
STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

MAY 2026

Overview

It has been a productive month, with peak wildflower blooms serving as a vibrant backdrop for our spring work. Efforts across districts include progress on infrastructure projects, weed management, mowing, and several outreach tours and events. Please note that our next Monthly Commission Meeting will be on Friday, June 12th (second Friday) on Lopez Island.

Outreach

Staff: Tanja Williamson, Margo Thorp

Wildflowers are at peak bloom and have been the outreach “star” of the month! Margo hosted four tours of the Salish Seeds Project Nursery, sprinkling her seeds of plant knowledge along to elementary aged students to 65+ aged students (Photo 1). Eliza led a group of native plant enthusiasts through Driggs Park, sharing how to incorporate native plantings into home gardens. Peter hosted his first guided tour of the Dolphin Bay Property on Orcas Island. SJI stewardship staff, along with the SJI Conservation District, hosted a presentation regarding the five-year landscape restoration project at Mount Grant Preserve, followed up with a field trip to the site.

Salish Seeds Nursery

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

Our first “Third Thursday” volunteer event on April 16th was attended by 9 volunteers (Photo 2). In addition to the usual seasonal weeding and seeding, staff are gearing up for building a 16 x 48 ft greenhouse. Oregon Valley Greenhouses, a small business that fabricates hoopouses, delivered the components. Jacob and Shauna reworked a section of fencing to make room for the structure (Photo 3). With the help of a few volunteers, staff will be working on construction over the next several weeks as time permits.

Seed sales and new special orders remain temporarily on hold while pricing and ordering information are updated and posted to the website.

District 1

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

Beaverton Marsh Trail: We have received the 60% design package, reviewed it and sent back comments. Permitting is on track with a site visit by the 3rd party reviewer used by DCD. Next steps are to field verify elements of the 60% design based on trail centerline stationing to be surveyed in this week and next. This will help us accurately located field conditions to make adjustments on the plans.

With the 60% design, we also received a comprehensive cost estimate. While there is more to review and adjustments to the design to be had, we do not expect to be able to construct the full project under this one grant.

Included are two graphics of what helical piles (or anchors as they are sometimes called) look like as well as a crude mockup detail of the two current proposed pier supports within the wetland (Photos 5-7).

Cady Mountain: Staff recently started annual monitoring at the Preserve during the peak wildflower bloom. Work on the stewardship and management plan is underway with vegetation mapping completed and a site tour with Peter, Amanda, and Doug. A visit to key activity areas with District 1 LBC is scheduled for Friday, May 8.

Deadman Bay: Joe Vlach (County Risk Manager) found a rare deep-water hyperiid amphipod (*Phronima*) on the beach during the Great Islands Cleanup which garnered interest from UW FHL biologists (Photo 8).

Driggs Park: Cleanup and removal of old structures is nearly complete. Conversations have been initiated with our neighbor regarding replacement of fence.

Kellett Bluff: Land Bank staff, National Monument staff, and one volunteer recently visited the Preserve to conduct annual monitoring and check on restoration activities (Photo 9). Restoration areas are looking good structurally, but understory composition appears to be suffering from heavy deer browse. Wildflower extent and diversity qualitatively appeared to be reduced coupled with observations of heavy herbivory. Thanks to Humpback Hauling for the shuttle!

King Sisters: Thank you to our amazing volunteer Laura for mowing the roadside trail! We appreciate you.

Limekiln: A truck-load of rotten logs was illegally dumped at one of the Preserve parking areas. Neighbors reached out to complain about ongoing camping issues and suspected “dodgy” activity. The report and a request for increased patrols have been submitted to Sheriff’s department. They believe the vehicles in question are “overflow” parking from a nearby residence and will follow-up with the individual in question. Doug has been working on habitat mapping in preparation for SMP update for Limekiln, Deadman Bay, Westside, and Mount Ben which is scheduled for later this year.

Mount Ben: Land Bank and SJPT staff recently visited the Preserve for noxious weed work and annual monitoring (Photo 11).

Mount Grant: A presentation and public tour of the Landscape Scale Restoration site are scheduled for Wednesday, May 6 and Thursday May 7. Both are being conducted in collaboration with the San Juan Islands Conservation District, who have provided funding and implementation through the Islands Conservation Corps program.

Third Lagoon: The main entrance area was recently mowed. Staff are planning to replace an aging gate this season.

