

**ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE SKAGIT COUNTY
URBAN GROWTH AREA OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN**

WHEREAS RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160 require each Urban Growth Area (UGA) to include greenbelt and open space areas and require cities and counties to identify open space corridors within and between UGAs; and

WHEREAS on July 24, 2000, Skagit County adopted amendments to its Comprehensive Plan through Ordinance No. 17938; and

WHEREAS the Friends of Skagit County (FOSC) challenged the County's adoption of Ordinance No. 17938 before the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board (Hearings Board) in Case No.00-2-0046c, arguing, among other things, that it failed to identify greenbelts and open space corridors within and between UGAs per RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160; and

WHEREAS the Hearings Board, in its February 6, 2001, Final Decision and Order (FDO) in Case No. 00-2-0046c, held that "(t)his generalized discussion in the [Skagit County Comprehensive Plan], plus city maps (that do not show green belts in unincorporated UGAs) and County parks plan maps (which do not show open space corridors between UGAs), do not adequately meet the requirements of RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160." The Hearings Board further ordered the County to within 180 days "adopt maps or some other clear mechanism to identify greenbelts and open space areas within UGAs and open space corridors within and between UGAs"; and

WHEREAS the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance No. R20020036 on January 28, 2002, amending the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan in response to the 2001 FDO; and

WHEREAS FOSC appealed the adoption of Ordinance No. R20020036 to the Hearings Board in Case No. 02-2-0005 arguing continued violation of RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160 relating to open space corridors and greenbelts; and

WHEREAS the County entered into settlement negotiations with FOSC, and the parties agreed to proposed language amending the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan to address the open space corridors and greenbelts issue in Case No. 02-2-0005; and

WHEREAS on May 13, 2003, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance O20030013 as part of the settlement agreement with FOSC, which overrides Ordinance No. R20020036 and adopts the language subsequently added to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan in Policy 2B-1.3:

"By December 1, 2007, Skagit County will develop a program to identify and prioritize open space corridors and greenbelts within and between UGAs that include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas. The program will include a list identifying and prioritizing open space and greenbelt lands desirable for public acquisition. Any potential acquisition that may be proposed by such a program will not include any condemnation actions, but

CC: Code Publishing

instead will be achieved by voluntary donation, CaRD subdivision, or mutually agreeable sale;" and

WHEREAS in October 2006, the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) and Planning and Development Services (Department) were awarded a Regional Collaboration Competitive Grant from the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) to prepare the open space plan called for in Comprehensive Plan Policy 2B-1.3; and

WHEREAS the Department conducted an extensive public involvement program in 2007 and 2008 as listed in Attachment A of the proposed plan; and

WHEREAS on January 9, 2009, the Department issued a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) for the proposed open space plan; and

WHEREAS also on January 9, 2009, the Department sent the proposed plan to CTED for 60-day review under RCW 36.70A.106; and

WHEREAS on January 8 and January 22, 2009, the Department published a Notice of Availability, Public Comment Period, and Public Hearing Notice regarding the proposed plan; and

WHEREAS on March 17, 2009, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed plan and heard testimony from fourteen (14) individuals and organizations; and

WHEREAS 35 written comment documents were received by the March 20, 2009, extended deadline for written comments; and

WHEREAS on April 21, 2009, the Planning Commission held deliberations on this matter; and

WHEREAS during deliberations, the Planning Commission determined that an additional work session to discuss issues raised during public comment and deliberations would be helpful; and

WHEREAS a work session was held on June 16, 2009, during which the Planning Commission and staff agreed to make certain changes to the draft plan prior to final Planning Commission deliberation and action; and

WHEREAS the changes included the following items:

1. New definition section added to preface of Plan;
2. Clarified explanation regarding strategy for acquisition/prioritization of properties added to FAQ's of Plan;
3. Map legends changed to 'trails' vs. 'public access' throughout Plan;
4. Map legends changed from 'existing trails' vs. 'possible trails' throughout Plan;
5. Removed arrows from open space indicators on maps throughout Plan;
6. Removed zoning designations from maps;

7. Added North arrow to maps;
8. Added new OSRSI/Federal/State lands map to App. A (A-1); and

WHEREAS on July 30, 2009 the Planning Commission reviewed the proposed revisions to the draft plan as described above and held final deliberations on the matter; and

WHEREAS the Planning Commission recommended approval of the UGA Open Space Concept Plan as amended [Attachment 2 to the Planning Commission Recorded Motion] as well as adoption of specified recommendations by a vote of 8 to 0; and

WHEREAS on August 7, 2009, the Planning Commission chair signed a Recorded Motion reflecting the Planning Commission's recommendations and findings of fact (Attachment 1); and

WHEREAS on August 11, 2009, the Department transmitted the results of the July 30, 2009, Planning Commission deliberations to the Skagit County Board of Commissioners for review at a public meeting scheduled for August 18, 2009; and

WHEREAS on August 18, 2009, the Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in a public work session to review and deliberate on the Planning Commission's recommendations and findings of fact contained within the Recorded Motion; and

WHEREAS the Skagit County Board of Commissioners acknowledges and appreciates the participation of the cities and towns in the UGA Open Space Concept planning process, and the work of the Planning Commission to achieve a unanimous vote on the proposal and the four recommendations; and

WHEREAS the Skagit County Board of Commissioners supports the use of lesser traveled County roads for recreational opportunities such as walking and bicycling; and

WHEREAS the Skagit County Board of Commissioners has determined that due to the generally weak economic conditions no funding strategy involving special taxation will be implemented at this time.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners adopts the Skagit County UGA Open Space Concept Plan as recommended by the Planning Commission in its Recorded Motion and attached thereto, to be effective immediately; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners adopts the findings of fact as recommended by the Planning Commission in its Recorded Motion and attached thereto and will duly consider the recommendations contained in that Recorded Motion; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY ORDAINED that if any section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance should be held to be noncompliant, invalid or unconstitutional by a court of

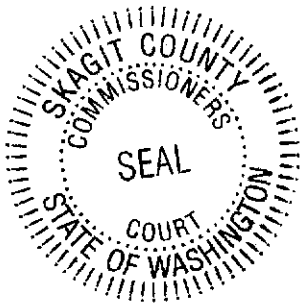
competent jurisdiction, such noncompliance, invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the compliance, validity or constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance.

WITNESS OUR HANDS AND THE OFFICIAL SEAL OF OUR OFFICE this 8th day of September, 2009.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Chairman



Sharon D. Dillon

Sharon D. Dillon, Commissioner

Ron Wesen

Ron Wesen, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Amber Klobajic, Assistant
~~Linda Hammons~~, Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Jill M. Olson
Jill M. Olson, Civil Deputy
Prosecuting Attorney's Office

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Gary R. Christensen
Gary R. Christensen, Director
Planning & Development Services

**SKAGIT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
RECORDED MOTION
UGA OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN**

WHEREAS RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160 require each Urban Growth Area (UGA) to include greenbelt and open space areas and cities and counties to identify open space corridors within and between UGAs; and

WHEREAS on July 24, 2000, Skagit County adopted amendments to its Comprehensive Plan through Ordinance No. 17938; and

WHEREAS the Friends of Skagit County (FOSC) challenged the County's adoption of Ordinance No. 17938 before the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board (Hearings Board) in Case No.00-2-0046c, arguing, among other things, that it failed to identify greenbelts and open space corridors within and between UGAs per RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160; and

WHEREAS the Hearings Board, in its February 6, 2001, Final Decision and Order (FDO) in Case No. 00-2-0046c, held that "(t)his generalized discussion in the [Skagit County Comprehensive Plan], plus city maps (that do not show green belts in unincorporated UGAs) and County parks plan maps (which do not show open space corridors between UGAs), do not adequately meet the requirements of RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160." The Hearings Board further ordered the County to within 180 days "adopt maps or some other clear mechanism to identify greenbelts and open space areas within UGAs and open space corridors within and between UGAs"; and

WHEREAS the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance No. R20020036 on January 28, 2002, amending the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan in response to the 2001 FDO; and

