describe how have you engaged the public, how community members or organizations have expressed support (e.g., verbal, written), and the extent of that support (e.g., number of people or organizations).		
<b>4. Proposal Quality (1 Point Possible)</b>		
Include an adequate level of detail (1-3 pages) to enable the Ad Hoc Review Committee to make an informed decision. If available, reference research, background documents or other information supporting the proposed name.		
		<b>10 Points Total</b>

## DRAFT Communication Outline

### WHO:

#### Target Audiences:

- Trails Groups
- New Residents
- Schools/Parents
- Ag Community
- Service Clubs
- Realtors

#### Responsibility:

Staff/Commissioners  
Tanja  
Staff  
Staff/Commissioners  
Lincoln/Commissioners  
Lincoln/Commissioners

### WHAT (themes defined by Strategic Plan)

- Environmental Work
- Ag Work
- Recreation Opportunities
- \_\_\_\_\_

### WHERE:

#### Social Media

- Facebook (Weekly goal 3-4 Posts)
- Instagram (Weekly goal 3-4 Posts)

Tanja/Staff support/Commission Support

Tanja/Staff support/Commission Support

#### Land Bank Website News

Tanja/Staff Support

#### Online Media/Press (Monthly goal 3 stories)

Tanja/ Staff Support

#### Printed Assets

- Annual Report
- Flyers
- Mailers

Tanja/Staff Support

Tanja

Tanja

### HOW:

#### Educational Events

- Tabling (Farmers Markets; County Fair; ?)
- Power Points to groups (see target audiences)
- Interpretive Walks
- New Buyer Packet

Tanja/Staff Support/Commission Support

Lincoln

Stewards/Contractors

Tanja

#### Volunteer Events

Stewards

#### Social Events

- “Fireside Chats”
- Commissioner “office hours”

