

AGENDA

San Juan County Conservation Land Bank Commission

Members of the public may participate in person at
Orcas Fire Hall
45 Lavender Lane, Eastsound, WA 98245
join virtually by [CLICKING HERE](#)
or by phone @ (253)205-0468 Meeting ID: 875 4197 7162

September 18, 2026

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 8:30am | Convene |
| 8:30 | General Public Comment Period |
| 8:35 | Approve August 21, 2026 Meeting Minutes |
| 8:40 | Chair and Commissioners Reports |
| 8:50 | Council Update – Justin Paulsen |
| 9:05 | Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mt. Ben West Conservation Easement |
| 9:10 | Director’s Report – Lincoln Bormann |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ingram (Talking Horse Farm), SJI. Process Update on Acquisition/Purchase and Sale Agreement Assignment |
| 9:40 | Break |
| 9:50 | Stewardship Report |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Orcas Deer Hunting Update• SJI Beaverton Marsh Trail• Salish Seeds Plant Sale |
| 10:15 | Outreach/Communications Report – Tanja Williamson |
| 10:25 | Future Agenda Items* |
| 10:30 | 2 nd Public Comment Period |
| 10:40 | Executive Session to Discuss Acquisition or Sale of Real Estate as per RCW 42.30.110(1)(b) |
| 11:10 | Adjourn |

Future Agenda Items - Accessibility (disabled, elderly) - Organization structure, procedures, and priorities
 - 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”

STEWARDSHIP & OUTREACH REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2026

Overview

Many staff have been engaged in drafting sections of the policy manual as well as reviewing a draft.

Learning opportunity placeholder: In October, the Preservation Trust's Meghan Howard will be giving a presentation for the Co-Stewardship working group on *"Evolving toolkit for western conservation organizations supporting Indigenous stewardship and land return."* The event will be in-person with virtual option. Date, time, and location TBD (but likely on Orcas island)

Outreach

Staff: Tanja Williamson, Margo Thorp

The annual Fall Native Wildflower Sale went live on September 13th and closes on September 19th. A preview guide of available plants can be found [HERE](#). Other outreach activities have included responding to hunting inquiries and providing subsequent letters(s) of permission, supporting our second Beaverton Marsh Trail Open House, and Orcas Seniors enjoyed a tour and discussion around forest health work at Crescent Beach Preserve led by Tyler (Photos 1 and 2).

Salish Seeds Nursery

Staff: Eliza Habegger, Margo Thorp

Staff are doing final preparations for the 2026 Fall Native Wildflower Plant Sale. As we approach fall, weeding and watering have started to taper, and staff have shifted to cleaning seed harvested throughout the season. Greenhouse progress continues as staff and volunteer time allows (Photo 3).

District 1

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

The District 1 forest assessment is proceeding on schedule. Field work should be complete by the end of the September, and our consultant estimates the draft of the report is 25% complete.

Staff met with the new "Pro Crew" iteration of the Islands Conservation Corps to go over projects together and discuss how to most effectively work with one another, including mutual expectations for work and communication.

Beaverton Marsh: A request for coordination for a Treaty harvest of Labrador tea was received from a Lummi citizen and employee. The information was reviewed by staff and County Cultural Coordinator before an affirmative response was sent. Following delays due to breakdown of vendor's testing equipment, water quality samples of bog areas were returned. The breakdown effected ability to test some parameters, but glad to have this assessment finally underway. Mowing of select areas in the marsh has been initiated. The goal of the mowing is to reduce woody stem plants within the bog and adjacent areas as well as create pockets of open water habitat to support waterfowl. Early wet conditions prevented mowing the previous two years.

Beaverton Trail Project: All documents are submitted for review to WSDOT. It has been an effort, but our Local Programs WSDOT office has been very responsive. Upon approval, construction funds will be “obligated”, i.e. available to use. We are still working out the finer details, but the next step is advertising the project for bid. We expect to do this in early November with the bid opening in late November. The details will be buttoned down once the funding is secure. These details will include an idea of the work windows. We also had a final review of the construction cost estimate. The current estimate is lean, but realistic. There is a scenario that allows us to complete the entire project with the available funds. View the project storyboards [HERE](#).

