

*The discovery of new territory is an astonishing occurrence in the 21st century.  
In the San Juan Islands in particular, our ability to explore places  
that have evaded the pressures of human development and destructive  
non-native plant and animal species has become increasingly rare.*

YET THE SAN JUAN PRESERVATION TRUST HAS RECENTLY SECURED SUCH A PLACE...

THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE  
**VENDOVI ISLAND**

# Preserving an Island of Discovery

*Vendovi Island is truly a gem of the San Juan archipelago.*



KURT THORSON

Essentially untouched by human development and virtually free of invasive plants, Vendovi Island has six beaches, lush forests, native grassland, healthy wetlands and diverse plant and animal habitat. Its wildflower meadows are among the richest in the San Juan Islands and perhaps in Washington State, and ornithologists have observed almost 60 avian species, including bald eagles, peregrine falcons and pigeon guillemots. With 2.8 miles of pristine shoreline, hundreds of harbor seals have been observed to use Vendovi's sandy beaches for community haul-outs.

Vendovi is very remote, located due east of Sinclair Island and between Guemes and Lummi Islands. Only two of the island's 217 acres have been developed, including a dock, a small home and auxiliary structures. Vendovi is one of the wildest private islands in the San Juan archipelago, which is why for many years it has been a Preservation Trust priority for permanent conservation.

THE PROTECTION OF VENDОВI ISLAND IS ONE OF THE MOST  
IMPORTANT LAND CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN THE PRESERVATION TRUST'S  
33-YEAR HISTORY.

## STEWARDSHIP OBJECTIVES FOR VENDОВI ISLAND

1. Protect the island and its unique conservation values in perpetuity.
2. Make the island available for education, scientific research and low-impact public access.

In order to achieve both objectives, the San Juan Preservation Trust must raise **\$3.3 million** to retire a bridge loan that was needed to acquire Vendovi Island.



# A Rare Opportunity

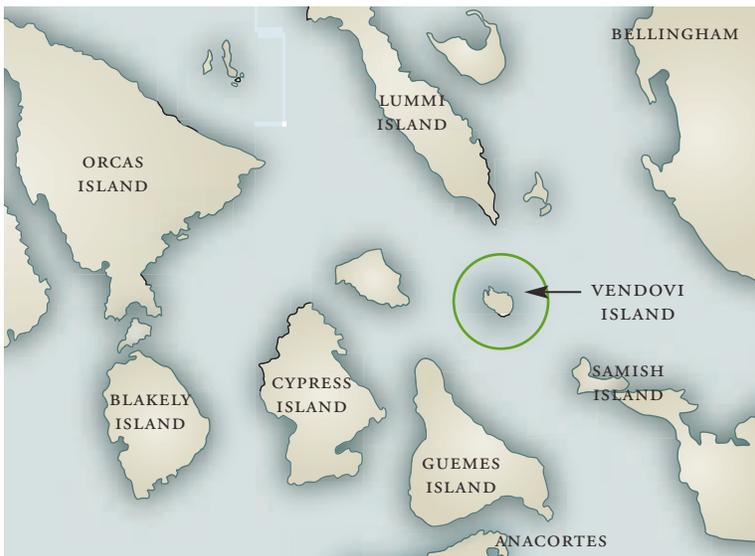
In the fall of 2010, Vendovi Island was put up for sale at auction. At stake was a 217-acre, virtually untouched island with nearly three miles of shoreline, abundant wildflower fields and lush fern forests. Long considered among its highest conservation priorities, the San Juan Preservation Trust acted swiftly. With the financial backing of one visionary individual, the Preservation Trust was able to successfully participate in the auction and subsequent negotiations.

**HAD THIS BENEFACTOR NOT APPEARED, VENDОВI WOULD HAVE REMAINED A PRIVATE ESTATE, INACCESSIBLE TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD AND VULNERABLE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 42 HOMES.**

The Preservation Trust purchased Vendovi Island for \$6.4 million, approximately half of its appraised value. **But this acquisition required the Trust to take a calculated risk.** The generous support from this anonymous lead donor came in two forms: a \$3 million outright gift and a \$3.4 million bridge loan (the very first loan ever assumed by the organization). Subsequent gifts have reduced the outstanding loan balance by approximately \$100,000 to \$3.3 million.

Vendovi Island is now owned by the San Juan Preservation Trust, but this will only be a temporary arrangement unless \$3.3 million can be raised to secure it permanently.

