

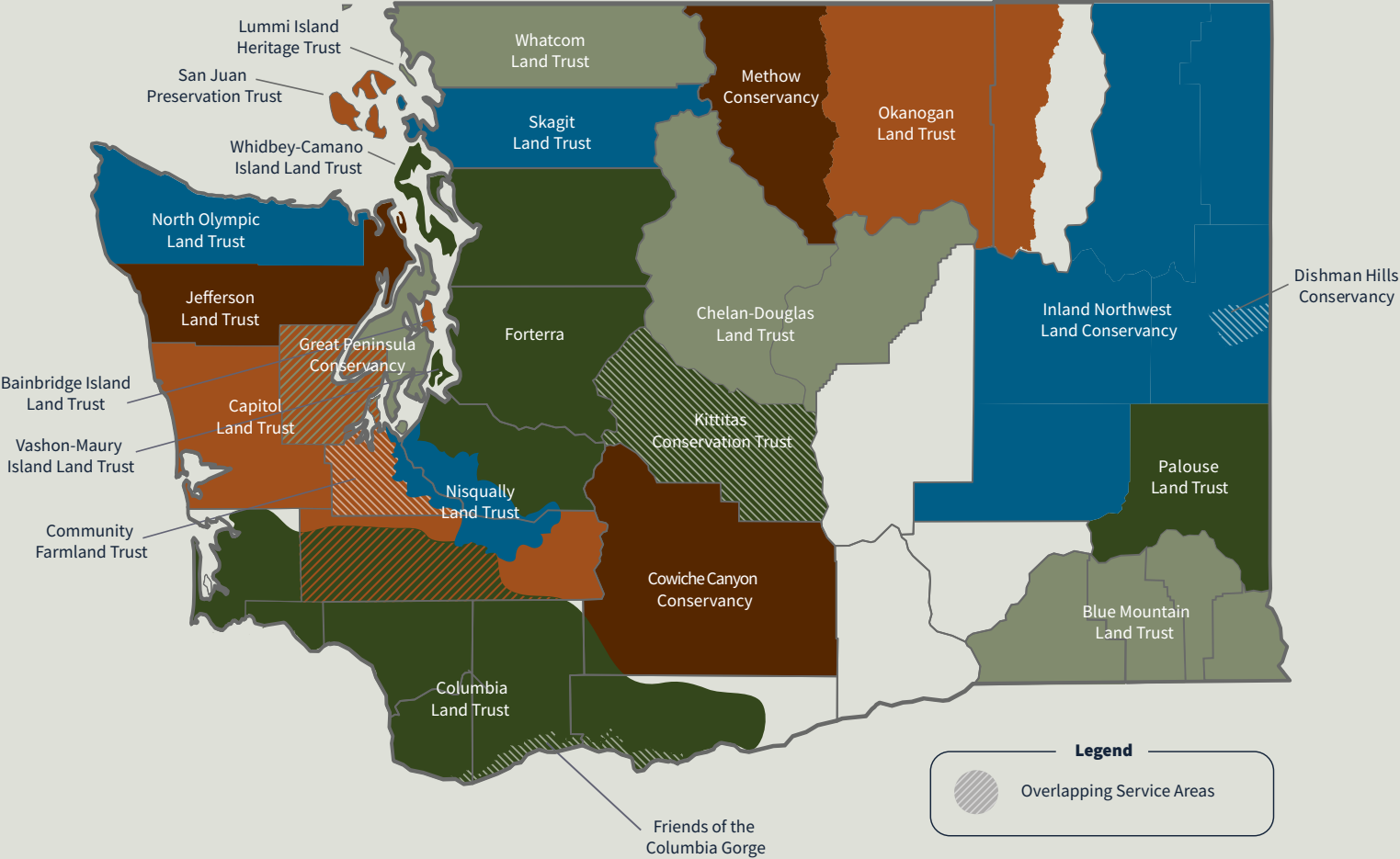
Ground- 2023 swell

Celebrating Private Land
Conservation in Washington



WASHINGTON
— ASSOCIATION OF —
LAND TRUSTS

WHERE WE ARE



Welcome to Groundswell



DIRECTOR'S LETTER

As Executive Director at the Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT), it's my pleasure to welcome you to our second edition of *Groundswell*. Since I stepped into the role of Executive Director at WALT this past year, I have been inspired nearly every day by all the impactful projects our land trusts are advancing to protect our land, waterways, and wildlife.

