

**AGENDA**  
**San Juan County Conservation Land Bank Commission**

**Members of the public may participate in person at  
SJI Grange, 152 1<sup>st</sup> St N, Friday Harbor, WA 98250  
join virtually by [CLICKING HERE](#)  
or by phone @ (253)205-0468 Meeting ID: 864 2185 5108**

**January 16, 2026**

8:45am	Convene
8:45	General Public Comment Period
8:55	Approve December 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes
9:00	Chair and Commissioners Reports
9:10	Council Update – Council Liaison <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commission Candidate Interviews</li></ul>
9:20	Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust
9:30	Financial Report – DRAFT 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2025 Report
9:50	Directors Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retreat Notes</li><li>• Stewardship Leadership Team</li><li>• Policy Manual Update</li></ul>
10:20	Break
10:15	Outreach/Communications Report – Tanja Williamson
10:30	Stewardship Report
10:50	Future Agenda Items*
11:00	2 <sup>nd</sup> Public Comment Period
11:10	Adjourn

*- Accessibility (disabled, elderly)	- Organization structure, procedures, and priorities
- Review of acquisition matrix criteria	- Tribal relations

*The Land Bank Commission May Add or Delete Agenda Items and Projects for Discussion. The Agenda Order is Subject to Change. You are invited to call the Land Bank office at 360-378-4402 for more details prior to the meeting. SJC Code 2.116.070 “All meetings and actions of advisory bodies and their subcommittees shall be open to the public, even where such meetings are not within the purview of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 42.30 RCW, except where the meeting is properly closed for executive session, as provided in RCW 42.30.110”*

**SJC Conservation Land Bank**  
**DRAFT Combined Financial Statement**  
**12 Months End of December 2025**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	<b>Balance Sheet</b>									
2		<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>\$ Change</b>						
3	<b>Cash</b>									
4	Conservation Area Fund	3,571,708	5,012,395.99	1,440,688						
5	Stewardship M&M Fund	1,120,111	755,990.84	(364,120)						
6	Endowment Fund	8,648,308	8,718,308.25	70,000						
7	<b>Total</b>	<b>13,340,127</b>	<b>14,486,695.08</b>	<b>1,146,568</b>						
8										
9	<b>Assets</b>									
10	LBRC Fund -Restricted*	20,000	20,000	-						
11	Real Property/Total Value*	72,799,493	72,799,493	-						
12	<b>Total</b>	<b>72,819,493</b>	<b>72,819,493</b>	<b>-</b>						
13										
14	<b>Liabilities</b>									
15	Long Term Debt	3,275,000	2,725,000	(550,000)						
16	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,275,000</b>	<b>2,725,000</b>	<b>550,000</b>						
17										
18	<b>Revenues &amp; Expenditures</b>					<b>REET</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
19		<b>Q4</b>	<b>2025 YTD</b>	<b>% of Budget</b>		Jan	230,612	110,845	329,863	360,392
20	<b>Revenues</b>					Feb	149,471	140,709	170,409	316,292
21	Combined Tax's	1,243,283	4,683,738	121.00%		Mar	187,758	251,487	347,114	482,637
22	LGIP Interest	44,844	407,082	232.62%		Apr	282,989	343,717	262,422	349,007
23	Conservation Buyers Program*	-	1,679,238	97.90%		May	401,336	241,615	342,814	752,805
24	Donations*	11,682	433,582	12388.00%		Jun	338,433	290,134	620,587	644,480
25	Grants*	1,428,776	1,431,004	90.00%		Jul	530,491	338,485	339,411	399,948
26	Nursery Sales	24,475	41,078	342.30%		Aug	600,709	495,314	384,040	324,623
27	Leased Property	15,804	41,963	111.00%		Sept	487,680	325,214	383,036	416,135
28	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,768,864</b>	<b>8,717,684</b>	<b>107.23%</b>		Oct	438,189	333,762	450,583	399,211
29						Nov	308,713	347,296	428,180	246,895
30	<b>Expenditures</b>					Dec	361,924	282,656	285,566	354,612
31	CAF Administration	81,908	368,496	97.30%		<b>Total</b>	<b>4,318,304</b>	<b>3,501,234</b>	<b>4,344,025</b>	<b>5,047,037</b>
32	STEW Wages and Operations	388,523	1,416,245	92.00%						
33	Acquisition Costs*	10,164	3,642,373	99.00%						
34	Debt Payment	592,409	645,308	104.30%						
35	Property Management & Maintenance	349,396	663,475	52.40%						
36	Site Enhancement	185,948	191,548	38.10%						
37	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,608,350</b>	<b>6,927,444</b>	<b>86.17%</b>						
38	<b>Revenue over Expenditures</b>	<b>1,160,514</b>	<b>1,790,240</b>							
39										
40	<b>*Footnotes</b>									
41	LBRC Fund - Land Bank Renewal Committee restricted donation.									
42	Real Property/Total Value - The taxable value of property is significantly lower. See "Impact on your tax's" statement									
43	Conservation Buyers Program (Sale of Land) - North Shore Preserve conservation easement sale to SJPT									
44	Grants - Q4 1,428,776 Watmough Addition									
45	Donations - Q3 400,000 Dolphin Bay Rd									
46	<b>Acquisition Cost:</b>									
47	Q2 \$200,000 final payment on Hauschka Cady Mt note.									
48	Q3 \$3,373,330 Dolphin Bay Rd									



