San Juan County Conservation Land Bank
PROPOSED
Second Amended 2024 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan

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Note: It is understood by the Land Bank Commission and Staff that the figures contained in this document are reflected on the SJC Auditor's 2024-2025 Preliminary Budget. Changes to amounts on this document may be made by the Auditor's office limited to payroll benefits, IT charges and county insurance adjustments. Changes may be presented at the Public Hearing for the San Juan County 2024-2025 Budget. The Land Bank 2024-2025 First Amended Budget will reconcile to those on the SJC Auditor's 2024-2025 Budget.

2.120.130 If the County council elects not to ratify the annual acquisition and expenditure plan, it must reject the plan in its entirety and remand it back to the LBC with specific recommendations for reconsideration. The County council shall have no authority to amend the plan. (Ord. 21-2008 §§ 9, 10; Ord. 142-1990 § VIII. Formerly 16.54.110)

Approved by SJC Land Bank Commission 05/17/2024
Approved by SJC Council by Ordinance No. xx-2024

1021 Conservation Area Fund (Land Bank)					
	ADOPTED		2024 - FIRST AMENDMENT	PROPOSED	2024- SECOND AMEDMENT
REVENUE	2024	2025	2024 1st Amend	Amendments	2024 2nd Amend
Total Beginning Cash & Investments	4,940,980	5,984,013	5,430,840	0	5,430,840
Total Taxes Revenue	4,059,040	4,069,392	4,059,040	0	4,059,040
Total Grant Revenue	1,750,200	200	1,750,200	0	1,750,200
Investment Interest - LGIP	50,000	25,000	50,000	100,000	150,000
Total Miscellaneous Revenues	52,500	27,500	52,500	100,000	152,500
Sale of Land	600,000	1,715,000	600,000	0	600,000
TOTAL REVENUE	11,402,720	11,796,105	11,892,580	100,000	11,992,580

	ADOPTED		2024 - FIRST AMENDMENT	PROPOSED	2024- SECOND AMEDMENT
EXPENDITURE	2024	2025	2024 1st Amend	Amendments	2024 2nd Amend
Total Ending Cash & Investments	5,984,013	6,245,601	6,473,873	100,000	6,573,873
Total Administration	362,687	375,279	362,687	0	362,687
Total Transfers to Stewardship	3,094,191	3,238,512	3,094,191	0	3,094,191
Total Acquisition Costs	276,151	278,902	276,151	0	276,151
Total Debt Service	1,685,678	1,657,811	1,685,678	0	1,685,678
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	11,402,720	11,796,105	11,892,580	100,000	11,992,580

Land Bank Stewardship & Management Fund					
	ADOPTED		2024 - FIRST AMENDMENT	PROPOSED	2024- SECOND AMEDMENT
REVENUE	2024	2025	2024 1st Amend	Amendments	2024 2nd Amend
Total Beginning Cash & Investments	6,019,159	7,697,675	5,858,588	0	5,858,588
Total Grant Revenue	113,909	10,000	113,909	0	113,909
Total Charges for Goods & Services	12,000	12,000	12,000	0	12,000
Investment Interest - LGIP	30,000	30,000	30,000	100,000	130,000
Total Miscellaneous Revenues	212,600	80,100	212,600	100,000	312,600
Total Loan Principal	1,000,600	1,000,600	1,000,600	0	1,000,600
Total Transfers	3,094,191	3,238,512	3,094,191	0	3,094,191
TOTAL REVENUE	10,452,459	12,038,887	10,291,888	100,000	10,391,888
	ADOPTED		2024 - FIRST AMENDMENT	PROPOSED	2024- SECOND AMEDMENT
EXPENDITURE	2024	2025	2024 1st Amend	Amendments	2024 2nd Amend
Total Ending Cash & Investments	7,697,675	9,311,233	7,537,419	100,000	7,537,419
Total Administration	1,397,024	1,477,594	1,396,709	0	1,396,709
Total Management & Maintenance	739,260	747,060	739,260	0	739,260
Total Site Enhancement	618,500	503,000	618,500	0	618,500
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	10,452,459	12,038,887	10,291,888	100,000	10,391,888

PROJECT SUMMARY

PROJECT TITLE: HAUSCHKA PARCELS

PROPOSED ACQUISITION: ACQUISITION OF FEE TITLE INTEREST

OWNER: STEPHEN AND SARAH HAUSCHKA

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Location: San Juan Island; 1) Prohaska Road parcel, south of Mt. Grant; 2) Cady Mountain parcel, the summit of the mountain.

General Description: 1) The 40-acre Prohaska Road parcel is bounded on its north side by Mt. Grant Preserve, and on its west and south sides by the Town of Friday Harbor Trout Lake property; 2) The 40-acre parcel at the summit of Cady Mountain adjoins the Land Bank Preserve to the east and a 10-acre parcel of the Preserve to the south, currently only connected by a corner.

BACKGROUND

The Land Bank has worked toward this acquisition for over a decade, with on-going conversations with the seller, site visits, and ultimately negotiations. These efforts preceded the original 2015 Mt. Grant acquisition. Once Mt. Grant was established, the Hauschka Prohaska Road parcel became even more important, particularly as a buffer to development.

The Cady Mountain parcel has been of keen interest to the Land Bank since the establishment of Cady Mountain Preserve in 2002, and the beginning of our Garry oak savannah restoration work. The parcel is hugely significant to that work, and perhaps equally as a key destination point for visitors to the Preserve.

CONSERVATION VALUES OF THE PROPERTY

Prohaska Road Parcel

This 40-acre parcel features 80 to 100-year-old Douglas fir-dominated forest and slopes gently upward toward Mt. Grant Preserve. There is also a seasonal creek stretching from its northwest to southeast corners. If developed, up to eight homesites could be created bound on Mt. Grant and the Town's Trout Lake property.

The property has a small cabin and two Texmo buildings which may be utilized as caretaker or conservation corps crew housing options. It connects directly to the public Prohaska Road at its southeastern corner. The current owners have allowed public access to the property for some time, and it does provide an alternate access to Mt. Grant. However, there are complications with the connection to the existing preserve due to restrictions in the easement for the main entrance road from West Valley Road.

Cady Mountain Parcel

This 40-acre parcel contains significant Garry oaks and savannah as well as old growth Douglas-firs. Also, a wetland area at its north west corner adjoins the existing Land Bank Cady Mountain Preserve. Acquisition of this property would be a key addition to the Land Bank's ongoing Garry oak restoration efforts.

The open areas at the summit afford spectacular views to the south and east and create a natural destination point from the Land Bank's proposed trailhead along Three Corner Lake Road.

If left unprotected, property could be subdivided into four lots.

ACQUISITION DETAIL

The Land Bank intends to partner with the San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) on both parcels, with SJPT contributing up to 50% of the purchase price for conservation easements. Staff are currently working on this agreement with the Preservation Trust. At present, the Land Bank Commission is recommending proceeding with the acquisitions regardless of the outcome of the partnership arrangement with SJPT.