WHEREAS FOSC appealed the adoption of Ordinance No. R20020036 to the Hearings Board in Case No. 02-2-0005 arguing continued violation of RCW 36.70A.110(2) and .160 relating to open space corridors and greenbelts; and

WHEREAS the County entered into settlement negotiations with FOSC, and the parties agreed to proposed language amending the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan to address the open space corridors and greenbelts issue in Case No. 02-2-0005; and

WHEREAS on May 13, 2003, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance O20030013 as part of the settlement agreement with FOSC, which overrides the Ordinance No. R20020036 and adopts the language subsequently added to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan in Policy 2B-1.3:

"By December 1, 2007, Skagit County will develop a program to identify and prioritize open space corridors and greenbelts within and between UGAs that include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas. The program will include a list identifying and prioritizing open space and greenbelt lands desirable for public acquisition. Any potential acquisition that may be proposed by such a program will not include any condemnation actions, but

instead will be achieved by voluntary donation, CaRD subdivision, or mutually agreeable sale;" and

WHEREAS in October 2006, the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) and Planning and Development Services (Department) were awarded a Regional Collaboration Competitive Grant from the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) to prepare the open space plan called for in Comprehensive Plan Policy 2B-1.3; and

WHEREAS the Department conducted an extensive public involvement program in 2007 and 2008 as listed in Attachment A of the proposed plan; and

WHEREAS on January 9, 2009, the Department issued a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) for the proposed open space plan; and

WHEREAS also on January 9, 2009, the Department sent the proposed plan to CTED for 60-day review under RCW 36.70A.106; and

WHEREAS on January 8 and January 22, 2009, the Department published a Notice of Availability, Public Comment Period, and Public Hearing Notice regarding the proposed plan; and

WHEREAS on March 17, 2009, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed plan and heard testimony from fourteen (14) individuals and organizations; and

Whereas 35 written comment documents were received by the March 20, 2009, extended deadline for written comments; and

WHEREAS on April 21, 2009, the Planning Commission held deliberations on this matter; and

WHEREAS during deliberations, the Planning Commission determined that an additional work session to discuss issues raised during public comment and deliberations would be helpful; and

WHEREAS a work session was held on June 16, 2009, during which the Planning Commission and staff agreed to make certain changes to the draft plan prior to final Planning Commission deliberation and action; and

WHEREAS the changes included the following items:

1. New definition section added to preface of Plan;
2. Clarified explanation regarding strategy for acquisition/prioritization of properties added to FAQ's of Plan;
3. Map legends changed to 'trails' vs. 'public access' throughout Plan;
4. Map legends changed from 'existing trails' vs. 'possible trails' throughout Plan;
5. Removed arrows from open space indicators on maps throughout Plan;
6. Removed zoning designations from maps;

7. Added North arrow to maps;
8. Added new OSRSI/Federal/State lands map to App. A (A-1); and

WHEREAS final deliberations were held on July 30, 2009, and the Planning Commission reviewed the proposed revisions to the draft plan as described above and directed that a Recorded Motion be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners, containing the following findings and recommendations:

Findings

1. Open Space Plan is conceptual only and not a regulatory program.

The requirement to identify open space areas does not mandate that these areas be regulated or protected. The Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan does not create a regulatory land use designation or allow public access by default.

RCW 36.70A.160 does not require regulating to protect open space corridors, it does not provide that mere identification is protection of an open space corridor, nor does it provide an independent source of authority for regulating land use activities within an open space corridor. Any authorized land uses, or limitation, restriction, or prohibition of land uses that a jurisdiction might choose to employ within an identified open space corridor must be grounded in separate legal authority, not RCW 36.70A.160. [LMI/Chevron, 98-3-0012 FDO at 54, Jan. 8, 1999.]

This decision and a similar one were affirmed in the following case:

Based upon these two cases' [*AFT*, 5356, FDO and *LMI/Chevron*, 8312, FDO] interpretation of RCW 36.70A.160, which the Board affirms, Kitsap County is required to identify open space corridors pursuant to .160, but there is no GMA requirement that these areas be regulated or protected. [*Suquamish II*, 07-3-0019c FDO, at 61, Aug. 15, 2007.]

In addition to the non-regulatory status, the GMA specifically forbids interference with the use or management of lands within the corridor for agricultural or forest purposes. The proposed plan identifies priority areas within the county to be considered for the strictly voluntary program outlined within the plan.

2. Trails and/or Public Access on Dikes/Levees

Pursuant to the conditions of the Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance (MDNS) issued by Skagit County April, 24, 2002, establishing the Skagit County Non-motorized Transportation Plan:

- "1. Any future trail projects proposed on dikes or levees shall require the Planning and Permit Center [now Planning and Development Services] to meet, consult and obtain the approval of any involved dike district and affected property owner.
2. Complete necessary and adequate environmental review prior to issuing a Mitigated Determination of Non-significance for each specific project proposal on dikes or levees".

3. **Dike Road/Britt Slough**

The Dike Road/Britt Slough area shown to the southwest of the City of Mount Vernon in the draft Open Space Plan presented to the Planning Commission is amended to be shown only as open space in green, with no future trail as originally proposed.

4. **Preferential Tax for Open Space**

Open space/current use taxation provides important, though short-term protection of lands that contribute open space functions. The Current Use Open Space Taxation Program includes properties utilized for agricultural, timber and open space uses as provided in RCW 84.34. Lands enrolled in the Current Use Open Space Taxation program receive significant reductions in property tax liabilities. Public access on participating parcels is required in certain circumstances in specific taxation categories.

5. **Limits on Liability for Recreational Use of Private Land**

RCW 4.24.210 states that "Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) or (4) of this section, any public or private landowners or others in lawful possession and control of any lands whether designated resource, rural, or urban, or water areas or channels and lands adjacent to such areas or channels, who allow members of the public to use them for the purposes of outdoor recreation, which term includes, but is not limited to, the cutting, gathering, and removing of firewood by private persons for their personal use without purchasing the firewood from the landowner, hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, swimming, hiking, bicycling, skateboarding or other non-motorized wheel-based activities, hang gliding, paragliding, rock climbing, the riding of horses or other animals, clam digging, pleasure driving of off-road vehicles, snowmobiles, and other vehicles, boating, nature study, winter or water sports, viewing or enjoying historical, archaeological, scenic, or scientific sites, without charging a fee of any kind therefore, shall not be liable for unintentional injuries to such users".

6. **Appendix Additions**

A map depicting Wilderness areas, National Forests and Parks/Recreation areas designated as Open Space of Regional and Statewide Importance is added to Appendix A along with all (Department of Natural Resources) DNR trust lands to illustrate the extent of Skagit County included in such designations.

7. **New Trailheads in Rural Area**

The South Fidalgo Community Council asked that the County locate new rural trailheads only on arterial roads so as to minimize impacts on neighbors.

8. **Future uses classified as open space**

Current emerging uses such as dike/levee setback areas and mitigation banks, as well as unknown potential future uses may result in open space in the County. The existence of open space areas are not limited to those mapped in the proposed plan and will necessarily change over time.

9. **Identification of open space within the Bayview Ridge UGA**

Because the County is currently in the early implementation stages of establishing a non-municipal UGA at Bayview Ridge, it is not currently known where parks and other open

space areas will be located within the UGA boundaries. The County is engaged in a multi-phased planning approach for the UGA and specific open space areas will be identified during master site planning.

10. Definitions

The definitions for open space are added to provide increased specificity to the plan.

11. Photo Captions

Per citizen requests, photos in the plan are captioned to identify locations, structures, and/or features.

12. Errata

The attached errata sheet lists technical corrections made to the draft plan document (Attachment 1).

Recommendations

R1. Regarding implementation of an adopted plan, due to the current economic downturn, the Planning Commission urges the County to defer funding options that involve tax measures, but to proceed with efforts to use existing funding sources that achieve protection of open space areas identified in the plan.

R2. The Planning Commission recommends that the Board of County Commissioners work with SCOG municipalities to implement setbacks within incorporated and unincorporated UGAs adjacent to Natural Resource lands per the Countywide Planning Policies.

R3. The Planning Commission recommends that Ordinance R20020036 be rescinded as Ordinance O20030013 overrides it.

