



MEETING MINUTES

Conservation Land Bank Commission Meeting November 14, 2025 Hybrid Meeting Lopez Island Family Resource Center

Commission Members in Attendance:

Marilyn O'Connor, District 1, position 1
Peggy Bill, District 3, position 3
Brian Wiese, at large, position 4

Amy Trainer, at large, position 6
Tim Clark, at large, position 7

Commission Members Absent: Ann Marie Shanks, District 2, position 2, Mike Pickett, at large, position 5

Land Bank Staff in Attendance: Lincoln Bormann, Peter Guillozet, Erin Halcomb, Doug McCutchen, Aaron Rock, Amanda Wedow, Charlie Behnke

Land Bank Staff Absent: Shauna Barrows, Tyler Goodman, Eliza Habegger, , Margo Thorp, Jacob Wagner, Tanja Williamson

County Council Liaison: Jane Fuller

Public in Attendance: 4 individuals over the course of the meeting.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
Call to Order 8:01 am Time Stamp (0:10)	Chair, Brian Wiese, called the meeting to order. Brian acknowledged Land Bank Commissioner applicant in the audience, Mary Gropp, and asked Mary to introduce herself.
Public Comment 8:02 am (5:38)	None
Adoption of Minutes 8:12 am (10:50)	The draft October 17, 2025, minutes were reviewed. There were corrections. Minutes were approved.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
<p>Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) 8:14 am (12:25)</p>	<p>Vickie Edwards, Conservation Director of SJPT, reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJPT continues to fundraise for Mount Ben West Campaign and hope to complete in February 2026. A purchase and sale agreement is in place to acquire the property by end of March 2026. More information regarding the campaign can be found on their website at sjpt.org/mount-ben-west. Vickie reminded attendees that post acquisition, SJPT will work with the Land Bank on a conservation easement. • Their outreach team has been busy hosting “Walk and Talks” and community presentations.
<p>Council Liaison 8:20 am (18:23)</p>	<p>Jane Fuller reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2026-27 County budget is looking at a deficit of about \$3M in 2027 and the County will have to implement FTE reductions. Council anticipates a balanced budget on December 1st. • County is heading towards finalization of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Jane noted Council hopes to complete each of the Comp Plan elements and appendices this year and move into updating Critical Areas Ordinance in 2026. The Comp Plan public hearing begins on November 25th. • As part of finalizing the Washington Tax Advisory Committee Recommendation awards for 2026, the Committee recommended to Council to engage environmental stewardship in updating the lodging tax five-year master plan.
<p>Chair and Commissioner’s Report 8:36 am (34:19)</p>	<p>Tim visited Weeks Wetland and was impressed with the new lookout.</p> <p>Marilyn visited the Mount Ben West property with Doug McCutchen and was able to observe the Islands Conservation Corps “in action” while they completed a forest thinning project.</p> <p>Brian attended SJPT’s community meeting on Orcas and found it very interesting and encouraged attendees to attend the meeting on San Juan Island.</p> <p>A nominating committee was formed for 2026 officer nominations consisting of Amy Trainer and Tim Clark.</p>
<p>Financial Report 8:44 am (41:15)</p>	<p>Aaron Rock shared a new internal grant revenue and obligation tracking spreadsheet. Aaron also reported on excise tax revenue for 2025 exceeding budget and projecting to be over \$4M.</p>