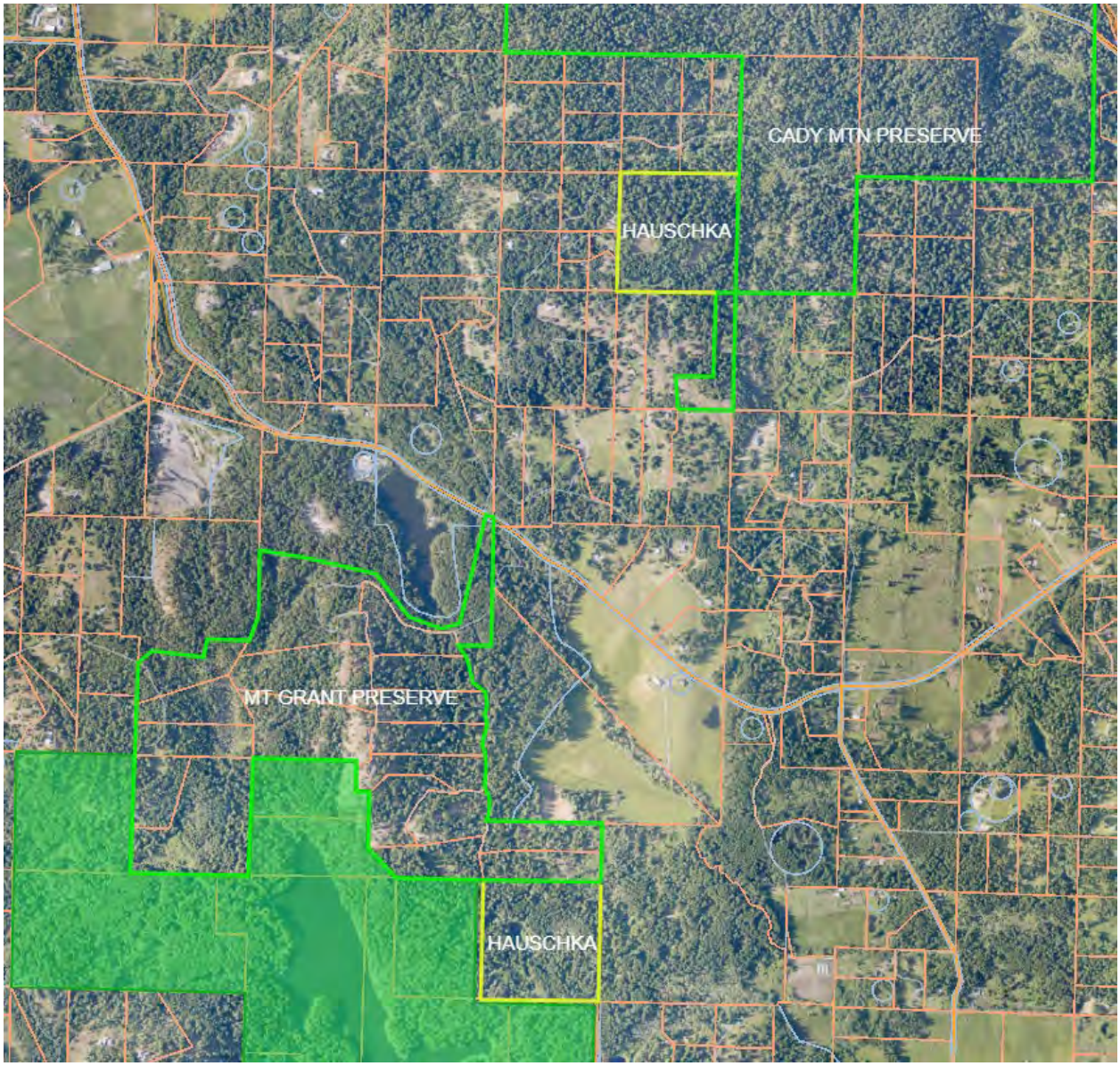
A. Acquisition Costs: The purchase price for each parcel is $800,000 ($1.6M total) which is anticipated to be at or below appraised value. The Hauschka's have offered to seller-finance the sale at 5% interest and the Land Bank is recommending an initial down payment of $200,000 ($400,000 total) on each parcel with the remainder to be paid off in three years. Should the Preservation Trust purchase conservation easements, these time periods would be condensed accordingly.

B. Management Costs: Initial site stabilization costs would be relatively low for both parcels. Cady Mountain would be accessed by trail only from the existing preserve. A driveway, trails and limited parking already exist on the Prohaska parcel. Maintaining the infrastructure on this latter parcel will likely cost $10,000 annually. Land management and restoration costs for both parcels are estimated at $5,000 annually combined.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Land Bank will incorporate both parcels into the management plans for Mt. Grant and Cady Mountain Preserves.

CONTEXT MAP FOR BOTH HAUSCKA PARCELS



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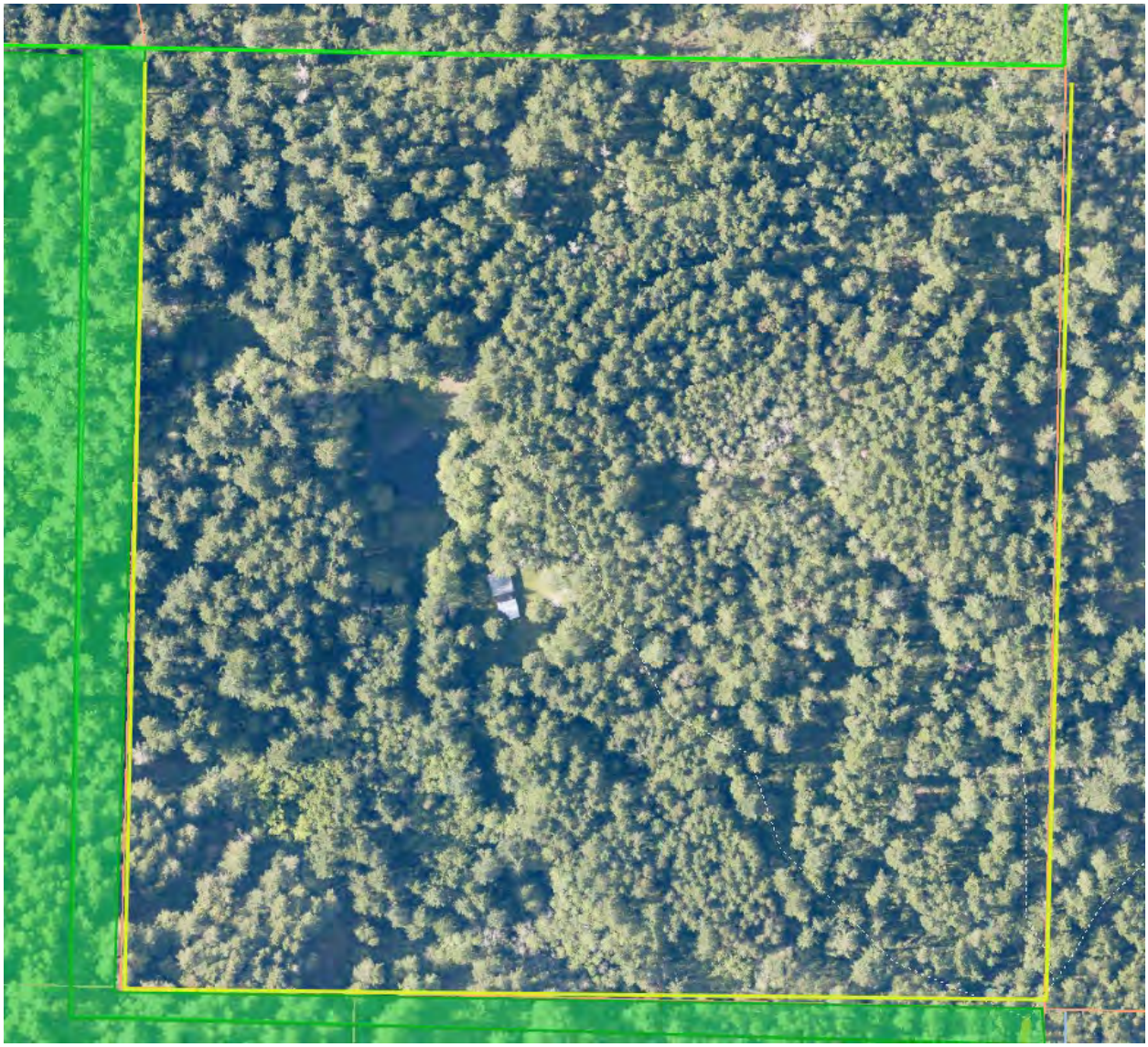
AERIAL MAP OF THE HAUSCHKA PROHASKA ROAD PARCEL