Westside: A hole was found, believed to have been the result of digging and removing camas and surrounding sod. A few days later large numbers of camas stalks appeared to have been cut and removed. Staff are working on a press release to increase awareness of conservation issues and address these transgressions. Following fieldwork two months ago, we are anticipating a draft cultural resource assessment for Limekiln, Deadman, Westside, and Mount Ben Preserves.

Zylstra Lake: Blackcap Restoration is completing mowing an extremely steep section of the upper dam. Permits for trailhead head improvements have been submitted. These include installation of a restroom, an ADA van accessible parking space, and expanding gravel parking by three spaces.

District 2

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman, Scot Devereaux

Staff (mostly Erin) have dedicated significant time this month responding to a lively community conversation around the Land Bank's proposal for limited deer hunting and North Shore and Turtleback Mountain Preserves. Although at times difficult, it is our duty (and our pleasure) to engage with island residents around the need to protect and restore island ecosystems. Peter organized a kick-off meeting for the Policy & Procedures Manual update.

Coho: We completed Department of Ecology billing for the flow restoration grant. Peter inspected recent utility relocation work by the Taylors, which is part of the acquisition process. Grant-funded planting work by the Friends on a small portion of the Taylor property that will become part of the Preserve is complete. We'll install additional plants on other portions of the property next winter.

Crescent Beach: Tyler and Scot cut and pulled English ivy as part of ongoing invasive species management associated with the recently completed thinning and planting work.

Dolphin Bay property: Peter led a tour of the property as part of Orcas Earth Day festivities. Participants were enthusiastic about the future Preserve. Coordination continues around a planned training session for OIFR staff in the future parking area in late spring. A draft SMP is ready for staff review.

Judd Cove: We completed Salmon Recovery grant billing for the shoreline restoration project.

North Shore Preserve: Recent maintenance activities have included annual grass control around plantings in the deer enclosure. The plants are growing quickly despite some winter damage by meadow voles. Tyler and Scot burned piles of branches from recent fruit tree pruning (Photo 14).

Turtleback Mountain: Broom pulling continues to be a focus this month. Under Tyler's leadership, Washington Trails Association and ICC crews each spent two days building a section of the future pedestrian-only (no dogs) trail on the south slope. The new oaks in the South Entrance field are leafing out nicely (Photos 15-16).

District 3

Staff: Amanda Wedow, Matt Currey

Channel: Beach cleanup volunteers found a tire with foam, a large foam block, and a large garbage bag of beach trash. These items were too heavy to carry up the hill trail, so staff used the mower and a sled to haul out the large pile of beach debris (Photo 17). Staff also mowed the trail and removed Scotch broom. New trim was installed on the entry map sign that had been damaged over the winter.

Hummel Lake: Regular trail mowing, though sections of the field trail remain very wet. Scotch broom was pulled and a small patch of Italian arum was dug. Staff completed spring vegetation maintenance around native plants in deer enclosures.

Lopez Hill: Completed noxious weed removal of scotch broom and isolated patches of herb Robert.

Richardson Marsh: The trail and field were mowed. Staff installed a split rail fence near the parking area and followed up with the farmer to adjust placement of their electric fence for the summer cattle grazing.

The Spit at Fisherman Bay Preserves: April is a big push on the Italian arum treatments. Scotch broom, mowing, and driveway maintenance.

Volunteers cleaned up marine debris along the beach and sand dunes during the Great island cleanup.

Weeks Wetland at Fisherman Bay Preserves: Completed trail mowing and maintenance. Amanda and Tim removed several hundred pounds of treated lumber during the Great Islands cleanup, as well as many small pieces of plastic and marine debris

Staff observed nesting killdeer (Photo 18) and Canada goose, and an expanding patch of the native plant *Sidalcea* (checkermallow).

Watmough: Submitted a stage 1 grant application and received approval to submit a full grant application to the Washington State Historical Society for the Chadwick House Stabilization. The grant request is for \$100,000 and will go to sponsoring Historicorps, a nonprofit, to train volunteers in historic preservation treatments to stabilize the exterior components of the house. The grant program is competitive, and funding will need to be approved through the state legislature in 2027. The grant has a 2:1 match requirement, most of which will be covered from acquisition cost and volunteer in kind donation, though there will be some additional cost to the Land Bank.

Staff removed poison hemlock, completed routine mowing and other vegetation maintenance.



Photo 1. Margo leads a nursery tour for members of the Mullis Community Senior Center.