Staff/Commission

Commission/Staff Support

#### Videos

Staff Support/Tanja

#### Commission Meetings

Staff/Commission



31.8%

68.3%

## Top cities

Friday Harbor, WA

28.3%

Orcas, WA

Seattle, WA

7.3%

Lopez Island, WA

4.5%

Bellingham, WA

1.9%

Paid impressions ⓘ

39,030 ↑ 1.4K%

Apr 29

Jun 28

Aug 27

Oct 26

— Paid reach

— Amount spent  
\$252.00

es ⓘ

New Instagram followers ⓘ

147 —

8

6

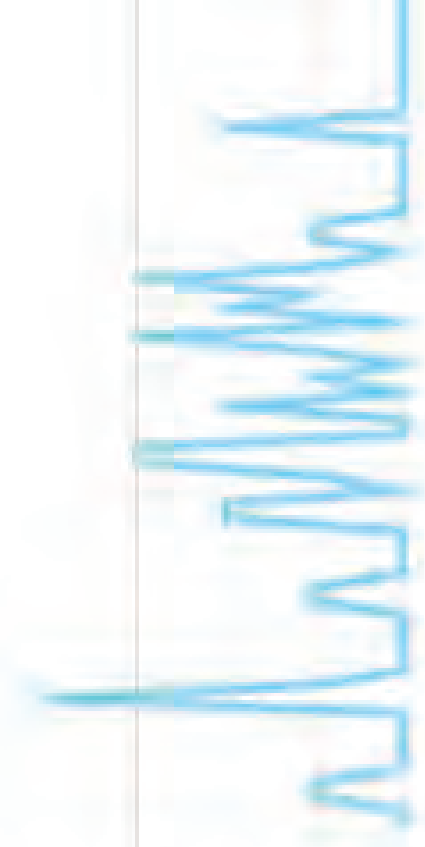
4

2

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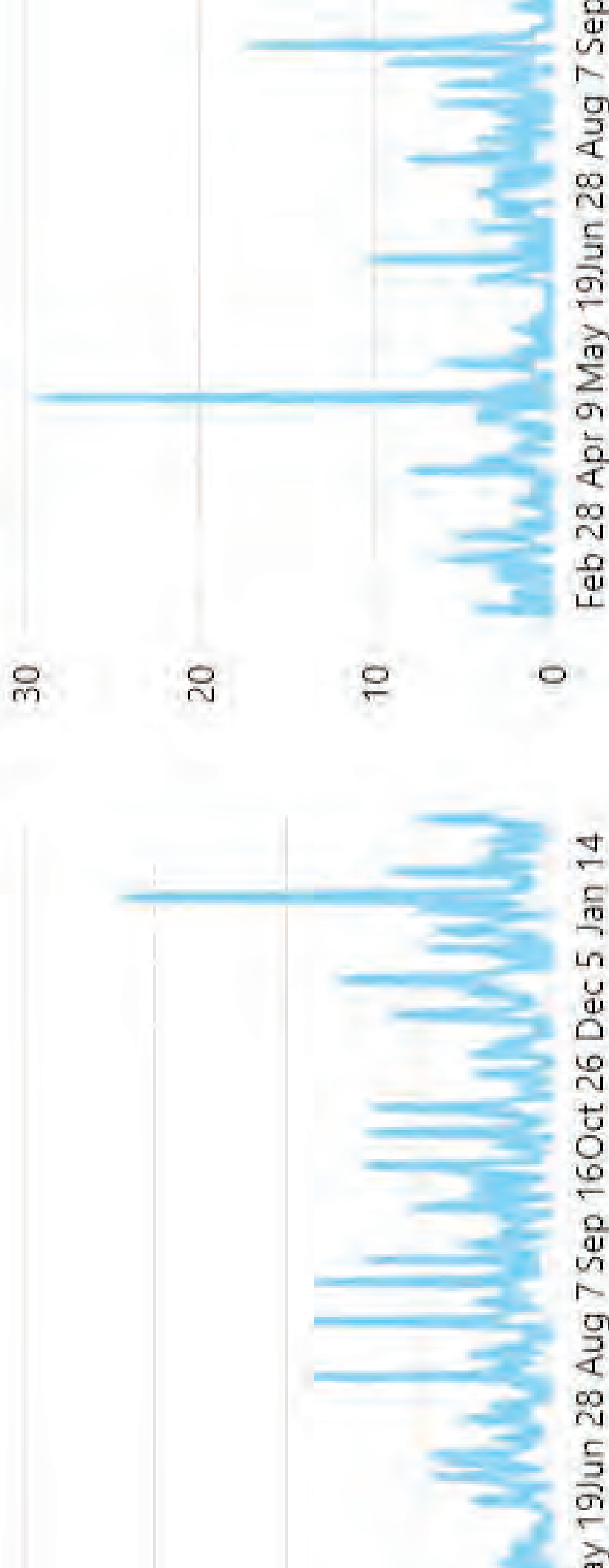
May 19 Jun 28 Aug 7 Sep 16 Oct 26 Dec 5 Jan 14

May 24 Jun 26 Jul 8 Jul 18 Jul 29 Aug 14



## Instagram profile visits ⓘ

549 ↑ 16.6%



Instagram reach ⓘ

13,653 ↑ 1.3K%

3.0K

2.0K

1.0K

0

May 19 Jun 28 Aug 7 Sep 16 Oct 26 Dec 5 Jan 14

Feb 28 Apr 9 May 19 Jun 28 Aug 7 Sep

# OIFR announces upcoming live fire burn training exercise

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 [theorcasonian.com/oifr-announces-upcoming-live-fire-burn-training-exercise/](https://theorcasonian.com/oifr-announces-upcoming-live-fire-burn-training-exercise/)

Community

February 3, 2024



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## ||| FROM ASSISTANT CHIEF DON SWAIN for ORCAS FIRE & RESCUE |||

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Orcas Island is excited to announce an upcoming Live Fire Burn Training Exercise to enhance our dedicated firefighters' skills and preparedness. Pending safe weather conditions, this training exercise will occur on February 24 at The Old Glenwood Inn property near the north shore. It will provide an invaluable opportunity for our firefighters to gain practical experience in a controlled environment.

The Live Fire Burn Training Exercise is an essential component of our ongoing commitment to ensuring the highest level of safety and proficiency among our firefighting personnel. By simulating real-life fire scenarios, our firefighters will have the opportunity to sharpen their skills, enhance their decision-making abilities, and further develop their teamwork and communication skills.