Overmarsh Farm Commons: Will be hosting farm tours on Sunday September 27th from 12-4.

False Bay Creek: Charlie has been working with Public Works to address mitigation requirements of their Bailor Hill Road project which will take place on the Preserve.

Frazer Homestead: Interior fence construction will be installed this month by lessee as the final cost part of the current cost share project with SJICD.

Kellett Bluff: A wildfire in the driftwood was reported by a Henry Island resident on an early morning fishing trip (Photo 5). The individual reported the fire to dispatch as well as the Henry Island Fire Bridge before responding with a 5-gallon bucket. The small fire was readily extinguished, with the cause listed as “natural” after investigation by San Juan Island Fire Department.

King Sisters: Staff are following up on a request from neighbor for the installation of a sign reading “End of Trail” or similar wording at the west end of the trail, reporting they had experiences incidences of trespass. The party was not in favor of posting a private property sign on their property.

Cattle have been moved off the pastures, except for the old Scottish Highland cow that will often be seen side by side with the old ram. The flock of sheep is being rotationally grazed.

Limekiln: Bass were recently discovered in the lake, and the sighting was passed on to WDFW (Photo 6). It is suspected the fish were introduced recently. WDFW is concerned about the unsanctioned movement of fish, especially as it may complicate analysis of the success of the rotenone treatment last fall intended to eradicate the Northern Pike population.

Mount Ben: The “Acorn Team” returned to Mount Ben to search for successful seedlings from the planting effort in 2023 (Photo 7). A number of seedlings were found and flagged, and volunteers will return to place cages on select ones in the coming weeks. Blackcap Restoration reinitiated a combined habitat and public access project in the SW corner of the Preserve. Islands Conservation Corps (ICC), Samish Dept. Of Natural Resources, and Coast Salish Youth Coalition will continue the work, focusing on priority habitat areas along the proposed future trail corridor in the coming weeks. The goal is completing thinning within the vicinity of the trail corridor to reduce disruptions to future trail access as well as reducing safety concerns.

Mount Grant: Archery deer hunting season has started in the west basin of the Preserve. The Land Bank was lucky enough to host the brand-new Islands Conservation Corps on a new riparian grant project (RGP), adjacent to the landscape scale restoration project that spanned the previous 5 years. Volunteers have continued working on the foundation for a permanent restroom at the parking lot (Photo 8). Annual monitoring was conducted in partnership with the Preservation Trust.

Westside: The final draft of the cultural resource assessment spanning Limekiln, Deadman Bay, Westside, and Mount Ben was approved.

Zylstra Lake: Permitting for the restroom has been delayed due to disagreement on soil assessment between our consultant and Health department staff. Piezometers were installed to monitor and evaluate ground water through winter and spring before permit will be issued. Although permits for other sites had been approved in 2024, new staff at the health department are pursuing a different permitting process for the Toilet Tech restrooms, which will be applied retroactively to the previously permitted restrooms. Planning for the Riparian Grant Program funded restoration project is underway in collaboration with the Conservation District. The project will expand restoration buffer from 30 feet wide to 100 feet, with the goal of improving water quality and enhancing native biodiversity. The adjacent farmer/rancher informed staff that he has ceased irrigation for the year. The siphon was closed and downstream neighbors informed. A dead wood duck was reported by a member of the public. The bird was collected and frozen at the direction of WDFW for potential testing for bird flu.

District 2

Staff: Peter Guillozet, Tyler Goodman, Scot Devereaux

Peter worked with a consultant, staff and two Commissioners to develop a first full draft of the Policy and Procedures Manual. The next draft will be available for review by the full Commission from 11/6 to 11/20.

Coffelt Farm: Tyler and Scot spent time weed whacking around plantings in the riparian zone along the stream corridor.

The cost share livestock heavy-use area improvement project is underway.

Lum Farm will be hosting Farm Tours the weekend of October 3rd.

Coho: Work on the RCO grant requirements for the additional acreage continues. As one final step, a consultant will complete a Phase I Environmental Assessment next week. Staff remain hopeful that closing will occur prior to the close of the year.

