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## STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

AUGUST 2024

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### **OUTREACH**

Staff: Tanja Williamson

From meaningful introductions made at Farmer's Markets to creative events out on our preserves, the outreach program is in full swing! The Land Bank's collaborations with non-profits, [Alchemy Art Center](#) and [Island Verse Literary Collective](#), have been well received – and attended – as were the most recent volunteer work parties at Watmough and Beaverton preserves (Photos 1-3). Kudos to our community for lending their time to help staff ready various preserves for public access. Next on the schedule is our second [Nature Rx event](#) with Dr. Mandy Gulla of [Living Medical Arts PLLC](#). She will lead a hike at Mount Grant Preserve with a focus on botanical medicine in the evening of 8/15. And of course, it's also time for the [San Juan County Fair](#)! The Fair runs Thursday (8/15) through Sunday (8/18). Gates open at 10:30 am and close at 8:30 pm. The CLB booth is once again among the Green Village, but the village is in a different, shaded, location this year. Be sure to preview the robust [Schedule of Events](#) before you attend as there's a wide array of presenters over the four-day spread including Lincoln and Eliza! Lincoln speaks to "Climate Resiliency" on Saturday morning (8/17 at 11am), and Eliza shares her newly minted step-by-step guide "Growing Native Wildflowers in the San Juan Islands," on Sunday afternoon (8/18 at 12:30pm). The 16-page pamphlet is informative, beautifully illustrated and hot off the press. Copies are [available online](#) and at our office.

### **SALISH SEEDS NURSERY**

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

The nursery is fuller than ever with plugs and pots, and we have many volunteers to thank for this accomplishment too. Volunteers have been potting up and prepping labels for plants destined for the fall Native Wildflower Sale, which is scheduled for September. Seed gathering and processing is also well underway, and a seed crop of woodland tarweed has attracted a plethora of goldfinches and other birds. They've been gobbling up the seed we'd hoped to harvest, causing frustration, but also reminding us that planting native species is one of the best ways to

help wildlife. A new sign at Driggs Park, in the demo area, helps to showcase the many benefits of converting lawn to native landscape (Photo 4).

## **DISTRICT 1**

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

**Beaverton Marsh:** A final push to the finish line on the Linde Park – Beaverton Marsh Preserve trail! Multiple contractors, volunteers, and staff contributed to the effort (Photo 5). The opening celebration was well-attended, and the new access point is already popular within the community. The fencing project within the agricultural area continues. Weeds are being pulled, and hay is being harvested.

**Cady Mountain:** Volunteer Mark Hetrick discovered a large fallen alder. He cleared the trail and has been assisting with other maintenance and tweaks to the new trail. Official trail marker signs were installed. Staff recently received the final draft of an ecological assessment, and the report detailed rare plants and habitats, and made recommendations for thinning. The Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) Queer Affinity crew helped remove noxious weeds as well as cage Garry oak saplings (Photo 6).

**Deadman Bay:** Staff conducted annual monitoring and managed noxious weeds including removing Italian arum berries.

**False Bay Creek:** Tansy was removed from the fallow fields, which are currently tall and thick with grass and legumes.

**Frazer Homestead:** The WCC crew helped staff remove tansy and brush the trail corridor.

**King Sisters:** Sheep and cattle continue to graze the pastures. A neighbor continues to volunteer mow the public trail. (Thank you!)

**Limekiln:** Lincoln and Doug met with staff from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to discuss eradication options for Northern pike. WDFW followed up with a formal proposal which is slated to be shared and discussed at the August CLBC meeting.

**Mount Grant:** Construction of a new restroom facility will likely be initiated next month, since permitting is moving forward, and Peter Kilpatrick has volunteered to lead construction.

Volunteers with [Great Old Broads for Wilderness](#) contributed a tremendous amount of work and

helped to remove Scotch Broom, and the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) helped brush back encroaching shrubs on the trails.

**Westside:** The WCC Queer Affinity crew helped remove noxious weeds along the trail, within upland restoration sites and in other sensitive habitats.

**Zylstra Lake:** Grant proposals for the continued enhancement of False Bay Creek's riparian corridor have been successful. SJC's Environmental Stewardship Department and SJPT both received funding, and Doug met with Tyler Davis (Project Manager for SJC's Environmental Stewardship) and Dean Dougherty (Stewardship Director) to discuss the activities which are all designed to improve wildlife habitat and water quality.