R4. In addition to the requirements outlined in finding 2 above, the Planning Commission recommends that a public hearing be held prior to any land use approvals (where applicable) or construction of any trail identified as 'possible' in the UGA Open Space Concept Plan.

R5. The Planning Commission strongly urges and recommends that this recorded motion as well as the signed, adopting ordinance be included in perpetuity in the Plan document for any publication and/or distribution.

Motion

Based on the above findings, and the record in this matter, the Planning Commission recommends approval of the UGA Open Space Concept Plan as amended (Attachment 2) as well as adoption of the above specified recommendations.

Motion for approval/denial: Jason Easton

Seconded by: Mary McGoffin

Vote

William Stiles III, Chair
Jason Easton, Vice Chair
Carol Ehlers

Support	Oppose	Abstain	Absent
X			
X			
X			

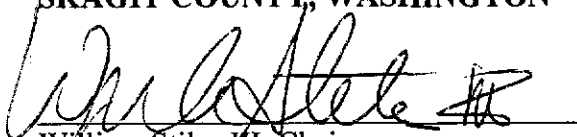
Dave Hughes
 Jerry Jewett
 Annie Lohman
 Matt Mahaffie
 Mary J. McGoffin
 Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn

X			
X			
X			
X			
X			
			X

TOTAL **8** **0** **0** **1**

NOW, THEREFORE, on July 30, 2009, the Skagit County Planning Commission voted, as recorded above, to forward to the Board of County Commissioners the foregoing recommendations.

**SKAGIT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
 SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**


 William Stiles III, Chairman

8-7-09
 Date


 Carly Ruacho, Secretary

8-3-09
 Date

Errata List

The following items are factual, as distinguished from policy items.

1	Spelling errors:	Run through spell check again.
2	Anacortes web site:	Should be www.cityofanacortes.org
3	Anacortes area demographics:	Per communication with Anacortes parks department and Carol, edit the last sentence in the first section as follows. "Anacortes city is expected to increase from 16,400 persons to 18,300 by the year 2025." <i>Delete remainder of sentence.</i>
4	Reference to County Council, throughout:	Change to Board of County Commissioners
5	Discussion of condemnation and inverse possession in FAQ 5.1 is inaccurate	Substitute language below
6	Map changes	Per Gary's email
7	Table of contents	Check for consistency with revised Appendix B
8	Appendix B.27 Town "of" not "on" Concrete	
9	Add Appendix for WSDOT	

Errata item #5

Proposed edit to FAQs

5.1 If the officially adopted open space plan map shows open space on my property, does that mean I am restricted to open space uses?

The open space plan map does not change the uses currently allowed by the property's zoning.

~~The state legislature recognizes that the preservation of urban greenbelts is an integral part of comprehensive growth management in Washington. The legislature further recognizes that if certain greenbelts were subject to adverse possession action (condemnation) it would threaten the comprehensive nature of the GMA.~~

~~Therefore, RCW 36.70A.165 specified that a party shall not acquire by adverse possession property that is designated as a plat greenbelt or open space area or that is dedicated as open space to a public agency or to a bona fide homeowner's association.~~

~~Individuals may voluntarily sell property or easements to an open space program agency should they desire.~~

~~From the Central Public Sound Growth Management Hearings Board: "RCW 36.70A.160 does not require regulating to protect open space corridors, it does not provide that mere identification is protection of an open space corridor, nor does it provide an independent source of authority for regulating land use activities within an open space corridor. Any authorized land uses, or limitation, restriction, or prohibition of land uses that a jurisdiction might choose to employ within an identified open space corridor must be grounded in separate legal authority, not RCW 36.70A.160." [LMI/Chevron, 8312, FDO, at 54.]~~

Image - west of Skagit River Delta from top of Little Mountain Park, Mount Vernon



Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Concept Plan
Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG)
January 2009

Skagit County Council of Governments (SCOG)

SCOG - Kelley Moldstad, Executive Director, and James Mastin
City of Anacortes - Ian Munce, Attorney and Planner
City of Burlington - Margaret Fleek, Planning Director
City of Mount Vernon - Jana Hanson, Planning Director
City of Sedro-Woolley - Jack Moore, Planning Director, and John Coleman
Port of Anacortes - Bob Hyde, Executive Director, and Connie Thoman, Environmental Administrator
Port of Skagit County - Patsy Martin, Executive Director, and Sara Young, Manager Planning & Environmental Services
Skagit County - Gary Christensen, Planning Director
Skagit PUD - Scott Spahr, Planning Engineer
Swinomish Tribe - Ed Knight, Associate Planner, and Scott Andrews
Town of Concrete - Lacy Lehr/Rick Cisar, Planner
Town of Hamilton PDA - Lauren Freitas, Grants Coordinator,
Margaret Fleek, Planner, Curt Miller, Landscape Architect
Town of La Conner - John Doyle, Planner
Town of Lyman - Chris Stormont
Upper Skagit Tribe - Lauren Rich, Environmental Planner

Participating Agencies & Organizations

Active Community Task Force (ACT) - Liz McNett Crowl, Coordinator
Anacortes Park & Recreation Department - Gary Robinson, Director
Friends of Skagit County - Ellen Bynum
La Conner Alliance for Youth & Family - Marcy Shapley
Mount Vernon Parks & Recreation Department - Larry Otos, Director
Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) - Terry Stevens, Sharon Riggs
Puget Sound Energy - Connie Freeland
Puget Sound Partnership - Hilary Culverwell
Samish Indian Nation - Leslie Eastwood, General Manager, Ted Gage
AICP, Planning Director
Seattle City Light - Ed Connor
Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board - Allison Aurand/Kendra Smith
Skagit County Forestry Advisory Board - Kendra Smith
Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department - Bob Vaux, Director,
Brian Adams

Skagit County Physical Activity Coalition (SCPAC) - Liz McNett Crowl, Coordinator
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group - Alison Studley
Skagit Land Trust - Molly Doran, Executive Director, Martha Bray, Conservation Director, Brenda Cunningham, Retired
Skagit River System Cooperative - Steve Hinton, Larry Wasserman
Skagitians to Preserve Farmland (SPF) - Allen Rozema, Executive Director
South Fidalgo Island Community Council - Tom Conroy
The Nature Conservancy - Bob Carey, Program Director, Melisa Holman, Upper Skagit Stewardship Manager, and Kevin Morse,
Skagit Delta Project Manager
Urban Trail Committee & Mount Vernon Healthy Communities Project - Liz McNett Crowl, Coordinator
US Army Corps of Engineers - Linda Smith
US Forest Service, Wild & Scenic River - Greta Movassaghi, Phil Kincare, Jon Vanderheyden
WA Department of Commerce, Trade & Economic Development (CTED) - Douglas Peters, Senior Planner
WA Department of Fish & Wildlife - John Carleton, Conservation Planner, Lora Leshner
WA Department of Natural Resources - Stan Kurowski, Program Section Manager, Northwest Region
WA Department of Transportation (WSDOT) - Elizabeth Sjostrom, Highway System Planner, Tim Hostetler
Skagit County Planning & Development Services
Director - Gary R Christensen AICP
Senior Planner - Kirk Johnson AICP, Community Planning Team Leader, Senior Planner
Senior Planner/Project Manager - Jeroldine Hallberg
Geographic Information Services (GIS) - Kim Berry
Consultant Team
Team Leader - Tom Beckwith FAICP, Beckwith Consulting Group
Recreation/Open Space Planner - Lee Springgate, Point Wilson Group
Terry Reckord ASLA, Landscape Architect - Terry Reckord ASLA, MacLeod Reckord
Public Opinion Surveys - GMA Research Corporation

Open Space Definitions

Following are some alternative approaches to defining the term "open space" in the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan:

Open space and UGA open space definitions

The 2007 Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 2: Urban, Open Space and Land Use Profile, pages 4 and 5 define open space as:

A. Open Space

Land and water that is in its natural state or is developed or restored consistent with the following:

Greenbelts - are made up of combinations of public and private properties of various ownerships with varying levels of access including no public access including the following categories:

1. Private
2. Public
3. Access
4. No-Access
1. Greenbelts within and around urban growth areas;
2. Greenbelts connecting critical areas;
3. Lands receiving open space tax incentives;
4. Resource lands (*agriculture, forest, and aquatic*)
5. Conservation easements;
6. Rural areas (created by low-density zoning);
7. Park and recreation lands, including trails; and
8. Significant historic, archaeological, scenic and cultural lands.