I hope that this issue of *Groundswell* can share some of that inspiration with you. Each of the stories featured remind us how people have a personal connection to the natural spaces around us and that we can protect them through working together. As a mom, this work is personally so powerful for me because I can envision how each forest, farm, and river we protect and steward is a place our children and future generations will be able to enjoy. In these pages, you'll hear exciting stories about how land trusts are working in collaboration with individuals, organizations, and Tribes to do truly community-oriented work, address historical injustice, and develop forward-looking programming to help people engage with nature.

These 33 private land conservation organizations span every corner of the state. So no matter where you are in Washington, please reach out anytime to learn about how you can get involved in your stretch of the woods. We're here as a resource to help support our land trusts and those wanting to connect into conservation work.

Happy reading!

Vanessa Kritzer, Executive Director
Washington Association of Land Trusts

Regional Organizations

- Bainbridge Island Land Trust
- Blue Mountain Land Trust
- Capitol Land Trust
- Chelan-Douglas Land Trust
- Columbia Land Trust
- Community Farmland Trust
- Cowiche Canyon Conservancy
- Dishman Hills Conservancy
- Forterra
- Friends of the Columbia Gorge
- Great Peninsula Conservancy
- Inland Northwest Land Conservancy

- Jefferson Land Trust
- Kittitas Conservation Trust
- Lummi Island Heritage Trust
- Methow Conservancy
- Nisqually Land Trust
- North Olympic Land Trust
- Okanogan Land Trust
- Palouse Land Trust
- San Juan Preservation Trust
- Skagit Land Trust
- Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust
- Whatcom Land Trust
- Whidbey Camano Land Trust

Statewide Organizations

- American Farmland Trust
- Center for Natural Lands Management
- The Conservation Fund
- The Nature Conservancy of Washington
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Trust for Public Land
- Washington Farmland Trust
- Western Rivers Conservancy

On the cover: A photo of Catherine Creek Universal Access Trail, owned by US Forest Service (USFS) and adjacent to Friends of the Columbia Gorge's LT property, which will connect to the Gorge Accessibility Project. Photo courtesy of Cate Hotchkiss.



WHO WE ARE

The Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT) has been the unified hub for Washington's voluntary private land conservation movement since 2007. Our 33 land trusts have conserved well over a million acres of vital open space, and represent a community of staff, board members, supporters, and volunteers over 60,000 strong.

Connecting with Community

For Washington’s land trusts, 2022 was a year of exciting opportunities to help people reconnect with in person projects, working together to protect critical lands and continuing to create outdoor recreational access for communities across our state.

TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND, CHELAN-DOUGLAS LAND TRUST & THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Planning together to protect forestland

Trust for Public Land (TPL), in partnership with Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and Chelan County, worked with communities across Chelan County to develop a plan for unprotected forestland in the **Upper Wenatchee Watershed** to expand outdoor recreation, protect wildlife habitat, and improve forest health to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. In 2022, TPL secured an option agreement with Chinook Forest Partners, the largest private landowner in this watershed, for TPL to purchase and conserve all of their 35,000 acres by 2030. Significant progress is already underway. The USFS’s Land and Water Conservation Fund proposal for the Phase 1 acquisition of 5,600 acres is ranked #5 in the nation. The Upper Wenatchee Watershed proposal for Phase 2 will be submitted this fall. *Story provided by Trust for Public Land.*



COMMUNITY FARMLAND TRUST

Keeping farms working for community benefit

The 29-acre **James Family Historic Farmland** is the Community Farmland Trust’s (CFLT) newest farmland acquisition. For centuries prior to the arrival of pioneer settlers like the James family, the Upper Chehalis People lived on this land. The Tribe lived along the shores and tributaries of the Chehalis River, upstream from its joining with the Satsop River, and thrived on salmon and the resources of the surrounding prairie and forests. Now CFLT has allowed Common Ground CSA to farm on the property with the goal to provide locally grown food to the surrounding community. This is one of many efforts CFLT has taken to connect South Sound communities to fresh foods and farms over the past 25 years. They distribute over 13,000 copies of their free annual publication *Fresh from the Farm Guide*, which most recently showcased 97 farms, including what they produce, grow, and sell, and where to buy from them. *Story adapted from Community Farmland Trust’s September 1st, 2021 announcement.*

INLAND NORTHWEST LAND CONSERVANCY

Expanding a wildlife and recreation corridor

Inland Northwest Land Conservancy has partnered with the county and key donors to build a recreation corridor only minutes from Spokane’s urban center. Connecting two public properties created an 11-mile wildlife and recreation corridor in the west side’s **Rimrock to Riverside**. With a \$100,000 gift from Washington Trust, along with support from many other private donors, the Inland Northwest Land Conservancy is working to secure and manage these lands for public benefit until they can be transferred into public ownership and management through Spokane County’s Conservation Futures program. *Story adapted from the [Spokane Review](#), “Land Conservation Receives \$100,000 from Washington Trust”.*



