



Washington
WINTER 1996
Wildlands

The Magazine of The Nature Conservancy of Washington

Washington's Wild Success

Campaign leaves a lasting
legacy of new preserves

Washington Wildlands

The Magazine of The Nature Conservancy of Washington
WINTER 1996, VOL. 1, NO. 3

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The
Nature
Conservancy
OF WASHINGTON

The Nature Conservancy
is a private, non-profit conservation
organization committed to preserving plants,
animals and natural communities that represent the
diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and
waters they need to survive. The Conservancy
owns and manages 1,600 nature preserves
nationwide and 29 in Washington.

COVER: SKAGIT RIVER EAGLE BY KEITH LAZELLE
BACK COVER: PLANT ECOLOGIST CHRIS CHAPPELL
EXAMINING A NATIVE FOREST BY MICHAEL WEWER
PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

EDITOR'S NOTE

A Gift for Washington's Future

\$5 million to protect our precious diversity of life

We have great news for the people of Washington state, especially those who care about this wonderful place we call home.

The Nature Conservancy of Washington—thanks to many generous supporters—has made a \$5 million gift toward Washington's future.

It's the outcome of the Washington Wildlands campaign, a three-year fund-raising effort for land conservation, which the Conservancy completed in December.

As many of you have read in past issues of this magazine, the money has already enabled the Conservancy to establish five new preserves in the state and make important additions to three existing preserves. These wetlands, woodlands, canyonlands and grasslands are spectacular examples of the diversity of landscape and life that we find in Washington. (See the article on page 8.)

And we're not done. The Conservancy will purchase a number of other key natural areas in the near future with Washington Wildlands funds.

Additionally, the campaign will help support the scientific identification of future preserves and the long-term management of our existing preserves. Some of the Wildlands money has also helped fund our work with McChord Air Force Base, Fort Lewis and the Hanford Site to identify, and in some cases protect or restore, key natural areas on their lands. Two exciting results so far: the Conservancy's discovery of 10 previously unknown species on untouched parts of Hanford and the Army's designation of five natural areas on Fort Lewis.

What we've done with \$5 million is tangible, lasting conservation. It's a sizable legacy for future generations. And we've done it efficiently. Ninety-six percent of Washington Wildlands funds go directly into identification, purchase and management of the land. The rest paid for administration and fund-raising expenses. That's an impressive figure for any nonprofit group.

The job's not done, though. There is much more to do to preserve what remains of Washington's natural heritage. But for now, let's celebrate the good news of Washington Wildlands.

—Gordon Todd

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The Washington Natural Heritage Program researches and catalogs Washington's rarest natural treasures, contributing to smart planning and protection of scarce native habitats.

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KATHRYN BECK



Botanists Florence Caplow (left) and Kate Beck discovered three previously unknown plants at the Hanford Site, including this buckwheat.

Using scientific names for species would improve magazine, make plant identification easier

We have enjoyed reading Washington Wildlands in its new format and always look forward to the next issue.

I do have one suggestion, with reference to the article on page 3 of the Fall 1995 issue concerning the discovery of two unknown plants at the Hanford Site. As a (strictly) amateur botanist, I find it frustrating that the scientific names of plants are often omitted in your articles, making positive identification impossible. In this case you have named one of the species, but of the buckwheat species you state only that, "The broad plant grows low to the ground and has brilliant yellow flowers."

I try to keep my books on Northwest flora current and I find it impossible to do so with such scanty information. It might seem that scientific names can be of no interest to the general reading public, but I know I am not the only one who finds this a serious omission. Please, when referring to plants in the future, give us their Latin names!

Mae G. Kent
Lacey

Editor's note: This is an excellent idea and a point well taken. In this and all future issues, we will provide the scientific and common names of plant species. Many plants, however, do not have common names. Officially, the three new plants found at Hanford are unnamed, so they are currently known as Lesquerella sp. nov., Eriogonum sp. nov. and Astragalus reventiformis var. nov.

Visitation and volunteering

I am a believer and supporter in conservation and in The Nature Conservancy of Washington. Being a naturalist and having the good fortune of being able to spend all my life closely associated with

nature, my feelings run deep.

I enjoy your magazine, Washington Wildlands, but I see a major flaw. It tells about new lands acquired and gives just enough information to make you want to go see for yourself, but it gives no information on how to get

there. Why not correct this with maps? If the acquired preserves are not open to the public, this should be noted and the reasons why should be stated.

Complaint number two: Work nights and training sessions appear to be held only in Seattle . . . I would like to be a part of this training, but there is no way I'm going to drive to Seattle for an hour meeting.

I would very much like to become a volunteer for The Nature Conservancy . . . I have a lifetime knowledge of wild, free places I would like to share with others in the hope of preserving these places.

Lenn Smith
Shelton

Editor's note: Mr. Smith makes an excellent point about preserve visitation and we will make every effort to be clear about public access. For more information on this subject, see "Preserve visitation revisited" below.

