

## A LETTER FROM ANGELA



One of the core values that everyone who serves on the Preservation Trust's board of directors agrees to abide by is "a commitment to striving to be good ancestors." Nice words, but what do they mean? I had two extraordinary experiences early this year that gave "good ancestors" added meaning for me.

In mid-April I was invited to attend a three-day camas bake at a prairie restoration site on Whidbey Island. The invitation came from Sam Barr, Program Director of the Coast Salish Youth Stewardship Corps, which organized the event.

About 65 children and teens from seven tribes converged on the site, accompanied by their extended families, tribal elders, and a small group of non-indigenous friends from ally organizations. My husband, Adam, our daughter Leela, and I were welcomed like family members to witness and participate as camas roots were harvested and prepared, pits were dug, and fires kindled.

The traditions of camas culture that we were privileged to witness have been passed down from Coast Salish ancestors for thousands of years. We owe the beauty of the islands that we enjoy today to these good ancestors, and we benefit from those who are working to revive and perpetuate Coast Salish stewardship and food culture long into the future.

Earlier this year, Adam and I flew to the other San Juan—the one in Puerto Rico. Our mission was to find a mystery property that was part of a bequest left to the Preservation Trust by long-time Lopez Island resident Jerry Schultz. The property (which will be sold to a local land trust) was on a mountainside, with no road access. After trying for two days, we were finally able to view it by carving our way by machete through thick jungle.

Fortunately, most bequests we receive don't require long-distance travel or machetes to value and appreciate. But we'd gladly go the extra mile for Jerry Schultz, Frank Bayley, and all visionary supporters who have included the Preservation Trust in their estate plans—both those who are living members of our Gann Society (page 20) and those whom we acknowledge In Memoriam (page 21). We're deeply grateful for their demonstration of what it means to be good ancestors.

With sincere thanks,

angela anderson

Angela Anderson, Executive Director



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On this and the pages that follow, we feature highlights from the past year of advancing the three C's of our mission: Conserve, Care, and Connect.

## **CONSERVE** Island Land

With your support, we've advanced the "first C" of our mission this past year by protecting:

- 343 acres (about half the area of Central Park in New York City) and 3,820 feet (nearly three-quarters of a mile) of shoreline with four conservation easements on Lopez, San Juan, and Orcas islands, and
- 59 SJPT-owned acres with the donation of a preserve on Orcas Island.

Together with our landowner partners and donors, SJPT now protects 302 properties encompassing 18,169 acres, 51 miles of shoreline, and 25 miles of trails on 22 islands.

Here are a few 2023 conservation highlights:



## McArdle Bay Shoreline | Lopez Island

By year's end we expect to complete the bargain-sale purchase of a conservation easement that permanently protects a key stretch of habitat-rich shoreline and 12 acres of upland forest and open meadow in McArdle Bay, one of the most naturally intact bays along the spectacular southern coast of Lopez Island.

The property provides wildlife habitat with close connection to hundreds of

acres of other protected lands in the area, including Watmough Bay and Chadwick Hill. The beach and eelgrass beds just offshore contribute to high-quality habitat for juvenile salmon and forage fish that thrive throughout the bay. A \$416,250 grant from the state Salmon Recovery Funding Board will provide essential funding for the project, along with additional funding from the Preservation Trust.

We are grateful to the four landowners, Derek Eisel and Abe Gates, and Robin Reid and Cathy Wilson, who will make a generous donation by selling the property's development right at well below its appraised value. To take a video tour, go to **sipt.org/mcardle**.



## A "Central Park" on East Sound | Orcas Island

Dan and Margie Carper, both natives of Spokane, have spent many years living in New York City. There, in the heart of Manhattan, they formed a deep attachment to the natural beauty of Central Park. With an eye toward retirement, in 1996 they purchased waterfront property on East Sound. With its combination of meadows, woodlands, water, and abundant wildlife, the property became the Carpers' own "Central Park" in the middle of Orcas Island.

In August, the Carpers donated a conservation easement to the Preservation Trust covering 115 acres of their property. The easement permanently protects 3,470 feet of shoreline and 4,340 feet of tidelands, providing important habitat for marine mammals, waterfowl, and forage fish critical for salmon recovery. Mixed forest, meadows, wetlands, and herbaceous bald areas host a Central Park Zoo's worth of native birds, mammals, amphibians, and insects.

"There aren't that many places left in this world for animals to call home," Dan says. "So now there will always be just a little bit more for them."