Bottom Left: A multigenerational family hikes in the Upper Wenatchee Watershed. Photo courtesy of Adair Rutledge.
Top Left: Tierney Creech, owner of Common Ground CSA, gives community members a farm tour at the new property. Photo courtesy of Fletcher Ward.
Above: Nearly 200 volunteers came to a work party to restore and reforest a section of the Rimrock to Riverside property. Photo courtesy of Inland Northwest Land Conservancy.

Us by the Numbers



33
ORGANIZATIONS



1,000,000+
ACRES PROTECTED
TO DATE



425
MILES OF TRAILS
OPEN FOR USE



854,000
VISITS ANNUALLY TO
PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE
LANDS



150,000
PEOPLE ENGAGED
IN PROGRAMS



Food & Fiber

Washington state is home to some of the most productive forests and farms in the country, and we'd love to see it stay that way.

"It was important to us to keep the land natural for wildlife. And we'll be able to keep working the land, just like it's been for the last hundred years."

— **Vernon Breiler**
Fourth-generation Rancher

BLUE MOUNTAIN LAND TRUST

Conserving farmland and habitat in the Blue Mountain foothills

The foothills of the Blue Mountain region are marked by rich soils and abundant rainfall. Farmers and ranchers in this area know how special these lands are. So it was an exciting victory when Blue Mountain Land Trust (BMLT) permanently protected the 661-acre **Mud Creek Dixie Ranch**. The conservation easement was completed over the course of four years in collaboration with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) as project funders. Located just outside of Dixie, Washington, this project raised the number of total acreage protected by BMLT to over 23,000 acres. It is owned by sisters Jeannie Eagleson and Lynne Bush, who wanted to conserve the agricultural heritage of the area and keep the region's landscape from being developed further. In addition to being a wheat farm, this property also contains important wildlife habitat, including steep forested uplands, and riparian habitat along Mud Creek, which will now be protected forever. *Story adapted from the Blue Mountain Land Trust's February 14th, 2023 blog post.*



WASHINGTON FARMLAND TRUST

Supporting the next generation of farmers

In 2022, Washington Farmland Trust (WFT) permanently protected the 24-acre **Pink Moon Farm** in Eatonville, WA. Pink Moon Farm supplies high quality products to the local community through a CSA and direct market sales, from Icelandic sheepskins and yarn, to eggs, grass-fed lamb, and a diverse array of organic vegetables. This was the 29th farm conserved by WFT and one more step forward in their efforts to support the next generation of independent small farmers. To date, WFT has conserved 30 farm properties, totaling 3,163 acres. *Story adapted from PCC Sound Consumer's January 2023 newsletter and the WFT website.*

VASHON-MAURY ISLAND LAND TRUST

Honoring history and the future on Vashon farm

Matsuda Farm, one of the remaining historic Japanese American Farms on Vashon Island following the unjust incarceration of Japanese Americans in WWII, was purchased by Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust (VMILT) in 2015 from Miyoko Matsuda. The Matsuda family and VMILT shared a vision of honoring both the history and the future of the farm. In 2022, an additional five acres was donated to the trust and Matsuda Farm by Ray Gruenewald. The farm now supports a Farm-to-School program, grows produce for local food banks, and hosts special events. *Story adapted from Vashon-Maury Island's website where you can learn more information on the farm's **complex history**.*

CHELAN-DOUGLAS LAND TRUST

Ensuring shrub-steppe survival through a conservation easement

In the spring of 2021, the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust worked closely with fourth-generation rancher Vernon Breiler to place an agricultural conservation easement on 2,480 acres on Badger Mountain, about 10 miles from the growing city of Wenatchee. Over half the **Breiler Ranch** contains shrub-steppe, a community of native grasses and sagebrush that sustains a diverse group of wildlife, including the threatened greater sage-grouse. More than 90 percent of sage-grouse habitat has been lost to development and fragmentation, and most of the remaining populations live right in this area. Voluntary conservation agreements on private land like the Breiler Ranch will be key not only for sage-grouse survival, but also for at-risk pygmy rabbits and Washington ground squirrels. When discussing the project, Vernon said, "It was important to us to keep the land natural for wildlife. And we'll be able to keep working the land, just like it's been for the last hundred years." *Story adapted from Chelan-Douglas Land Trust's April 16th, 2021 press release.*



Left Page: Mud Creek Dixie Ranch's wheat fields and lush riparian habitat. Photo courtesy of Blue Mountain Land Trust. *Top Left:* Farmer Grayson Crane stands in their field on Pink Moon Farm. Photo courtesy of Kae-Lin Wang. *Above:* Matsuda Farm grows fresh local produce for a Farm-to-School program and Vashon's food bank. Photo courtesy of Jim Diers. *Right:* Ranch owner, Vernon Breiler, breaking the ice covering his stock's water on a cold spring day. Photo courtesy of Mickey Fleming.