## **DISTRICT 2**

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman, Mary Gropp

**Coffelt Farm:** Several nest boxes were occupied this summer by some (Photo 7). We're investigating a potential septic system issue and hope to know more soon.

**Coho:** Mary watered plants along the trail, particularly along the former roadbed, in an effort to keep them alive until the return of the rains. Although native plants typically do not require watering, in some settings, a little help during the first year can be crucial to their establishment. Tyler led the YCC crew for a day of work removing invasive species from the three planting enclosures. He also joined Jenny DeGroot and Steve Boessow with WDFW in a seining effort. The team surveyed the lower stretch of Cascade Creek below the waterfall barrier and observed salmon fry as well as other salmonids (Photos 8-10).

**Crescent Beach:** Erin and Peter will meet with DNR representative Gene Phillips at the end of the month to review forest conditions and refine plans for the upcoming forest health project. Peter has also followed up with several individuals with questions about the project.

**Eastsound Waterfront Park:** The Exchange sponsored yet another microplastics cleanup on the beach, and the group removed over 13 gallons of plastic bits from the shoreline! Another event was held on 8/10.

**Judd Cove:** Tyler made upgrades to the signage as well as to a bench that needed replacement.

**North Shore:** SJPT held their summer social at the Preserve and several Land Bank staff attended. The YCC came out for a day of work and hauled over 360 gallons of water to the restoration area and gave the native plants a needed summertime boost. The final phase of construction began on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Notable accomplishments this past week include: demolition of the foundation and pump shed, cleanup of dump piles in the forest, and initial clearing for the main parking area. Water levels in the pond were drawn down to prep for construction, and wetland restoration, but amphibian growth was carefully considered. Christian Oldham of Kwiaht has been documenting the various stages of metamorphosis in the pond throughout these activities. Tyler, along with Blackcap Restoration, began work on the trail that will circumnavigate the wetland (Photos 11-14).

**Stonebridge-Terrill:** Staff made several sweeps to remove tansy ragwort. Mary collected sedge seed for planting at North Shore.

**Turtleback Mountain:** The recent trail improvements and re-routing on South Turtleback are holding up well, with many hikers every day (Photo 15). Staff removed the temporary deer enclosure fence in the upper meadow. YCC worked on the south side digging blackberry crowns, hand pulling scotch broom seedlings, and plenty of tansy was also removed.

### **DISTRICT 3**

Staff: Amanda Wedow, Cedar Charnley

**Channel:** Staff attempted to download data from the trail counter and were disappointed to find out that the counter had not been functioning for several months. After rebooting the system, the trail counter was reinstalled, and it will be checked again at the end of August.

**FB Spit:** The YCC installed tarps for the island marble butterfly habitat plots. The group then removed Italian arum seedheads and thistles. While working on the weeds, Amanda showed the group the previous restoration project and plantings, and they all observed the thriving checkermallow (*Sidalcea hendersonii*), which, protected within the deer enclosures, has grown up to three-feet tall (Photos 16-17).

**Hummel Lake:** This Preserve received some much-needed maintenance on various infrastructure. Cedar replaced the field gate, rebuilt benches, filled potholes, and maintained the trail. And the list goes on: the outhouse was cleaned, repainted, and the walkway was leveled out

with some fresh gravel. A tractor was rented from County Parks to assist with moving gravel, and the old bench wood has been even repurposed into a photo booth base for the County Fair (Photo 18)!

Staff also tended the native vegetation plantings, which were planted in 2020. They are getting well-established. Kwiaht has been hosting bird walks around Hummel Lake, and Beth St. George reported that, among many other birds, the group was excited to see a Western Tanager. On another birdy note: A pair of Cooper's Hawks successfully nested in the forest and three fledglings are out and about.

**Lopez Hill:** The YCC assisted Amanda with noxious weed removal of the three T's: tansy, teasel and thistle in an area that we have been targeting for several years. No teasel was found this year, there was very few stems of tansy, and thistle in noticeably less abundant. YCC returned for another day to brush vegetation along the trail, and Amanda and Cedar reviewed plans for the puncheon on the new trail.