Crescent Beach: Staff have worked on weed management throughout the segments of the Preserve that received forest health treatments last summer.

Deer Harbor Waterfront: Tyler and Scot worked on clearing the trail of encroaching rose and blackberry and tagged a kayak that had been left on the beach. The owner removed it promptly.

Dolphin Bay Property: Monthly public tours continue on the third Thursday of the month. Peter inquired with SJC DCD about the status of the permit application and was told that it has yet to be reviewed. Staff eagerly await permits to begin preparing the property for public access.

Eastsound Waterfront: Staff removed trash and stabilized rocks along the path that lead down to the water.

Fowler's Pond: Peter and Tyler met with a project manager from Beavers Northwest to discuss the possibility of installing a beaver deceiver. A permit application is under way to remove beaver-deposited muck from around the dam outfall and to install a deceiver to prevent its reoccurrence.

Judd Cove: Tyler and Scot responded to downed trees on the upper trail segment.

North Shore: Staff conducted weed sweeps for persistent patches of tansy ragwort. Scot fixed replaced a damaged section of drainage pipe under the trail to the beach.

Turtleback Mountain: At the request of Brandon Roozen (WDFW), staff joined him in exploring the western portion of the mountain in further consideration of potential limited deer hunting. Staff spent multiple days with Jason Ontjes from the Noxious Weed Program managing blackberry patches on the southern slopes. Tyler and Scot scouted eroding creek drainages for potential addition of woody debris in anticipation of a grant funded effort by the ICC. Tyler and Scot responded to downed trees blocking segments of the northern trail loop.

District 3

Staff: Amanda Wedow, Katherine McDermott

Amanda was on vacation for a portion of the month. Katherine kept up with regular field monitoring and wrapped up the season's noxious weed work.

Channel: A tree that fell over the trail was cleared.

Lopez Hill: Katherine brushed overgrown salal along the trail system. Hunting season started September 1st. Hunting signs and vests were placed at entrances. So far, staff responded to sixteen hunting inquiries.

The Spit at Fisherman Bay Preserves: Amanda and Katherine cleaned and repainted the outhouse.

The Tomolo at Fisherman Bay Preserves: The WDFW green crab trapping in August caught a female green crab in Fisherman Bay. Another green crab was found in Mud Bay - these were first detections for Lopez.

Watmough Bay: The Heritage Capital Projects Grant Program announced project rankings, and the Chadwick House Stabilization made the final ranked list. The final list has to be approved for funding in the 2027-2029 State Capital Budget by the Washington State Legislature.

PHOTOS



Photo 1. Tyler highlighting wet vs dry areas of Crescent Beach Preserve during a forest health walk with Orcas Senior Center members.



Photo 2. During a forest health walk through Crescent Beach Preserve, Tyler explains how to identify a Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) leaf.



Photo 3. Shauna and Jacob helped out with the new greenhouse build at Salish Seeds Nursery. Shauna is very proud of that trench!



Photo 4. Garter snake in the Salish Seeds Project nursery plugs.



Photo 5. Area of very small wildfire at Kellett Bluff Preserve.



Photo 6. Newly introduced bass from Westside Lake.



Photo 7. One of the 6000+ acorns planted by volunteers in 2023.



Photo 8. Volunteers Peter Kilpatrick, Elliot Burch, and Barrett Kennedy pouring mini foundation for outhouse at Mount Grant trailhead.



Photo 9. European green crab 76mm adult female detected in Fisherman Bay.



Amanda Thiel, Ph.D.
199 Thimbleberry Lane, Friday Harbor, WA 98250, and
580 W. 25th Place, Eugene, Oregon, 97405
(360) 378-9447
athiel@uoregon.edu

September 5, 2026

Dear San Juan County Land Bank Commissioners and County Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Camas Commons proposal for Talking Horse Ranch.