<p>Director's Report 9:19 am (1:04:34) Retreat Topics</p> <p>Demetrick Conservation Easement (CE) Donation</p> <p>Taylor Property Along Cascade Creek</p>	<p>Lincoln shared possible topics noting a key item will be the Strategic Plan, including discussion around stewardship standards and practices, and setting third year priority actions. He suggested discussion around the organizational staffing and review process that staff has undertaken and conversation regarding the overall context the Land Bank is facing, noting external challenges regarding funding, and possible partnerships. Lastly, discussion of acquisition criteria for agricultural lands. There was discussion. Lincoln will work with John Howell in setting the agenda.</p> <p>Background: The Demetrick's own a 13-acre waterfront parcel north of Channel Preserve on Lopez Island and are interested in a CE with the Land Bank. Current: The CE would set up a building envelope and prohibit any subdivision or guest house. They would also donate a trail easement.</p> <p>Background: SJPT secured a salmon recovery grant to acquire a total of roughly six acres from Sandy Taylor along Cascade Creek, adjacent to the Land Bank's Coho Preserve. Current: The Land Bank is assuming the acquisition. Next steps include a survey and then a purchase and sale agreement. The expectation is to close end of March 2026.</p>
	<p>Action Item: Lincoln draft thank you letter to the Demetrick's on behalf of the Commission.</p>
<p>Break 9:26 am– 9:38 am</p>	
<p>Stewardship Report 9:38 am (1:42:01) Orcas Island</p> <p>Lopez Island</p> <p>San Juan Island</p>	<p>Peter commented on the Cascade Creek flow restoration effort and noted that it has been a banner year for Chinook. The stream is known for its small Coho run, which arrives later in the season. He noted this may be the only salmon bearing stream in the County and that we have been trying for the last five years to secure a portion of the senior water right, which is owned by Orcas Water Holdings, the former owners of Rosario Resort. The Land Bank has been able to extend the grants to 2026, but the deadlines are looming. He shared that we are maintaining regular communications with the water rights owners and that we are close to completing a water rights valuation to determine the market value. At this point there appears to be a large gap between the available grant funds and the potential sale price of a portion of the water. This raises the question of whether there might be private donors who might consider contributing to the effort.</p> <p>Amanda reported classes from the Lopez elementary and high schools are on a field trip to Channel Preserve. Upcoming is a native planting party at Watmough Bay Preserve on 11/27 and an Upright Head restoration project to improve slope stability in conjunction with Friends of the San Juans. Amanda is waiting on a forest assessment report from Rainshadow Consulting regarding all forested Lopez preserves; she is working on parking lot improvements for Fisherman Bay Spit; and hunting season wrapped up at Lopez Hill with a total of 65 requests for permission.</p> <p>Doug spent a couple hours in the field with Marilyn and he thanked co-workers for helping fill in holes during some unusually busy workdays, one of which included</p>

Stewardship Report continued	<p>Jacob and Shauna working with Island Conservation Corps and Samish Indian Nation Department of Natural Resources to all become Certified Prescribed Burn Managers through WA State DNR Certified Burn Program. Doug attended the Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team’s annual conference in Victoria and a forest restoration workshop with Tal Engle on Galliano Island.</p> <p>Erin gave an overview related to Tribal engagement efforts. Letters of notification were sent out regarding the Blakely Island acquisition and Beaverton Marsh Trail project. She noted next week discussion will continue with WA Department of Fish and Wildlife and other land managers regarding deer hunting on Turtleback and North Shore preserves. Erin has begun CE monitoring and working to line up 2026 Salmon Recovery Grant projects. There was discussion.</p>
Outreach Report 10:04 am (2:02:22)	Tanja was absent. There was general discussion regarding continuing to host Community Conversation events.
Future Agenda Items 10:11 am (2:09:10)	Tribal Relations Hunting Policy Budget Guidelines Joint meeting between Land Bank and SJPT staff Update from Overmarsh Farm Commons Consistent stewardship infrastructure standards (e.g. Porta Potties/Restrooms) Criteria for Acquisition/Acquisition Priorities (focus on Ag) Community Conversation
2nd Public Comment 10:13 am (2:10:58)	Tracey Cottingham shared some ideas regarding Community Conversations and thanked Peter for sharing his knowledge at a summer event with Trust for Public Land. She also thanked Brian for his work his years of support for conservation.
Meeting Adjourned 10:19 am (2:17:10)	Chair, Brian Wiese, adjourned the meeting.
NEXT MEETING	The next LBC meeting is scheduled to take place December 19, 2025, at the UW Friday Harbor Labs, located at 620 University Road, Friday Harbor, WA