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AERIAL MAP OF THE HAUSCHKA CADY MOUNTAIN PARCEL

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PROJECT SUMMARY

PROJECT TITLE: MCPEAKE (GLENWOOD INN)

PROPOSED ACQUISITION: ACQUISITION OF FEE TITLE INTEREST

OWNER: ESTATE OF DAVID AND LINA MCPEAKE

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Location: North Shore, Orcas Island

General Description: This roughly 58-acre property on the north shore has extensive high bluff and beach with an access road. The upland is largely forested with approximately six acres cleared. There are also a number of older structures formerly utilized for accommodating guests at the Inn.

CONSERVATION VALUES OF THE PROPERTY

The Glenwood Inn parcel features roughly 1/3 mile of shoreline, largely backed by high bluffs. This shoreform and location are high protection priorities for salmon recovery.

Aesthetically, the site offers unparalleled views of Patos, Sucia, and Matia Islands, with the Canadian Gulf islands to the northwest. Mount Baker is visible as well to the far east southeast. Directly east are the cliffs of Point Doughty.

This is the largest parcel remaining in the immediate Eastsound area with the exception of Camp Orkila which is just to the south. Left unprotected, the site could be developed into as many as 11 homesites along the shoreline.

The upland area has significant cultural resources, being close to the approximate location of the historic Coast Salish village of T'qwá:leqs.

The site offers tremendous potential for access to one of the most dramatic beaches in the archipelago. In addition to the 1/3 mile on the property, there is tideland access to the Point Doughty Natural Area Preserve, managed by the Washington Department of Natural Resources. This area is currently only accessible from the water. Together, these properties would roughly double the amount of shore available for public access on the island. A County road connects directly to the south property line.

In addition, the site offers the possibility of serving as a base for kayakers overnighting to the outer islands.

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PARTNERS

The Land Bank would partner with the San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) on the proposed purchase, with each paying 50% and the Trust retaining a conservation easement on the property. The Preservation Trust would also work to secure stewardship funding for the project.

COSTS

A. Acquisition Costs: The purchase price for this acquisition is anticipated to be roughly $6,350,000.

   The Land Bank would make the initial purchase with the Preservation Trust purchasing a conservation easement within 3 years under a contractual agreement.

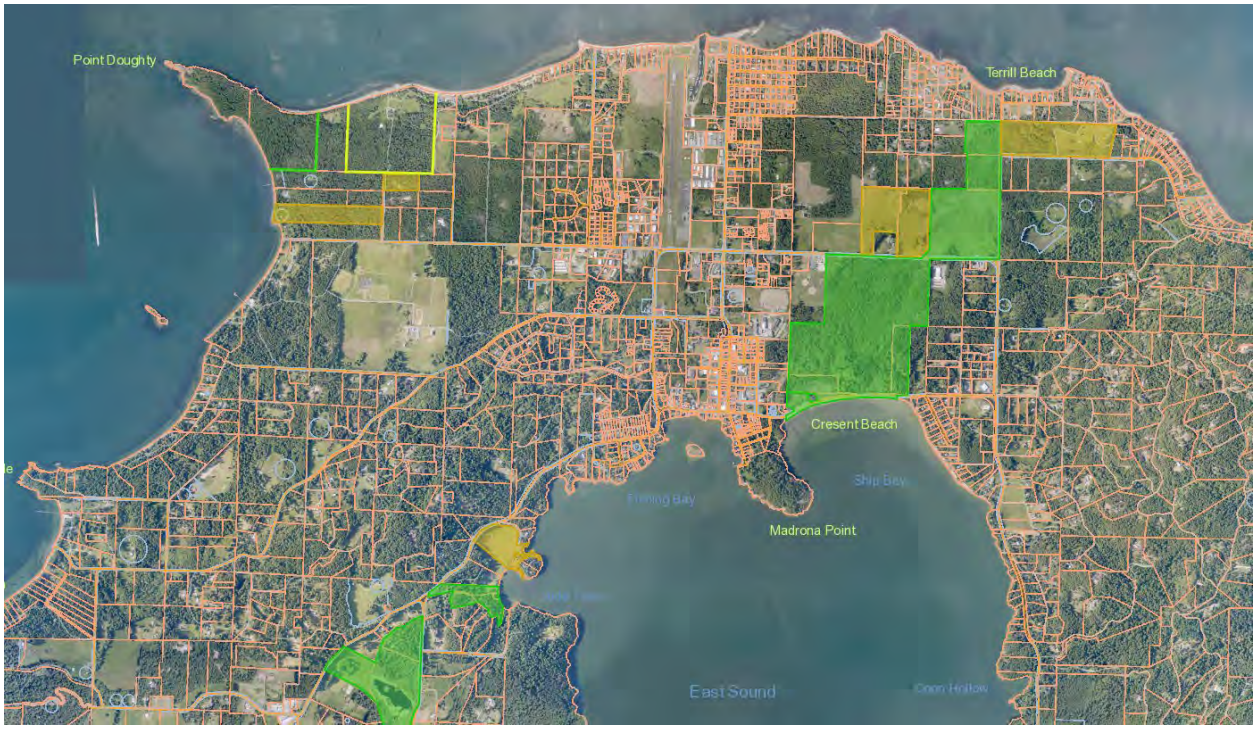
B. Management Costs: There would be significant cost associated with removal of the derelict structures on site, potentially in the $250,000 range. Further site stabilization to allow public access (parking, trail enhancement, etc.), might approach an additional $85,000. With this in mind, the Preservation Trust is applying for a Puget Sound Action and Recovery Fund grant which will include money for demolition and removal of structures on the shoreline.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Land Bank will initiate a management plan process in the first year of ownership. Given the level of interest in public access, an interim plan may be the best course, to allow some limited use while working through the details of the full plan.