B. Urban Growth Area (UGA) Open Space

A system of open space and greenbelts that weaves within and between urban growth areas and helps define the edge between urban and rural areas.

Open Space Areas

There are a variety of types of open space lands in Skagit County. Open space areas include greenbelt corridors within

and around urban growth areas, greenbelts which connect critical areas, lands receiving open space tax incentives, resource lands, conservation easements, rural open space areas, park lands, and significant historic, archaeological, scenic and cultural lands.

By December 1, 2007, Skagit County will develop a program to identify and prioritize open space corridors and greenbelts within and between UGAs that include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas. The program will include a list identifying and prioritizing open space and greenbelt lands desirable for public acquisition. Any potential acquisition that may be proposed by such a program will not include any condemnation actions; any potential acquisition for land for open space or greenbelts shall only be achieved by voluntary donation, CaRD subdivision, or mutually agreeable sale.

Public Open Space

Public open space areas include publicly owned lands that are dedicated or reserved for public use or enjoyment for recreation, scenic amenities, natural resource land management, or for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas. *Where identified below to be of regional or statewide importance, such lands are designated on the Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map.* Other publicly held lands, such as local neighborhood parks, scenic roads and highways, shorelines, rivers and streams, and utility corridors, *although not designated as open space on the Comprehensive Plan Map*, nevertheless offer similar open space functions and benefits. However, certain areas may not be open to the public, such as utility corridors, road easements, etc., where ownership or public safety reasons may preclude public access, even though these areas may provide open space benefits to wildlife.

Private Open Space

There are several private organizations in Skagit County that in some way set aside lands for conservation purposes, such as for their ecological, scenic, or natural resource values. Private land

trusts, such as the Skagit Land Trust, the San Juan Preservation Trust, and the Nature Conservancy, among others, own or in some way administer a significant amount of land in Skagit County.

These private organizations contribute to the preservation of wildlife habitat, biodiversity, natural and scenic greenbelts and open-space corridors. Through the use of such techniques as conservation easements, purchase of development rights, or the outright purchase of land, development of these lands is limited or precluded altogether.

Open Space Taxation

Lands enrolled in a taxation program as defined in RCW 84.34 are identified in the Current Use Open Space Taxation Program map. This map also may change over time according to participation.

Open space lands public accessibility

The degree of public access on open space lands is determined on a case-by-case basis. While three types of open space are shown below with no public access, individual cases could have access depending on the owner's desires. For example, certain rural CaRD subdivisions may choose to make their open space area accessible to the public. The same holds for urban clustered subdivisions. A range of public access is illustrated below, using the types of open space listed in the Comprehensive Plan.

	None	Limited	Extensive
1. Greenbelts within and around urban growth areas	X	X	X
2. Greenbelts connecting critical areas	X	X	
3. Lands receiving open space tax incentives	X		
4. Resource lands	X		
5. Conservation easements	X	X	

Public Access Array

6. Rural open space areas	X		
7. Park lands	X	X	X
8. Significant historic, archaeological, scenic, and cultural lands	X	X	X

Passive and active open space

The terms "passive" and "active" are used in park planning literature in a very general manner. The following scale was derived from examples in various parks plans.

Parks tend to have both passive and active features and the goal is to balance the two. For example, if an open space area has habitat protection as its primary function, it may have only passive uses and access limited to soft-surface trails or a small interpretive area. An example at the "active" end of the scale is a sports field with parking and high numbers of people visiting and using the site. Trails are described as either passive or active, depending on the intended use. Further trail definitions originate with transportation regulations that require non-motorized planning. Trails that are part of a UGA open space area may also be part of the non-motorized system.

Intensity of Public Use - Examples

Passive	Moderate	Active
Habitat area Resource land Community forest	Scenic overlook Interpretive kiosk Trailhead Soft-surface trail Picnic Shelter	Ballfield Off-leash area High-volume, hard-surfaced trail Boat launch

FAQs - Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Concept Plan

Following are answers to some of the basic questions that have been asked about this plan:

1 Background

1.1: What is an Urban Growth Area (UGA) Open Space Concept Plan?

State law (RCW 36.70A.160 of the Growth Management Act - GMA) requires every county and city covered by the Growth Management Act to identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas.

In the 3-part system of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, this plan identifies a system of open spaces that are in and near the county's current and future UGAs.

1.2: What are the benefits of a UGA Open Space Plan?

A UGA open space concept plan differs from more familiar parks and recreation plans in that it helps to shape urban form, particularly where the developed area ends and rural begins. The concept plan provides boundaries between incompatible uses and breaks from continuous development. The concept plan can shape land use patterns to promote more compact development. The goal is to provide a continuous system of open spaces, linking those from within the cities into the edges and rural areas.

Other benefits of a UGA Open Space Concept Plan may include protection of:

- Flood control measures, water supply protection, air quality, separation from hazards
- Wildlife and habitat
- Commercially significant resources including agricultural products, forestry, fisheries, minerals
- Economic development through improved quality of life
- Natural features and spaces important to defining community image and distinctive character
- Healthy lifestyles

- Historic and cultural preservation opportunities

1.3: What are the Skagit County UGAs?

Skagit County has 10 UGAs including Concrete, Hamilton, Lyman, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, Mount Vernon, Bayview, La Conner, Swinomish, and Anacortes.

The legal definition of UGAs includes both the area within the existing city or town limits and any area in the unincorporated county identified for future growth. In common use, many people use the term UGA to specify only the unincorporated growth area.

1.4: Why is the plan being prepared now?

The plan is being developed now because of a decision in an appeal to the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board by Friends of Skagit County. The provisions for UGA open space were found to be inadequate and not explicitly mapped. The appeal was settled when the County adopted the following policy in the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan:

2B-1.3 By December 1, 2007, Skagit County will develop a program to identify and prioritize open space corridors and greenbelts within and between UGAs that include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas. The program will include a list identifying and prioritizing open space and greenbelt lands desirable for public acquisition. Any potential acquisition that may be proposed by such a program will not include any condemnation actions, but instead will be achieved by voluntary donation, CaRD subdivision, or mutually agreeable sale.

Note – instead of including a list of prioritized open space and greenbelt land acquisitions, the implementation program for this concept plan (Chapter 4, task 6) proposes to establish a funding source and solicit competitive proposals on an annual basis from interested parties including local public jurisdictions,

nonprofit interest groups, and private property owners that will implement the open space preservation, restoration, enhancement, interpretive, and recreational benefits defined herein. During the planning process for this plan, it was determined that this competitive proposal approach will result in a more responsive and implementable series of projects, which may include open space and greenbelt enhancements in manners other than outright acquisition, than a simple list of presumed acquisition targets would be.

1.5: Who updates or makes revisions to the proposed UGA open space concept plan?

In accordance with GMA requirements (RCW 36.70A.130(4)), each jurisdiction reviews, and if needed, revises all its GMA plans, including this one every 7 years.

1.6: Where can I get more information about the GMA requirements, case law, and open space planning?

Detailed information about GMA requirements and planning for UGA Separators and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space planning elements is available on the state's website:

http://www.cted.wa.gov/_CTED/documents/ID_1691_Publications.pdf

2 The Skagit County plan

2.1: How was the Skagit County Plan developed and funded?

This plan is a cooperative project between the cities and the county. It was overseen by the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) using funds provided by a grant from the Washington State Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development (CTED) with additional money from Skagit County. Cities are responsible for planning for open space within their incorporated city limits. Outside the city limits, most cities have expansion areas, or unincorporated UGAs. The county is responsible for integrating all of the individual city UGA open space corridors into a countywide network of UGA defining open spaces and is working with the cities to do so. The countywide network may include, as appropriate, areas "between" urban growth areas.

The staff and consultant team met with representatives of each of the 10 UGA jurisdictions to review the open space proposals in their adopted comprehensive plans.

