
STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

JULY 2025

Overview

As a follow-up to our recent organizational and workplace survey, staff met on July 10th along with facilitator, John Boyle, of [Convergency Partners](#) to address survey results, identify issues, and work on resolutions. A follow-up meeting has been scheduled for July 17th.

Outreach

Staff: Tanja Williamson, Margo Thorp

Tanja has been supporting stewardship staff with outreach while continuing to fill the events calendar. In late June, the Afternoon Adventures with Seniors series kicked off at King Sister's Preserve on San Juan Island. Sundays in July are filled with Free Guided Painting Sessions with Alchemy Art Center. Margo is preparing to lead native plant/seed activities with Camp Huckleberry (Lopez Island) on July 15 and Camp Eagle Rock (San Juan Island) on July 16, 23, and August 6. Lastly, the website update finally went live! We are still working through some transitional issues and will make a more formal announcement when those details have been ironed out.

Doug was invited to attend a site visit and review an eco-cultural restoration project being implemented by the [Glacier Peak Institute](#) as part of a project run by the [Darrington Forestry Collaborative](#) (Photo 1). Several of the Glacier Peak Institute staff are interested in joining for one of the habitat restoration project days on Cady Mountain Preserve this fall, with particular interest in conservation burn methods.

Salish Seeds Nursery

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

Spring plug sowing is complete with approximately 20,000 plugs seeded. We have started potting up plugs into 4" pots to prepare for the fall plant sale. Seed harvest is well underway and so far seed production is off to a very strong start. Genevieve Gislason finished her spring internship. County Noxious Weed Control program staff visited the nursery for training in wild seed collection for us, when feasible.

District 1

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

Beaverton Marsh: Progress continues with the Beaverton Trail Project. The project agreement was approved by WSDOT and FHWA and an RFQ for planning, design and engineering is currently advertised. A position description for a temporary project and construction manager has been drafted and is under review. Tanja and Doug are working on an outreach plan, including the establishment of a project website. Next steps will include selection of design firm and re-initiating the development of a stewardship and management plan. A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, July 31.

ICC and YCC assisted in removing broom, tansy, spurge, and hawthorn from priority areas in the Preserve.

Plenty of activity is underway at Overmarsh Farm Commons including participants tending their plots, volunteers building the shed and greenhouse, installation of a solar electric fence to support rotational grazing, weed control prior to hay harvest, and the perimeter fence is coming along.

Cady Mountain: Doug picked up a set of sand-blasted rocks acknowledging the Buck family's involvement in the Cady Mountain Addition property, which will be installed in the next week. A request for bids for the Cady Mtn and Mt Grant restrooms has been drafted and will be released in the coming days. Volunteers Elliot Burch and Peter Kilpatrick continue to assist with design and construction. Elliot recently completed the fabrication of timbers for the restroom structure.

Driggs Park: Doug is working to renew the maintenance contract with FrogSong landscape company.

False Bay Creek: Tansy has been pulled from the pastures. Bailer Hill road expansion continues, and the road is substantially higher along the west side of the Preserve.

Frazer Homestead: Charlie and Michelle of SJC Noxious Weeds teamed up for the first seasonal round of pulling tansy from the pasture; the quantity was surprisingly lower compared to previous years! The public trail has been brushed.

Limekiln: Shauna and Michelle removed tansy from the trailside and quarries.

Mount Ben: Land Bank and SJ Preservation Trust staff recently visited the Preserve for annual monitoring and weed work. A Garry oak associated habitat restoration plan has been developed for five acres at the southwest corner of the Preserve. This was considered in the management plan and interest from SJPT has elevated the prioritization level.

Mount Grant: Toilet paper thievery appears to be taking place with ongoing issues of missing toilet paper not corresponding with use levels found by the maintenance company.

Zylstra Lake: High school juniors Gus Rovenste and David Tobon recently finished construction of a "Fishing Lure Library" for their high school project (Photo 4). The library will hold fishing lures, information packets about fish species, and bait for anglers to use while fishing at the lake.

Haying has wrapped up for now after a successful harvest by the Oak Knoll Farm team. The remaining fields may be hayed or mulch cut in the coming months.

ICC and YCC teamed up to help install a third Beaver Dam Analog at the Emmerling restoration site (Photo 5). They also helped remove teasel and blackberry from the native plantings by the parking area.