AERIAL MAP OF THE MCKPEAKE (GLENWOOD) PROPERTY

CONTEXT MAPS OF THE MCKPEAKE (GLENWOOD) INN PROPERTY



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AERIAL PHOTO OF THE MCKPEAKE (GLENWOOD) INN PROPERTY

Richardson Marsh Preserve

Stewardship and Management Plan

January 2024
San Juan County Conservation Land Bank 350
Court Street No. 6
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

SAN JUAN COUNTY CONSERVATION LAND BANK

SAN JUAN COUNTY WASHINGTON

Approved by SJC Land Bank Commission 05/17/2024
Approved by SJC Council by Ordinance No. xx-2024

Richardson Marsh Preserve, Lopez Island Stewardship and Management Plan

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A. Introduction

Richardson Marsh Preserve is located near the southwestern coast of Lopez Island, slightly inland of Davis Bay. The 23.7-acre preserve is part of a much larger coastal wetland, known locally as Richardson Marsh, that has long been a conservation priority. As a basin for the largest watershed on Lopez, the marsh is seasonally inundated and serves as a significant over-wintering site for waterfowl. The adjoining marine nearshore habitat of Davis Bay supports forage fish spawning, eelgrass, kelps, and is a high priority for salmon recovery. During the summer months, the extensive wetland area supports livestock grazing.

Conservation of this property protects roughly 18 acres of wetlands. It maintains the islands' open-space character by protecting scenic terrestrial views from a county road. The Preserve's six acres of uplands, comprised of forest and rocky outcrops, also have the potential for low-impact recreation.

The protection of undeveloped natural areas is a central tenet of the Conservation Land Bank's (Land Bank) mandate.[1] Establishing interconnected natural areas is one approach to mitigating the global crises of biodiversity loss and climate change. Although relatively small in acreage, the Preserve's ecological, agricultural, and scenic values are enhanced by its location within Richardson Marsh. The Preserve connects to 140 acres of adjacent private lands protected by conservation easements held by the San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT). Additional development within San Juan County will increase the importance of such conservation areas to maintaining water resources, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and the general quality of life.

After acquiring a property, the Land Bank creates a Stewardship and Management Plan (SMP) to guide decision-making and work planning and to promote transparency. SMPs identify future management priorities and summarize annual, five-year, and ten-year expenses. SMPs are adopted by the Land Bank Commission following a public hearing and then ratified by the San Juan County Council, typically as part of the County's budgetary process.

In a broad sense, the Land Bank's stewardship goals for Richardson Marsh Preserve are:

- To protect and enhance the property's ecological values;
- To promote habitat resiliency in the face of climate change;
- To monitor, assess, and adaptively manage seasonal grazing; and
- To provide low-intensity public access.

[1] The Land Bank's mandate is to "preserve in perpetuity areas in the county that have environmental, agricultural, aesthetic, cultural, scientific, historic, scenic or low-intensity recreational value and to protect existing and future sources of potable water."

This SMP provides information about the Preserve's acquisition and history (Section B) and outlines ecological resources and conservation objectives (Section C). Stewardship goals aim to expand understanding of the current and potential future wetland conditions, support wildlife habitat, increase the abundance of native plants and reduce the coverage of reed canarygrass and other noxious weeds. This plan also discusses the continuation of agricultural activities (Section D), proposes public access (Section E), and provides a summary of activities for the next ten years and their associated cost estimates (Section F). Management planning is an iterative process and all the activities outlined are subject to public input, final approval, and available funding.

B. Preserve Overview

Richardson Marsh Preserve is located approximately nine miles from the Lopez Island ferry terminal. Richardson Road, a county thoroughfare, borders the Preserve's eastern property line (Figure 1). Private parcels in agricultural use share the north, south, and west boundaries.

The full extent of Richardson Marsh is estimated to be approximately 75 acres. However, this is a coarse estimate based on GIS and it likely under-represents the complete wetland area; there has not been extensive delineations across all the properties within the marsh, and conditions within the lowland coastal basin are also likely changing due to sea-level rise.

Richardson Marsh is an outlet for the Davis Bay watershed, which encompasses 5,000 acres, and a substantial amount of freshwater is conveyed into and seasonally inundates the low-level wetlands.[2]

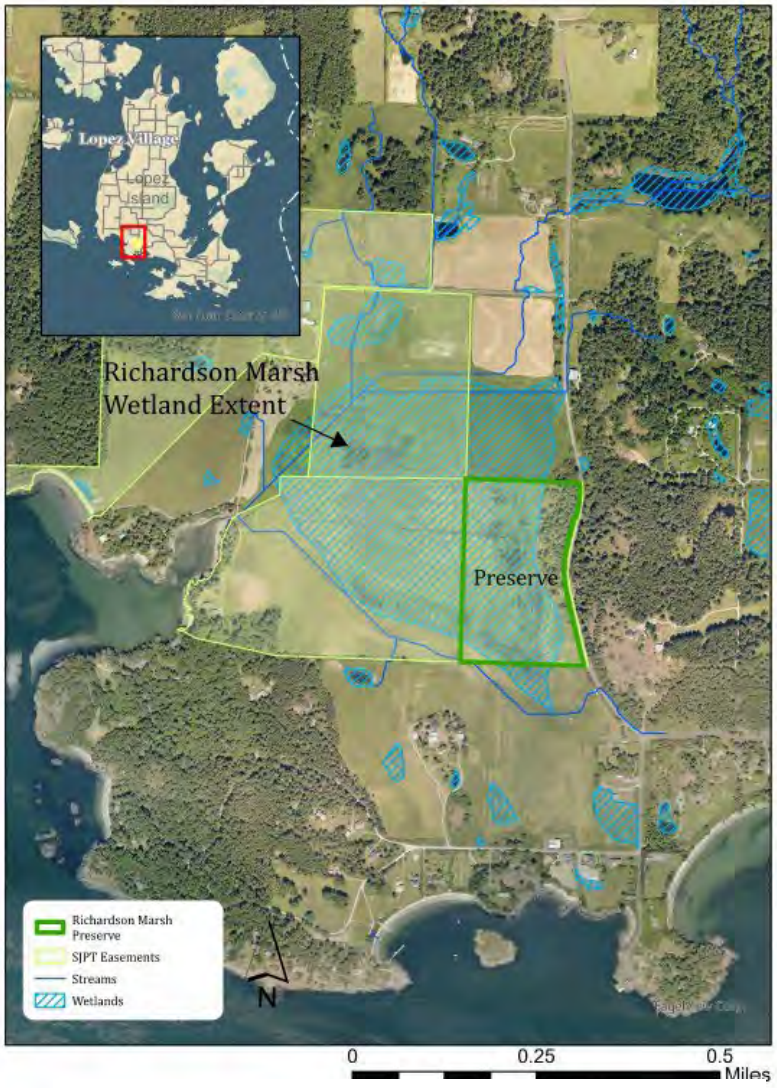

Figure 1. Preserve Context

[2] San Juan County GIS, Stormwater Watersheds

Soils in the area are hydric and classified as Dugualla muck. These are commonly associated with tidal flats and indicate that the wetlands were, prior to the installation of the tide gate and dike, a coastal saltwater marsh. The modern-day extent of tidal influence, and the subsequent brackish and estuarine habitats within the wetland complex, are not well known and warrant further research. Currently, a tide gate controls the release of freshwater into Davis Bay and a 15-foot dike, constructed in the late 1800's or early 1900's for agriculture, impedes tidal influence, though not completely.

