
STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

OCTOBER 2025

Overview

Staff have been working to manage four different RCO grant projects, including: Judd Cove (2020), Watmough (2022), Dolphin Bay (2024) and Cascade Creek (2025). All of these properties possess critical shoreline habitat. On October 8th, Watmough received \$1.43M! The total money to be awarded for these properties is \$3.2M.

Outreach

Staff: Tanja Williamson, Margo Thorp

Tanja managed online logistics for the fall plant sale, highlighted stewardship accomplishments and outreach events via social media, and released the [Fall 2025 Newsletter](#). She also led Orcas seniors around the North Shore Preserve (Photo 1) and San Juan Island seniors along the last 2-mile portion of San Juan Island's Town to American Camp trail – from Frazer Homestead to the American Camp Visitor Center. An all-island [Community Conversations](#) is scheduled for Tuesday, October 28th from 5:30-6:30pm.

Salish Seeds Nursery

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

The annual Fall Native Wildflower Sale was a focus of late September activities. Over 2,000 plants, bulbs, seed packets, and garden kits were sold to 88 customers on Shaw, Lopez, Orcas, and San Juan Islands. Land Bank trucks were stuffed front and back with plants headed to Lopez and Orcas (Photo 2)! The Wildflower Sale event is our primary way of selling small quantities of plant materials to the general public.

Additional special orders for larger quantities of plants, bulbs, and seeds were also filled. These sales will be ongoing through the fall. All Salish Seeds Project prices are set to reimburse our costs of producing them. However, the majority of our output this year is headed to Land Bank Preserves and a few partner projects.

District 1

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

Beaverton Marsh: We are super excited to have Rachel Dietzman on board! She is off to a great start taking over project management for the Beaverton Trail project (Photo 4). The contract with Bowman/Exceltech was approved and recorded. Our consultant's kickoff meeting on Oct. 1 was very productive. The property is being surveyed and coordination with WSDOT for next steps has begun. We will have a very full fall as Bowman/Exceltech is trying to deliver a 30% design package that can be used for permit applications. The plan is for plans package review in early November.

There will be consultant and stakeholder design site visits followed by public site walks in late November, early December.

Cady Mountain: A neighbor reported an altercation with the un-homed individual on the Preserve. Lincoln followed up with the individual and Sheriff. Apologies were forthcoming and the situation is considered resolved by all parties.

Limekiln: Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife conducted a rotenone treatment of the pond to control and, hopefully, eradicate Northern pike (Photos 6-9). The project was well organized, and their team was satisfied with the outcome. The pond will be tested weekly until it is deemed detoxified, which will likely take several weeks.

Middlewood: We submitted our annual report detailing Island Marble Butterfly habitat creation to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Mount Ben: A contract with Rainshadow Consulting for the first phase a habitat restoration project is nearly complete. Work will include thinning of young conifers, building SimDOGs (simulated downed old growth) and conservation burn piles, and creation of both living and dead snags. Living snags mimic a tree which has lost its top, resulting in complex forms that provide unique wildlife habitat such as hollow cavities and reiterated tops.

A contract for a cultural resource assessment with Willamette Cultural Resources Associates is being negotiated. The scope of work will include the SJ Preservation Trust's Mt. Ben West parcel in addition to existing Mount Ben, Westside, Deadman Bay, and Limekiln Preserves. These sites are understood to be culturally significant. The contract will include the production of material suitable for outreach and interpretation in consultation with regional Tribes.

Mount Grant: ICC wrapped up three days of hard work in the west basin at the LSR site. This is the final year of the grant funded portion of the project. We anticipate an additional 5 days of field work before the grant deadline of June 30. Some of this will be paid through the SJ Preservation Trust's stewardship fund for Mount Grant. The Land Bank is partnering with the Conservation District on additional thinning work to take place along riparian corridors funded by the State Conservation Commission's Riparian Grant Program. The CD successfully petitioned the Commission to add a new practice of the use of thinned material to create large woody debris within riparian areas for this site. Doug is working with Falcon Cultural Resources to complete a cultural resource assessment that was initiated in 2022 but delayed due to the consultant's family health issues. An event hosted by several Indigenous non-profit groups (Protectors of the Salish Sea, PKOLS, Chiapas Education Project, & Whiteswan Environmental), "The Walk to Protect and Restore the Salish Sea", visited Mount Grant as part of a multi-day event on San Juan Island. Permission has also been extended to a photographer who hopes to capture long-exposure night sky images. Starting October 1st, the summit will only be open for driving access on Sundays from 10-4 pm.