Jon Shannon, acting as a volunteer, has completed the septic design for the Zylstra restroom. Permits will be developed and submitted in the coming weeks.

District 2

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman, Scot Devereaux

Coffelt Farm: Tyler and Scot led a day of work with the Youth Conservation Corps along the riparian corridor. Work included blackberry removal and clearing grass away from stumps of trees to prevent vole damage. Peter joined Charlie and members of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) on a tour

of the riparian and wetland area as part of their day-long visit to several SJC farm properties (Photo 6). Peter worked with consultant Andy Saxe to finalize the design and permit application for needed septic system improvements and will issue a bid solicitation shortly.

Coho: Scot trimmed vigorous vegetation growing along the trail. Tyler prepared another annual presentation on native salmonids and the general ecology of the Preserve to participants in the Whale Museum's marine naturalist training course.

Crescent Beach: Scot installed a sign at the north parking area describing the forestry project that will commence in late June. We've responded to several calls about overnight vehicles at the various preserve parking lots, especially around the 4th of July holiday. The DNR-funded forest thinning project is scheduled to begin July 28th. Tanja is posting website and social media updates, and Erin and Peter will co-lead a pre-project site walk for interested members of the public this Saturday at 1pm.

Deer Harbor Waterfront: Tyler removed a rowboat that had been stored on the Preserve after posting it with a 10-day notice (Photo 7). The boat is being stored elsewhere in case the owner comes for it.

Diamond Hill: Tyler and Scot spent time removing spurge laurel, bull thistle, and scotch broom.

Eastsound Waterfront: Peter will join staff from the Friends in providing a tour of the shoreline restoration project area this Friday at 4pm. Construction is scheduled for mid-September.

Judd Cove: Tyler mowed the field adjacent to the restored lime kiln. Final planning is underway for the shoreline restoration project, which is scheduled to begin in early September.

North Shore: Tyler and Scot worked alongside YCC crew members watering shrubs planted last winter along a particularly dry portion of the former pond berm. The group dispersed nearly 500 gallons of water and also completed a beach cleanup. A youth volunteer group from Camp Orkila came the following day and mulched the same plantings (Photos 8-9). Blackcap Restoration joined in for a day for maintenance around plantings within the large deer enclosure. Growth of new plantings across the site is excellent. Use levels during the holiday weekend were modest. The automated entry gate has been functioning well for a year and a half with no issues to report.

Stonebridge-Terrill: Scot spent time surveying the Preserve and then removing tansy ragwort and Canada thistle.

Turtleback Mountain: Peter worked with the Sherrif's Office and Orcas Towing to remove an abandoned vehicle from the South Entrance parking lot. Scot and Tyler have been busy tackling scotch broom on the northern balds of the Preserve. Tyler mowed the north trail loop. Anne Marie, Lincoln and Peter joined staff and supporters of the Trust for Public Lands and the San Juan Preservation Trust in a hike to Ship Peak to commemorate the establishment of the Preserve and the partnership that enabled it (Photo 11).

San Juan County and DNR fire crews acted quickly to extinguish a 7-acre fire on private property near the southeast corner of the Preserve (Photo 12). At least two human-caused fires have occurred in this general vicinity. Over the last several years, we've done significant thinning and blackberry control in this area to release Garry oaks and reduce fuel loads. This work is ongoing.

District 3

Staff: Amanda Wedow, Claire Waterman

Channel: A visitor reported a 40' creosote log along the westside beach, and notified the DNR marine crew, who has begun their work in the San Juans. Staff use the Mycoast.org app to document and report creosote logs and other marine debris.

Lopez Hill: Staff continue to focus on trail brushing and removing noxious weeds including scotch broom, herb Robert, and thistles.

Spencer Spit: State Parks conducts routine maintenance of the Preserve (thanks Ranger Meghan and staff!). Amanda and Claire spent a day at the Preserve for various tasks. We installed a new signpost and directional signs, brushed the trails, and pulled thistles and tansy. Amanda will return to complete annual monitoring in the fall.

The Spit at Fisherman Bay Preserves: Amanda built a temporary fence to replace the field gate that broke - most likely due to wind and a rotten post. Trinity Lutheran youth group volunteers helped with a beach cleanup; they collected two bags of marine debris and carried out plywood and other treated lumber.