The Richardson-Davis Bay area was one of the primary settlements on Lopez in the early 1900's, and historic activities included fishing, forestry, and agriculture. Early photographs show Davis Bay crowded with fishing boats, and maps from 1897 indicate that the marsh had both perimeter and interior fencing. Likely historic uses within the Preserve include hay production and livestock grazing.

Despite the lack of archeological evidence within the Preserve, it is likely that the ecological richness of this area was important to Coast Salish peoples. Richardson Marsh Preserve resides within their traditional territory. Native American tribes and First Nations of Canada have cared for the San Juan Islands as part of their ancestral territory since time immemorial. Coast Salish people inhabited and gathered in the islands to harvest shellfish and salmon from the sea, berries from the forests, cedar for clothing, shelter and canoes, and other flora and fauna for food and traditional uses. These ancestral lands and waters are still utilized today and are protected under tribal treaty rights.

Acquisition History

The San Juan County Conservation Land Bank acquired the single, 23.7-acre parcel in January of 2021.[3] The total purchase price was $75,000. Funding for the acquisition came from a voter-approved conservation area Real Estate Excise Tax (REET).

Acquisition of this property, previously owned by the Hoedemaker family and operated as part of Davis Bay Farm, was a partnership project with SJPT. At the same time as the Land Bank's fee-title purchase, SJPT purchased a conservation easement (CE). Working with both organizations, the family sold the property at the appraised value of $243,000. The family also generously donated another CE to SJPT over an adjacent 34-acre parcel.

Conservation Easement

The CE preserves and protects ecological habitat and undeveloped open space and allows for passive recreational use.[4] The CE restricts the construction of structures. It allows

[3] Tax Parcel Number 241131003000

[4] AFN 2021-0202020

passive recreational improvements, like trails and wildlife blinds, as well as management activities to enhance wetland areas and wildlife habitat. Agricultural activities are not a stated conservation value, but they are allowed in a designated area. See Section D for more discussion. Finally, the CE reserves the Right of First Offer to SJPT.

Existing Infrastructure

All infrastructure on the Preserve, except for fencing erected in 2023 to protect the well, was in place prior to Land Bank ownership. A parking area, upgrades to fencing, and limited signs are proposed to support future public access and agriculture.

Well and Sanitary Setback Covenant

The well system for Richardson Water Works Association is in the southeast corner of the property. The well agreement was established in 1913. This "Group B" system currently supplies nine residential parcels. Covenants and restrictions require a sanitary setback of 100 feet to protect the water system from potential contamination.

Access

The eastern property line borders Richardson Road, a county thoroughfare, and at the southern corner there is a wide shoulder. A grassy drive extends beyond the fence and provides access to the upland field and wellsite. This driveway can accommodate several vehicles and is the proposed site for future public parking.

Fencing

Existing fences vary in their conditions and in their combination of materials. Perimeter fencing along the road combines field fence and barbed wire, and it ranges from fair to poor condition. The southern boundary fencing, also a mix of field fence and barbed wire, is in good condition. Remnant wood fence posts are scattered along approximate property lines to the west and north. The wetland's western fence line was in very poor condition and the wire was removed in 2023. At the well site, new fencing and a gate were installed by the Land Bank to continue to exclude cattle and to provide vehicle access for maintenance. Electric fence currently excludes cattle from the upland forest.

Old Road

The old road that courses through the upland forest was developed in the early 1900's and once served as a segment of Richardson Road. It is unknown when the County road was relocated to its current alignment. The Land Bank proposes using this former road segment as the basis for a future pedestrian trail.

C. Ecological Resources and Conservation Objectives

The Land Bank holds protection of environmental resources as a primary goal of its stewardship program. Maintaining or restoring an area's ecological health also typically preserves, and even enhances, scenic and open space attributes and recreational opportunities. For example, wildlife activity on a preserve affords memorable outdoor experiences.

Historic uses have reduced Richardson Marsh's ecological values. The wetlands and forest have been modified to support agriculture and transportation. Conversion of the coastal saltmarsh with the dike and tide gate resulted in loss of an important and increasingly rare habitat type. Still, even with these alterations the Preserve continues to provide numerous ecological benefits.

Richardson Marsh is one of the largest wetlands in the County. Seasonal flooding of the coastal lowland and the subsequent open water is utilized by large concentrations of waterfowl. Species observed in the winter include trumpeter swan, American widgeon, mallard, gadwall, Northern pintail, Northern shoveler, canvasback, Wilson's snipe, greater and lesser scaup, and hooded mergansers.

Recent water monitoring indicates that there are saline conditions within the Preserve's wetland complex, though the full extent is currently unknown. Saline conditions are likely to increase with sea-level rise, and the brackish and estuarine conditions will likely also expand. Restoring Richardson Marsh into a coastal saltmarsh is a recurring area of interest expressed by members of the public and environmental organizations. Although the Land Bank recognizes the importance and rarity of coastal wetlands, this SMP does not analyze the feasibility of such a complex endeavor or explore it as a future condition. This is primarily because the tide gate is located and maintained on private property. The scope of such a project would require the participation of numerous landowners, stakeholder groups, and funding partners.

The Land Bank will, however, participate in feasibility discussions, seek to manage the Preserve in the larger ecosystem context, and assist in gathering any information related to the property that can illuminate existing conditions, and inform future conditions such as risks to infrastructure and wells, and changes from sea level rise.

Near-term management actions detailed in this section of the SMP are modest; they focus primarily on maintaining existing conditions in the wetlands, preventing spread of reed canarygrass in transitional zones, and enhancing biodiversity in uplands. Long-term objectives are expected to be informed through further assessments and outside expertise.

Annual monitoring of Land Bank preserves is critical to tracking changes over time and protecting conservation values. The Land Bank will conduct annual monitoring visits with the specific task of inspecting key features such as noxious weed presence and distribution, hazard analysis, agricultural activities, and public use trends and impacts. Salinity and water level monitoring are also considered to be important and will occur on an annual basis to inform broader management objectives.

Major Habitat Areas

Classification of the Preserve into habitat types helps to inventory resources, and to organize and prioritize management activities. For general management purposes, the present-day resources at Richardson Marsh Preserve have been categorized into major areas based on land cover (Table 1). Each habitat type is discussed below, and a map displaying their location is provided in Figure 2. Collectively, these areas provide a diversity of habitats for mammals, pollinators, and resident and migratory birds.

Table 1. Land cover and approximate area

Habitat Type	Acres
Wetland Complex	17
Forested Shrub Wetland	1
Dry Douglas Fir Forest	4
Field (pasture)	1.74
Total	**23.74**

The spread of invasive species ranks second only to habitat loss as a threat to global biodiversity. The Land Bank recognizes this problem and puts a high priority on controlling populations of invasive species on its properties. In general, the Land Bank's weed management efforts are focused in areas of greatest priority and vulnerability, and where actions have the greatest chance of success. Staff follow Integrated Pest Management[5] approaches, with the preferred methods being manual and mechanical control and with cut stem and spot herbicide treatment used on a case-by-case basis for species that are especially difficult to control.

