

Skagit County Conservation Futures Advisory Board
Meeting Summary
March 10, 2026

Members Present | Advisory Rep. Affiliation

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| ☒ Scott DeGraw (chair) District 3 | ☒ Margery Hite Skagit Conservation District |
| ☐ Andrea Xaver (vice chair) District 2 | ☒ Keith Morrison At Large |
| ☒ Jim Glackin Skagit Land Trust | ☐ Owen Peth District 1 |
| ☒ Audrey Gravley Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland | ☒ Sarah Stoner <i>ex officio</i> Skagit County |

Others Present—Affiliation

Jenn Johnson, Skagit County Public Works
Taylor Scott, Skagit County Public Works

Scott called the meeting to order at 7:50AM. The group met in a non-typical meeting room with different technology; sound was an issue and delayed meeting start.

Review Agenda

Agenda approved. Quorum present with minimum of four voting members.

Review January 13 Meeting Summary

Jim made a motion to approve minutes; Audrey seconded. All in favor.

Property Updates

The group discussed updates on the properties currently in queue for agricultural conservation easements. The queued applicants encompass 141 acres and 3 development rights.

Sarah shared that several potential applications are pending, but no applications are in hand. Right now, the work is pre-application development, including site visits, discovery conversations, research on deed and lot certification documents that are missing/unrecorded and how to handle those.

Marketing & Application Process

Annual Report—2025

Sarah is drafting the updated annual report for Farmland Legacy. A total of 21,000 copies will print by Skagit Publishing for April distribution. One full page is dedicated to farmland succession, with stories from two local farmers: Dave Hedlin and John Thulen. Access last year's [full report here](#).

21,000 copies, to distribute as follows (April 2026):

- a) Skagit Valley Food Co-op Natural
- b) Skagit Valley Herald
- c) Anacortes American
- d) La Conner Community News
- e) Concrete Herald
- f) Overruns

Monitoring & Stewardship Updates

Kai is absent today. Sarah reported that work is still in motion for IT and GIS approval review of the Landscape easement software.

Sarah is working—now and into 2027—to establish and improve monitoring systems and stewardship protocols with the understanding that management of FLP easements will become increasingly complex over time. This complexity is due to 1) increasing number of easements; 2) increasing number of divisions of ownership within easements. Clear systems, access to files and archived files, and accurate records are key to easement stewardship on behalf of our landholders. Moving from a mix of Excel files, tabs, Word and PDF documents to a central easement management software is a key step.

Succession & Land Access Grant

The group discussed the third and final winter workshop series on succession. This final session ***Your Farm's Future: Moving Forward*** (February 18) included a showcase of all the tools available for farmers/farmland owners in their succession process.

A total of 80+ farmers attended the three workshops. Not incl. the service providers and speakers and admin. Representing 60 farms. For a “first time” event that’s not established event (like Ag Summit, 10+ years—confirm), great success.

Sarah is following up with a resource guide + survey asking for input on specific needs and wants for future workshops and support around succession.

The format offered stakeholder organizations that have limited resources (staff, finances) to take advantage of relevant programing that gives them the ability to partner and showcase the event without the heavy lifting.

The first session of three shared stories from our farmers (***Understanding the Journey***) and the second offered a traditional overview of the process (***Planning the Transition***)—financial, legal, managerial. This final session should present all resources available for farmers/farmland owners in their succession journey and get their creative juices flowing. So many of our farmers’ situation do not fit the traditional straight path. Our farmers need to hear about alternative but equally viable paths towards succession.

Related news:

[Press release](#), Skagit County Farmland Legacy Hosts Community Workshops on Succession Planning”
La Conner Community News articles, based on Farmland Legacy’s three-part workshop series supporting farmland succession for our mid- and late-career Skagit farmers.

- 1) <https://laconnercommunitynews.org/2026/01/26/farm-succession-experts-share-tips-with-agriculture-community/> (January 26, 2026)
- 2) <https://laconnercommunitynews.org/2026/02/01/local-farmers-discuss-succession-multi-generational-land-stewardship/> (February 1, 2026)

Access to farmland remains a significant obstacle for new producers and those looking to expand:
[Seeking land connections at the Oregon Small Farms Conference](#)

[Succession commercial](#) during Super Bowl. *Who cut the onions?!* If only it was this simple...

Member Updates

The group discussed the recent listing and sale of a five-acre farmland parcel with development right. The property is now sold at \$325,000.

Recent ag news of interest was shared by Sarah but not discussed:

- [NW Ag Show: Oregon Farm Bureau leader says state's ag industry in crisis](#) (Capitol Press, January 16, 2026).
 - From the article, "Many producers can't see their sons and daughters succeeding in the industry, so they're looking at selling their farms," said Austin McClister, communications director for the Oregon Farm Bureau. "Sixty-nine percent of farmers are operating at a net cash loss in Oregon," McClister said. high input and labor costs and poorly thought-out policy were combining to crush farmers.
- Good news! [Local Farmer Declines Multi-Million Data Center Bid to Preserve Land Instead in Chester County, PA.](#)
- [Skagit Delta tidegate flap goes to 9th Circuit Court of Appeals](#) (Capitol Press, Feb. 11, 2026)
- [Seattle spent years misleading the public about Skagit River salmon. Now it will pay \\$1 billion for fish passage.](#) Subhead: [For years, Seattle City Light insisted its hydroelectric dams on the Skagit River were not harming salmon.](#) (KING 5, March 6, 2026)

Financial Report / Administrative

The financial summary is updated through March 2026 and reflects easement properties closed and recorded.

CFAB 2026 Meeting Dates

April 14
May 12
June 9

July 14
August 11 (tbd/cnx)
September 8

October 13 (tbd)
November 10
December 8

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 AM