On the volunteer matters, Volunteer Program Manager Kristin Mishler points out that we are expanding Conservancy volunteer opportunities outside of the Puget Sound area. With limited staff and resources, the Conservancy depends on volunteers to help in this effort. In March, we have organized volunteer speakers training in Yakima and the Tri-Cities, and we are planning programs for other parts of the state as well. See pages 12-13 for more details about volunteer activities.

Presidential impression

I read the Fall issue of Washington Wildlands recently and was most impressed.

John Sawhill, President
The Nature Conservancy
Arlington, Virginia

Preserve visitation revisited

Editor's note: We often receive questions and comments about preserve visitation, including one recently from member Charlene Kanahale, of Renton, in response to a letter in the Fall 1995 issue ("Can I visit the oaks?"). Thousands of people visit the Conservancy's Washington preserves every year. Many are popular with bird watchers, walkers and other nature enthusiasts. Information, visitation rules and directions to these preserves is available through the Seattle office.

While many preserves are open to the public, some are closed to minimize disturbance of endangered wildlife or fragile vegetation. The Conservancy's science and stewardship staff carefully consider which areas to close in order to protect the natural features and our members' investments in them. In addition, access to some preserves is difficult, sometimes requiring us to get permission to share private roads or cross adjacent property. In the interest of respecting our neighbors and their property, we don't encourage public visitation to these places.

PLEASE WRITE US

We encourage your letters with questions and comments.
Write to: Editor, The Nature Conservancy of Washington,
217 Pine St., #1100, Seattle, WA 98101.
Or E-mail at tncwash@aol.com
Please include your name and address.

Conservancy purchases key addition to Black River Preserve

The Black River Preserve—home to diverse wetland habitats, migratory birds and many native mammals—has grown.

The Nature Conservancy of Washington purchased a 24-acre parcel of land this fall that increases the size of the preserve to 283 acres. Located south of Olympia, the Black River is one of the best riverine

wetland areas left in Western Washington. It harbors a great variety of wetland types that support many native species, including black bear, green heron and beaver. The Conservancy established the preserve in 1993.



GORDON TODD

The Conservancy's Black River Preserve protects a dense wetland.

The new addition protects dense wetland thickets at the southern end of Black Lake and the mouth of the Black River. The parcel was purchased from a willing seller at fair market value. Because the wetland thickets are nearly impenetrable, visitation to the preserve is limited to researchers and educators.

Students of conservation

Four students got a close look at the world of conservation earlier this year when they interned for The Nature Conservancy of Washington. Their energy, enthusiasm and hard work contributed a great deal to the Conservancy.



GORDON TODD

Conservancy interns Greg Wright, Erin Carlson, Sunmeng Yan and Elizabeth Kaplan (left to right).

Army, Conservancy resolve to restore habitat in the new year



GORDON TODD

Volunteers removed Scotch broom from this area.

The conservation partnership between The Nature Conservancy of Washington and the U.S. Army's Fort Lewis continues into the new year with several habitat-restoration projects.

The military installation, established in 1917, harbors some of the most significant natural areas left in the Puget Trough. Native oak woodlands, wetlands and prairies are among the Fort's rare habitats. Since 1991, the Conservancy has worked cooperatively with the Army to identify Fort Lewis' rare species and ecosystems. As a result of this research, the Army established five natural areas on the installation last year.

Now the partners are concentrating on restoring damaged habitats to a more natural state. These cutting-edge projects include the following:

- ◆ Oak woodlands, once common in the Puget Trough, have now been reduced to few remnant patches. These open woodlands are habitat for the state-threatened western gray squirrel and neotropical migratory birds. A restoration project for this ecosystem is underway at the Fort, and entails the removal of competing Douglas-fir. A result of fire suppression, the invading conifers grow faster and taller than the oaks, eventually shading them out. Experienced loggers, contracted through the non-profit Columbia Basin Resource Conservation and Development program, are currently removing the firs. The project will continue with prescribed burning, revegetation of understory plants and planting of additional oaks.
- ◆ The revegetation of Muck Creek, a tributary of the Nisqually River, is designed to revitalize one of south Puget Sound's most important salmon-spawning streams, a restoration that will also favorably impact the state's second largest concentration of wintering bald eagles (after the Skagit River). This project consists of volunteers planting cottonwood and ash trees along the creek as well as the control of non-native invasive weeds.
- ◆ A prescribed fall burning program has been implemented for the Fort's renowned prairie habitat. Once part of a vast ecosystem of grasslands and oak savannahs that stretched from Olympia to Everett, 85 percent of south Puget Sound's remnant lowland prairies (about 6,000 acres) exist within the Fort's boundaries. Although a program for prescribed spring burning has existed for over a decade, the new fall burns will aid further in controlling non-native weeds like Scotch broom, which can alter habitat considerably.