The planning team integrated all of the individual city's UGA concept graphics into a countywide UGA open space network. To address the "between" portion of the state mandate, the plan includes lands protected by Skagit County critical area ordinances, lands or development rights acquired by public agencies and non-profit organizations for open space preservation, and lands that presented potential open space linkages between and into/out of the UGAs.

These integrated countywide UGA concepts were then reviewed with each UGA jurisdiction's planning and park staff representatives, Planning or Parks Commission, or City Council to obtain their suggestions, criticisms, and to resolve their accuracy during public workshops and official meetings.

2.2: Who else was consulted during this planning process?

In addition to the UGA jurisdictions, the planning team met with other public agencies and non-profit organizations involved in open space. These organizations included:

- Regional – Port of Skagit County, PUD #1, Seattle City Light,
- State – Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (DFW), Natural Resources (DNR), Transportation (WSDOT), Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR)
- Tribes – Samish, Upper Skagit, Swinomish (a UGA jurisdiction)
- Federal – US Forest Service (USFS),
- Non-profits and private – Skagitians for Farmland Preservation, The Nature Conservancy, Skagit Land Trust, Puget Sound Energy
- Advisory groups – Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board, Forest Advisory Board, Active Community Task Force, Physical Activity Coalition (SCPAC), among others.

2.3: Aren't there already enough organizations working to save open space in the County?

Numerous private organizations in Skagit County are actively involved in conserving open space assets including fish and wildlife habitat, working farmlands, and unique forestlands.

These groups have accomplished a great deal through their efforts to conserve important county open space assets and are actively involved in the management, restoration, and enhancement of these conserved lands.

However, their missions do not include a focus on the urban growth areas. With a few exceptions, most lands they protect are located in more remote parts of the county. As a consequence, some of the most threatened remaining open spaces are located within or adjacent to the designated urban growth areas (UGAs) of the county.

Therefore, the task of meeting the GMA open space goals has not been accomplished. And, there is a "gap" or lack of sufficient funds with which to make up the cost differences necessary to protect open space lands adjacent or within the UGAs compared to the lower cost of such lands in the rural areas.

2.4: What happens next and how can I get involved?

The cities, towns, county, and SCOG board will be asked to adopt the plan. The Skagit County Planning Commission will schedule public hearings before making a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. The schedule for public hearings will be posted on the county web site.

3. Public involvement and survey

3.1: How is the public involved in creating, updating, and approving these UGA open space plans?

Cities were consulted at public meetings of their choice and included Planning Commissions, Parks Commission, and joint meetings of Planning Commissions and City Councils.

Two public information meetings were held April 14 and June 24, 2008, with announcements in the local newspapers and county web site with email notifications to various groups that have expressed interest.

A survey of public opinion was conducted during the summer of 2007 and the county web site was used to publicize it. Results are summarized below.

Future comment opportunities will be available when each jurisdiction considers the final plan for adoption. The Skagit County Planning Commission is expected to take the plan under advisement in late 2008, at which time at least one public hearing will be held.

The county and the cities are subject to RCW 36.70A.140, which requires early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive land use plans including this open space plan.

3.2: What are the results of the public survey?

In June 2007 a random sample of resident voter households in Skagit County was contacted to participate in a controlled sample survey concerning open space needs and priorities in general and the proposed concepts in this plan in particular.

450 households agreed to participate in the survey and were mailed a copy of a summary description of the plan and a copy of the questionnaire. Survey results were compiled for the first 200 households who completed the surveys by follow-up telephone call - the number planned for in the original survey scope.

The resulting survey results are accurate to within +/-8% of the opinions of the county's registered voter household population. Key findings include:

- a: Existing open space protection and conditions - most of the respondents felt existing protections are inadequate for each of the following:
 - farmland,

- scenic areas,
- wildlife habitat,
- historical landmarks,
- forests,
- parks,
- trails, and
- other access features

b: Open space trends and values - respondents agreed that Skagit County:

- Has some of the most valuable wildlife habitats, woodlands, and farms in the region if not country (90%),
- UGA open spaces should be interconnected (70%),
- Unacceptable amounts of these open spaces are being lost to urban development (64%),
- Open space efforts should do more than preserve land – but should also restore, enhance, and manage the land 59%),

c: Priorities for open space include:

- Productive and working farmlands adjacent to UGAs (74%),
- Forestlands adjacent to UGAs (67%),
- Wildlife habitat and corridors within UGAs (62%),
- Scenic landscapes and roadside views (61%),
- Historical & cultural landmarks (55%),
- Public access trails extending through and outwards from UGAs (64%),
- Day-use parks within UGA open space (65%), and
- Interpretive trails within UGA open space corridors (52%).

d: Specific UGA concept maps:

When shown maps of each UGA concept, respondents from throughout the county supported each illustrated plan with high ratings given by more than 50%

e: Specific trail proposals:

Respondents also gave high ratings to each of the following trails: Anacortes-Burlington, Cascade, Swinomish Channel, Pacific Northwest/Interurban, Centennial, and Skagit-Snohomish Trails.

f: How to organize and pay for an open space program - respondents were asked for their opinion about how to implement and fund an open space plan.

- Regarding organization - survey respondents favored a coordination role for the county and cities, rather than a more active role as "principal agent."
- Regarding funding - survey respondents were informed about and then asked to rate funding sources available to counties and cities. 59% said they would pay some amount for a property tax levy (the mean dollar amount was \$89.40 per household per year. Survey participants were marginally supportive of a local option sales tax dedicated to open space and not at all in favor of a 3rd real estate excise tax (REET), local option fuel tax, or local option vehicle license fee where each option would be dedicated to open space.

4 Farms and forests

4.1: How will this plan protect farmland?

County residents place a high value on protecting farmland and forests, as borne out in the survey results above. Farms and forests have inherent open space qualities as a secondary benefit to their productive value.

RCW 36.70A.160 stipulates the open space corridors shall include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas as defined in RCW 36.70A.030. Identification of a corridor under this section of the RCW by a county or city **shall not restrict the use or management of lands within the corridor for agricultural or forest purposes.**

Farm and forest protection is accomplished by a variety of tools outside the scope of this plan. Examples are restrictive zoning, purchase of development rights, and limits on urban expansion.

This plan can help protect farms and forests by providing "urban separators" where UGAs are close to the agriculture and forest zones. It is in these areas that the potential for "edge" conflicts exist.

Advisory groups to both agriculture and forestry expressed concerns that the open space plan could create more conflicts with their operations by bringing more people. While such conflicts are occurring even without a UGA open space concept plan, this plan has been modified to address these concerns by emphasizing passive forms of open space next to working farms and forests, the careful location of trail corridors, and providing interpretive information about their productive value.

5 Property rights

5.1: If the officially adopted open space plan map shows open space on my property, does that mean I am restricted to open space uses?

The open space plan map does not change the uses currently allowed by the property's zoning.

According to the Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board: "RCW 36.70A.160 does not require regulating to protect open space corridors, it does not provide that mere identification is protection of an open space corridor, not does it provide an independent source of authority for regulating land use activities within an open space corridor. Any authorized land uses, or limitation, restriction, or prohibition of land uses that a jurisdiction might choose to employ within an identified open space corridor must be grounded in separate legal authority, not RCW 36.70A.160." [LMI/Chevron, 8312, FDO, at 54.]

5.2: Are there other techniques that can be used to protect UGA open space corridors besides acquisition of development rights or property title?

RCW 36.70A.090 stipulates that a city or county comprehensive plan should provide for innovative land use management techniques, including, but not limited to, *density bonuses, cluster housing, planned unit developments, and the transfer of development rights.*

6 Implementing the UGA open space concept plan

6.1: How would the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Concept Plan be implemented?

Consistent with the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan policy 2B-1.3 directive to develop a "program," this plan proposes the following mechanism:

- A countywide funding source would be established with a "bottom-up" approach to allocating funds.
- Community groups, parks departments, non-profits, or private groups could propose projects that meet the program goals and compete for funding.
- The Board of County Commissioners would establish a UGA Open Space Advisory Committee to provide citizen advice regarding the use of any UGA open space funds.
- The funds would be used to acquire and maintain UGA open space.