## Cady Mountain "Keystone" Addition | San Juan Island

In the heart of San Juan Island, this 142-acre property bridges the Conservation Land Bank's existing Cady Mountain Preserve with the Roche Harbor Highlands and the San Juan Island National Historical Park (English Camp). This remarkable parcel provides an important refuge for wildlife and includes dozens of acres of a critically imperiled





type of woodland habitat that was previously thought to have been eliminated in Washington. It's the "keystone" that locks together one of the largest undeveloped areas in the county, second only to Moran State Park.

The Conservation Land Bank purchased the Cady Mountain Preserve Addition in 2021 with the understanding that the Preservation Trust would contribute towards project financing and add an extra layer of permanent protection by purchasing a conservation easement. Motivated by an anonymous dollar-for-dollar challenge grant, 50 families and organizations stepped forward and made donations to the project, ensuring that we will achieve our \$495,000 fundraising goal in time to purchase the conservation easement by the end of the year.



### **CARE** for Island Land

By the end of the year, our Stewardship staff will have upheld the "middle C" of our mission by completing their annual monitoring of SJPT's 75 owned preserves and 321 properties protected by conservation easements.





## **Volunteer Eyes and Ears**

Of all the volunteers who contribute their time and skills to help us accomplish our mission, the group that our staff Land Stewards lean on most heavily are our Preserve Stewards. These are folks who have made a long-term commitment to visit one of our 75 SJPT-owned preserves regularly, report what they see, and tidy things up as necessary.

Rob Wilson is a great example. Since Reef Island was donated to us in 2020, Rob has kept watch from his home overlooking the 17.5-acre island near the mouth of Deer Harbor on Orcas Island. An avid kayaker, Rob frequently paddles around the island, rarely setting foot on it except to collect trash that's washed ashore, ranging from small bits of plastic to big chunks of Styrofoam and other flotsam.

Rob is also a keen observer who documents seasonal changes in vegetation along the shore, the expansion and contraction of nearby kelp beds, and the cycles of transient and resident bird species. Rob recalls feeling a shift in his feeling toward Reef Island when it became a Preservation Trust preserve. "It went from being just 'somebody else's' island to a special place that is 'ours' to collectively protect," he recalls.

Are you interested in helping to "collectively protect" an SJPT property as a preserve steward? Learn more at *sjpt.org/volunteer* or email volunteer@sjpt.org.

## All in a Day's Work

For our Stewardship Department, it's not all about pulling weeds and planting trees. Maintaining infrastructure, while not exactly sexy, is also part of the job on properties that come to us with buildings, access roads, even kitchen sinks. Here are a few examples that came up this year:

- On Vendovi Island, we planned to add a rain catchment system to supplement the
  island's meager fresh-water supply. Then we discovered that the island's two septic
  systems needed replacement. Both projects required bringing heavy equipment and
  materials by barge, so it only made sense to do it all at once. This made a muddy mess,
  so a by-product of the excavation was a newly graded and graveled access road that
  greets visitors on their arrival.
- Among the historical structures on the Marilyn and Fred Ellis Preserve is a 40-foot-tall water tower. Some boards near the top came loose and were dangling precariously. Head-scratching ensued: How was someone going to get up there (safely) to refasten the boards? A Lopez-based OPALCO crew, on Shaw Island to do routine electrical work, volunteered to bring their high-rise bucket truck. Problem solved, the island way.
- Also on the Ellis Preserve, staffers donned respirators and protective suits while removing old insulation and debris from the crawlspace under another historic building. The evicted mice weren't too happy, though.



## **Corps Values**

For many years the Preservation Trust has relied on hired hands from the statewide Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) to help us accomplish tasks that are too big for our staff or volunteers. Now we have a new, home-grown partner: the Island Conservation Corps (ICC). Under the umbrella of the San Juan County Conservation District, the ICC program combines hands-on fieldwork with academic coursework in ecological restoration.

ICC crews have been essential to our restoration work along False Bay Creek on the Red Mill Farm property. The crew planted more than 1,000 trees and shrubs in the project's first year, then returned to replace non-surviving plants and remove invasive competitors. This year, they watered the plants after an unusually dry spring. ICC crews have also done amazing forest-thinning work under the Conservation Land Bank's guidance on Turtleback Mountain Preserve.

Thanks to the Conservation District for adding this adult CC as a "sequel" to its well-established Youth Conservation Corps program (a valued partner in our education outreach).