—Langdon Cook



Planting the seeds of habitat restoration on Yellow Island

First they gathered seed from Yellow Island in the summer. Then they sent it to Seattle for cultivation in a high-tech greenhouse. After much care and feeding, more than 100 square feet of grass was soon growing in flats. Finally—by car, ferry and motorboat—they transported hundreds of pounds of sod hundreds of miles back to the San Juans for replanting on Yellow Island.

Seems like a lot of trouble just to plant some grass seed.

But this was no ordinary grass.

Staff and volunteers from The Nature Conservancy of Washington went to all this trouble to make sure Yellow Island's ecosystem stays intact. As part of the Conservancy's five-year habitat restoration program to maintain the island's native grassland, this project focused on enhancing its Idaho fescue grass population.

The rare grassland harbors Yellow's dense carpet of colorful wildflowers, making it a favorite destination of members and other nature enthusiasts. In addition to the fescue planting, the Conservancy has used controlled burning—which mimics natural fires—to

keep out weeds and woody shrubs that threaten the grassland.

Early last summer, Yellow Island caretakers, Linnea and Glenn Pritchard, gathered seeds from Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*), a perennial bunch grass once common throughout the San Juans and the primary component of Yellow's grassland plant community. The seeds were sent to the University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture where graduate student Catherine Houck propagated them. With the help of Conservancy volunteers and staff, she divided and transplanted the thread-like seedlings into flats. This was no small task, with a final product of more than 100 square feet of fescue.

The huge volume created a challenge for the team as they considered different methods for transporting the seedlings back to Yellow Island. Using a large metal plant rack borrowed from City People's Garden Store, they were able to transport the more than 30 flats of fescue.

Having traveled full circle, the young grasses are now back home—part of Yellow Island's magnificent native landscape.

communications and fund-raising staff. Greg is an environmental studies student from Spanaway.

Sunmeng Yan interned with the Conservancy through the Seattle Public Schools' student-training program, assisting the fund-raising and administrative staff. Sunmeng is a freshman at Rainier Beach High School.

Conservancy, City Light, Forest Service team up to protect Skagit additions

The Nature Conservancy of Washington and two partners have protected 547 additional acres in the Skagit River Bald Eagle Natural Area. The additions, which were made in December 1995, protect key tracts of forested wetlands, river floodplain, slough and riparian forest.

The Conservancy purchased a 62 acre tract of wetland and floodplain for the U.S. Forest Service. This parcel, at the confluence of the Cascade and Skagit rivers, will be transferred to the Forest Service, which will manage it for its wildlife and recreational values.

The Conservancy also negotiated the sales of two parcels of land from Crown Pacific to Seattle City Light. These parcels, totaling 485 acres, protect forested wetlands, slough and riparian (streamside) forest in the Skagit River corridor.

Thousands of bird watchers flock to the Skagit preserve each winter to view hundreds of eagles that gather to feed on spawned-out chum salmon. Two viewing areas along State Route 20 between Marblemount and Rockport are open for visitation. Peak viewing times are usually in January.



Catherine Houck and Fayette Krause prepare native fescue seedlings for transport to Yellow Island.

RUTH JOHNS

Erin Carlson, of Seattle, volunteered her summer to work with Laura Smith, director of conservation programs. Erin is a junior at Stanford University.

Elizabeth Kaplan, a biology student at Stanford, also volunteered to work with the Conservancy's conservation biologist, Sandy Andelman. A Mercer Island resident,

she is in her sophomore year.

Greg Wright a Stanford junior, received the school's Western Washington Alumni Club summer fellowship to work with the Conservancy's

BIODIVERSITY SLEUTHS

THE WASHINGTON NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM IS THE STOREHOUSE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT WASHINGTON'S RAREST NATURAL TREASURES. WITH EXPERT STAFF AND RELIABLE DATA, THE PROGRAM CONTRIBUTES TO SOUND PLANNING AND PROTECTION OF NATURAL AREAS—BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC.

BY CONNIE DAY



GORDON TODD

“I wasn’t expecting it to be there, because there hadn’t been any recent sightings in Puget Sound. But I was looking around the pond margin for another species and thought, ‘this looks like howellia habitat,’ and then it was right there. It was exciting.”

—Botanist John Gamon [above] on his recent finding of water howellia [right], a federally threatened plant species

When botanist John Gamon set out to search for rare plants at a pond on McChord Air Force Base last spring, the last thing he thought he would find was an aquatic plant that hadn’t been found in the Puget Sound area since the 1930s.

“I wasn’t expecting it to be there, because there hadn’t been any recent sightings in Puget Sound. But I was looking around the pond margin for another species and thought, ‘this looks like howellia habitat,’ and then it was right there,” recalls Gamon, rare-plant botanist for the Washington Natural Heritage Program of the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR). “It was exciting.”

Carefully walking along the banks, stooping to inspect the surface closely, Gamon found the tiny plant called *Howellia aquatilis*, or water howellia. This federally threatened species has thread-like stems and a single white blossom the size of a pinhead, making it tough to spot. Only a handful of sites support howellia in Washington as most of its original wetland habitat has been destroyed or degraded. Finding a healthy howellia population indicated that this was a remnant high-quality wetland system.