Land &

Justice

Across the state, land trusts continue to learn how their time and tools can support Indigenous priorities and address past injustices.

JEFFERSON LAND TRUST

Protecting a sacred site

The **Tamanowas Rock Sanctuary** in Chimacum, Washington is a sacred site for the S’Klallam people. Formed 43 million years ago, it is a colossal monolith with caves, crevices, and cliffs that holds deep cultural importance. It was used formerly as a mastodon hunting lookout over the land below. In 1976, Tamanowas Rock was listed in the Washington Heritage Register for its archaeological significance. Rising up from the forest, Tamanowas Rock is like a natural cathedral. The property is 80% second-growth forest of Douglas fir, grand fir, red alder, big leaf maple, Pacific madrone, and Western redcedar. It was protected in 2009 by Jefferson Land Trust, which holds a permanent conservation easement on the land. The **Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe** purchased it in 2012, with help from Washington State Parks, Jefferson County Conservation Futures Fund, and Jefferson Land Trust. The conservation easement ensures permanent protection for the wildlife habitat, abundant forest, scenic and open space qualities, and other natural values. The Tribes have established allowable uses for the site that focus on respect for its sacredness to the S’Klallam

people and the Sanctuary is open for limited public access. *Story adapted from the article “Understanding the Tamanowas Rock Sanctuary” in the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribal Library.*

NISQUALLY LAND TRUST

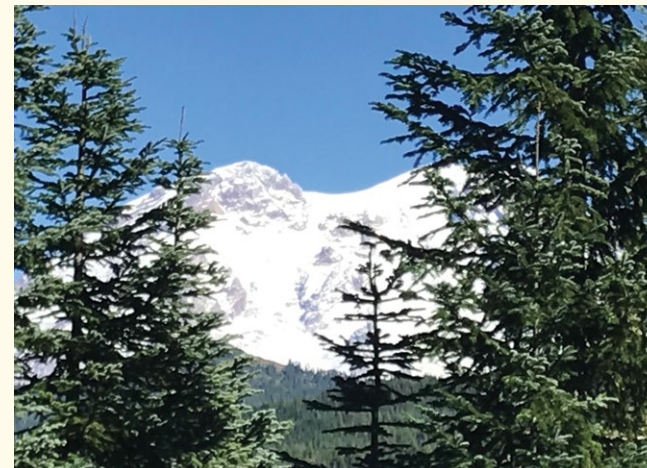
Entering into a historic partnership

Nisqually Land Trust entered into a historic partnership with the **Nisqually Indian Tribe** to purchase land and critical salmon habitat along **Busy Wild Creek** near Mount Rainier, in which the Tribe purchased 1,240 acres and the land trust acquired 960 adjoining acres. This is the largest transaction in the history of the Nisqually Land Trust and the first industrial-timberland acquisition for the Nisqually Indian Tribe. These properties will be incorporated into the **Nisqually Community Forest**, effectively doubling it in size. The Tribe purchased its portion of the property with a long-term, low-interest loan through the Department of Ecology’s Clean Water State Revolving Fund and then won funding through the state’s new Community Forest grant program, administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office, to help repay the loan. The land trust received funding from the

“It’s really a repatriation of lands historically used by the Nisqually people. And we see this as just a beginning.”