THREE PHOTOS AT RIGHT: ISLAND CONSERVATION CORPS CREWS PLANTED MORE THAN 1,000 TREES AND SHRUBS ALONG FALSE BAY CREEK, SAN JUAN ISLAND

# **CONNECT**People and Land

#### **Class Connections**

What do mosses, rocks, forests, botanical art, wetland plants, and intertidal zones have in common? They were all topics for the Preservation Trust's series of Field Classes held at the Marilyn and Fred Ellis Preserve in 2023. The preserve's diverse lands and waters, combined with lively and knowledgeable presenters, creates an ideal atmosphere for small groups to learn about natural history.

SJPT Stewardship Director Dean Dougherty shared fascinating facts about mosses. Geologist Julia Turney helped us envision the complex geologic history of the San Juan Islands. Participants in the Ecological Forestry class taught by Marty Main were treated to a wealth of information on the ecological functions of island forests, plus tips for small-woodland owners.

Megan Dethier and David Duggins led an intertidal exploration. Eliza Habegger (with Preserve Curator Ruthie Dougherty) provided pointers on hosting pollinators. And Sally Vongasthorn guided a group in the art of botanical printmaking. All in all, a wonderful year of learning, sharing, creating, and connecting.



## **Engaging the Next Generation**

The Preservation Trust's efforts to encourage young people to form connections with the natural world experienced a growth spurt this year. Here are a few highlights from our K-12 education programming:

- SJPT's Education Specialist, Liz Doane, expanded our fledgling Learning Landscapes program into two schools this year: Orcas Island Elementary and Spring Street International School on San Juan Island.
- During the 2022-23 school year, Liz facilitated five outdoor-ed sessions involving a total of 120 Orcas Elementary students, plus two sessions that were each attended by 27 Spring Street middle-schoolers.



- With help from SJPT's land stewards, Liz also arranged 11 service-learning outings involving about 40 Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew members on onto SJPTprotected properties, along with 11 teenage youth from Camp Nor'wester.
- Ruthie Dougherty, our staff interpretive specialist, continued her work with elementary students at Shaw Island School. In 2021, each student planted a Garry oak seedling at the Graham Preserve along with other plants typically found in oak prairies. Successive classes visit and tend the caged mini-prairies in the "Graham Grove" twice a year.
- This year's class decorated and installed a welcome bench, which invites visitors to enjoy the growing oaks and pollinator habitat on the peaceful site along Reef Net Bay Road.



## On the Wings of Volunteers

Our wonderful volunteers fuel our work, and this year we had more of them powering through more projects than ever.

There's no better single example than "Team Bluebird," the cheerfully loyal group of San Juan Islanders who, each spring, scan the skies and fencerows for the return of migrating Western Bluebirds, host and monitor nest boxes on their land, and clean out the boxes when the nesting season is over. Capping off the seventeenth(!) year of the Western Bluebird Project, volunteers gathered at San Juan Brewery and socialized over birds, beverages, and bites to eat.

To see how the 2023 season went and learn more about the project, go to *sjpt.org/bluebirds2023*.

## **THANK YOU**

Because of you, our dedicated supporters, we are able to conserve beautiful island landscapes, protect and care for the islands we call home, and inspire the next generation of change-makers who will sustain this one-of-a-kind ecosystem for generations to come. Your generous donations ensure a vibrant future for the San Juan Islands, and we are deeply grateful.

All members who have contributed between January 1, 2022, and October 2023 are listed according to the number of consecutive years they have invested in our conservation work. We have done our best to make this list complete and accurate. If, however, we have omitted your name or placed it in the wrong category, please accept our apology and let us know (email Kristin Buckley at kristin@sjpt.org or call 360-317-3055).



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#### **10 TO 19 YEARS**

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Kathy Williams<sup>†</sup> • Mac Madenwald and Wendy Gray · Kathleen Magnuson · Thomas Main† · The Mary A. Crocker Trust<sup>†</sup> · Craig and Caryol Mathiesen<sup>†</sup> · Stanley and Karen Mayhew · Cheryll McCain · Chuck and DT McCarty · Douglas McCarville • Fielding McGhee and Rebecca Moore · Rob Roy McGregor · Ian M. McKinley<sup>†</sup> · Amy Mertl · Eugene and Annette Metzger · Microsoft Alumni Community Network<sup>†</sup> · Barbara and Richard Miller · John Miller · Charlie Mills · Chris Moore · Greg and Lorraine Morrell · David Moser · Signe and Chris Mullen<sup>†</sup> · Matthew and Nina Mullett · Desiree Nabong and Adam Chorba-Pulkka Chelsea Nesvig · Dean and Sandy Nichols · Stephen Nute · Marilyn O'Connor · Anne Pallinger · Ellen Pardee · Sandi Parker and David Asher · Luanne Pasik and Kent Gale · Cheryl Peach · Philip and Kitty Pearson · Demaree Peck · Lisa Pedersen · Phillip and Katie Person · Scott Plank and Corina Hardin · Joe Plattner · William and Jennifer Pollard · Rod Pyle · Jim and Carol Raabe · Cameron and Tori Ragen · Dr. and Mrs. Fazlur Rahman · Steven A. Rath · Christopher and Alexis Reed<sup>†</sup>