Photo 2. Salish Seeds Project Volunteer Day



Photo 3. Shauna starting site prep for the greenhouse at the Salish Seeds Project nursery.



Photo 4. Darcie Nielsen (SJC Community Development), Rachel Dietzman, and Gray Rand (David Evans Associates) site visit review for Beaverton trail permitting.

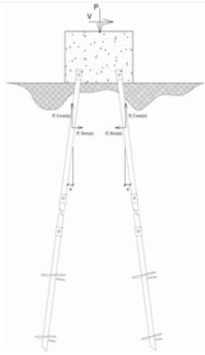


Photo 5. Helical Pile graphic A

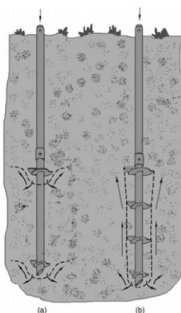
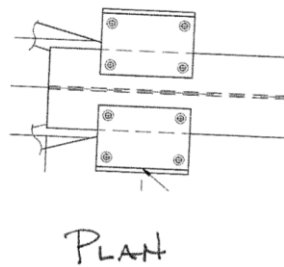
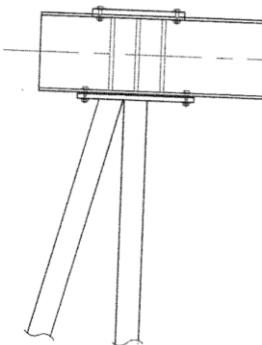


Photo 6. Helical Pile graphic B

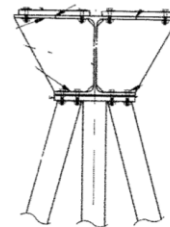


PLAN



ELEVATION

WETLAND
CROSSING
PIER DETAILS
per 60% Design
4/20/2026



SECTION

Photo 7. Pier Support mockup from 60% design



Photo 8. Rare hyperiid amphipod: *Phronima* found at Deadman Bay Preserve. It is a parasite on salps.



Photo 9. Volunteer Barrett and staff Jacob hug a massive Madrona on a recent trip to Kellett Bluff Preserve (it took three of us to connect hands!)



Photo 10. Northern alligator lizards mating in driftwood at Limekiln Preserve.

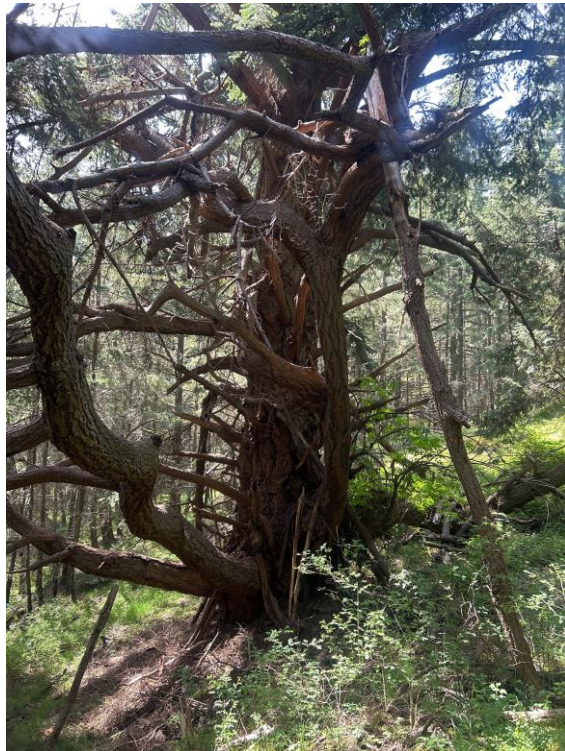


Photo 11. Massive Douglas fir at the Mount Ben Preserve.



Photo 12. Larkspur in bloom at the Westside Preserve.



Photo 13. When mowers break down in the field you have to get creative.



Photo 14. Tyler tending North Shore burn piles.



Photo 15. New Garry oak and camas protected from deer in South Turtleback field.



Photo 16. Wildflowers following South Turtleback parking area rehabilitation.



Photo 17. Creative hauling of marine debris at Channel Beach Preserve.



Photo 18. Killdeer nest on driftwood at Weeks Wetland.



Photo 19. *Aphyllon purpureum*, a native parasitic plant, growing among sedum.



Photo 20. Efforts to secure funding to purchase a conservation easement on Picnic Point continued this month.



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