**Spencer Spit:** Staff monitored the site, pulled thistles (so few!), brushed the trail, and adjusted the trail counter. The trail counter was installed last year when the Preserve opened, and the counter indicated an "average daily traffic" of three visits. However, there may be some limitations in how the data is collected. Adjustments were made to the counter's location and it will be reviewed again this fall.

**Upright Head:** Staff followed up on tansy pulling.

**Watmough:** Staff are working with the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) on the grant status and the various items to move forward. Stewardship staff reviewed the draft Stewardship and Management Plan and Erin and Amanda are integrating some revisions. Amanda led one guided walk and one volunteer work party. The work party volunteers built a stacked rail fence and helped with thistle removal (Photo 19).

## Photos



Photo 1. One of the paintings initiated during Alchemy Art Center's plein air class at Deadman's Bay Preserve. (Photo credit: Alchemy Art Center.)



Photo 2. Participants in Poetry of Place workshop hosted by Island Verse Literary Collective at Lime Kiln Preserve.



Photo 3. Amanda staffs our booth at the Farmer's Market on Lopez.



Photo 4. The new sign at Driggs Park showcases the many benefits of planting natives.



Photo 5. Jacob finishes the kiosk at the Linde-Beaverton trailhead.



Photo 6. The WCC hunting weeds on Cady Mountain Preserve



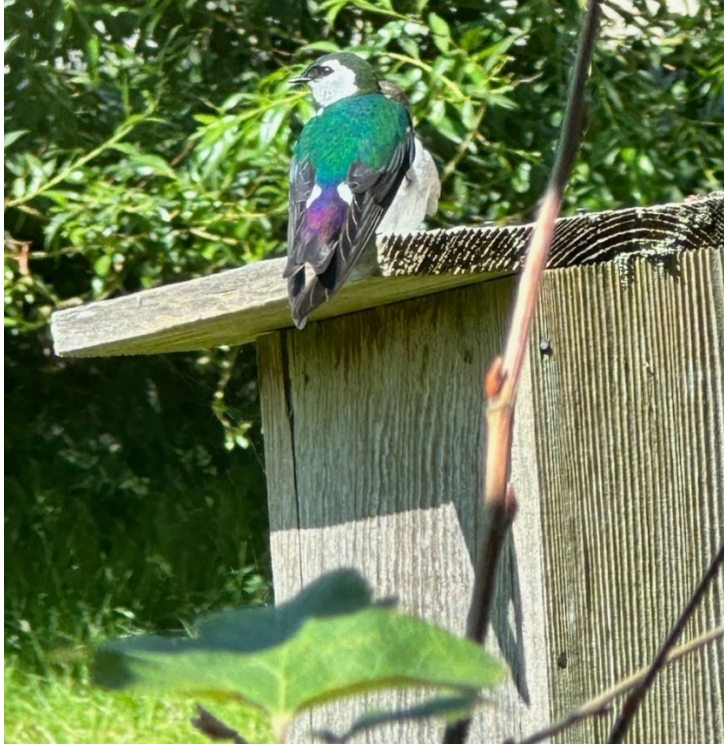


Photo 7. A Violet-green swallow at home, on Coffelt Farm Preserve.



Photo 8. Jenny DeGroot and Steve Boessow (WDFW) seining Cascade Creek.



Photo 9. Jenny DeGroot displays a sea run cutthroat trout captured (and released) in Cascade Creek.



Photo 10. Salmonid fry swim the stream, at Coho Preserve.



Photo 11. YCC crew members bucket watering plants at North Shore Preserve.



Photo 12. The foundation of the old house was demolished and hauled away, at North Shore.



Photo 13. The pond was drawn-down in preparation for the wetland resotration project, at North Shore.



Photo 14. Attendees during the San Juan Preservation Trust's summer social at North Shore Preserve.



Photo 15. Tansy ragwort removal along Raven Ridge on Turtleback Mountain Preserve.



Photo 16. The YCC on Lopez install tarps for the “moveable feast” Island Marble butterfly project, FB Spit.



Photo 17. Checkermallow (*Sidalcea hendersonii*) thrives in a deer exclosure at FB Spit Preserve.



Photo 18. Cedar helps with a variety of the improvements made this month at Hummel Lake Preserve



Photo 19. Volunteers help construct a split rail fence on the headland at Watmough Preserve