Richardson Marsh Preserve has English holly, Himalayan blackberry, and reed canarygrass. The latter is an aggressive wetland colonizer that forms thick mats with its rhizomes and suppresses other vegetation. Approximately 50 percent of the marsh and wetland edge is covered with reed canarygrass. San Juan County lists reed canarygrass as a "Class 3"

[5] For further details see the Land Bank's *Guidance for Integrated Pest Management Plan*

noxious weed; control is recommended but not required. Mapping the current extent and preventing further expansion of reed canarygrass is a staff priority.

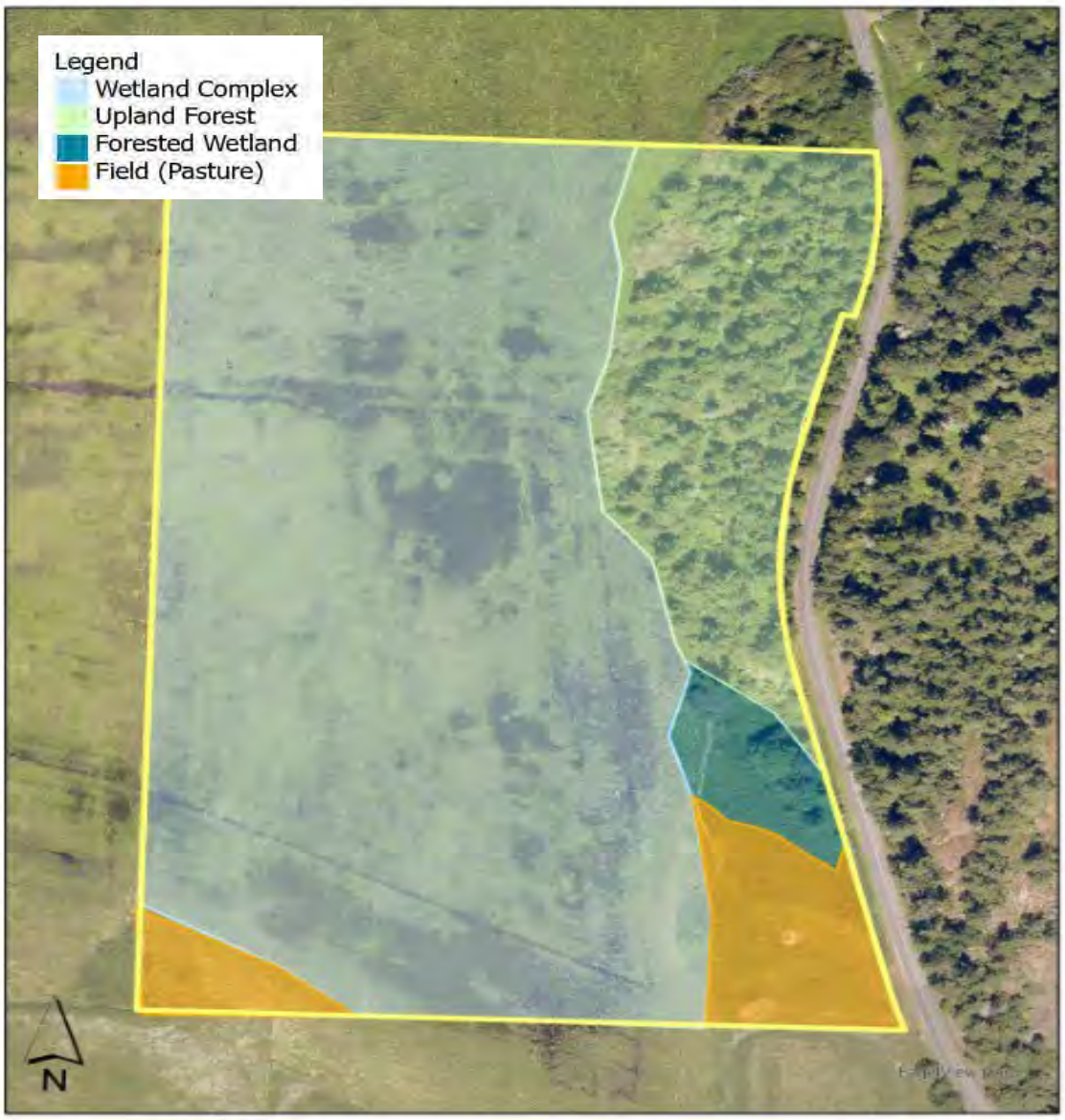

Figure 2. Generalized Land Cover of Richardson Marsh Preserve

After mapping a preserve, Land Bank staff assign ratings (e.g., Poor, Fair, Good) to each habitat area to reflect its current condition. Future stewardship activities are then identified by determining a reasonable, desired future condition for each type. A summary of current and desired future conditions for Richardson Marsh Preserve is provided in Table 2. Future condition for this SMP assumes a ten-year management period with no change having occurred to tide gate infrastructure.

The condition ratings used by Land Bank staff consider multiple aspects of biology or ecology that, if missing or altered, could lead to future declines or losses to either species or habitats.[6] A similar process is used by other conservation organizations to help prioritize stewardship goals, actions, and monitoring. The ecological attributes and ratings system represents an iterative, adaptive process informed by research, field observations and peer review. Priorities may be revised in response to site conditions and available funding. Even with careful management, the Preserve's conservation values face threats from stressors such as drought and invasive species, and changing land uses on surrounding properties.

Table 2. Generalized current and desired future condition

AREA	CURRENT CONDITION	DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION
Wetland Complex (Freshwater emergent marsh to brackish/estuarine marsh)	POOR to FAIR- Wetland hydrology on the Preserve is altered by ditch lines and tide gate on private property. Reed canarygrass 50% cover.	FAIR- Wetland hydrology on the Preserve remains altered by ditch lines and tide gate on private property. Reed canarygrass cover reduced to less than 50%.
Forested Shrub Wetland	VERY GOOD- Dense, diverse native vegetation.	VERY GOOD- Dense, diverse native vegetation.
Upland Forest	GOOD- Few invasives species present. Signs of heavy understory browse.	VERY GOOD- Invasive species removed. Saplings protected from browse. Increased cover and diversity of understory species.
Field (Pasture)	FAIR- Reed canarygrass dominant, native shrubs low abundance.	GOOD- Reed canarygrass cover reduced. Transition to native habitat with increased cover and diversity of native shrubs.

[6] These values are also referred to as Key Ecological Attributes (KEAs) and this methodology for determining conservation action was developed by The Nature Conservancy in 2007.

Wetland Complex

Wetlands are classified as a state priority habitat. They filter sediment and bacteria from surface water; recharge groundwater by regulating flow and allowing infiltration; and recently, they have gained recognition for their carbon-storage capabilities. Wetland environments also provide critical habitat and support a diversity of terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals.

A freshwater to brackish wetland encompasses most of the Preserve. The full extent of the estuarine habitat is unknown, but recent water samples indicate saline conditions in standing water on the Preserve.[7] The salinity levels may also vary seasonally, and one objective is for staff to conduct annual and/or seasonal water sampling to learn more about site conditions. Emergent vegetation in the area includes Pacific cinquefoil, cattail, slough sedge, bentgrass, and reed canarygrass. Salt-tolerant vegetation such as salt grass and bulrushes occurs in patches.[8]

A near-term endeavor for the Land Bank is to prevent the expansion of reed canarygrass within the Preserve. Management options for control or removal require a long-term commitment and plan for establishment of desirable vegetation. Currently, seasonal grazing assists by reducing height and thereby maintaining areas of open water. Future agricultural uses in the wetlands will be managed to be compatible with ecological goals.