– David Troutt

Director of the Nisqually Indian Tribe’s Natural Resources Department

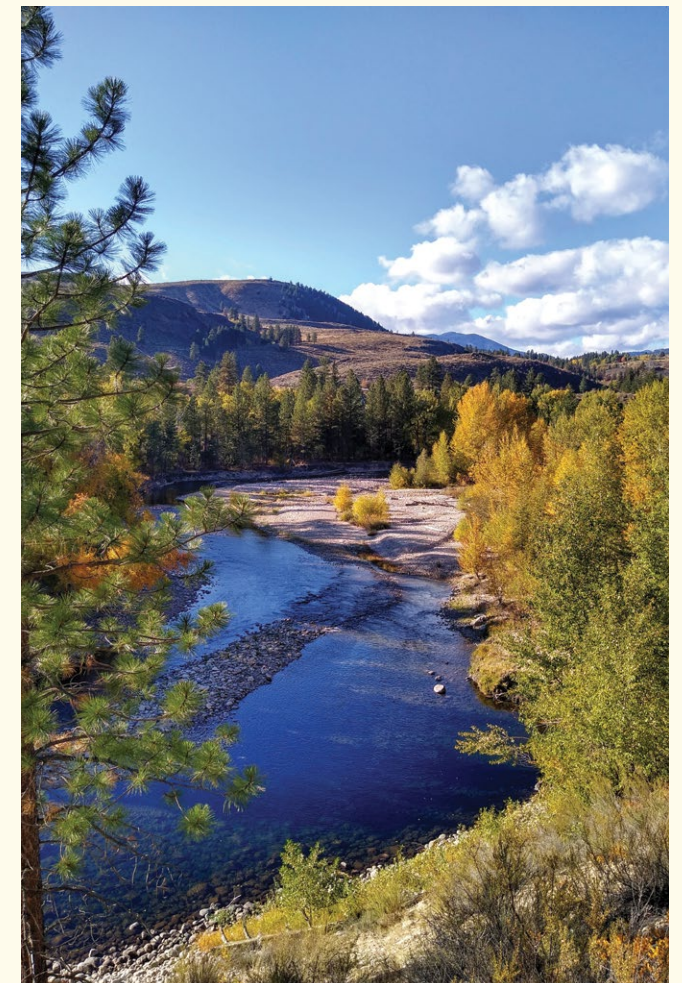


state’s new Streamflow Restoration program, also through the Department of Ecology, for its portion of the purchase. In a press release, David Troutt, Director of the Tribe’s Natural Resources Department, said, “It’s really a repatriation of lands historically used by the Nisqually people. And we see this as just a beginning.” It is hoped that this project will serve as a partnership and funding model both within and beyond Washington State. *Story adapted from the Chronicle’s piece, “Nisqually Land Trust, Nisqually Tribe Purchase 2,200 Acres of Land”.*

METHOW CONSERVANCY

Returning ancestral land and protecting vulnerable fish habitat

In 2021–2022, the Methow Conservancy, supported by private philanthropy from the Methow Valley community, purchased and then facilitated the return of 320+ acres of ancestral land along the Chewuch River outside of Winthrop, WA to the **Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation** (CTCR) in honor of the Methow People, who are one of the 12 tribes of the CTCR. The property—the former Wagner Ranch, renamed **ḵʷnámḵʷnam** or Hummingbird by the Methow People, offers an important place for the Methow People to preserve and share their ancestral knowledge, skills, and traditions and to steward the



property in the way Methow People have cared for the land since Time Immemorial.

Hummingbird will now be conserved to protect valuable fish and wildlife habitat, under the guidance of the CTCR management plan. The land’s watershed is a prime area for salmon recovery efforts, and the CTCR’s Fish and Wildlife Anadromous Program will continue work in this watershed with this property. There may also be potential for restoration of native plants and wildlife. In collaboration with tribal entities and the Methow People, the CTCR will pursue habitat improvements and educational programming to benefit all inhabitants of the valley and surrounding region. *Story adapted from information from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and the Methow Conservancy.*

Left Page: An aerial shot of Tamanowas Rock Sanctuary. Photo courtesy of Jefferson County-Conservation Futures Fund. Permission given by Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe to photograph sacred site. *Top Left:* A view of the Busy Wild Creek site and the surrounding mountain views. Photo courtesy of Jeanette Dörner. *Above:* Landscape perspective of Hummingbird’s beautiful lands and waterways. Photo courtesy of Jason Paulsen.

Policy Victory

New Tools for Farmland Protection & Equitable Land Access



This Page: Cattle graze near Trout Lake on the Schmid Farm, which was protected using FPLA funds. Photo courtesy of Columbia Land Trust.
Right Page: FPLA funds ensured the protection of Chimacum Farmland property. Jefferson Land Trust Staff will be designing a 3.5-acre wetland enhancement project on the farm in addition to adding a conservation easement. Photo courtesy of Jefferson Land Trust.

In recent years, we have made critical progress in advocating for new tools available to protect farms and make them affordable to new farmers.