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## STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

JANUARY 2026

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### **Overview**

Holiday vacations and weather conditions slowed field work during the past month but across the preserves, staff addressed weather-related impacts including downed trees and erosion issues. Progress was made on annual monitoring, routine maintenance, workplans, and preparations for upcoming projects in the new year.

### **Outreach**

Staff: Tanja Williamson, Margo Thorp

Before taking a break over the holidays, Tanja attended a webinar centered around social media content, completed her ninth “End of Year Newsletter” and helped coordinate her tenth Annual Retreat. Post vacation activities include collaborating with staff and partner organizations to populate the 2026 outreach calendar and circling back to a 2025 project: moving the Land Bank’s email newsletter from Mailchimp to the County’s GovDelivery software.

Annual agricultural conservation easement site visits were completed for the year.

### **Salish Seeds Nursery**

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

Nursery operations are limited during the winter months. Staff have responded to a few seed purchase requests and have been taking plant orders for fall 2026. Two end-of-year private donations totaling \$10,000 will allow for the purchase of a greenhouse, a long-anticipated addition to the nursery.

### **District 1**

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

Holidays, stormy weather, and short days inform the seasonal rhythm of stewardship work (Photos 2 and 3). Staff have been busy refining work plans for the year as well as cleaning and organizing.

**Beaverton Marsh:** Overmarsh Farm Commons has slowed down for the winter. Garden beds are mulched and cover cropped, sheep have been moved off the pastures, and the water system has been winterized. Planning is underway for the next phases of farm improvements including continuing to replace the perimeter fence. The Beaverton Marsh Trail project is moving forward with outstanding questions on trail standards and permit requirements nearly resolved. We expect a 30% design package by the end of January and plan for our first public meeting in late February. There will also be a February project walkthrough for interested Land Bank staff and commissioners, and county administration personnel. Look for that timing and invitation by the end of January. It will be wet and muddy. But fun (Photo 4).

**Cady Mountain:** Neighbors reported overnight camping with vehicles matching those suspected of wide-spread mail theft. Star Septic also reporting dumping of garbage in portable restrooms. Staff have

been monitoring the site more closely and have requested additional support from SJC Sheriff. The heavy rain event in early December washed out a section of Shooting Star Road. Neighbors were able to temporarily patch the effected section. There is disagreement amongst easement holders on acceptable level of maintenance and repair. We have suggested seeking an outside assessment by one or more local contractors.

**False Bay Creek:** The western pasture is ponding with more water flowing through following the road widening and culvert modifications implemented last summer. Waterfowl have abundant open water this winter.

**Frazer Homestead:** A small herd of cattle has been grazing following the water system improvements earlier in the fall.

**King Sisters:** The Conservation District is working on an Individual Stewardship Plan (Farm Plan) to inform current and future farm activities. Rob Waldron continues to graze a small mixed herd of cattle and sheep.

**Limekiln:** Staff have responded to downed trees and report of a dead deer in the trail. Annual monitoring was completed.

**Mount Grant:** We have received a request for potential name change from Josiah Feld-French and [PKOLS: Protection of Knowledge of Land & Sea](#). A presentation at the January LBC meeting should follow. Staff have responded to downed trees. Public works will be selectively mowing roadsides and sweeping.