Forested Wetland and Upland Forest

An abrupt rise in topography, from sea-level to approximately 45 feet in elevation, occurs along the Preserve's eastern boundary. This upland area contains shallow, well-drained soils and rocky outcrops, and combines two habitat types. Although this area only encompasses five acres, it supports a diversity of species.

A forested wetland covers approximately one acre along the Preserve's eastern boundary. Characterized by a dense thicket of trees and shrubs, this area contains alder, Pacific crabapple, and a well-developed edge of Nootka rose and salmonberry. Reed canarygrass grows along the shrub edge.

The upland forest to the north is drier and dominated by Douglas firs. Other common conifers include lodgepole pine, Western red cedar, and grand fir. Pacific yew, madrone, and willows are also present. Shrubs such as serviceberry, oceanspray, snowberry, dwarf Oregon-grape, salal, Nootka rose and baldhip rose comprise much of the understory, and traces of vegetation associated with rocky balds such as sedums, yarrow, and heuchera is found on exposed outcrops.

[7] Water samples taken in winter of 2023.

[8] Latin names for species listed include *Disticlis spicata* and *Scirpus* sp.

In general, the upland forest is in good condition. Trees vary in age, and there are some larger diameter Douglas fir and grand fir. The presence of only a few stumps suggest that minimal logging has occurred, and snags and large woody debris are present. Regeneration is a mix of grand fir and Douglas fir. Seedlings, and most of the understory plants, show the effects of excessive herbivory by deer. Modest amounts of invasive English holly and Himalayan blackberry are present throughout the area.

Cattle were previously allowed to access the upland forest, and some portions of the understory are devoid of vegetation due to loafing and trampling. The CE discontinued this activity and electric fence currently excludes cattle from the upland areas. Disturbed sites will be monitored to ensure that non-natives do not establish, and in some cases also re-vegetated with natives to enhance biodiversity.

Field (Pasture)

Two distinct areas along the edge of the marsh are in a transitional state from field to more shrub-dominated vegetation. These areas are relatively small and dominated with reed canarygrass, although there are pockets with Nootka rose and snowberry. This habitat type is a focus area to reduce cover of reed canarygrass and enhance habitat value within this area by planting more native shrubs and trees.

The stewardship goal for the upland forest management is to increase the abundance and diversity of native plants to support wildlife species with food and habitat. Stewardship activities will aim to remove priority invasive weeds, support tree regeneration with browse protection, and enhance the understory and wetland edge by planting trees and shrubs. Rocky bald habitat will be enhanced through planting native forbs and grasses.

Summary of proposed ecological objectives:

- Water sampling for salinity baselines
- Remove priority invasive weeds; monitor and control spread of reed canarygrass
- Plant native forbs and shrubs in select upland areas
- Protect tree and shrubs from deer browse
- Manage agricultural use to be compatible with overall ecological health

D. Agricultural Resources and Objectives

Protection of agricultural land is another core value in the Land Bank's mandate. In some instances, the Land Bank acquires land where agricultural use is the primary objective. In other cases, as with Richardson Marsh Preserve, the primary goal of acquisition is to

protect and enhance the property's ecological features. Secondary uses, such as agricultural operations, are considered when they are deemed compatible.

Richardson Marsh Preserve has been in agricultural use since the late 1800's. The parcel is identified in the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan as Agricultural Resource Land (ARL). Soil types and quality shape agricultural uses and productivity, and soils within the marsh are ranked as 'not prime farmland'. High salinity, poor drainage and seasonal flooding make the land unsuitable for crop cultivation and historic use of the area has been livestock grazing. Vegetation consists of native forbs and grasses, cattails, and non-native grasses such as reed canarygrass. Careful management of grazing is necessary to protect the soils.

Compatible agricultural use is considered by the Land Bank in areas that have ARL zoning, historic and/or recent uses, and where there are objectives for vegetation management. The Land Bank's Agricultural Policy provides more details about guidelines for best management practices, and prioritizes engaging farmers and other agencies, such as the San Juan Island Conservation District, for outside expertise.

The CE does not include agriculture as a primary conservation value but does allow for agricultural uses within a designated 17-acre area. To achieve compliance with the terms of the CE, the Land Bank erected a permanent stretch of field fence around the well site, and the farmer uses an electric fence between the marsh and upland forest. Dilapidated fencing along the western boundary has also been removed.

The Land Bank's proposed objectives are to maintain agricultural use on the Preserve that is compatible with its ecological objectives, and to collaborate with the existing operation to continue to employ best management practices. Grazing can reduce reed canarygrass height and cover, help to maintain and/or create open areas for winter waterfowl, and minimize the need for manual control such as mowing.

Current Use

The entire grazing area extends over several different parcels and ownerships. Most recently, the land was leased to Buffum Brothers farm. They operate on use agreements with each individual property owner to seasonally graze cattle in summer. Access to water sources exist on neighboring land. After acquiring the Preserve, the Land Bank removed access to the uplands but otherwise continued the previous arrangement. The Land Bank proposes to discuss terms and issue a letter of agreement with the farmer for continued grazing. As noted in the Agricultural Policy, short-term leases are used in various circumstances including when agricultural use is not the primary objective of the property.

In the event that agricultural uses are discontinued on the Preserve, and maintained on the neighboring parcels, extensive fencing would need to be installed along the west and north perimeters. The Land Bank intends to collaborate with the farmer and neighbors about ongoing agricultural uses, and to consult with other organizations for development of best management practices or inclusion in the voluntary stewardship program.

Consultation, research, and monitoring will help meet vegetation management goals for reducing reed canarygrass cover and target reed canarygrass as a better forage. Monitoring will aim to evaluate best management practices and resource protection. Future activities may include assessing soils and water quality to establish baseline conditions, and an inventory of the extent of reed canarygrass cover and density to track control efforts.

Summary of proposed agricultural objectives:

- Collaborate with neighbors, farmers and other organizations about agricultural use
- Perform annual reviews of grazing agreement and practices
- Manage priority noxious weeds
- Ensure agricultural activities are consistent with SJPT's CE

E. Public Access Overview and Objectives

Providing access to the natural beauty and diversity of the San Juan Islands is another important part of the Land Bank's mandate. One component of the conservation mandate specifies preserving areas for "low-intensity" recreation. This stipulation reduces the likelihood that human use will degrade a preserve's ecology and protects the organization from increased management costs that tend to result from high intensity uses. Limited, low-intensity recreation also helps to assure quietude for visitors and retain the rural character of neighboring communities.

Richardson Road, which runs parallel to the marsh, is also a popular bicycle route and the Preserve provides scenic, open views over the marsh. The Preserve also presents opportunities for a 1/3 of a mile pedestrian trail, an overlook, and seasonal wildlife viewing. The Land Bank proposes limiting recreation to the upland areas to protect current agricultural and wildlife activities in the wetland and utilizing existing infrastructure like the old road as the basis for public access.