I have a personal history with this land: 15 years ago, I lived and farmed there as a young entrepreneur trying to establish a livelihood in San Juan Island agriculture. I had many of the same hopes for the property that I see in Camas Commons today: a place where farming could be a viable livelihood, where people could learn from the land, and where agriculture and community could reinforce one another. What I lacked then was the infrastructure and resources to make those dreams sustainable. Had something like Camas Commons existed at that time, I believe I could have continued my livelihood in island agriculture while contributing my skills and passions to the broader community.

In pursuit of viable opportunities, my life has taken me considerably farther afield. I have earned a PhD, built a research career, and moved about the Pacific Northwest. I have had the opportunity to watch many ambitious projects and community ventures on San Juan Island attempt to take flight. Some succeed; many do not. That experience has given me a different perspective on what it takes to turn a compelling vision into something that endures. From this perspective, I see something unusually promising in Camas Commons.

Camas Commons is not just about preserving farmland. It is an opportunity to create the conditions in which farming and rural community can actually continue to exist—and even thrive—on San Juan Island. Affordable access to agricultural land and affordable housing for farmers and producers are the greatest concern I see for the viability of island agriculture. When I worked seasonally for an island farm five years ago, I saw lack of housing as the chief barrier to the farm's ability to sustain a workforce. As a result, staff turnover was high, and the farm struggled. In addition to affordability, Camas Commons offers opportunities for education and research, regenerative land stewardship, food security, and spaces for community gathering. These are not separate issues. They are interconnected pieces of the same question: What kind of island do we want to sustain into the future?

San Juan Island has a remarkable agricultural heritage, but heritage alone cannot keep agriculture alive. Farmers need access to land. They need places to live. They need viable economic pathways and supportive community infrastructure. Young people need opportunities to enter agriculture without having to already possess substantial wealth. And the wider community needs places where people can remain connected to the land and to one another. This is what makes Camas Commons so important.

The Camas Commons proposal represents the possibility of preserving Talking Horse Ranch a living agricultural and community resource. It has the potential to support working farmers while creating educational, ecological, scientific, and cultural opportunities that extend far beyond the people who live and work on the property. In doing so, it speaks directly to the Land Bank's responsibility to protect the island's agricultural lands and to preserve the qualities and opportunities that make San Juan County such a special place.

I continue to have a strong connection to San Juan County. My son lives there, I vote there, and I pay taxes there. I want the future of San Juan Island to be vibrant for him and for other young people who have dreams of building lives there and perpetuating the island's culture, agricultural traditions, and livelihoods.

Having watched projects with tremendous promise struggle or fail over the years, I do not offer this endorsement lightly. I believe Camas Commons has the leadership, vision, and underlying purpose to go the distance. Knowing Ally and Guisepi personally, I can attest to their commitment, passion, relationship-building and many other skills, drive, and community buy-in. There are no better people than them to spearhead this endeavor.

For me, supporting Camas Commons is both deeply personal and profoundly practical. I can see in this proposal a version of the opportunity I wished had existed when I was a young farmer on the island. I can also see an opportunity for the community to make a long-term investment in the people, land, and agricultural culture that will shape San Juan Island for generations.

I respectfully urge the Land Bank and County Council to choose the Camas Commons proposal for Talking Horse Ranch and to support it wholeheartedly. Please recognize this opportunity not simply as a real estate decision, but as a decision about the future of island agriculture, affordable rural living, food security, ecological stewardship, and community life. Camas Commons offers a chance to make those things more possible for the people who will call San Juan Island home in the decades ahead.

Thank you for considering my perspective and for your stewardship of this extraordinary place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amanda Thiel".

Amanda Thiel, Ph.D.
Ethnobotanist and Socio-Ecological Research Scientist
University of Oregon

From: [Maria Michaelson](#)
To: [SJC Landbank](#)
Cc: [Jane Wentworth](#); [San Juan County Council](#)
Subject: Alchemy supports Camas Commons
Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 1:50:06 PM

You don't often get email from maria@alchemyartcenter.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I write in support of Camas Commons' proposal for stewardship of Talking Horse Ranch.

Guisepi and Ally have already earned this community's trust. They steward San Juan Island's local agricultural needs, are devoted community builders, and their proposal will enliven the island's ag culture through programming that reaches both established growers and people just starting out. I have seen their work as community builders and know that they are an asset to our island that we should not take lightly.