**Westside:** Consistent heavy rains have hampered planting efforts in oak restoration areas. Shauna has scheduled a volunteer effort for MLK Day of Service, weather willing. Staff responded to garbage dumping and sign vandalization (Photo 5).

## **District 2**

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman

Tyler completed annual monitoring at all District 2 preserves, which also included work to remove small, isolated patches of holly, ivy and spurge laurel.

**Coffelt Farm:** Boundary lines were surveyed on the NE side of the property in advance of perimeter fence installation and repairs. Lum Farm sold Christmas trees this year in addition to the usual array of meats, dairy, and other farm products.

**Coho:** In support of Erin's efforts to advance the grant-funded acquisition along the east side of Cascade Creek, Peter has initiated a boundary survey contract with Holman Land Surveying. The survey will define approximately 6.07 acres along the western, riparian portions of two tax lots, plus approximately one acre of adjacent tidelands.

**Crescent Beach:** Staff have begun preparations to plant over 7,000 trees and shrubs in thinned areas starting January 27<sup>th</sup>. This effort will include a volunteer planting event on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Dolphin Bay property:** Staff will meet on site on January 15<sup>th</sup> as a precursor to preparation of the Stewardship and Management Plan. Caldera Archaeology recently completed a cultural resources

survey, with findings indicating that riparian planting and beach access, trail and parking improvements will not impact any cultural resources. Peter worked with a local contractor to remove the old speedboat and other debris. OPALCO is reviewing existing electrical infrastructure with an eye towards moving the existing transformer to the roadside.

**Diamond Hill:** Staff sought assistance from Skyline Tree Care to remove a tree hanging over one of the sheds at 'Camp Killebrew'.

**North Shore:** Runoff during heavy rains has been manageable thus far this winter thanks, in part, to recent drainage improvements along the trails.

**Turtleback Mountain:** With assistance from Blackcap Restoration, staff planted approximately 2,500 plants on the south side of Turtleback in previous burn pile footprints. Chihuahua Team assisted with chipping piles of thinned limbs and small diameter trees along the North Turtleback trail. We plan to continue this work next month to establish a shaded fuel break along the entire Turtleback road network. We are preparing to plant roughly 150 Garry oaks in the field adjacent to the South Entrance parking lot. A surveyor completed a boundary survey along the northern boundary to address encroachment in that area.

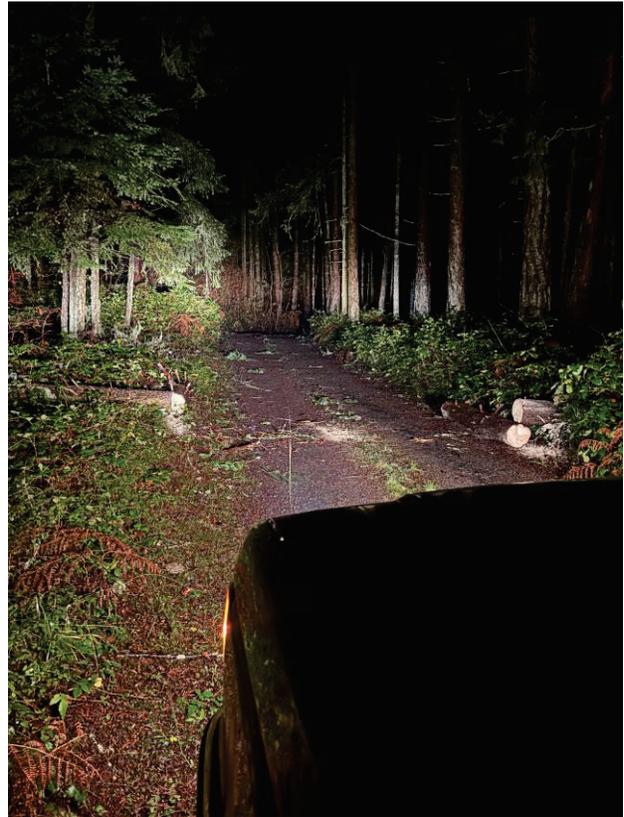
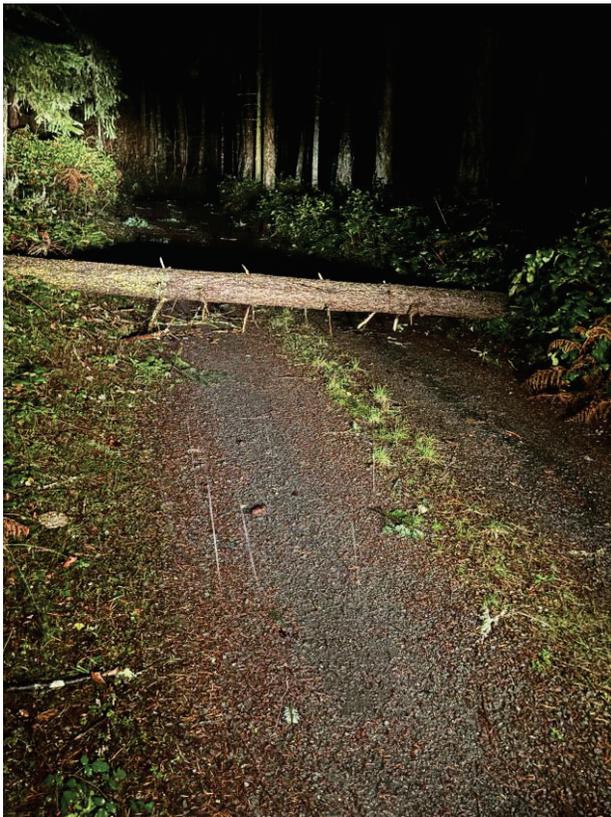
### **District 3**