During the training exercise, participants engage in controlled fire scenarios. These scenarios will allow our firefighters to experience firsthand the challenges and complexities associated with firefighting operations while maintaining a strong focus on safety and industry standards.

The safety of our firefighters and the public is our utmost priority. OIFR conducts this Live Fire Burn Training Exercise in strict accordance with the guidelines and standards set by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 1403) and WAC 296-305-05502. Trained Instructors, Fire Chiefs, and the department Safety Officer will be present throughout the exercise to monitor and control the training environment, ensuring that all necessary safety precautions are in place. No toxic fire suppression chemicals will be used in this exercise.

We extend our gratitude to the San Juan County Conservation Land Bank for providing us with this opportunity and to the residents of Orcas Island for their support and understanding during this important training exercise. We also want to express our appreciation to our dedicated department members for their commitment to continuous improvement and unwavering dedication to protecting and serving our community.

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# the rich and the dying deer remain ter

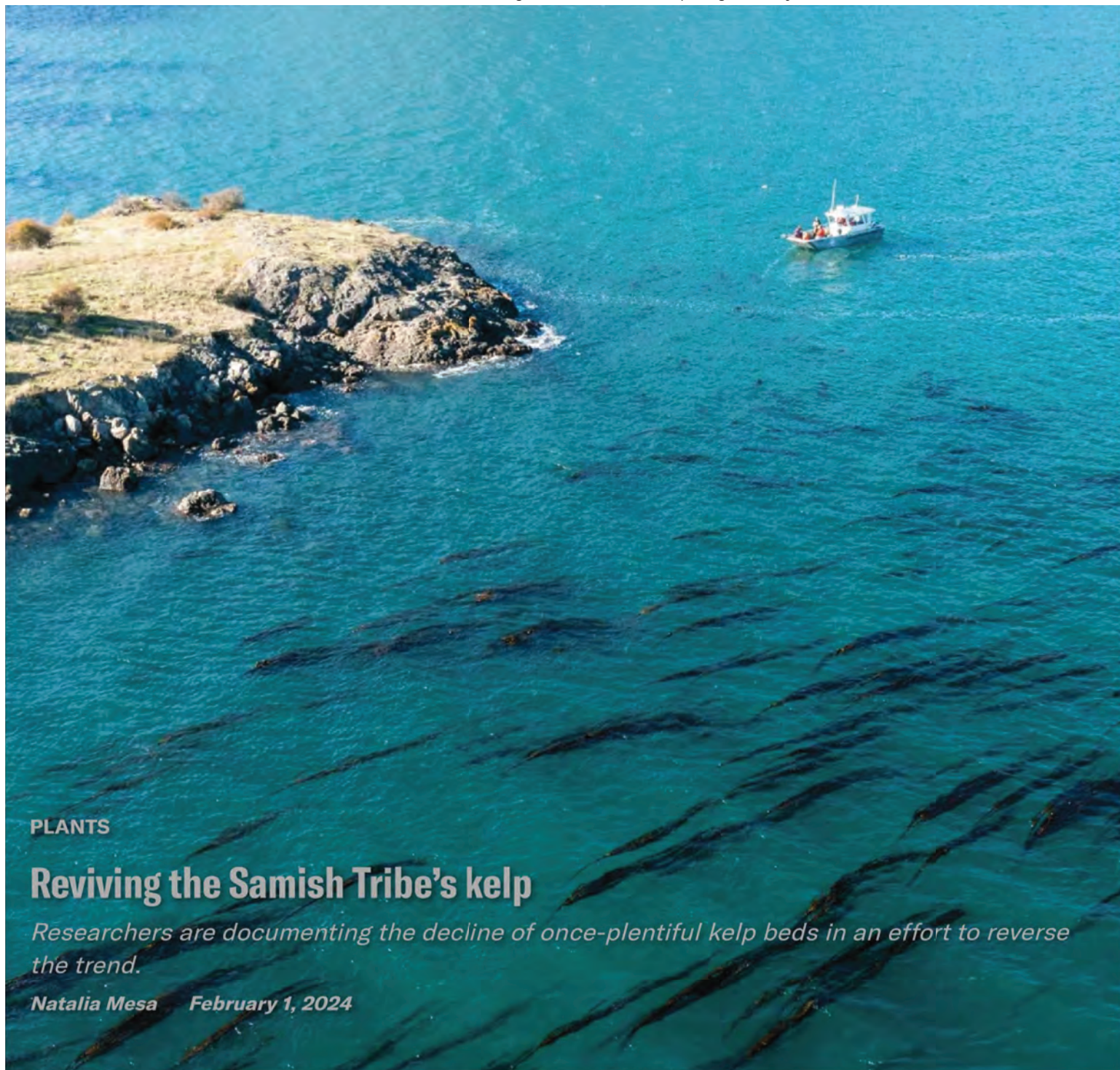
2024 1:30 am



County assessors directly harm residents by Increasing property taxes and by feeding the gaping maw of the County Government. County managers build bureaucratic stature by increasing their subordinate numbers. These measures may fatten managers' egos but may not increase productivity with a four-day work week. Overstaffing in a digital world frequently diverts work time to personal time with a computer mouse and accessible dating sites.

Excesses of the excessive subordinates further harm residents. With excessive permitting, the planning department, requires copious plan revisions, slows housing construction, and increases construction costs. Conservation easements and the land bank reduce housing sites. Conservation easements reduce property taxes by reducing assessed value. Successful building often requires attorneys citing arcane legal precedents and questionable historians surreptitiously. All these government mandates and machinations shift the housing supply curve leftward, increasing the housing demand curve at a higher price with fewer housing units.



**PLANTS**

## Reviving the Samish Tribe's kelp

*Researchers are documenting the decline of once-plentiful kelp beds in an effort to reverse the trend.*

**Natalia Mesa**    **February 1, 2024**

**David Moskowitz/High Country News**

*Bull kelp in the Salish Sea off of the south coast of Lopez Island, Washington.*