Alchemy looks forward to partnering with Camas Commons. Our missions run parallel. We build community through the arts, and they build it through agriculture. Our overlap creates exciting room for shared work. We are developing joint programming already and Talking Horse Ranch would give that programming a home.

I ask the Land Bank to weigh this application knowing that many engaged islanders are very excited about the possibilities it creates. Camas Commons' plan opens Talking Horse Ranch to the farming community it should serve, and it is hard to imagine it as anything other than the most community inclusive of any proposal before you.

Looking through your website, I see so much parallel in terms of values. I found this beautiful vision statement on your website:

"We envision a network of public lands managed by and for the communities they sustain, where any person regardless of race, gender identity or expression, age, religion, national origin, migratory status, disability/ability, veteran status, or socioeconomic background can celebrate and deepen their connection to place. We strive to approach the caretaking of land and water with humility and openness to learning."

Your mission and vision could not be better put to use in a property sale than through selling this property to Camas Commons. This farm is historic and holds community value, please preserve it for all of us by saying yes to Camas Commons' proposal.

--

Maria Michaelson
Executive Director
Alchemy Art Center

Tanja Williamson

From: CJ Cusick <cjcusick1@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2026 6:05 PM
To: Tanja Williamson; Shauna Barrows
Subject: public comment letter for 8-21-26 meeting

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I was unable to make the zoom session below is my submission of written public comment. Thank you :)

Dear Land Bank,
Please support birthing something extraordinary for all islanders now and for generations to come.

It is my belief that the land usage proposal and vision of Camas Commons is environmentally sustainable , economically wise and crucially necessary for the future of our island community. It would be a terrible sociopolitical decision if the Land Bank accepted any other proposal for the purchase of the 40 acres section of talking horse farm.

Private ownership of large Agricultural land for the sake of personal economic gain with out community benefit needs to stop. No more third homes! No more fifth homes! No more LCC tax break scemes for the rich! No more playgrounds and oasis's for the ultra rich while islanders scrape by to exist!

The island needs this. Young people need this. Our food security needs this. Our agricultural community needs this.

This is the future of agriculture and housing in our community.

Sincerely,
CJ Cusick

From: [Dan Paulson](#)
To: [Tanja Williamson](#)
Subject: Ingram property purchase
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 10:30:09 AM

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Hi Tanja,

Can you please forward this to all commissioners as well as Lincoln?

Thanks,
Dan

Dear Land Bank Commissioner's and Lincoln,

A few more thoughts on the potential Ingram 40 acre farm sale.

I met with Darci Nielson in the county planning department and the County has some real concerns about the potential sale.

- The Public Health dept. has been out to the Talking Horse farm on the Ingram property to address violations of Public Health.
- Nobody from the Talking Horse farm has been in to the planning dept. to discuss any future plans and determine what would be allowed.
- The county has serious concerns about the land being used for purposes other than agriculture, some of which are;
 - a- Public meetings would not be allowed.
 - b- Public workshops would not be allowed.
 - c- Weddings would not be allowed.
 - d- Music concerts would not be allowed.
 - e- No items other than site grown food could be sold.
 - f- The county would require conditional use permits for other uses as well

Please meet with Darci Nielson about their concerns as well as the health department to determine precisely what would be approved as well as what would be prohibited.

The county also has real concerns about others, who do not live on site in a county approved dwelling (four would be allowed), be allowed to lease land to farm or use. This issue will pertain to any potential buyer.

The Land Bank is a tax funded entity and owes it to the community to carefully and diligently review all RFP's for the potential sale of the Ingram agricultural parcel. The preservation of agricultural land is

vital to our community and it is vitally important that any new owner can demonstrate that they have the experience, financial resources, will follow all county regulations, and have a sound management plan to assure the county that the land will in fact be responsibly and continuously managed.

To that end, all applicants must, at least, demonstrate;

- 1- past history, receipts and records of agricultural produce and product sold and provided to the public.
- 2- record of past history of responsible land stewardship, management and fiscal responsibility.
- 3- realistic financial plan of how to manage, protect and improve agricultural land into the future.
- 4- prove that all activities meet county regulations, now and into the future.
- 5- present a plan to monitor well water use in the future (with ground water being such a critical issue in the county, unlimited water use cannot be allowed).