6.2: Who would be on a Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee?

Committee membership could include 9 or more members appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. Members could be appointed from among community-minded citizens who are active in civic matters, supportive of the intent and objectives of the UGA Open Space Plan and Program, and geographically representative of the county's UGAs.

6.3: What would be the responsibilities of the Advisory Committee?

The Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory

Committee would be authorized to do the following:

- Evaluate current and future conditions, needs, opportunities, and priorities.
- Develop procedures and processes for soliciting requests-for-proposals (RFPs).
- Develop public benefit evaluation and selection criteria for RFP submissions.
- Award (on the Board of County Commissioners behalf) Skagit Countywide UGA open space funds.
- Monitor compliance and expenditures.

- Issue annual evaluation reports and consult with the Board of County Commissioners and the public-at-large.
- Issue any revisions, modifications, or other actions that should be undertaken.

6.4: What public benefit criteria would the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee likely use to rate and award UGA funds on a competitive basis?

The following criteria (not listed in any priority order) could be used to evaluate properties or programs submitted for funding consideration under the proposed UGA open space program:

- Land use – benefits for UGA separators, public/private network opportunities, flood control,
- Natural resources – benefits for agricultural lands, woodlands, aquatic habitat, wildlife habitat,
- Scenic resources – benefits for scenic landscapes, scenic byways, and viewpoints,
- Cultural resources – benefits for landmark preservation, exhibits, trails, centers, and programs,
- Interpretive opportunities – benefits for interpretive connections, trail linkages, water trail linkages, and accessibility,
- Recreation – benefits for regional multiuse trails, community connections, trail linkages, water trail linkages, and accessibility,
- Transportation – benefits for interconnections, water trails,
- Jurisdictional and leveraging – opportunity to implement land use policy, leverage local monies, match state and federal funding opportunities, elicit public support, and
- Feasibility and timing – resolving land threatened status, restoration, stewardship, geographic distribution, feasibility, resolving hazards.

6.5: Impact fees – can new growth be tapped to contribute to the open space “funding gap”?

Skagit County could expand upon the growth impact fee provisions provided in the Growth Management Act (GMA). Park and/or traffic impact fees could be applied to all new residential developments within the unincorporated county to maintain existing park, recreation, and open space and traffic levels-of-service (LOS).

The cities and county could determine an equitable means to collect and allocate impact fees where the county and city maintain the same local and regional or citywide level-of-service (LOS) presently existing within the incorporated (city) and unincorporated (county) sections, and for the urban growth area in total.

A common fee could be collected by each agency then shared on a project by project basis for open space improvements benefiting the residents of the UGAs as well as the county-at-large. Impact fees are not likely to raise the same level of funding as most of the methods identified above.

Impact fees **cannot** be used to expand or improve facilities that do not increase the capacity of these systems to meet the needs of new growth, nor can they be used for maintenance or management.

6.6: What are the other potential funding sources and how much would these sources create?

Based on the results of the survey, the plan analyzed the potential amount a Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) or Property Tax Levy (PTL) could raise in Skagit County over a 6 year funding period assuming county voters would prefer a 6-year pilot project be used to demonstrate program success and to build public support for a more long-term commitment. This approach has been successfully used in other Western Washington communities.

- Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) - if approved by voter referendum, LOST would add an additional \$0.010 per \$1.00 of retail sales to be dedicated exclusively for open space purposes and be paid by in-county residents as well as out-of-county residents and tourists. *The annual proceeds from the LOST option would likely be \$924,868 based on recent annual sales tax trends.*
- Property Tax Levy (PTL - Levy Lid Lift) - if approved by voter referendum, would add on a limited duration (typically 6 years) an additional property tax to be dedicated exclusively for open space purposes. The following 3 alternative amounts are

based on the 2005 assessed value of average county house at \$222,500:

<i>Rate/\$1.00 value</i>	<i>Annual cost</i>	<i>Annual proceeds</i>
\$0.00011	\$24.68	\$1,641,082
\$0.00016	\$35.60	\$2,387,028
\$0.00022	\$48.95	\$3,282,163

Approval to use either the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) or Property Tax Levy (PTL) would likely depend on what extent a referendum on the issue would motivate the respondents who rated the proposal a 3 or mid-level priority. A proposal to use either approach will require more detailed descriptions of how much would be raised how it would be used.

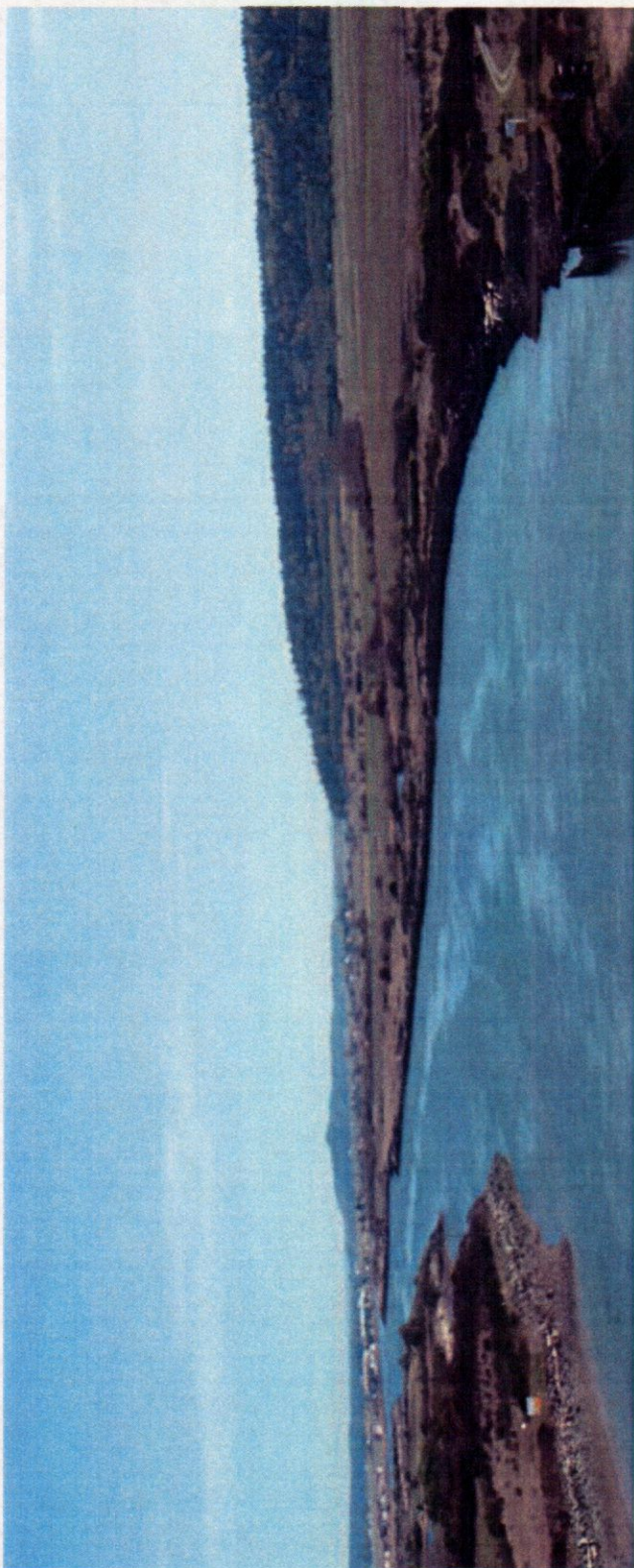


Photo - view to the south of Swinomish Channel from SR-20 bridge to Fidalgo Island

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Skagit County population is forecast to increase by over 46,000 new residents by the year 2025 – which is equal to the current (2007) population of Mount Vernon and Anacortes combined. Most of this new growth is expected to occur in the county's 10 Urban Growth Areas – Anacortes, Bayview Ridge, Burlington, Concrete, Hamilton, La Conner, Lyman, Mount Vernon, Sedro-Woolley, and Swinomish.

The choices that confront Skagit County at the present time are significant and could alter the character and quality of wildlife, agriculture, forest, scenic, historic, and recreational open spaces permanently if not adequately planned and protected.