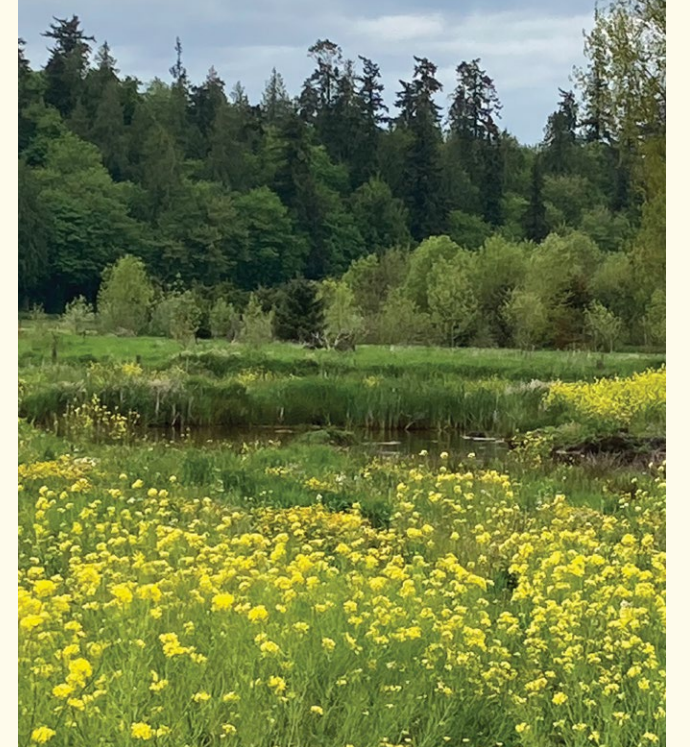
This work began because we recognized that, despite strong land-use planning, Washington State has been losing farmland to development at high rates. According to a report by [American Farmland Trust](#) (AFT), nearly 100,000 acres of farmland were lost to urban and low-density residential development in Washington between 2001 and 2016, and over 50% of the land lost was considered the state’s best quality farmland. We have a broad wave of aspiring farmers and a growing interest from communities in healthy, local food, but many of those who would keep farms working are often priced out of land ownership.

The good news is that Washington’s land trusts know how to protect agricultural land. They have already permanently protected more than 22,000 acres of farmland across our state. However, we knew they could do more if they had tools to act faster – it can take two to six years to protect a single farm, with funding being a big hurdle.

That is why WALT worked with AFT and other land trusts to support state agency efforts to develop new state financing programs to help address some of the most common pain points in farmland preservation. In the past few years, we have succeeded in establishing two new state programs that help land trusts to buy farmland when it goes on the market, protect it with an agricultural easement, and then sell it to the next generation of farmers at a more affordable price – also known as the “Buy-Protect-Sell” model.

The first of these programs, the **Farmland Protection and Affordability Investment** program (FarmPAI) was officially launched in 2021 with an investment of \$7 million approved by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission board. This program addresses the timing challenges by providing low-interest loans to land trusts to purchase an important piece of farmland when it goes up for sale.

The second piece is the Washington State Conservation Commission’s (WSCC) **Farmland Protection and Land Access** (FPLA) program, which is designed to work in tandem with the FarmPAI to make vital agricultural land affordable to new and historically underserved



farmers, including veterans and people of color. The funding from FPLA helps get a successful easement application under contract within a matter of months, allowing partners to preserve the farmland by removing the development rights, repaying part of the FarmPAI loan. That land is then sold to a next generation farmer at a more affordable cost, which repays the rest of the revolving loan so it can work on protecting the next farm. Thanks to successful advocacy efforts by our coalition of land trusts and other partners, WSCC secured \$2 million in funding in the State Supplemental Budget in 2022 for a pilot of the FPLA program.

“Within the first year since pilot approval, Whidbey Camano Land Trust, Columbia Land Trust and Jefferson Land Trust have put the \$2 million to work protecting 237 acres of farmland across 3 counties.”

Within the first year since pilot approval, Whidbey Camano Land Trust, Columbia Land Trust and Jefferson Land Trust have put the \$2 million to work protecting 237 acres of farmland across 3 counties. We also continued our joint advocacy efforts during the 2023 legislative session and secured an exciting victory: in the 2023–2025 Capital Budget, FPLA transitioned from a pilot to an established program, as the State Legislature allocated \$4 million to WSCC to continue these groundbreaking efforts! *Story includes information from American Farmland Trust’s report, “Farms Under Threat: The State of the States”.*

Water Connects Us

Whether estuaries, inland waterways or tidal flats, the dynamic connection between land, rivers and sea defines life in Washington.