Our goal is to retain ownership, protect sensitive areas and provide the public with ongoing access to the wonders of this island. **But if we can't pay off our \$3.3 million bridge loan, we will have no choice but to re-sell the island.**



## A UNIQUE CHALLENGE

Vendovi Island presents us with a significant fundraising challenge. Unlike other community campaigns undertaken in recent years by the San Juan Preservation Trust (see back cover), Vendovi is not a familiar landscape. Isolated from our population centers and closely guarded for many decades by its previous owners, this island is essentially unknown to most of our supporters. Despite this challenge, the Preservation Trust's board of trustees felt strongly that this remarkable property is deserving of our best effort for permanent protection.

# Vendovi A Window in

*Island of Discovery Provides a  
and Cultural Heritage of*

## UNDEVELOPED ISLANDS

The Preservation Trust's conservation plan prioritizes the protection of undeveloped islands. Adjacent to our Jack Island Preserve – also undeveloped – Vendovi is the third largest island under single private ownership in the entire San Juan archipelago. Given its isolation and lack of destructive plant and animal species, it is also the most pristine of all the islands on this list.



## PLANT HABITAT

According to botanists from the University of Washington Herbarium, Vendovi Island is home to at least 215 plant species. As one of the only islands in the archipelago to be free of deer and other grazing animals, these scientists reported wildflower displays that rival anything they've ever seen in western Washington. They have also located healthy populations of several native plant species (including the Oregon boxwood) that had long been eradicated from other deer-inhabited islands. There are also two natural wetlands on the island that provide a permanent source of fresh water and host a rich and diverse ecosystem.

## WILDLIFE HABITAT

Skagit Audubon and other volunteers have documented 60 avian species on or around Vendovi, and that number is expected to grow as research continues. The island provides important habitat for a number of raptor species, including peregrine falcons, and large numbers of pigeon guillemots are nesting on its rocky shore. Hundreds of harbor seals use Vendovi's sandy beaches for community haul-outs. The island is surrounded by historically productive fishing grounds, so we will commission studies to evaluate the health and influence of nearshore waters on salmon, bottom fish and forage fish populations.



# Island: nto Our Past

*Rare Glimpse into the Natural  
the San Juan Archipelago*



## PUBLIC ACCESS

A floating dock, tucked into a protected harbor, serves as the entry point for the island. Well-established walking trails meander through lush forests (including old growth) and rocky ravines, connect spectacular outlooks, sandy beaches and tide pools, and pass by spectacular wildflower meadows. Once our natural inventories are complete, the Preservation Trust intends to provide the public with low-impact access to the island during daylight hours.

## HUMAN HISTORY

The 95-year old daughter of the only settler child to be born on the island tells us of her father's birth in a cabin near the island's current home site. On the eve of his birth, in April 1894, Haida visitors pulled their canoes ashore and made camp within yards of the cabin. The homesteaders feared for their lives, but barricaded in the cabin, survived the night without harm. Referred to as "Hog Island" (as an insult) by neighboring islanders, the first settlers actually raised sheep on the island, and subsequent inhabitants farmed both foxes and fitches (European weasels valued for their fur). In the depression years, a "Peaceful Paradise of the Pacific" communal retreat was established on Vendovi by the followers of Father Divine, an African American spiritual leader. The island then became a closely guarded private estate, with the most recent owners purchasing it in the 1960s. Since we know relatively little of Vendovi's history prior to settlement, we will be commissioning a study to better understand its importance to native cultures.



## WHAT'S WITH THAT NAME?

Vendovi Island was named by the U.S. Exploring Expedition of 1838-42 led by Captain Charles Wilkes. Chief Vendovi (also known as "Ro Veidovi") was a native of the Fiji Islands who was accused by Wilkes of being a "sailor-eating Feejee chief" that participated in the murder of 10 crewmen from another American ship. He was taken in Fiji and held prisoner for the remainder of the Expedition's journey, which included an excursion into the San Juan Islands. Wilkes' crew ultimately befriended Vendovi, inspiring Wilkes to name the island after him. He died shortly upon the Expedition's arrival in New York Harbor, and his skull was hastily claimed as a prized addition to a collection that became the foundation for the Smithsonian Institute. We plan to honor Vendovi on the island with interpretive signage that tells his remarkable story.

# Campaign Summary

Despite being appraised at over \$12 million, the Preservation Trust was able to purchase Vendovi Island for \$6.4 million. To do this, it was necessary to secure a bridge loan that currently carries a \$3.3 million outstanding balance.

## CAMPAIGN TO SAVE VENDОВI

<b>Outstanding Bridge Loan:</b>	<b>\$ 3,300,000</b>
Gifts required to meet terms of challenge grant:	- 1,000,000
Challenge grant funds (see terms on facing page):	- 1,000,000
<b><i>FUNDS LEFT TO RAISE :</i></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,300,000</u></b>

If we successfully meet the terms of the \$1.0 million challenge grant (see facing page), we will have raised \$2.0 million towards the outstanding debt. We are confident that we can raise the remaining \$1.3 million from public and private grant opportunities and, if needed, a broader community campaign.