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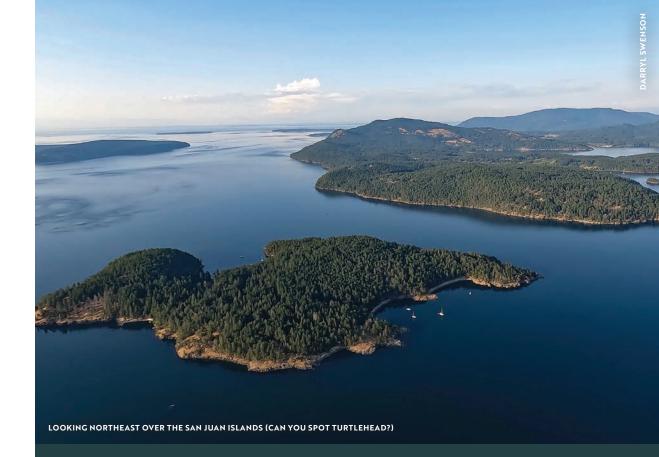


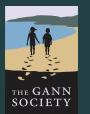
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People who notify us that they have provided for the San Juan Preservation Trust in their estate plans are members of our Gann Society. We are grateful to the following Gann Society members, who have taken the remarkable step to help preserve our islands well into the future:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>†</sup> Tiptop League

<sup>\*</sup> Deceased



#### **IN MEMORIAM**

The San Juan Preservation Trust has been notified of, or has received, bequests from the estates of these farsighted individuals:

Wanda Broadie Alexander

Judith A. Baker

Frank S. Bayley III

Nancy F. Chapman

**Irmgard Conley and John Stafford Conley** 

Barbara Fulton

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Robert H. Grimm

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**Bob Lundeen** 

Mathew J. and Katherine B. Mottola

**Cherill Perera** 

Robert J. Roseburg

Jordan (Jerry) Marsh Schultz

June H. Vynne

**Peter Willing** 

To view "Virtual Memorials" of these and other visionary people who have left legacies benefitting the San Juan Islands, visit *sjpt.org/memorials* 

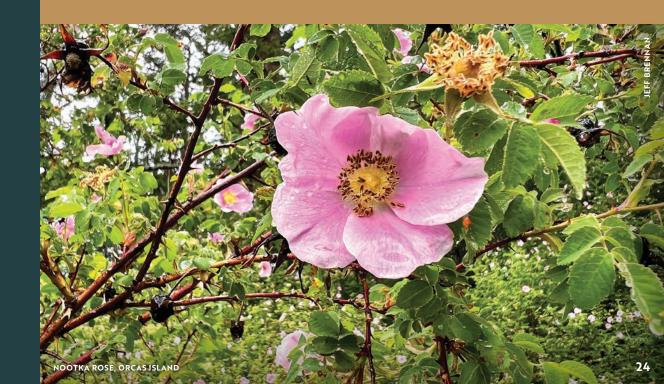
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We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the following people, who gave freely of their time, skills, and love for the islands while helping us carry out our mission during the period from January 1, 2022, through October 31, 2023.

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- 1. Become a member (or renew) by using the enclosed envelope.
- 2. Donate online at sjpt.org.
- 3. Volunteer on the land or in the office.
- 4. Give through your Donor Advised Fund.
- 5. Set up automated monthly contributions.
- 6. Give in honor or in memory of someone special.
- 7. Donate appreciated stock.
- 8. Add the San Juan Preservation Trust as a beneficiary of your retirement plan.
- 9. Provide a donation with an IRA charitable rollover.
- 10. Include the Preservation Trust in your will.
- 11. Donate land or a conservation easement.
- 12. Introduce a friend to your favorite SJPT preserve

Visit sjpt.org/support or call us at 360-378-2461 to learn more about any of these ways to preserve and protect our beloved islands.



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