Gamon wasn’t the only one thrilled about finding a rare plant species and a native wetland. “We got a good response from Air Force officials,” adds Gamon, “they think it is impressive to have natural habitat and a rare plant out there.”

Gamon’s discovery is important because the information gathered at

the site is being used to help suggest the best way to protect a plant that is globally rare and was thought to have been lost from the Puget lowlands. It also illustrates the work being done by a small but important program within the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) called the Washington Natural Heritage Program.

Though it operates on a minuscule budget with less than a dozen full-time employees, the Heritage Program has earned a solid reputation among the scientific community for its high-quality data about the rare plant and animal species of the Evergreen State. The Heritage Program has also garnered accolades from private and public landowners who depend on the program for information that helps them make land-management decisions. In addition, the Heritage Program has recommended many high-priority sites for natural area protection based on their research into rare species and habitats. More than 40 of these sites have been protected as state Natural Area Preserves.

Like a well-managed business that knows what its assets are, Washington’s public agencies and citizens need to have thorough information about the state’s rarest natural assets. The Heritage Program is the primary source for this information and the only source for data on rare plants and outstanding native plant communities. Without it, we would not have sound data on which parts of Washington’s natural heritage are rare

and which are most imperiled.

Similar Heritage data centers have been established in most of the 50 states, Canadian provinces and a few other countries, most run by government agencies. Some are managed and funded by The Nature Conservancy.

Started in 1978 by a partnership of Washington state agencies and The Nature Conservancy, the Washington Natural Heritage Program became a part of the DNR in 1982. The Heritage Program collects and identifies elements of biodiversity such as plant communities, aquatic systems, and special animal and plant species. That information is then stored in a computer database, which is used by small landowners, developers, public utilities, timber companies, railroad companies, state and federal land managers, and a host of others seeking the best and most up-to-date information about what is living on their lands.

The nonregulatory Heritage Program also identifies plant species and natural communities that are at risk and makes recommendations about lands that should be protected. More than 40 of these sites have been purchased by the state or, if they were already state-owned, designated as state Natural Area Preserves (see article on next page). Many other Heritage sites have been purchased by other public agencies or private organizations, including The Nature Conservancy of Washington.

This kind of effort is critical and must be an ongoing, concerted professional endeavor to ensure solid scientific information. "It's important that someone is actively seeking out and recognizing those examples of natural elements that are important to protect for scientific and educational purposes. For it to fall under the realm of volunteerism wouldn't be adequate," says Pat Bleakney, who calls himself "an old clod-buster from Klickitat County" and is the chairperson for the Natural Heritage Advisory Council, the state-mandated body that helps decide what lands will be recommended as natural areas.

Heritage Program Manager Mark



PATRICK LITTLE

◀ *Water howellia, a recent find by the Heritage Program.*

▼ *After gathering field data, program staff analyze it at their Olympia office.*

▼▶ *Cartographer Betty Stephens maps natural features throughout the state.*

▼▼ *Fieldwork is the best way to gather information about species and natural communities. Here, John Gamon wades through a pond looking for rare native plants.*



MICHAEL WEVER



MICHAEL WEVER



CURT SOPER

► *Mark Sheehan, manager of the Heritage Program, sees his work as a service to help citizens with “thoughtful planning and land-management activities.”*

▼ and ▼ *Heritage Program plant ecologists Chris Chappell and David Giglio (wearing hat) inspect the condition of a native forest in southern Puget Sound.*



Sheehan sees the program as a service to citizens. The information it provides “is useful for thoughtful planning and land-management activities of all kinds, private and public. It’s better to know what your natural assets are rather than forging ahead blindly.”

“It (the Heritage Program) is like a calculator or a quality tool to help us do things more efficiently and faster,” says Mark Cline, a wetland ecologist with the Bellevue-based Foster Wheeler Environmental Corp.

Cline says information from the Heritage Program about rare oak woodland habitat in Thurston County proved to be invaluable to a public utility client. “It was prime habitat for the (state-threatened) western gray squirrel and it’s unique. It was in the area of the project that we would never had guessed it was there. The information helped us in the planning phases.”

“They are the only people who can provide that kind of comprehensive information about National Forest lands,” says Laura Potash, a forest botanist with the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. “Everybody relies on them for that information . . . I think all of us feel really strongly about the necessity of having the Heritage Program. When you are trying to make an evaluation on rare habitat, it helps to have a credible source of outside information to concur.”

The Heritage Program is “supported by many in the timber industry,” said University of Washington forestry professor Jim Agee. “It really is an early warning system about imperiled ecosystems and species, and it’s been very valuable.”

Support for this small but valuable program is clearly quite broad—from business interests to public agencies

The Heritage Program identifies plant species and natural communities at risk and makes recommendations about significant natural areas that should be protected.