This document outlines the choices that are available and the means for implementing preferred actions found to be of most interest and benefit to Skagit County residents concerning open space separators around the 10 county UGAs.

1.1 Objectives

The specific objectives of this planning effort were to:

- **Inventory assets** – including the programs, properties, ideas, and objectives of the numerous public and non-profit agencies and organizations that are involved in protecting, preserving, and enhancing wildlife, agriculture, forest, scenic, historic, and recreational open spaces within the county, and particularly within and around the 10 county UGAs.
- **Develop the elements of a countywide UGA open space plan** – that provides a thematic concept for preserving and enhancing open spaces, trails, and interpretive opportunities on a countywide basis that extends around, within, and through the 10 county UGAs.
- **Define an implementation program** – outlining the roles, responsibilities, and actions necessary to realize the countywide UGA open space plan including regulatory and financing issues.

- **Determine public opinion** – through a series of workshops with SCOG, participating agencies and organizations, and ultimately a mail-out/phone-back survey of a sample of registered county voter households that resolves final plan and financing particulars.

1.2 Approach

This planning process analyzed the current condition of wildlife, agriculture, forest, scenic, historic, and recreation open space conditions in and around the 10 county UGAs and the results of past and on-going programs sponsored by public and non-profit agencies and organizations within Skagit County.

The proposed UGA open space concepts and implementation strategies are the result of this comprehensive or holistic analysis.

Generally, the proposed strategies recommend Skagit County focus its resources to resolve UGA open space concept plans with the 10 UGAs, and create gap financing to assist existing

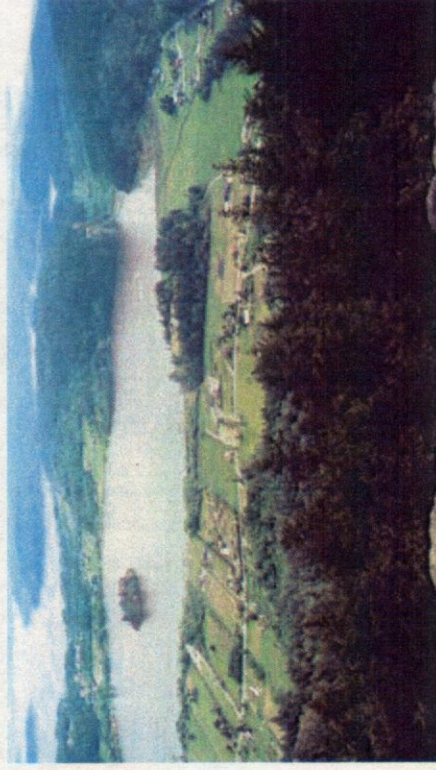


Photo – Lake Campbell from top of Mt Erie, Anacortes

public and non-profit agency and organization efforts to preserve and enhance open space assets around and within the UGA areas.

1.3 Public involvement

The Skagit County Council of Governments (SCOG) and Skagit County Planning & Development Services oversaw this planning process using a partial grant from the Washington State Community, Trade & Economic Development Department (CTED). During the course of the planning program, the participants conducted:

- ***Interviews and workshops*** - with public and non-profit agencies and organizations involved in wildlife, agriculture, forest, scenic, historic, and recreation open space issues within the county to determine their plans, concerns, and recommendations.
- ***Public workshops and presentations*** - with the Planning or Parks Commissions or City Councils of each UGA, the SCOG Board, and Skagit County Commissioners to determine their assessments of plan and strategy proposals prior to the development of final concept proposals.

- ***Mail-out/phone-back survey of countywide registered voter households*** - towards the end of the process to determine concept validations, strategy, and financing preferences with which to implement this plan.

The proposals contained within this document represent the opinions developed from these public participation events.

1.4 Documentation

This report is organized into 4 chapters outlining Introduction to the planning process, Findings of the analysis, UGA Open Space Concept Plan, and Action plan.

Separate technical appendices detail Growth Management Act (GMA) Urban Growth Area (UGA) open space separator requirements, resources available from public and non-profit

agencies and organizations, Goals and objectives of this plan, Mail-out/phone-back survey results, Financial resources available to this plan, UGA Open Space Levy & Advisory Committee proposal, and Public benefit criteria and are available from the Skagit County Planning & Development Services Department.

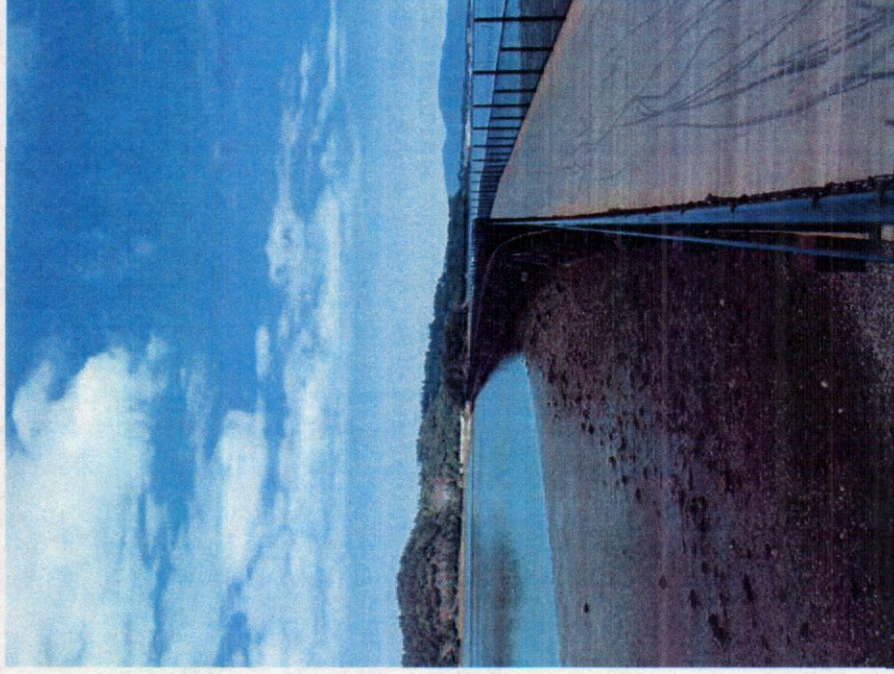


Photo - Tommy Thompson Trail over Fidalgo Bay, Anacortes

Chapter 2: Findings

2.1 Growth Management Act (GMA) initiatives

Public agencies have been active in protecting and conserving open space in Skagit County using the following methods.

Critical Area Ordinances (CAOs) - the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) mandated counties and cities to conserve and protect sensitive environmental features including aquifer recharge areas, streams, wetlands, steep slopes subject to landslide hazard, and floodplains from urban developments that would increase risk to the landowner (or adjacent properties) and degrade the environment.

Skagit County and all 10 Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) have enacted critical area ordinances (CAOs) that protect these features and the buffered areas from urban development. By and large, CAOs have protected significant and critically sensitive areas in the county and within and adjacent the urban growth areas (UGAs) from inappropriate urban development. Most of these lands remain in private ownership subject to private land use activities that do not impose an environmental risk.

While CAOs protect, and thereby conserve these significant open space resources, the CAOs do not restore, enhance, or manage these resources for wildlife, forest, farm, mineral resource areas, or scenic purposes for which they were once suited, nor to achieve UGA open space or public access benefits.

Resource and rural zoning districts - have been established by Skagit County to conserve productive and working farm and forest soils and properties - and to distinguish urban from rural settlement patterns. The county's Natural Resource Lands (NRL) zoning districts require large parcels ranging from 80 acres in Industrial Forest to 40 acres in Agricultural and Rural Resource to minimum 20 acre lots in Secondary Forest lands.

The rural zoning districts provide a transitional density and lot definition to provide a graduated settlement pattern between the urbanizing areas and the rural landscape. The density pattern ranges from 1.0 acre lots in Rural Village Residential zones with public water, 2.5 acre lots in Rural Intermediate, and 10.0 acre lots in Rural Reserve, or 2 lots per 10.0 acres in a rural cluster.