Zylstra Lake: October 1st marks the seasonal closure of the eastern farm road to all trail users. The trail that leads to the west side of the lake and Bluebird Ridge will remain open but CLOSED to dogs. Planning for riparian restoration is underway for the SJC Environmental Stewardship, Lower Zylstra as well as another newly funded riparian project with the Conservation District. The latter will focus on establishment of native plant buffers around the Zylstra reservoir over the next three years. Associated with these projects, a cultural resource assessment is underway with Caldera Archaeology. Finally, we submitted our annual report detailing Island Marble Butterfly habitat creation to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

District 2

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman, Scot Devereaux

Coffelt Farm: Viking Excavation is nearly finished installing the new four-tank system and drain field (Photo 10). Lum Farm saw a good turnout for the annual [Farm Tours](#) October 3-5th. Peter and volunteer Mary Gropp distributed native plants from the Salish Seeds Project to enthusiastic planters.

Coho: The Land Bank was successfully awarded \$521K from RCO to move forward with the purchase of an additional six acres.

Crescent Beach: The 32-acre forest health restoration project is complete. The work is highlighted on the Land Bank's website and on QR code-linked signage along the trail (Photo 11). Several staff traveled to Orcas to support the effort including, Erin, Amanda, Jacob and Shauna. Additional help came from ICC and Blackcap restoration (Photo 13). Initial feedback has been positive. Peter joined Lincoln and Councilmember Kari McVeigh on a tour.

Dolphin Bay Road property: Erin toured the property with RCO grant manager and discussed next steps for a potential boundary line adjustment.

Judd Cove: Peter and Erin toured the shoreline restoration area with RCO grant manager, Elizabeth Butler (Photo 14). Butler said, "It is so good to see this shoreline restored!" Peter is working on project accounting to seek reimbursement for all project-related expenses from RCO.

North Shore: Erin met with WDFW's Tribal Co-Managers Group to discuss preliminary proposals for deer hunting here, and at Turtleback Mountain. Prior to initiating any program, we will hold a public meeting, seek Commission approval, and pursue other necessary preparations. Tyler and Scot worked alongside ICC for some forest health thinning on the east side of the entrance road to the Preserve.

Turtleback Mountain: The South Entrance parking lot was reopened on Friday the 26th after a four-day closure. Comments from users suggest that the new layout and additional spaces are a welcome change.

District 3

Staff: Amanda Wedow, Claire Waterman

Amanda and Claire distributed plants at the Lopez pickup location for the Salish Seeds Project plant sale.

Channel: Volunteers completed a beach cleanup for the Great Islands Cleanup.

Hummel Lake: Claire weed whacked tall grass around planted trees and shrubs.

Lopez Hill: Hunting season is underway.

Richardson Marsh: Parking area plans are in the works.

Weeks Wetland at Fisherman Bay Preserves: The wildlife viewing platform has reopened after staff completed repairs. There are still some finishing touches, but the bench and decking have been replaced. Staff are looking for a volunteer to replace the trim on the interpretive signs so they can be reinstalled.

For the Spit, we submitted our annual report detailing Island Marble Butterfly habitat creation to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Two whimbrels, a type of locally uncommon shorebird, were observed in the wetland and around Fisherman Bay as a stop on their migratory route.

Upright Head: Friends of the San Juans was awarded RCO grant funding for implementation of a shoreline restoration project. The planning phase of this project has been going on several years and includes WSDOT.

Watmough: Reimbursement from RCO for the headland addition was received! Amanda led the RCO grant manager on a tour of the property.

Amanda and Claire completed some routine maintenance, remaining thistle removal, and finished spreading woodchips along the former sport court area. Trail counter data for August measured approximately 25 daily visits. Staff continue the usual schedule of monitoring the Watmough parking area and outhouse cleaning.



Photo 1. Hikers from Orcas Island Senior Center pose for a photo at North Shore Preserve.



Photo 2. Land Bank trucks were stuffed front and back with plants headed to Lopez and Orcas.

Photo 3. Salish Seeds Nursery volunteers help dig camas (*Camassia quamash*) bulbs for fall sales.



Photo 4. Beaverton Trail Project Manager, Rachel Dietzman, has wasted no time getting into the thick of the project. Seen here evaluating trail alignment which would avoid important ecological features such as the crabapple grove in the foreground.

Photo 5. Island Conservation Crew works on a restoration project at Beaverton Marsh.



Photo 6. Lime Kiln Lake is drawn down for rotenone treatment to control Northern Pike.



Photo 7. Water quality monitoring in preparation for rotenone treatment.



Photo 8. WDFW staff unload an airboat in preparation for treating Lime Kiln Lake to control northern pike.



Photo 9. WDFW staff apply rotenone to Lime Kiln Lake.



Photo 10. Two of four new septic tanks installed at Coffelt Farm Preserve.



Photo 11. One of four post-project signs at Crescent Beach Preserve.



Photo 12. Bird activity has increased at Crescent Beach Preserve following the forest health work.



Photo 13. ICC works on tidying up at Crescent beach Preserve.



Photo 14. Peter tours the Judd Cove shoreline restoration project with the RCO grant manager.



Photo 15. A revised trailhead at South Turtleback was part of the recent parking lot rehabilitation project.



Photo 16. Completed repairs to the Weeks Wetland platform and bench.