**David Moskowitz/High Country News**

Toby McLeod grew up on a fishing boat. Before he could walk, he said, he swears he remembers dozing off in bed and waking up among fishing gear, his father having carried him aboard in the early morning darkness.

McLeod's father and grandfather were both tribal fishermen; his father started at the age of 11, in 1957. On fishing trips, he and his dad would take their boat up to Cattle Point, a lookout on the southeastern tip of San

Juan Island, the second-largest island in the San Juan Archipelago in Washington's Puget Sound. There, in the heart of Samish traditional territory, grassy dunes rose from the calm sea water, ringed with jagged glacier-carved rocks. Just offshore, thick kelp stalks reached up from under the surface, connected to bulb-shaped heads and slick, hairlike fronds that swayed in the current, like kite tails.

"As a tribal fisherman, the existence of kelp has always been important. It's where you go fishing," McLeod said. His father would tell him stories about elders parking canoes on huge floating kelp islands, above a wealth of forage fish.

Puget Sound boasts 17 species of kelp, but despite its historical ubiquity — McLeod said that kelp and eelgrass used to be almost annoyingly plentiful — kelp beds are becoming increasingly rare. Across the South and Central Sound, bull kelp populations have decreased by two-thirds since the 1870s, according to a 2021 study published in [\*PLOS ONE\*](#).

McLeod wants to know why. After working as a crab fisherman as a teenager, he studied oceanography at the University of Washington, then became a technician at the Samish Department of Natural Resources. Early in his tenure, kelp became a source of concern for the tribe. Samish elders reported difficulties finding fronds, which are traditionally used to envelop salmon before cooking. The department started documenting the places where kelp once flourished, and eventually, McLeod helped assemble a dive team to study it. The Samish Department of Natural Resources wants to understand why kelp is disappearing in parts of the San Juan Islands, hoping to bring it back. "Trying to understand what's going on is the first step in the process," McLeod said.





*Jennie De La Cruz and Charlie Donahue prepare to make a dive during an October trip to replace a data collection sensor in the water.*

*David Moskowitz/High Country News*

**ON A LATE** October day, a Samish Department of Natural Resources boat streaked across the cobalt-blue waters of Puget Sound, kicking up briny seawater. On a narrow channel between Lopez Island and a small grassy islet, bull kelp peered over the ocean surface, their spherical, golden heads bobbing in the boat's wake.