While we greatly appreciate gifts of all sizes, this challenge grant has created considerable pressure to raise private funds swiftly. We are therefore focusing on **leadership gifts in the \$10,000 - \$500,000 range** from donors who are capable of fully paying their gifts within the one-to-three year timeframe set forth by the terms of the challenge grant.

### WHAT IF WE FAIL?

Ideally, the Preservation Trust will satisfy the challenge grant, pay off the bridge loan and retain ownership of Vendovi Island. However, if we are unsuccessful at meeting our fundraising goals, we will protect the sensitive natural values on the island with a conservation easement before selling it. Unfortunately, this outcome may not preclude all development, nor would it assure that future generations will have access to the island.

Should this resale contingency become necessary, we will work closely with our Vendovi donors to ensure that their investments in the project will be used to secure the strongest permanent conservation restrictions possible on the island before it is sold. Donors will also have the ability to request a refund of their gift or to redirect it to meet other land conservation goals in the San Juan Islands.

# One Million Dollar Challenge Grant

Recognizing this unique – and urgent – opportunity to protect the largest privately-owned island in the San Juan archipelago, a very generous family with roots in the islands has stepped forward with a ***\$1 MILLION CHALLENGE GRANT***. Their hope is that this will inspire others to invest with us over the next three years to acquire Vendovi.

This challenge grant will match every dollar up to \$1 million if we can meet the following schedule:

**\$ 250,000** *before* October 1, 2011

**\$ 350,000** *before* October 1, 2012

**\$ 400,000** *before* October 1, 2013

**\$1,000,000**

Subsequent portions of the challenge grant will not be available to us unless we meet the above targets. In other words, if we fail to raise \$250,000 by October 1, 2011, this challenge grant will expire and no donations will be matched. Only funds received will be matched; pledges will not count towards the challenge grant until they are paid.

WE THEREFORE MUST RAISE AT LEAST \$250,000 IN DONATIONS BY  
**OCTOBER 1, 2011** TO RECEIVE THE FIRST \$250,000 MATCH AND TO ENSURE THAT  
FUTURE CHALLENGE GRANT MATCHES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO US IN 2012.

Matching gifts raised each year that are in excess of the current year's goal may be applied to the subsequent year's matching requirement.



NAN SIMPSON

**HELP US SAVE VENDОВI ISLAND!**

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

If you have questions, or if you are interested in participating in the Campaign to Save Vendovi Island, please contact the San Juan Preservation Trust at **(360) 468-3202**. For more information about the Preservation Trust and our Vendovi Island Preserve, visit **[www.sjpt.org](http://www.sjpt.org)**.

## PROJECT BENEFITS

1. Vendovi Island will never be developed.
2. Low-impact day use will be provided for boaters, kayakers, and other visitors.
3. Dock and walking trails will provide access to dramatic views and beaches.
4. Native forests, wildflower meadows, pristine shoreline and wetlands will remain undisturbed.
5. Habitat for numerous avian and marine species will be permanently protected.
6. A \$1 million challenge grant from an island family will match private gifts.

If successful, this fundraising campaign will ensure that these benefits are maintained in perpetuity.

KURT THORSON



MOLLY DORAN

## THE SAN JUAN PRESERVATION TRUST

Founded in 1979, the San Juan Preservation Trust ([www.sjpt.org](http://www.sjpt.org)) is a private, non-profit and membership-based land trust dedicated to helping people and communities conserve land in the San Juan Islands of Washington State. The Preservation Trust has permanently protected more than 260 properties, 34 miles of shoreline and 14,000 acres on 20 islands, including land now managed as public parks, nature preserves, wildlife habitat, and working farms and forests.

## THE PRESERVATION TRUST HAS LED A NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL PRIVATE FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS IN THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS, INCLUDING:

- Turtleback Mountain** (Orcas Island, with San Juan County Land Bank and Trust for Public Land)
- Mount Disney** (Waldron Island)
- Guemes Mountain** (Guemes Island, with Skagit Land Trust)
- Watmough Bight** (Lopez Island)
- Crow Valley/JB Farm** (Orcas Island)
- Baker Mountain** (Lummi Island, with Lummi Island Heritage Trust)
- Henry Island Isthmus** (Henry Island)
- Montgomery-Duban Headlands Park** (Fidalgo Island)
- Peach Preserve/Demopoulous Marsh** (Guemes Island)



*the* SAN JUAN  
PRESERVATION  
TRUST

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