WHATCOM LAND TRUST

Expanding park and recreation space in a critical watershed

In early 2023, Whatcom Land Trust transferred an additional 12 acres of conservation land to the Blaine-Birch Bay Park and Recreation District 2 (BBBPRD2) for expansion of the **California Creek Estuary Park**. This is the third contiguous parcel purchased by the land trust to facilitate acquisition by BBBPRD2. For the last ten years, the land trust has prioritized conservation in the California Creek watershed to support critical habitat restoration, increase climate resilience, and support salmon rearing habitat. By protecting coastal wetlands and estuary shorelines, the wetlands provide a buffer from impacts of sea level rise and sustain critical wildlife habitat. Serving as the trailhead for Bay-to-Bay International Trail, Whatcom Land Trust plans to include an interpretive trail and kiosk, a picnic area, a kayak launch, and a ¾-mile loop trail. In total, more than 100 acres and 6,500 feet of shoreline will be conserved. *Story adapted from Whatcom Land Trust website article from February 2023.*

Top Left: A waterside view of Keystone Preserve's expansive coastline. Photo courtesy of David Welton. *Above:* An aerial view of the California Creek Estuary Park. Photo courtesy of Whatcom Land Trust. *Top Right:* A bufflehead duck spotted near Meyer's Point. Photo provided by Garret Yarter. *Bottom Right:* The river passing through Yakima Canyon Ranch acts as a haven for wildlife and recreation. Photo courtesy of Tyler Roemer.



WHIDBEY CAMANO LAND TRUST

Protecting farm, forest and coastline on Whidbey Island

Whidbey Camano Land Trust launched emergency efforts to protect the 226-acre **Keystone Preserve**, the most expensive acquisition in the land trust's history, when it was marketed to developers in early 2022 and they had to act fast to protect it. The property includes 2/3 mile of coastline, 175 acres of forest, and one of the oldest farms on Whidbey Island. It will be a public access showcase for coastal, forest and farmland conservation, and climate resilience. The Keystone Preserve will also feature regenerative farming in partnership with the local Organic Farm School. *Story adapted from Whidbey Camano Land Trust's May 2022 blog post.*



WESTERN RIVERS CONSERVANCY

Preserving one of Washington's premier waterways

Determined to protect a key area of the Yakima River in eastern Washington, Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) purchased the 812-acre **Yakima Canyon Ranch**. This site includes 3.5 miles of the Yakima River, which is known as one of the West's premier waterways, especially for fly fishing, recreational floating, spectacular views, and unique wildlife. WRC plans to convey this property to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) who will manage it as part of the Yakima Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Major fish recovery and restoration efforts are now underway across the basin, and the Yakama Nation is also working to reestablish runs of summer Chinook, coho and sockeye. *Story adapted from a Western Rivers Conservancy web story on Yakima Canyon Ranch.*



CAPITOL LAND TRUST

Coastal site partnership for conservation and education

A significant portion of Puget Sound shoreline will be permanently conserved, providing environmental research and education opportunities to the entire region, thanks to a new partnership between Capitol Land Trust (CLT), Washington State University (WSU), and affiliated groups, including the Squaxin Island Tribe. The land trust has purchased a permanent conservation easement on 94 acres of land, known as **Meyer's Point Environmental Field Station**, owned by WSU. The property includes multiple wildlife habitats, from estuary and nearshore habitat to an agricultural field and forest stands ranging from 15 to 70 years old. It also includes 43.6 acres of wetlands, 3,600 feet of Meyer's Creek, and 2,100 feet of unarmored marine shoreline. Capitol Land Trust and the Squaxin Island Tribe have a formal agreement to work jointly on coastal conservation efforts on this land and the Tribe provided support for this project with scientific and mapping services. In addition, the easement allows for the maintenance of existing WSU facilities, and up to 20 upland acres is reserved for teaching, research, and outreach. *Story adapted from a Capitol Land Trust article, "Meyer's Point —A Partnership for Conservation and Education."*



Out & About

Whether laying trail, getting your feet wet, or just watching the clouds go by, land trusts have something for everyone.

“In the middle of a city, the Anacortes Community Forest protects old growth forest, three lakes, wetlands and 50 miles of trails. In April 2022, Skagit Land Trust announced that it had partnered with Friends of the Forest to add an additional 253 acres to the existing 3,000 acres.”

PALOUSE LAND TRUST

Turning forestland into learning space

Some of our land trusts work in multiple states – and this project from Palouse Land Trust was so cool we have to share about it, even though it’s in Idaho. In 2013, landowner Judy LaLonde partnered with Palouse Land Trust to safeguard her beloved forestland outside of Troy, Idaho. Judy and her late brother, Brad Neuman, shared a dream of protecting the land from development, and creating a community learning space on the land through a conservation easement. Teachers from Troy schools, serving students K-12, have long used this as a learning space, but there were barriers to access remote areas and uneven terrain.