Staff: Amanda Wedow

Amanda took a break for the holidays and has limited updates to report. Preserve annual monitoring was completed. In the field, she is doing basic preserve maintenance such as filling potholes and clearing trails and planting. Amanda met with SJC Noxious Weeds staff to remove Holly at Richardson and Hummel preserves. In the office, Amanda is preparing the annual Lopez workplan.



**Photo 1.** SJCLB Commission Annual Retreat, December 2025.



**Photo 2.** Short days and spicy weather has resulted in minor erosion issues on private roads and many downed trees.

**Photo 3.** After clearing downed tree.



**Photo 4.** Blackcap Restoration was enlisted to help brush proposed new trail routes at Beaverton Marsh Preserve.  
**Photo 5.** Inspirational vandalism from the Westside Preserve.



**Photos 6 and 7.** Removal of derelict boat and other debris from Dolphin Bay Road property on Orcas.



## Summary of Land Bank Retreat December 19, 2025

### Attendees

**Commission Members:** Peggy Bill, Tim Clark, Marilyn O'Connor, Ann Marie Shanks, Amy Trainer, Brian Wiese

**Staff Members:** Charlie Behnke, Lincoln Bormann, Rachel Dietzman, Tyler Goodman, Peter Guillozet, Eliza Habegger, Erin Halcomb, Doug McCutchen, Aaron Rock, Margo Thorp, Jacob Wagner, Amanda Wedow, Tanja Williamson

**Public Participants:** County Council Member Jane Fuller, Angela Anderson (ED SJPT), Jon Cain (SJC PA Office), Joe Cohen, Vickie Edwards (Conservation Director, SJPT), Nancy Greene (Board President, SJPT), Mary Gropp, Chris Guidotti, Beth Helstein, Lee Taylor

**Facilitator:** John Howell

### **Introductory Comments**

Chair Wiese welcomed everyone to the 2025 retreat. He noted that there will be several vacancies on the Commission next year and that several candidates for those positions were in attendance. The retreat provides a good opportunity to learn about the work of the Land Bank.

### **Summary of 2025 Accomplishments**

Lincoln provided an overview of the work completed in 2025. It was anticipated that after reauthorization in 2024, there would be a reduced level of activity in 2025. However, that was not the case. Some of the highlights this past year included the following:

- Purchase of 225 acres of School Trust Land on Blakely Island.
- Hosted 85 outreach events.
- An Agricultural lease with the SJ Island Grange for the Overmarsh Farm Commons at Beaverton Marsh was put in place. Several other leases were also completed.
- The Crescent Beach forest thinning project.
- The Salish Seeds program continues to thrive.

There were several other acknowledgements of accomplishments from retreat participants:

- Aaron's work on financial guidelines and financial forecasting.
- Collaboration with the San Juan Preservation Trust on several projects.
- Community events and revisions to the web site.
- The staff and commission's continued passion for the work.