NATURAL HERITAGE HIGHLIGHTS

The Washington Natural Heritage Program has played an important role in safeguarding a number of important natural area preserves, and providing solid scientific data about the state's diminishing communities of wetlands, forests, prairie lands and marine systems.

Here is a short primer on a few of the program's projects.

◆ **Neotropical Migratory Bird Study.** In the 1993, the Heritage Program completed the first in-depth analysis of the breeding habitats of neotropical migratory birds in Washington state. Funded by the Partners in Flight—a consortium of federal, state, and private groups—the report has provided valuable information that will help determine management, research and monitoring priorities for these avian long-distance travelers.

◆ **Chehalis River Surge Plain Natural Area Preserve.** This 2,500 acre preserve is the largest wetland of its kind on the West Coast. Located at the mouth of the Chehalis River and dominated by Sitka spruce, the area was recommended for protection in 1992 as a result of the information from the Heritage Program's inventory of coastal wetlands.

◆ **Columbia Hills Natural Area Preserve.** This 3,000-acre preserve was recommended by

the Natural Heritage Program to protect populations of three rare plant species and significant natural communities. It safeguards more than 85 percent of the world's known habitat of obscure buttercup (*Ranunculus reconditus*), a plant species endangered in Washington. The preserve also supports the largest known occurrence of the Idaho fescue-houndtongue hawkweed plant association. Native oak woodlands, potential habitat for the state-threatened western gray squirrel and the state-sensitive Lewis' woodpecker, are also within the preserve.

◆ **Marine and Estuarine Habitat Classification System.** Completed in 1989, this comprehensive scientific system was developed to serve as a framework for determining the best elements of marine and estuarine systems. It is used to help identify important marine communities, and it was the first of its kind in the United States. The Heritage Program gets inquiries about the system from scientists as far away as Sweden, Australia, Poland and South Africa.

to conservation groups. But recently a handful of people have surfaced who don't like this kind of information.

"We all tend to think that people want good information to make good decisions," said Sheehan, who has been with the program since 1980. "But there are a few people out there who don't want any information. They believe that no news is good news, that information only causes problems. But they don't appear to represent the majority of people."

Those who are dedicated to protecting the state's rich biodiversity far outnumber the naysayers, however.

"People in development and industry would prefer to have the data available to avoid problems, and if there is no current data it brings more uncertainty to the process," said Elliot Marks, executive director of The Nature Conservancy of Washington. "There isn't any other source for this data, and if you don't have this system, then you go back to the old days. Ignorance isn't bliss, ignorance is trouble."

In early 1996, the Heritage Program plans to provide even more value for the state when it enters cyberspace with a home page on the Internet. Via computer, people will be able to access general species information, including rare plants and native plant communities throughout the state.

As society enters the Information Age, the Heritage Program will continue to supply information that is both age-old and cutting-edge.

"Heritage's research allows people to understand what Washington's landscape was like before widespread human settlement. And at the same time it tells us what parts of the landscape are most threatened by human activities," Marks said. "Many Washington citizens aren't familiar with the program, but it has helped preserve examples of our natural heritage for future generations. It's one of government's best bargains that benefits everyone." 🌿

Connie Day is a freelance writer and magazine editor in Bellevue, Washington.



Wildlands

BLACK RIVER

WAHKIACUS OAKS

GRAYS BAY

YAKIMA CANYON

KLICKITAT OAKS

SKAGIT RIVER

BARKER MOUNTAIN

FOULWEATHER BLUFF

Wild Success

Three years in the making, The Nature Conservancy's \$5 million Washington Wildlands campaign is complete, leaving a lasting legacy of new preserves.

Black River. Wahkiacus Oaks. Grays Bay. Yakima Canyon. Klickitat Oaks. Skagit River. Barker Mountain. Foulweather Bluff.

These preserves mark the legacy of The Nature Conservancy of Washington's \$5 million Washington Wildlands campaign, which ended in December several thousand dollars over the top. The campaign, which began in 1992, was the Conservancy's largest-ever fund-raising effort in the state.

So far through the campaign, the Conservancy has purchased land to establish five new preserves in Washington and has bought key additions to three existing preserves. Additionally, the campaign has allowed the Conservancy to identify other significant natural areas, many of which the Conservancy hopes to acquire in the near future with Washington Wildlands funds.

"This is one of the best conservation bargains possible," said David Skinner, head of the Wildlands campaign and



KEITH LAZELLE



JONATHAN SOLL



KEITH LAZELLE

◀ *The new Grays Bay Preserve safeguards a spruce swamp where the Grays River joins the Columbia.*

▲ *A band of oak-conifer woodland borders a stream at the new Klickitat Oaks Preserve, which protects this rare habitat.*

▲▶ *Conservancy scientists discovered several unknown species at the Hanford Site, including this buckwheat.*

▶ *The steep basalt cliffs of the Yakima Canyon Preserve protect the rare basalt daisy and raptor nesting habitat.*





ART WOLFE



LYNN CORNELIUS

former chair of the Washington Conservancy. “The Conservancy has already accomplished a great deal of land conservation with a relatively small amount of money, and they’re not done yet. They will safeguard a number of other areas before the campaign money is exhausted.”