Respectfully,

Dan Paulson
c-360-378-8003

From: [Bruce Robinson](#)
To: [SJC Landbank](#); [San Juan County Council](#)
Subject: Letter of Support: Camas Commons
Date: Sunday, September 6, 2026 4:17:18 PM

You don't often get email from brobinson@rockisland.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to express my support of the Camas Commons proposal put forth by Ally Rugge and Guisepi Spanafora. With an aging farmer population and the astronomical cost of farmland, *their model embodies the future of successful, sustainable agriculture in the San Juan Islands*. It is a “triple win” model. First win: Their plan demonstrates how they will nurture the land through the application of regenerative agricultural principles. This level of care is a basic tenet of the Conservation Land Bank. Second win: Their plan provides security for the farmers who will tend the land. At most gatherings of “agricultural folk”, one of greatest problems always identified is housing for farmers. *This is the only proposal that I have ever seen that addresses this issue*. Third win: the whole community will benefit from their plan. The Camas Commons will increase the islands’ food security while providing a center for education, recreation and entertainment.

To take this third win a little further, it is important to recognize that the Camas Commons will not be a “stand alone” project. As a steering committee member of Overmarsh Farm Commons (a shared-access to farmland project), I have recognized and discussed with Guisepi and Ally some of the ways that we could collaborate to improve both projects. A couple of examples: 1. Our growers could sell at their farm store. They have a secure location while Overmarsh sits right on Roche Harbor Rd. with nobody on site a night. 2. OFC and CC could share poultry processing equipment. Camas Commons will have power to run the equipment while Overmarsh does not. Also, we at Overmarsh have nowhere to store the equipment. I am certain that this is just the beginning of ways that we will collaborate, plus I am equally certain that other organizations will partner with Camas Commons to enhance our community in a multitude of ways.

It will take very special people to bring Camas Commons into existence. I believe Ally Rugge and Guisepi Spanafora are those people. They are young, vibrant and creative individuals. Both demonstrate integrity, reliability and excellent communication skills. Not only do they show an environmental consciousness and concern for the farm they have lived on for many years, but also a love of our community. I sincerely hope you select Guisepi and Ally to purchase the 40 acres available at Talking Horse Ranch so they can make the Camas Commons become a reality.

Respectfully,

Bruce Robinson

Overmarsh Farm Commons

From: [Brittany Whitaker](#)
To: [SJC Landbank](#); [San Juan County Council](#)
Subject: Letter of Support: Camas Commons
Date: Monday, September 14, 2026 10:33:26 AM

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for the *Camas Commons Proposal* submitted in response to the Land Bank's Request for Proposals for the easternmost 40 acres of the "Talking Horse Farm" property at 652 Halvorsen Road.

Specifically, I urge the Land Bank and County Council to select Guisepi Spadafora and Ally Rugge as the purchasers to establish Camas Commons. Choosing this team secures a visionary, well-rounded plan for the property that directly serves our local ecosystem and residents.

With a background in sustainable design and architecture, I tend to view self-described sustainable development plans critically. True sustainability requires a holistic approach that balances land development, building methods, community impact, food access, environmental stewardship, and long-term viability. **After reviewing the Camas Commons proposal and learning more about their projects, to say that I am impressed would be an understatement.**

I am blown away by the depth of this proposal, specifically how it acknowledges the many facets or branches of sustainability: physical land and building development, environmental stewardship, responsible agriculture, affordably housing, community engagement, education, historical preservation, Indigenous acknowledgement (and moreover, the perpetuation and preservation of that knowledge), etc.

At the end of the day, sustainable farming is not viable if farmers cannot afford land or housing. This insecurity directly threatens our community's food access, leaving us increasingly dependent on imported goods and the fossil fuels required to transport them.

Sustainability is not a simple, single-step process. Every aspect is interconnected. Addressing only one part of this issue is not only ineffective, but irresponsible. We must take a comprehensive approach to protect both our farming community and our environment, for the wellbeing of our community as a whole.