### **Background Context**

There was discussion about circumstances that have changed since the last Commission retreat. Some of the changes included:

- There is less funding for climate change-related projects on the national level.
- There has also been a change at the national level in the acceptance of scientific findings related to climate change.
- These changes could impact how the Land Bank manages its properties. There could be less funding available to manage properties for mitigate climate change impacts.
- There is also an expected decline in salmon recovery funding at both the federal and state level.
- Traditional partnerships that Tribes have had with federal and state agencies have been reduced or eliminated. However, the City of Seattle has committed to make an historic level of investment in the Skagit watershed as part of the FERC relicensing process. Also, the Governor has made a commitment to engage in meaningful ways with state Tribes (although no funding has been provided yet).

There have also been some positive changes. Some of those include the following:

- The County Council recently approved a change in per parcel charges for the SJ Islands Conservation District which will create an additional estimated \$400,000 in annual revenue.
- Local communities remain committed to conservation.
- The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) has \$120 million available to conclude 2024 grant applications.

**Summary of Agreements and Actions Regarding Background Context**

- It was noted that members of Congress want to understand the impact of federal funding cuts and changes to federal policies. It was suggested that the Land Bank should keep track of stories that demonstrate the impacts of changes to federal funding and policies.

There was also conversation about the 12-year budget (2038) forecast.

- Last year after the retreat the staff developed financial guidelines that included an assumption that 60% of annual revenue should be set aside for stewardship.
- It was suggested that the \$14.5 million estimated in ending cash and investments at the end of the 12-year period (2038) is not sufficient for a very robust acquisition program, without partnerships and outside funding. The Stewardship Fund is projected to have \$18.3 million in 2038.
- It was noted that the assumptions built into the long-term budget forecast are conservative. As an example, the forecast includes no revenues from grants or leases over the 12-year period. It was also suggested that it is appropriate to use conservative assumptions in the forecast.
- It was noted that the operational costs increase at 6% per year, which is more than twice the rate of forecasted annual REET increases.

- It was noted that the flexibility built into the budget enables the Land Bank to take on projects like the Beaverton Marsh trail.

**Summary of Agreements and Actions Regarding Budget Forecast**

The following actions were suggested for the Commission:

- There should be an analysis of overall lease revenues.
- The budget forecast should be reviewed regularly. The conversation should focus on how the Land Bank is reacting to changes in anticipated revenues or expenses.
- It would be helpful for the Commission to have a tutorial about the budget forecast. The tutorial could be timed to coincide with the arrival of the new Commission members.

**Stewardship Direction**

In the past several years there has been a strong emphasis on creating and maintaining recreational opportunities. Community members have expressed their support for recreational access to Land Bank properties. However, there are other maintenance requirements and needs. There was discussion about how to prioritize the stewardship needs.

Commission members asked staff to describe their thoughts about what’s working well and where the Land Bank may be falling short.

- In general, stewardship work on Orcas is going well. Staff have been spending time addressing infrastructure liabilities (i.e. culverts). The public appreciates the trails that have been created. It was suggested that more work could be done on weed management. A suggestion about a priority was to conduct weed management activities along trail corridors. It was also suggested that conducting additional forest assessments should be a priority. There is some concern about how the Land Bank will maintain the new preserves and capital assets as they are added.
- It was suggested that there should be more emphasis placed on considering the management implications of adding lands with infrastructure needs. The Land Bank might want to prioritize projects that have lower long-term maintenance requirements.
- On Lopez, stewardship activities are generally going well. Staff are working on basic preserve maintenance and interactions with the public. Creating management plans for all preserves is a very big task. With current resources there is a need to prioritize where the management plans should be created. In terms of needs, there is a backlog of aging infrastructure.
- The Agricultural program has focused on establishing long-term leases. There is a need to analyze management costs associated with ag properties. There is a need to figure out water rights and dam management at Zylstra Lake.
- The state of stewardship on San Juan is good but still needs improvement. With a small staff, work is sensitive to disruptions based on funding or other priorities. They have utilized partnerships, including with the Island Conservation Corps. There is a need for

more staff interaction in the field with the community. Staff presence on preserves has decreased as the number of preserves has increased and other demands have increased. Annual baseline visits are being accomplished. The impacts of the 32-hour work week for county employees have created challenges.

- Partnerships (with the Island Conservation Corps, the State School Trust, and Tribes) have been important in assisting with forestry work and noxious weed control.
- There is a need to think more holistically about how resources are used across all districts, creating more equitable distribution of staff resources. There is also a need to be more consistent about stewardship practices across the districts. It was suggested that the Land Bank could separate the staffing for stewardship planning from implementation of on-the-ground management activities.