Genuine thanks go to the Conservancy’s many supporters who donated to the Washington Wildlands campaign, especially our members who gave \$103,000 last year to put the campaign over the top. This was in response to letters from Executive Director Elliot Marks, who informed members that a generous individual would match their gifts by 50 percent.

A pledge from the Trillium Corporation also was key in closing the campaign. Leadership gifts were made by: Walker Richer & Quinn, Inc.; Burlington Resources; Key Bank of Washington; Quality Food Centers; Microsoft; The Boeing Company; Charlotte Martin Foundation; National Fish & Wildlife Foundation; Wilburforce Foundation; Norcliffe Foundation; Forest Foundation; Tosco Northwest Company/BP; and Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation. 🌲

◀ *Wahkiacus Oaks Preserve harbors oak woodland and savannah, habitat for the threatened western gray squirrel.*

▲ *The campaign funded additions to the Skagit River eagle preserve and* ▶ *the grassland preserve at Barker Mountain.*

▶ *An addition to Foulweather Bluff further protects this coastal marsh.*



JEFF BOUCHER



VOLUNTEER HALL OF FAME

The Nature Conservancy of Washington is fortunate to have 400 volunteers dedicated to preserving natural areas. These people have reached all-star status with their long-term commitments.

■ 100+ HOURS

Kelly O'Rourke, Jenny Brown, John Savel, John Douglas, Tammi Nowak, Elizabeth Kaplan, Ellen Smith, Richard Mounts

■ 500+ HOURS

Dede Kennedy—Has co-managed our annual meeting and field trip programs.

■ 1,000+ HOURS

Sue Clark—Has co-managed our field trip program for several years and is currently providing support to our biologists.

CALENDAR OF VOLUNTEER EVENTS

The Nature Conservancy of Washington has volunteer opportunities in many parts of the state throughout the year. To sign up or request more information on volunteering, call (206) 343-4345, ext. 312.

TUESDAY WORKNIGHTS

Tuesday Worknights continue through the winter in the Seattle office from 5-8 p.m. Presentations are once a month from 6-7 p.m., followed by new volunteer orientation.

Jan. 2 For the Birds

Learn about ways you can put your interest in birds to work with the Conservancy.

Feb. 6 Naturelink

Find out how you can help the Washington Wildlife Federation expose inner-city families to nature.

Mar. 5 Skagit Update

Talk with Mary Wilcosz, new Skagit preserve manager, about current projects and volunteer opportunities.

Apr. 2 Fort Lewis Conservation

Join Conservancy biologist Patrick Dunn for previews of volunteer projects to restore habitat at Fort Lewis.

SPEAKERS BUREAU TRAINING

Seattle: Jan. 17 & 24, Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m., two-part session (adult speakers bureau training)

Yakima: March 16, Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (adult and youth education combined training)

Tri-Cities: March 17, Sunday, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (adult and youth education combined training)



BIODIVERSITY:
The Next Generation

Yakima, Tri-Cities volunteers needed for youth education program



The Nature Conservancy of Washington's Youth Education Program is going places.

Namely, Yakima and the Tri-Cities.

The program—launched last spring to inform students about the importance of biodiversity—is expanding its reach to additional parts of the state.

Designed and run by Conservancy volunteers, the program has had great

success with presentations to schools in Western Washington. Now they are looking for like-minded volunteers to run the program in Eastern Washington.

“This program enables these students to learn about ecosystems in a fun way,” said Kristin Mishler, volunteer program manager for the Conservancy. “Our plan from the beginning was to get the program off the ground near our office in Seattle and then expand it to reach students in other regions throughout the state.”

A recent grant from the Arco Foundation will enable the Conservancy to pay for slide shows and other educational materials for the program's expansion. But Conservancy volunteers are needed to make it fly in communities outside Puget Sound.

In March, the Conservancy will offer training seminars in Yakima and Tri-Cities for people interested in joining the program. In Yakima, training will be held March 16, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The Tri-Cities training will be held March 17 at the same time. If you would like to register for either training session or know of a school interested in the program, please contact Kristin Mishler at (206) 343-4345, ext. 312.

Youth Education Program volunteers present slide shows, talks and class activities geared toward different grade levels from first grade through high school. Volunteers also seek opportunities to present the programs in their area.

Thanks to the volunteers who launched the program: Bob Graves, Richard Mounts, Dave Morrison, Karl Englert, Dan Beals, Steve Kingsford-Smith and Aimee Backlund.

“The loss of biodiversity is a key environmental issue that current and future generations must address,” Mishler said. “This program is a good start at educating future leaders.”