Over the past year, students from the University of Idaho College of Art and Architecture designed and constructed a sustainable outdoor classroom with input from Troy educators. The new **Neuman Environmental Learning Pavilion** utilizes surplus recycled decking material donated from the WSU Composite Materials & Engineering Center, locally-harvested and milled wood products and a solar-powered composting restroom facility. *Story adapted from Palouse Land Trust’s 2022 newsletter.*



DISHMAN HILLS CONSERVANCY

Learning about lands through recreation

Twice a month, rain or shine, Dishman Hills Conservancy (DHC) invites community members to join their staff-led hikes, **Two for Tuesdays**, a series designed to bring people out onto DHC’s land. The hikes allow participants to see wildflowers, beautiful views, and learn more about the work DHC is embarking on within the region. DHC’s dedication to the community doesn’t stop at hikes, they also frequently host free events such as their upcoming guided events centered on wildlife, moths, and lichens. Other events hosted this summer will include yoga and pilates. *Story provided by Dishman Hills Conservancy.*

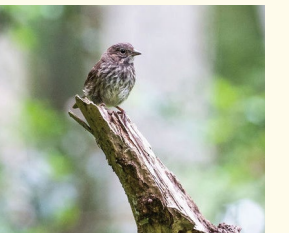
SKAGIT LAND TRUST

Expanding a beloved community forest

In the middle of a city, the **Anacortes Community Forest** protects old growth forest, three lakes, wetlands and 50 miles of trails. In April 2022, Skagit Land Trust announced that it had partnered with Friends of the Forest to add an additional 253 acres to the existing 3,000 acres. In the 1990s, a group of residents, including members of Friends of the Forest and Skagit Land Trust, worked with the City of Anacortes to ensure the forestlands would remain in their natural condition in perpetuity. After years of work, an amendment to the easement was completed and approved by Skagit Land Trust and the City of Anacortes to consolidate over twenty separate conservation easements held by the Skagit Land Trust. The City of Anacortes owns and manages the community forest, but the conservation easement will ensure that the forests surrounding the lakes remain clean and uncontaminated. Friends of the Forest provides educational, vocational, and stewardship opportunities in the forest. *Story adapted from Skagit Land Trust News, “Skagit Land Trust’s Conservation Easement on the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Grows By 253 Acres”.*


BAINBRIDGE ISLAND LAND TRUST

Taking a Stand for the Land on Bainbridge



In the face of increasing developmental pressure, Bainbridge Island Land Trust (BILT) launched a campaign aimed at safeguarding ecologically significant land across the island. The campaign, **Stand for the Land**, has successfully protected 120 acres of land. Most recently, as part of this campaign, BILT added a 10-acre expansion to the 13-acre Miller-Kirkman Preserve at **North Fork Manzanita Creek**. This property includes about 800-feet of fish-bearing stream used by coho salmon and a vibrant wetland complex covered in salmonberry, twinberry, sedges, and cattails. *Story adapted from BILT’s website.*

Left Page: Landowner Judy LaLonde reclining in the new Neuman Environmental Learning Pavilion. Photo courtesy of Palouse Land Trust. *Top Left:* The Anacortes Community Forest has become an unofficial classroom for students. Photo courtesy of Skagit Land Trust. *Bottom Left:* Two for Tuesday hiking group led by Dishman Hills Conservancy Executive Director, Ruth Gifford. Photo courtesy of CJ Kreitlow. *Bottom Right:* An alder branch offers itself as a perch for wildlife. Photo courtesy of Sue Larkin.



We believe land is a foundational asset, and defines our Northwest way of life. Together, we work with local voices to ensure our farms, forests, parks, trails and habitats provide for all people, forever.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge (Friends) recently purchased one of the last private properties within Catherine Creek's Recreation Area, a critical four-acre parcel of land which can now be permanently protected. Catherine Creek encompasses one of the most visible landscapes in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, easily viewed from iconic places such as the Memaloose Overlook and the Historic Columbia River Highway. In addition to protecting the ecological integrity of the land, Friends is focused on making the Gorge safer and more accessible for all. Since the acquisition, Friends has identified a few key areas which could increase access, such as enhancing connections to the adjacent ADA-accessible trails. They will work with the community as they envision a future which allows increased access for all. *Story adapted from, "Friends of the Columbia Gorge: A Diamond in the Rough at Catherine Creek".*



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