Maintaining a moderate level of use is essential to the protecting the Preserve's ecological values, and the Land Bank will employ multiple strategies to keep use within an acceptable range. The proposed parking area will provide approximately three spaces and standard Land Bank rules such as day-use only and prohibiting commercial use will apply. A

complete list of Land Bank restrictions is provided in Appendix A. To avoid disturbance to wintering waterfowl and seasonal livestock, dogs will be required to remain on a leash.

Signage and in-person contact from Land Bank staff and volunteers will be the primary method of educating visitors about regulations. When necessary, enforcement may be carried out through the San Juan County Sheriff's Office. The Land Bank always reserves the option of restricting or discontinuing any aspect of public use if it proves unmanageable or detrimental to the Preserve's conservation values.

Proposed Access

Parking access is currently available on the southeast corner of the property. This plan proposes refining the grassy drive to accommodate several vehicles and installing either a gate or bollard to limit access to the marsh and the well site for maintenance. A mowed trail for seasonal use will lead from the parking area to fencing along the field's edge and connect to the old roadbed in the forest.

The former road will be the basis of the pedestrian trail, and a short trail will spur off to an overlook atop a rocky bluff (Figure 3). In total, the walking trail will extend for a 1/3 of a mile. The proposed trail will also connect to Richardson Road and enable pedestrians, who walk in the neighborhood, to utilize the trail as part of their route. Routine maintenance to support public access will include mowing the field trail, cutting brush along the upland trail, monitoring, litter pickup, parking area maintenance, sign upkeep, and other tasks as necessary.

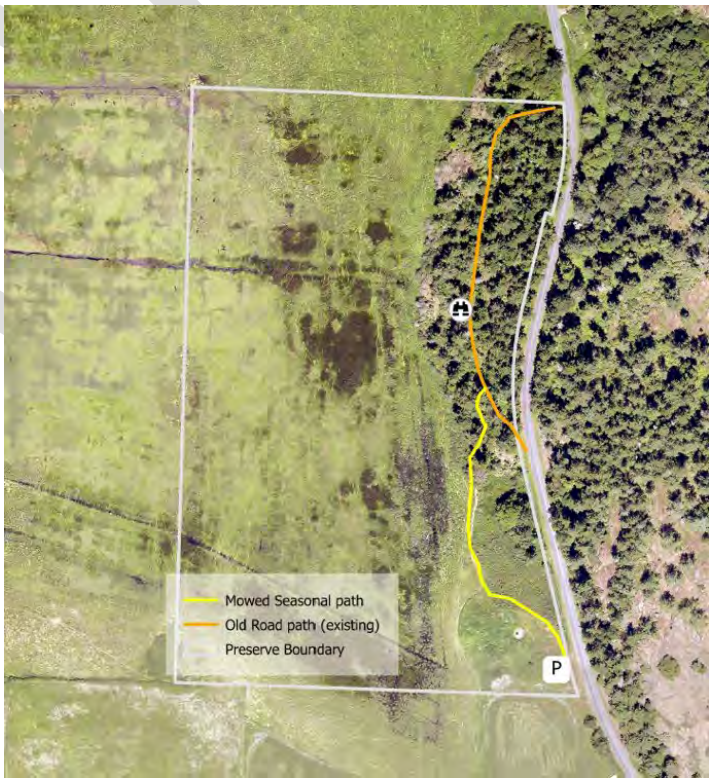

Figure 3. Proposed Public Access at Richardson Marsh Preserve

Signs are installed on preserves to inform visitors about rules and restrictions and to protect neighbor privacy and natural resources. As a general rule, the Land Bank aims to minimize signage. A sign will be installed in the parking area and provide preserve identification, maps, and regulations. Additional infrastructure that may be considered in the future include interpretive panels, a bike rack, picnic table, bench, and a wildlife viewing blind. These improvements will be evaluated through monitoring visitor use patterns. No restrooms are planned.

Outreach, Education and Research

Interpretive programs may be organized by the Land Bank or in collaboration with outside groups or experts. Where appropriate, the Land Bank may collaborate with Tribes, local organizations, schools, universities, and scientists to increase or disseminate knowledge of the Preserve's conservation resources. Educational and research activities will be subject to review, conducted on a permission-only basis, and limited in size or duration.

Volunteers

Volunteers contribute countless hours of service and perform meaningful stewardship activities across Land Bank preserves. Some serve for a single day to help maintain trails while others engage in recurring activities like monitoring. The Land Bank will continue to work with community volunteers and host work parties to meet some of its stewardship objectives such as constructing the proposed trail.

Summary of proposed public access objectives:

- Establish parking area
- Develop a pedestrian trail
- Design and install signage

F. Budget Projection

This budget projection is intended as a financial planning tool and considers annual property maintenance costs, infrastructure enhancement or "one-time" costs, and multi-year ecological enhancement costs. Staff time is included. All numbers are approximate, and costs are adjusted for inflation at 3 percent. Expenditures will be reconsidered annually or biannually as part of the Land Bank's regular budgeting process.

Year	General Operations		One-time Costs		Annual Subtotal
2024	$8,000	General stewardship, maintenance, monitoring, noxious weed removal	$5,000	Fencing	$24,500
			$10,000	Public Access Improvements	
			$1,500	Signage	
2025	$8,240	General stewardship, maintenance, monitoring, noxious weed removal	$2,000	Planting	$10,240
2026	$8,487		$0	None planned	$8,487
2027	$8,742		$0		$8,742
2028	$9,004		$0		$9,004
2029	$9,274		$0		$9,274
2030	$9,552		$0		$9,552
2031	$9,839		$0		$9,839
2032	$10,134		$0		$10,134
2033	$10,438		$0		$10,438

Total 5-yr costs (2024-2029) $60,973
Total 10-yr costs (2024-2033) $110,211

G. Planning Process Overview

To gather and incorporate input from the public regarding the use and management of Richardson Marsh Preserve, the Land Bank provided and sought information in a variety of ways. These are summarized as follows:

Timeline	Completed (Planned)
Scoping Meeting	February 2023
Land Bank Commission and staff review draft plan	January 2024
Draft Plan Public Comment Period	March 2024
Public Hearing and Approval on Final SMP by LBC	(April 2024)
Public Hearing and Approval by San Juan County Council	(May 2024)
SMP Adoption	(May 2024)
Open Preserve for Public Access	(July 2024)

H. References

Additional information about the Preserve will be made available upon request. Supporting digital documents are hyperlinked when possible.

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Appendix A. Rules and Use Restrictions

The following use restrictions will be in effect. Restrictions are intended to protect the ecology of the Preserve, the safety and peace of neighbors, and to 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. An enforcement ordinance that governs activities on Land Bank Preserves was adopted by the San Juan County Council on August 25, 2009. When necessary, enforcement actions may be carried out through the San Juan County Sheriff's office.

- Daytime use only
- Pedestrian access only (except where posted for other uses)
- No camping
- No fires
- No vehicles
- No hunting
- Launching or landing of UAV (drones and similar devices) is allowed only for research purposes and requires written permission of Land Bank Director
- No commercial use
- No collection of botanical, zoological, geologic or other specimens except on a permission-only basis for scientific or educational purposes