—Michael Wewer

GORDON TODD

GORDON TODD



A preserve of one's own: Be a DNR land steward

Adding to the already extensive list of this year's stewardship opportunities, The Nature Conservancy of Washington is helping the state Department of Natural Resources in recruiting volunteer site stewards for five preserves in the DNR's Natural Area Preserve program.

Acting as caretakers for the preserves, site stewards will be responsible for conducting monthly surveys of invasive weed growth, human impact and overall condition of each site for at least a year.

"It's a learning opportunity," said Dean Dougherty, a Conservancy volunteer stewardship coordination for the past three years. "Stewards will be working with the state and in some cases, there may be extra opportunities for involvement, including seed collection, invasive weed removal and prescribed burnings."

The sites are: Pineroft in Spokane, Bald Hill southeast of Olympia, Rocky Prairie south of Olympia, Badger Gulch near Goldendale and Columbia Hills near Goldendale.

Volunteers interested in becoming site stewards should

contact the Conservancy for a list of responsibilities at each site and application forms. Call Kristin Mishler at (206) 343-4345, ext. 312.

Want more volunteer info?

If you would like more information about volunteer opportunities with The Nature Conservancy of Washington, we've got you covered.

During the field season (February-September), we mail the monthly Volunteer Stewardship Bulletin, featuring notices of preserve work opportunities throughout the state. These jobs include removing aggressive weeds, planting native species for restoration and monitoring bird and butterfly populations. The first issue of 1996 will be published in January.

For general volunteer information, the VIP News (Volunteers In Protection) is published quarterly. This highlights outdoor and office jobs and profiles people and projects.

Both publications are published entirely by Conservancy volunteers.

Call (206) 343-4348, ext. 329 and leave your address if you would like to receive either or both of these bulletins.



Susan Aldworth's pen helps kids delve into biodiversity

Many thanks to Susan Aldworth for her beautiful pen-and-ink drawings of Washington forests, grasslands and their inhabitants. As part of the Youth Education Program, Conservancy volunteers use them to teach kids about the state's ecosystems. Children will enjoy coloring the poster edition.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE



GORDON TODD

Veteran volunteer Helen Griggs does it for the kids

"You can give something of yourself at any age," says Helen Griggs, longtime conservationist and stalwart volunteer for The Nature Conservancy of Washington.

During her 85 years, Helen has seen a lot of change in Washington state. Born and raised here, she remembers going on childhood outings to mountains and old-growth forests long before the protection of such places seemed necessary.

But as the inroads of settlement and industry increasingly altered the landscape around her, Helen saw a glimpse of the future and joined the infant ranks of environmentally concerned people. In 1968, she presented testimony to a congressional subcommittee that would lead to the establishment of the North Cascades National Park.

As a volunteer, Helen has shared her enthusiasm and vision with others by lending a hand on field trips to Conservancy preserves throughout the state, including sightseeing tours of the wildflowers on Yellow Island and bald eagles in the Skagit River Bald Eagle Natural Area. More recently she has brought her experience in conservation to the Conservancy's Seattle office, contributing more than 500 hours in the past four years to membership correspondence.

"Helen is our answer lady," says Kristin Mishler, volunteer manager. "We're lucky to have her in this position. She knows so much about the state's ecology, answering members' questions like, 'Where can I see a tufted puffin?'"

On a recent workday at the office, Helen was busy responding to a pile of letters sent by concerned grade schoolers from Spokane. The opportunity to help younger generations learn about conservation tickled her.

"I have a daughter, two grandsons and two great-grandsons, and they're all environmentally aware," she says proudly. "That's why I do this work—for them and future generations. I want them to have the same opportunities I had as a child experiencing the wonders of nature."

—Langdon Cook



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Roy F. Weston, Inc.
Wheelabrator Spokane Inc.
(New members are in bold.)

CORPORATE & FOUNDATION GRANTS

The following corporations and charitable foundations have made special grants to The Nature Conservancy of Washington.

Seattle Audubon Society	\$25,000	Skagit River Preserve
Key Bank of Washington	21,363	Washington Wildlands
Quality Food Centers Inc.	18,488	Washington Wildlands
Forest Foundation	26,666	Washington Wildlands
Mountaineers Foundation	15,000	Washington Wildlands
Peierls Foundation	12,950	Washington Annual Fund
Northwest Fund for the Environment	9,500	Washington Wildlands
Alaska Airlines	8,200	Washington Annual Fund
Harder Corporation	7,500	Public Lands Conservation
Seattle Foundation	7,500	Washington Annual Fund
Walker Charitable Trust	5,000	Washington Wildlands

MEMORIALS

Donations honoring the memories of the following individuals have been made to The Nature Conservancy of Washington. We are privileged to carry on our work in their names.