The decision to select the Camas Commons Proposal addresses these interconnected facets with impressive depth. It thoughtfully incorporates the many facets of sustainability in a clear, attainable plan. Additionally, the proposal's Advisory Committee reflects a breadth of experience that is essential for a project of this scale.

This proposal has obviously been put together with immense intention and consideration, reflecting a deep appreciation for this specific parcel of land, as well as strong support for the

broader island community, ecosystem, history, and legacy.

I cannot imagine a better fit for the "Talking Horse Farm" RFP or more dedicated, invested purchasers than Guisepi Spadafora and Ally Rugge. Their years of experience, stewardship, and history with the property and the island clearly demonstrate the vision expressed in the Camas Commons Proposal.

Selecting this thoroughly considered proposal aligns perfectly with the Land Bank's mandate while supporting the broader island community and ecosystem. I strongly encourage you to select Camas Commons for the future of this property.

Please forward my letter of support to each of the Land Bank Commissioners, and to each of the County Council Members for review.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Brittany Whitaker

Tanja Williamson

From: Ruth Fleming <reflem@rockisland.com>
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2026 5:07 PM
To: Tanja Williamson
Subject: Halvorsen rd purchase of Ingram property

[You don't often get email from reflem@rockisland.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Hi I was at the meeting today for a few hours. Thank you for your thoughtful conduction of the meeting. I have some concerns which I am sure you have considered but I will submit them anyway.

I am of course in support of farming as we had a farm for 30 years on our property next to the Ingrams and I listened to the emotional proposals for the project so I am sure that these young farmers really want to farm. I didn't hear from them about the realistic costs of this project as they have proposed. It is one thing to come up with the donations to purchase the land but that is where it starts. If this project is to happen as they propose and as is required per the sale, they will need ongoing support or some of them need to get big jobs (they may have them but not sure) Getting on open space and having a plan with the county is more than raising a few farm animals. The county will require a full plan and if it is not met then getting off open space is costly. Fencing, id love to hear from them how they propose to fence the property. Repairs to buildings they say need to be done If they are getting donations for the property then who owns it and who is responsible for entering into an agreement with the land bank for conservation and what happens if they fail to meet the requirements

I like the aim of what the land bank is trying to do but I think finding the right new owners is important. An experienced farmer who has the capital to put into this property and knows how to farm and what to farm is what you need.

Thank you
Ruth Fleming

From: [Beth Helstien](#)
To: [SJC Landbank](#); [San Juan County Council](#); guise314@gmail.com
Subject: support for Camas Commons
Date: Saturday, September 12, 2026 12:42:40 PM

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Friends

I am writing to express my support for the Camas Commons proposal to be the future owners of Talking Horse Ranch.

How this land is transitioned and who gets access and tenure to this land matters now more than ever as farmland is disappearing throughout the San Juan Islands, the nation, and anywhere wealth has influence (everywhere).

The future of our food system, the climate crisis, and the many social disparities and inequities will be impacted by what happens to this land as the land that has been stewarded as a farm is bought at this time, and passed on in the future.

Land transition is inevitable, land justice is not.

I support Camas Commons as a local solution that can keep farmland in active farming, support farmers living on the land they steward, and place land ownership in a non-profit organization that can ensure it will provide for our community and give regenerative farmers long-term, secure, equitable tenure.

--

all best wishes
Beth Helstien
360.317.4335

From: [David Charles Geist](#)
To: [San Juan County Council](#); [SJC Landbank](#)
Subject: Supporting Camas Commons proposal
Date: Thursday, September 10, 2026 6:35:08 AM

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Dear Members of the County Council and Land Bank Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Camas Commons proposal. This initiative offers vital benefits for our community by securing affordable land access and residential opportunities for local farmers and producers, which are essential for sustaining our local agricultural economy.

Additionally, the proposal fosters critical educational opportunities in regenerative agriculture and sustainability for community members of all ages and enhances food security across our island

I urge the Council and the Commission to approve the Camas Commons proposal to help secure these long-term benefits for our community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

David Geist
Friday Harbor

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