Perched on the edge of the boat in a dry suit and hot pink flippers, Jennie De La Cruz, a technician and dive lead at the Samish Department of Natural Resources, waited for the current to settle. The engines quieted as the boat came to a standstill atop a kelp bed a few hundred feet from the exposed volcanic bedrock of Watmough Head, a lookout on the southeastern tip of Lopez. Compared to elsewhere in the Sound, the kelp in this bed appeared healthy.

# “As a tribal fisherman, the existence of kelp has always been important. It’s where you go fishing.”

As they prepared to enter the frigid waters, De La Cruz and fellow researcher Charlie Donahue donned masks and checked their air hoses and regulators. Their goal was to anchor a sensor to the sea floor, where bull kelp clung to the rocky bed. The sensor, a rusty tube as thick as a forearm, would measure the water’s pH and temperature; in a month, De La Cruz and Donahue would retrieve it and download its data. The Samish Department of Natural Resources also does [Reef Check](#) surveys, employing the nonprofit Reef Check Foundation’s standard protocol to monitor kelp beds. Citizen divers across the world conduct these surveys documenting the extent and density of reefs and kelp beds, as well as the sediment, fish and invertebrates.



*De La Cruz and Donahue in the water during their dive to replace the data. [David Moskowitz/High Country News](#)*

De La Cruz called the time: 2:45. Splash time. “Pool’s open,” she said. “Dive, dive, dive.” She and Donahue rolled backward off the side of the boat into the water.

The sensor is one of six the Samish Department of Natural Resources maintains in Puget Sound in locations like this, both in places with robust kelp beds, as well as in areas where it’s no longer thriving. Kelp’s importance in the ecosystem is hard to overstate. [A recent study in \*Aquatic Conservation\*](#) confirmed that endangered and threatened species like young salmon depend on kelp, while rockfish, sea stars, urchins and shellfish rely on it for shelter.

Kelp is a staple of Samish cuisine and culture. Traditionally, it has been used in medicines, and its hollow, gas-filled bulbs have been used to hold eulachon, or candlefish, oil, which was burned for heating and light, and also have been used to make rattles for children. The Samish tell the story of the Maiden of Deception Pass, who married a man of the sea to ensure that her people retained access to the seafood bounty of Puget Sound. Her hair, the kelp, trails the water as she watches over her people.

**HISTORICAL DATA** on kelp in Puget Sound is scant, explained Helen Berry, a coastal ecologist with the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and that makes conservation decisions difficult. “To understand our environment, we need to be able to move our baseline back in time and to be able to talk about what’s happened in the last century,” she said.

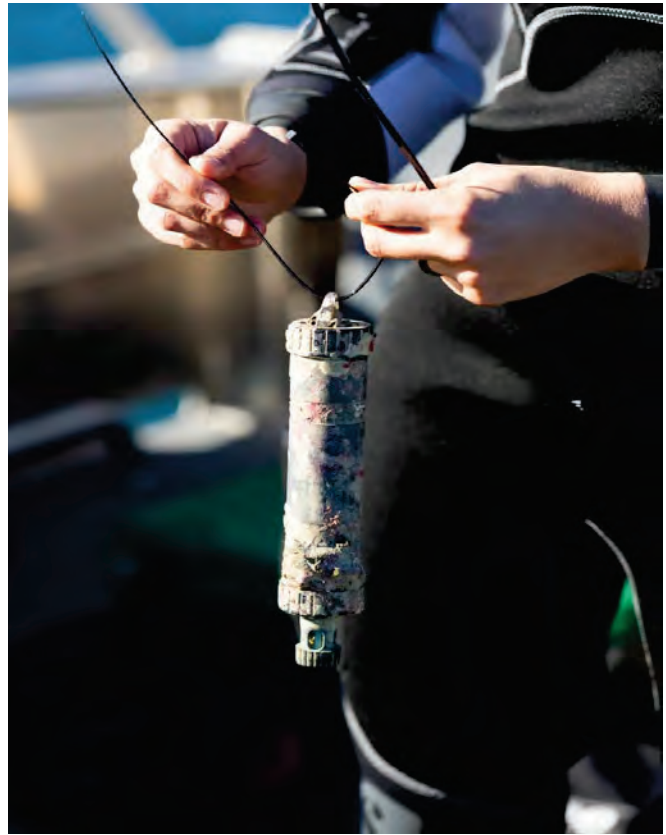
So, the Samish turned to their elders. In 2017, McLeod handed his father and uncle a map and asked them to trace the places where they’d seen bull kelp thrive in the past. The team merged McLeod’s map with aerial imagery and concluded that bull kelp had declined by about 36% overall across Samish traditional territory from 2006 to 2016.