The Tomolo at Fisherman Bay Preserves: Claire tackled the roadside weeds- meadow knapweed and thistle. Another plant of concern, salsify, has been expanding on the roadside. Unfortunately, salsify had already gone to seed (looks like giant dandelions) when staff came to remove knapweed.

The annual Fourth of July fireworks took place on Bayshore Road, and the show was enjoyed by many. The fireworks volunteers did a thorough cleanup the Saturday after the show (Photo 15). On Monday, Amanda, the YCC and a visiting youth group from Coeur d'Alene Idaho did a second round of fireworks cleanup. The group's efforts primarily focused on the Fisherman Bay marsh side, and the group picked up about half a trash bag of mostly fireworks related trash. This was an improvement over last year, and Amanda is thankful to all the volunteers that helped out.

Weeks Wetland at Fisherman Bay Preserves: A small fire destroyed a portion of the viewing platform (Photo 16). A Preserve visitor first noticed the fire and called the fire department, who responded and put it out. Thank you, Lopez Fire Department! The platform is now blocked off and a closure sign is posted. The cause of the fire is unknown.

Watmough: The Chadwick Homestead Condition Assessment is complete. More details to come once Amanda has thoroughly read through the report. Claire watered and mulched the new plantings. Woodchips for the project were donated by local arborist Dylan Moore.

Photos



Photo 1. Members of the Darrington Forest Cooperative tour an EcoCultural restoration site in the Cascades focused on promotion of culturally significant plants and habitat to support wildlife.

Photo 2. While this well-camouflaged nest found along the King Sister's trail may look like the creation of a fairy, this woven masterpiece is the impressive work of a small bird called a Bushtit.



Photo 3. A magical open-grown Douglas fir within the planned Mount Ben habitat restoration site. The limb on the right measures greater than 36" in diameter.

Photo 4. Gus and David install their fishing lure library on the upper dam at Zylstra reservoir.



Photo 5. YCC crew help complete new Beaver Dam Analogs for Zylstra’s Emmerling Creek restoration site.

Photo 6. Voluntary Stewardship Program staff and partners gather to see natural resource protections in place at Coffelt Farm Preserve.



Photo 7. Abandoned boat at Deer Harbor Preserve loaded up.

Photo 8. Tyler orients Camp Orkila volunteers at North Shore Preserve.



Photo 9. Camp Orkila volunteers lay mulch around plantings.

Photo 10. Erin H. checks for evidence of swallow roosting at North Shore Preserve.



Photo 11. Anne Marie powers up Turtleback with TPL, SJPT and Land Bank staff and supporters.
Photo 12. Aerial view of the post-fire situation near Turtleback Mountain Preserve.



Photo 13. Scot D. dwarfed by a large Clematis at Turtleback Mountain Preserve.
Photo 14. It's acorn season on Turtleback!



Photo 15. Volunteers at the Tombolo Preserve cleaning up firework debris in the marsh.



Photo 16. Weeks Wetland Preserve overlook damaged by a fire.



Photo 17. Soopalalie/Shepherdia canadensis on the shoreline at Watmough Head.

SAN JUAN COUNTY LAND BANK
Ecological Baseline Inventory

Site Name: Watmough Wetland Date: 7/26/93
 Inventory Compiled By: Jessy Bill
 Ownership: State - The Dept of Conservation easement to SJC Land Bank
 Location: Watmough Bight, SE Lopez Island
 Legal Description: _____
 Property Size: _____ acres Wetland size is 5 acres

CONSERVATION GOALS: Briefly identify the primary conservation goal(s) and purpose for preservation of the property.

Public Access
 Wildlife Habitat /Wetland
 State or Federally listed Plant Habitat
 Biodiversity
 Scenic Value
 Agriculture
 Other (describe): _____

If appropriate, list the target species to be protected: _____

Based on these goals, identify the appropriate information (questions) that should be collected for each property. This information should help to determine if conservation values are being protected in the future.

SOILS: Describe the soil units for the site based on SCS classifications. Include a copy of the map in baseline files.
Sm - Semi-arid muck - Very poorly drained organic soils

Photo 18. While reviewing the CE for the freshwater wetland at Watmough, Erin recognized just how long a certain commissioner has been dedicated to stewardship...