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STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 2024

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**OUTREACH**

Staff: Tanja Williamson

It's hard to believe it's only been one month since the SJC Fair! A big thanks to everyone that helped support the Conservation Land Bank this year. The seed-to-flower matching game, developed by Margo, was thoroughly enjoyed by fair goers of all ages (Photo 1). Many locals attended Lincoln's presentation on Climate Resiliency and Eliza's talk on How to Grow Wildflowers in the San Juan Islands (Photos 2-3). Copies of Eliza's new guide for growing wildflowers were also handed out to happy recipients! The annual Fall Native Wildflower Sale is now "live" online. A guide to the sale is available [HERE](#).

Other outreach activities have included responding to hunting inquires and providing subsequent letter(s) of permission and preparing for the fall newsletter. The walking series with the Mullis Senior Center kicked off with a hike at Beaverton Marsh Preserve, and several volunteer days are in the works (Photo 4). Elliot Burch, gold-star volunteer and resident of San Juan Island, built a kiosk for installation at North Shore Preserve, which has been a hotspot of activity lately, both on the ground and behind the screen. On National Public Lands Day (9/28), the community is invited to celebrate this milestone: the opening of North Shore Preserve (Photo 5)!

**SALISH SEEDS NURSERY**

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

August rains provided a welcome relief from watering duties. September priorities have included seed processing and preparing for the Fall Native Wildflower Sale. Seed samples have been sent to a seed lab to test for germination, weed seed, and purity, as required by WA state law for any seed that we sell to others.

## **DISTRICT 1**

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

**Beaverton Marsh:** There's been plenty of activity on the farmland portion of the Preserve. Farm gates are being hung, a solar water system is being installed, and access, including parking improvements, are in the works. The Grange harvested their potato crop and is now preparing the previously tarped area for fall plantings.

**Frazer Homestead:** The lessees, the Shephard family, are replacing and improving the pond exclusion fence and getting set up for a possible brief fall grazing. SJI Conservation District (SJICD) is prepping the new island marble butterfly plots for seeding.

**Zylstra Lake:** SJICD and Land Bank staff, and the farm lessee, are collaborating on a small pasture prairie trial in the hay fields.

## **DISTRICT 2**

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman, Mary Gropp

**Coffelt Farm:** Staff from the SJICD and the Land Bank, and farm lessee will also collaborate on a small pasture prairie trial in the hay fields. Initial investigations into recent septic issues indicate that the system is failing and will require major repairs or replacement in near future. Peter has requested a cost estimate.

**Coho:** Peter met with several members of a local traditional foodways group to discuss their interest in Cascade Creek flow issues.

**Crescent Beach:** Erin and Peter met with staff from Department of Natural Resources to hike and discuss specifics, including timing, for the forest thinning grant award (Photo 6).

**Judd Cove:** Peter met with a neighbor to review options to prevent preserve users from crossing onto private property. In response, staff will add signage and make efforts to close a social trail.

**North Shore:** Capping a two-year, multi-phase project, last week marked the end of a month-long push to complete major restoration grading and parking lot construction. Peter focused mainly on construction management, well rehabilitation and testing, and signage. Tyler's been on point for weeds, forest thinning, and trail development, and Mary collected and spread several

pounds of wetland and upland seed (Photos 7-11). Jacob and Shauna helped install the kiosk for the trailhead, bicycle racks, and bollards. Leading up to the September 28<sup>th</sup> opening, our focus will be on seeding and strawing, signage, trail and parking refinements and other tasks. Over the next five months, staff, contractors and volunteers will install another 15,000 herbaceous and woody plants to round out new forest and wetland habitats. (Join us in the field!)

**Turtleback Mountain:** Mary led a three-person crew focused on weed management along the Morning Ridge Trail. Peter did a short interview with a Canadian podcaster and led a small group of Garry oak enthusiasts on the ‘Seasons of Turtleback’ hike. A San Juan County Deputy responded to a report of two aggressive, off-leash dogs on the northern portion of the Preserve.

### **DISTRICT 3**

Staff: Amanda Wedow, Cedar Charnley

**FB Spit:** Italian arum seed head removal continues. Over the summer, staff and volunteers have pulled many plants, and now that the berries are ripening and turning red, those that remain are highly visible. Removing the seed heads helps to prevent spread from birds, on the Preserve and to neighboring properties (Photo 12).

**Lopez Hill:** Hunting season for archery opened September 1<sup>st</sup>. Orange vests and signage about hunting information was posted at four entry points. Tanja is helping to reply to hunter inquiries and provide written permissions. The new trail is nearing completion. One puncheon was completed, and another is being formulated. The Lopez Community Land Trust signed a revised trail easement, and discussions for trail access approvals across two adjacent properties are underway.

**Watmough:** The outhouse in the BLM parking lot was oddly vandalized; someone stole the steel holder bar for the toilet paper. A temporary wooden dowel was installed by staff. Amanda also supported the BLM by performing their visitor satisfaction surveys on a few afternoons. New identification stickers were installed on the three Land Bank mooring buoys (Photo13). Over time the paint had faded, and several boaters commented on the lack of information. Kwiaht is undertaking an acoustic monitoring research project. The underwater microphone will be deployed off one of the buoys, with the goal of recording and identifying various fish in the bay.

Staff continue to work towards opening the new trail by finalizing a draft SMP, completing various RCO grant requirements, and working on site cleanup and public access improvements. A cultural resources contract is out for signature to provide a monitoring plan and onsite monitoring during site work. Amanda prepared a Request for Proposal for the sport court removal. Erin and Amanda also revised the initial draft of the SMP and incorporated many comments received during the internal review. Now the SMP is being shared with the public for a 30-day comment period. Representatives from [HistoriCorps](#) will visit the site in November to assess the buildings and prepare a “Phase 1” project proposal. Amanda led two guided walks, which were well attended. Hunting season is also open on the National Monument lands. Since adjacent Land Bank properties are not open to hunting, staff posted ‘No Hunting’ signs and created a map of the hunting and no hunting areas.

#### Photos



Photo 1. Rhett gives Margo’s seed matching game a double thumbs up!



Photo 2. The CLB fair booth was a popular place!



Photo 3. Lincoln presents at the fair on Climate Resiliency.





Photo 4. A hike offered through the Mullis Center brought walkers to Beaverton Marsh Preserve.



Photo 5: Tyler, Shauna, and Jacob install the volunteer-built kiosk at North Shore Preserve





Photo 6. Gene Phillips (DNR) and Peter discuss forest health at Crescent Beach Preserve.



Photo 7. A late nestling was discovered in the swallow structure at North Shore Preserve





Photos 8-9. Metamorphosis never looked so cute! These critters were set aside in a holding tank while the pond was drained and modified into wetlands, at North Shore Preserve



Photo 10. Peter and Mary seeding the wetland at North Shore Preserve, prior to the recent rainfall.



Photo 11. Late summer rains partially fill new wetlands at North Shore Preserve.





Photo 12: Italian arum seed heads are highly visible amongst the snowberry at Fisherman Bay Spit Preserve.



Photo 13. Public mooring buoys at Watmough Bay Preserve receive bold new stickers.