Some places saw no decline, or even an increase, however, while others saw a 70% to 80% loss, said Todd Woodard, the tribe’s infrastructure and resources executive director. The Samish Department of Natural Resources team is still analyzing the data collected in 2022, hoping to understand whether rising temperatures and changing pH levels can help explain why some kelp beds are shrinking.

Rising temperatures are thought to be one of the biggest stressors. Puget Sound is warming rapidly, and recent [research](#) suggests that kelp are unlikely to grow or survive when temperatures consistently reach about 60 degrees Fahrenheit, as some sites already have.

The department has added its data to the [Kelp Vital Signs Indicator](#), a state-run tool that officials use to monitor the extent and health of kelp beds and to make conservation decisions, including whether and where to designate marine protected areas.





*De La Cruz holds a data logger that monitors the pH level of the water and collects temperature data. [David Moskowitz/High Country News](#)*

**IN THEORY**, kelp could recover quickly, given the right conditions. The Samish Department of Natural Resources is partnering with an environmental nonprofit called Puget Sound Restoration Fund, which has successfully planted kelp on long lines of string anchored to the ocean floor. In partnership with the Suquamish Tribe, Puget Sound Restoration Fund started replanting kelp in 2018 at Doe-Kag-Wats, an estuary in central Puget Sound where the now-vanished seaweed once grew in thick rafts, and, in 2020, kelp reached the surface for the first time in almost three decades. More recently, the group has had tentative success in the South Sound. In 2022, researchers found that a kelp bed near Squaxin Island had declined by 97% over the previous 10 years. The Squaxin Island Tribe worked with Puget Sound Restoration Fund to attempt restoring it in March 2023, and that summer, the kelp on their lines sprang to life. But whether this technique can reseed kelp beds on the ocean floor remains unknown.

Bull kelp declined by about 36% overall across Samish traditional territory from 2006 to 2016.

For now, the Samish Department of Natural Resources is still working to understand where and why kelp are disappearing. Later, it can decide where to focus restoration efforts. The department hopes to start a pilot restoration in the San Juan Islands within the next few years, and the temperature data may help. If sites are consistently reaching temperatures above 60 degrees, kelp might have to be planted elsewhere. But there are

many other factors involved in choosing a site, including water quality and the invasive seaweed sargassum, which competes with kelp for light and nutrients.

To McLeod, the Samish Department of Natural Resources' kelp work is part of its larger mission to preserve, enhance and protect the natural environment in traditional Samish territory. "The big picture idea is we're trying to create a positive impact in our community," McLeod said. But there's still a lot to learn. "The only thing we can do is take things one step at a time."



*Charlie Donahue looks out at the Salish Sea during an October bull kelp research outing.*

*[David Moskowitz/High Country News](#)*

Natalia Mesa is an editorial fellow for **High Country News** based in Seattle, Washington, covering the Northwest. Email her at [natalia.mesa@hcn.org](mailto:natalia.mesa@hcn.org) or submit a letter to the editor. See our [letters to the editor policy](#).

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This article appeared in the [print edition of the magazine](#) with the headline "Reviving the Samish Tribe's kelp".