**Summary of Comments about Prioritizing Stewardship Activities**

- There should be a priority on meeting existing obligations.
- There should be prioritization of the work needed on management plans.
- There should be careful deliberation about taking on projects with long-term maintenance requirements.

There was discussion about what the overarching stewardship goals should be going forward. Comments included the following:

- The Land Bank should look for opportunities to streamline the structure and format for the management plans.
- Climate change should continue to drive the Land Banks stewardship work. As examples, forest thinning and shoreline protection should be important goals. It was noted that there is a climate element in the recently adopted countywide comprehensive plan.
- It was suggested that in these times of diminished resources, there should be an effort to coordinate stewardship activities with county agencies and the Conservation District. There should be a deepening of partnerships with county agencies. As an example, wetland mitigation could be an opportunity for collaboration.
- It was suggested that forest assessments should be conducted across all preserves.
- Another way to consider overall goals is to have discussions about what work the staff could/should do more of and what they could do less of.

**Summary of Comments about Overarching Stewardship Goals**

- There should be a focus on completing existing obligations.
- The Land Bank should be more pro-active about potential collaborations with County agencies.
- Stewardship to address climate change should be a central focus for the Land Bank. This work should forest assessments.
- Staff should do an analysis of what stewardship work they should be doing more of, and which activities they could be doing less of.

- There should be work done to determine if management plan structures and formats can be simplified, and to determine if stewardship standards should be standardized across the districts.

### **Organizational Staffing**

This past year staff did work in six facilitated conversations to address roles confusion about roles, how to improve communication, address work overload issues, resolve conflicts, and address siloing of information and decision making. The following provides a summary of the conversation.

- Some decisions are made at the district level that could have implications for other districts. There should be discussion about creating consistent standards.
- There needs to be more discussion about stewardship best practices and what the stewardship priorities should be.
- Staff have agreed to have conversations about how work plans are assembled, and having peer to peer review of work plans. They would also like to have work plan check-ins on a periodic basis.
- To address interpersonal relationships, there is agreement to create rules for how staff interact with one another. A social contract has been created that all staff have signed.
- A stewardship management team will be created after the first of the year to focus on larger organizational goals and annual priorities. One of the team's first tasks will be to define their responsibilities. A concern was expressed that implementing the new management team will take more time of the stewards to implement and will take time away from other stewardship work.
- It was noted that staff had discussions about the potential creation of a stewardship manager position to oversee stewardship activities. However, given the resource constraints the county is currently facing, this is not the right time to request a new management position.
- There were many comments suggesting that the Land Bank should keep open the potential for creating a stewardship manager at some point in the future. It was suggested that as the Land Bank continues to acquire more land and easements, stewardship demands will grow and there will be need for additional staff at some point. It was also suggested that the current "flat" structure (i.e., 12 direct reports to the Director) is not sustainable over time, particularly is there is staff growth.
- There was a suggestion that making changes incrementally (as proposed), along with periodic (biannual) review and assessment, will allow for adaptive management.
- There was a suggestion to conduct a survey of staff to assess their work satisfaction.
- There was a suggestion that if the Commission would like the county to consider the addition of stewardship staff in the future, Commissioners should lay the groundwork with county officials well in advance of when the request would be made.

**Summary of Agreements and Actions Regarding Stewardship Staffing**

- There was widespread agreement that the proposed organizational and communications changes are a good first step.
- There was also widespread agreement to be open to creation of a stewardship manager at some point in the future.
- The Commission would like to have at least biannual check-ins about how the organizational changes are working.

**Strategic Plan Strategies for 2026**

There was discussion about the draft strategies for 2026.

- During the work on needed organizational changes (described above), it was noted that the Land Bank’s policy and procedure manual is out of date. It needs to be updated.
- The work on the policy and procedure manual will occur in 2026. When there is a draft, the manual will come to the Commission for review and approval.
- There is also a need to develop guidelines for property management, ecological management and enhancement standards, infrastructure creation and management standards, and agricultural management and infrastructure standards.

**Agreements and Actions Regarding Strategies for 2026**

- There was agreement regarding the proposed 2026 strategies.
- It was suggested that the Land Trust Alliance could be a source of policy and procedure manuals.
- There was a request for the San Juan Preservation Trust to share work it has done on its policies and procedures.