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## STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

DECEMBER 2025

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### **Overview**

2025 was a year packed with impactful work across our preserves and community outreach events. None of this progress would be possible without the immense support of our Commissioners and dedicated community volunteers – Thank you!

### **Outreach**

Staff: Tanja Williamson, Margo Thorp

Outreach supported 84 events in 2025, including volunteer work parties, native plant education, interpretive walks, and public meetings.

### **Salish Seeds Nursery**

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

The nursery was at full capacity in 2025, growing plant materials for Land Bank restoration projects, partner projects, and the general public. Output included 30,000 bulbs and plugs, 1,200 potted plants for the Fall Native Wildflower Sale, and 47 pounds of seed. Staff held 12 native plant-themed educational events, 6 for adults and 6 for youth, on San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez, with over 200 participants in total.

### **District 1**

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

2025 marked a necessary slow-down on projects and recentering on existing obligations. Nonetheless, significant advances were made in habitat restoration across many preserves: Beaverton Marsh, Cady Mountain, False Bay Creek, Frazer Homestead, Kellett Bluff, Middlewood, Mount Ben, Mount Grant, Westside, and Zylstra Lake Preserve. We successfully implemented the first prescribed broadcast burn on a Land Bank preserve. Our capacity for habitat restoration was also increased as Jacob and Shauna became the first DNR Certified Burners in San Juan County history. The consternating invasive Northern Pike issue came to a head as WDFW conducted an enforcement action. The Frazer Homestead and Beaverton Marsh agricultural leases were given flight this year with a great deal of community excitement surrounding the Grange's Overmarsh Commons project. Charlie shepherded these leases with patience and committed a great deal of time to infrastructure at Beaverton Marsh. The year would not be complete without mention of the Beaverton Trail project. The opportunity caused a major pivot in work plan to develop the project with an incredibly tight timeline, culminating with the fortuitous hiring of Rachel Dietzmann as a project manager.

### **District 2**

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman

Thanks to the Salish Seeds Project and private nurseries, we were able to plant 4,900 trees and shrubs, 3,000 wetland sedges and rushes, 4,500 upland plugs and bulbs, and 50 pounds of native seed. We completed grant-funded projects at Crescent Beach and Judd Cove Preserves, thinning the forest and

restoring the shoreline respectively. We also rehabilitated the South Turtleback parking lot, improving access and adding eight parking spaces and continued ongoing Garry oak habitat enhancement and shaded fuel break work. Honoring our commitment to local agriculture, we replaced the failing septic system at Coffelt Farm Preserve. And lastly, we were fortunate to take ownership of a new 25-acre shoreline preserve on Orcas and a 225-acre Washington State School Trust Lands parcel on Blakely.

We're grateful for our supportive community, and for the invaluable assistance of dedicated volunteers and skilled partners and contractors.

### **District 3**

Staff: Amanda Wedow, Claire Waterman

In December, staff is wrapping up annual monitoring of Lopez Preserves, which is an opportunity to visit different areas of the preserves and monitor for changes and plan for work ahead. Other goals for the month are cleaning out the storage unit, winterizing tools, and to prepare next year's workplan.

This year's field work went exceptionally well with support from our Seasonal Field Assistant, Claire. We completed our routine maintenance tasks across the Lopez Preserves and tackled several projects such as replacing the Weeks Wetland viewpoint. Staff continue to receive positive feedback about the new platform as well as the new Watmough Head public access.



**Photo 1.** Early morning view at the Salish Seeds Nursery.



**Photo 2.** Beth Tate of WDFW looking at the outfall falls at Friday Harbor Labs creek.



**Photo 3.** Beaverton Marsh Ditch filling up on November 20.



**Photo 4.** Burn piles with ICC and Blackcap at Cady Mountain Preserve.



**Photo 5.** The WA DNR certified burn manager evaluation at the Westside Preserve.

**Photo 6.** Planting bulbs and grasses at the Westside Preserve.



**Photo 7.** Tanja and Shauna planting atop Westside Preserve.

**Photo 8.** Margo, Elliott, and Chary planting atop Westside Preserve.



**Photo 9.** Over 5,000 plants on their way to planting projects on Orcas.

**Photo 10.** Volunteers planting plugs along the wetlands at North Shore Preserve.



**Photo 11.** Happy planters at North Shore Preserve.



**Photo 12.** ICC conducts a test burn on piles at North Shore Preserve.



**Photo 13.** New bench installed on Turtleback Preserve overlooking Massacre Bay.



**Photo 14.** Burn piles across the landscape at Turtleback Mountain Preserve.



**Photo 15.** Can you spot the juvenile eagle stationed along Waldron's shore?



**Photo 16.** One of many bright findings across Lopez conservation lands.



**Photo 17.** Wire mesh installed to prevent slips on the Hummel Lake dock.



**Photo 18.** Lobaria (lungwort) lichen amongst maple leaves at Upright Head Preserve.



**Photo 19.** Tanja helps plant wildflowers at Watmough Head Preserve.



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