# San Juan County Council sets 2024 goals including renewal of Land Bank

## LWVSJ Observer Corps\*: County Council January 22-23, 2024

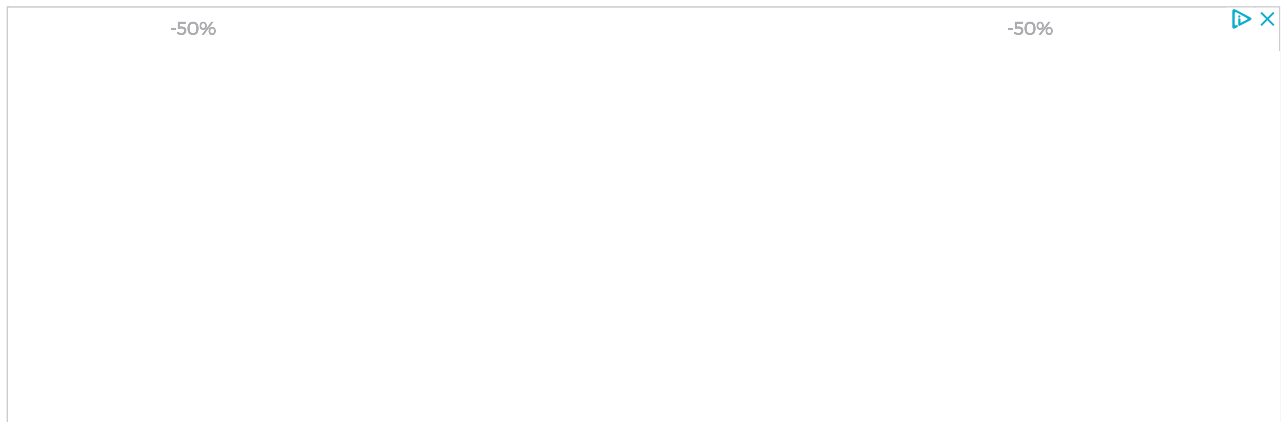
At the January 22 workshop and 23rd regular meeting the Council conducted a retreat to plan and prepare for 2024. They **approved appointments** to the SJI Library Board, Lopez Village Planning Committee Human Services Advisory Board, and the Lopez Solid Waste Committee. They approved council members' committee and board assignments and the 2024 calendar.

The final 2023 balances closed this week, and the **Council will review balances, the 2024-2025 biennial budget, and outstanding budget requests on February 6**. The county will need to closely manage the very tight 24-25 budget and limit budget amendments. The county will renew major contracts in 2024 including the Friday Harbor solid waste lease, the Lopez solid waste lease, the Visitor Bureau, and municipal court services. A working group will track and negotiate contracts.

The county will have a **new process to implement plans and projects**, align them with policy and include coordination and communication. The county will clarify communication guidelines for staff and members of boards and commissions and improve communication with citizens.

The **county building profile** will change as it acquires a new building, loses leased space at Orcas Senior Center, sells the Compass Health building, a public works buildings on Spring Street to the Conservation District and on Lopez to the solid waste utility. In 2024, they need to decide whether to renovate or rebuild to address courthouse seismic and safety issues.

**Human Resources** will do a compensation study and track implementation issues with the 32-hour workweek. They have seven applications for the Community Development Director job and the **County Manager job will be posted soon, as will the process for filling it**. Mark Tompkins and Brandon Cadwell will act as interim county manager and interim assistant county manager.



The county will form **new working groups** to coordinate key issues including the **2025 Comprehensive Plan Update, Sea Level Rise, and Transportation**. The county will do **an interim code update to fix conflicting pieces of the building code**. Transportation, especially **ferries, and broadband access** are key issues in regional forums and the state legislature. The council is working with their lobbyist to track and advocate for bills impacting ferries and education in the short legislative session.

**Major initiatives and projects in 2024** include studies on the impact of ferry service disruptions and the possibility of passenger-only interisland service; seeking a federal grant for Agate Beach; a community conversation on Bailer Hill Road and the possible Zylstra Trail; next steps for Killibrew Lake Road; compiling public comment on the Destination Management Plan; renewing the Land Bank and updating its acquisition process; a community health improvement plan; the Argyle Project will move forward with a lease signed soon with the Home Trust.

*\*The **League of Women Voters**, a nonpartisan organization encourages informed participation in government. The Observer Corps attends and takes notes at government meetings to expand public understanding of public policy and decisions. The notes do not necessarily reflect the views of the League or its members.*

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