Henry Andersen
Lydia Berschauer
Edward Brown
Norman W. Brunswig
David Burke
Claire Stewart Burkhart
Dan Charbonnier
James J. Collins
Marie Van Winkle Cushney
Christina Eidman
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CONTACT:

Lisa Carroll
The Nature Conservancy of Washington
217 Pine St., Suite 1100
Seattle, Washington 98101
(206) 343-4344

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



GORDON TODD

Bill Hainer budgets for monthly conservation

For seven years Bill Hainer lived and traveled on his boat. All that goes with life on the water—the lap of waves, rhythm of tides, a glimpse of a migrating whale—fine-tuned Bill’s sense of his own interaction with the natural world.

But during his nautical explorations of the Puget Sound, Bill also witnessed the degradation of marine ecosystems and once-beautiful maritime landscapes. With this dual understanding of limits and possibilities, he decided over a decade ago to join The Nature Conservancy.

Bill gives the Conservancy a donation each month, and he encourages other members to do the same. Living on a budget, he says this schedule enables him to give more over the course of a year than he would if it came down to a single annual donation.

Originally, the Seattle resident started with a monthly gift equal to annual Conservancy membership dues, about \$25. Bill has increased his gifts each year, and now his monthly donation is more than four times the original amount.

“I encourage members to give their annual dues every month, if they can afford it, and then raise the amount periodically, so we can move even faster to protect threatened habitats,” he said.

As an independent educational consultant, Bill said he recognizes the importance of collaboration within the community. He sees the Conservancy’s goal of preserving biodiversity through land conservation and ecosystem management as consistent with his own approach to education, and he applauds the Conservancy’s efforts to protect sensitive habitats by working with private landholders and government agencies.

As Bill can tell you, sailing around the Conservancy’s Yellow Island Preserve in the San Juans—with its spectacular parade of native wildflowers and seabirds—is proof that it’s possible to navigate the rocky straits of development and conservation.

—Langdon Cook

Charles Vail: A legacy of conservation

During his lifetime, Charles Vail enjoyed the solitude of mountains, frequently hiking, fishing and skiing alone in the peaceful seclusion of Washington’s Cascades.

As a way to preserve natural areas for future generations and for those who find solace in similar solitary pursuits, Vail left his home and two trusts to The Nature Conservancy of Washington when he died. The Conservancy received the gift—with a value of more than \$400,000—this year.

Born in Hamilton, Mississippi, in 1919, Vail came to Washington in 1955 and worked for Boeing as an engineer.

Vail leaves a legacy of love for the outdoors and a commitment to conservation. His generosity ensures the support of natural places in Washington—places for wildlife, personal reflection and spiritual renewal.

Holland America sails with Conservancy in mind

Seattle-based Holland America Lines Westours Inc. has launched a new program that supports the work of The Nature Conservancy. For each Conservancy member who books a trip with Westours, Holland America will contribute \$100 to the Conservancy.

The company has committed \$100,000 to the Conservancy to support conservation efforts in areas of the world where their ships sail. Donations will benefit the Conservancy’s Washington, Alaska and international programs.

The Nature Conservancy of Washington has already received its first gift through the program, a \$10,000 donation Washington’s

annual fund. With this gift Holland America joins Washington’s 85 Corporate Associate members



GORDON TODD

Chona Poblete looking after members

Chona Poblete knows how to work with people. Volunteering in The Nature Conservancy of Washington’s Seattle office, she has donated more than 500 hours of her time helping manage the volunteer staff of 400.

“Cho makes everyone feel at home,” says Kristin Mishler, Conservancy volunteer manager. “Both volunteers and staff appreciate her warm and helpful presence.” One of Cho’s biggest jobs was making sure volunteers received thanks and recognition for their work.

Although we’ll still see her on Tuesday Volunteer Nights, Cho has joined the Conservancy staff and will be responsible for looking after an even larger force—the extended Conservancy family in Washington. All 32,000 members!

As the new membership and development assistant, Cho is replacing Tom Jewell, who is leaving after six successful years in member services.

“It’s difficult to say goodbye to Tom, but I’m looking forward to working with our members throughout the state,” Cho said. “I’m learning a whole new side of the Conservancy.”

So, if you have any questions about your membership, Cho will be the pleasant voice on the other end of the phone.



Some people hope for a better future. We'd like to thank those of you who planned for one.

*T*he Nature Conservancy's Legacy Club honors those who make long-term gifts by remembering the Conservancy in their wills or estate plans. Club members may designate their gift to the Washington Legacy Fund, which provides a solid base of support for The Nature Conservancy of Washington's work for generations to come.

Legacy Club members receive a special newsletter, as well as exclusive opportunities to take part in field trips and special events. Please allow us to recognize your commitment. If the Conservancy is in your estate plans, or if you would like information on how to make a planned gift, please contact Lisa Carroll at the address below.



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PLEASE MAIL TO:

Lisa Carroll, Director of Planned Giving
The Nature Conservancy of Washington
217 Pine Street, Suite 1100
Seattle, WA 98101

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NATURAL TREASURES

The experts of the Washington Natural Heritage Program seek out the state's rarest native species and ecosystems, page 4.