While the resource and rural zoning districts conserve the ownership pattern that is compatible with working farms and forests, and with a graduated urban to rural settlement pattern - zoning alone does not guarantee that the land will be used for farm and forest production, or that developments on the rural sized lots will actually reflect a rural or scenic pattern or appearance.

Differential tax assessments - have been established by Skagit County to provide an additional incentive to maintain resource properties in active farm and forest use. Considerable lands



Photo - wetlands in Ted Reep Park, Mount Vernon

within the county are provided this tax incentive and are maintained in working farm and forest use for this purpose.

Skagit County also provides a differential open space tax assessment with an optional additional incentive if the property meets a Public Benefit Rating System – though no rating system is currently in place.

Conservation Futures – is a county tax levy that generates funds on a countywide basis for the acquisition of easements on “farm, agricultural land, and critical areas”. While the program is important for the conservation of open space, the funding levels have not been sufficient to protect the most threatened agricultural and crucial areas within an adjacent the UGAs.

By and large, these GMA related efforts have been successful at protecting critical environmental areas and their open space attributes, conserving large and potentially productive farm land property parcels, maintaining a graduated land ownership pattern between the most urban and rural areas, and acquiring some significant and threatened open space parcels. Most of the protected parcels have been located in rural areas removed from the UGAs.

However, these initiatives have heretofore not been sufficient, even when complemented by private organizational conservation efforts, to establish open space corridors within and adjacent to the most urbanizing areas of the county.

2.2 UGA open space separator/greenway requirements

In addition to protecting critical areas and providing incentives for rural resource protections, the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) also requires counties with urban growth areas (UGAs) to designate and develop open space separator or greenway plans with which to distinguish cities and urban areas from each other – and to prevent urban sprawl into the rural landscape.

GMA's intent is to determine and protect significant and important open spaces and corridors that define the edges of an

urban area – and that can provide interpretive and recreational opportunities to be accessed by rural and urban area residents alike. GMA's intent is also to provide for wildlife habitat, connections between critical areas, and trails (which can serve as transportation routes as well as for recreational uses), as well as connectors between UGAs.

2.3 Private conservation initiatives

Numerous private organizations in Skagit County are actively involved in conserving open space assets including wildlife habitat, working farmlands, unique forestlands, scenic landscapes, historic features, and recreational activities including on and off-road trail systems.

In fact, Skagit County has more organizations involved in open space conservation than is common of any other area in Washington State or the surrounding Pacific Northwest region. A conservation focus has emerged in Skagit County due to:

- the Skagit River's habitat value - the most productive river west of the Mississippi,
- the Skagit Valley's agriculture potential – one of the largest



Photo – channel mitigation project in Edgewater Park, Mount Vernon

- remaining viable farming areas in the region, and the county's overall scenic, cultural, and historical diversity, among others.
- By and large, these groups have accomplished a great deal through their efforts to conserve important county open space assets through property owner use agreements, conservation easements, and outright land purchases.

These groups have also been actively involved in the management, restoration, and enhancement of the natural features that once existed on these conserved lands and which provide their unique ecological, environmental, scenic, and cultural values.

In general, these organizations have been able to obtain the minimum funds necessary to implement their basic conservation missions - which are unique to each entity. These groups have been adept at raising monies through grants, donations, fund-raising drives, and other enterprises - primarily from residents of the county and surrounding region.

However, most of these organizations and their efforts have been focused in the more rural areas outside of the existing cities and proposed urban growth areas (UGAs). A rural focus



Photo - Beaver Pond in Eaglemont Development, Mount Vernon

has been followed for a variety of reasons including:

- higher land costs within or next to the urban areas,
- increased land management requirements,
- greater coordination requirements with other public and private parties, and
- the potential for conflict with local city land use objectives and priorities.

As a consequence, some of the most threatened remaining open spaces are located within or adjacent to the designated urban growth areas (UGAs) of the county.

2.4 Open space conditions

Interview and workshop sessions were conducted with over 30 public and non-profit agency and organization representatives during the course of this plan's analysis. The participants were asked to describe in quantitative and anecdotal terms open space conditions they observed in the county.

In addition, registered voter household participants in the mail-out/phone-back survey were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following condition statements on a scale of 1 to 5 where 4-5 were considered to be very strong concurrence with the workshop statements.

Following is a statement of the condition statements from the mail-out/phone-back survey in order of most agreement.

<i>UGA open space conservation efforts</i>	<i>poorest/best</i>			
	1	2	3	4-5
Protection of prime agricultural soils and working farmlands adjacent urbanizing areas?	31%	33%	36%	
Protection of scenic areas and landscapes including viewpoints and vistas from hilltops and along entry roads into urbanizing areas?	25%	38%	36%	
Conservation of wildlife habitat - especially within the Skagit River and its tributaries as they flow through the urban areas?	27%	42%	30%	
Identification and preservation of historical	27%	41%	30%	

and cultural landmarks, sites, and features within and adjacent to urbanizing areas?	<i>poorest/best</i> 1-2 3 4-5
UGA open space conservation efforts Preservation of woodlands – particularly mature, older forest stands within the urbanizing areas?	39% 34% 26%
UGA public access activities Picnic grounds, shelters, and other day use activity areas in open space systems in the urbanizing areas?	21% 42% 36%
Public access trails for hike, bike, and horse (including handicap accessible) to or through open spaces in the urbanizing areas?	31% 37% 31%
Waterfront access for fishing, swimming, kayaking, and canoeing in open spaces in the urbanizing areas?	33% 35% 31%
Interpretive markers, exhibits, trails, and centers located in open spaces within or adjacent to urbanizing areas?	32% 41% 25%

As shown, the survey respondents did not rank any open space or trail feature to be of a best condition overall. In some instances, the respondents indicated conditions were equal (rating 3) or of worse condition (rating 1-2) than those that considered them to be in good condition (rating 4-5).

2.5 Open space trends

The public and non-profit agency participants of the workshops were also asked to describe the open space trends they observed were occurring in the county and the impact such trends were and could have on open space conditions.

In addition, registered voter household participants in the mail-out/phone-back survey were also asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statements concerning trends that may be affecting the conservation of open spaces and trail developments within the UGAs of the county.

Following is a statement of the trends statements from the mail-out/phone-back survey in order of most agreement.

<i>Open space trends</i>	<i>dis-/agree</i> 1-2 3 4-5
Skagit County has some of the most valuable and productive wildlife habitats, woodlands, and farms in the region if not the country?	7% 10% 85%
Open spaces within the UGAs should be interconnected to flow through the cities into the surrounding countryside in a manner that conserves important assets and provides some logical and visible corridor networks?	11% 16% 73%
Open space conservation efforts must do more than just preserve land – conservation programs should also restore, enhance, and manage the land to provide the valuable natural and ecological functions it once did?	14% 17% 70%
Open spaces that are being created are often small, landlocked preserves within new residential developments that are not linked to a continuous open space network for the surrounding city or its residents – or between cities and urbanizing areas?	14% 21% 63%
An unacceptable amount of these valuable open space assets (wildlife, woodlands, and farms) are rapidly being lost to urban development within UGAs?	18% 19% 63%
An unacceptable amount of these valuable assets are also being lost to rural type land uses including roadside stands, hobby farms, big box houses, and other developments adjacent UGAs?	28% 25% 46%
Skagit County has some of the most diverse and scenic resources in the region including mountain, valley, waterfront, and farm landscapes and viewpoints?	2% 8% 90%
Scenic resources Rural roads and byways, especially the entry roads into and out of the urbanizing areas should retain an open and rural character	15% 16% 70%

("rural by design") that is not cluttered with commercial uses, advertising, and other urban characteristics?		dis-/agree 1-2 3 4-5
Scenic resources "The view from the road", however, is rapidly disappearing or being blocked or replaced with roadside clutter consisting of advertising signs, rural commercial uses, hobby farms, and/or inappropriate developments?		21% 19% 59%
Public access activities Skagit County public access trail systems and park activities could extend from open space corridors within the urbanizing areas out into the countryside to access some of the most diverse and scenic features in the county and region?		12% 17% 72%
Public access trail systems and park activities should extend from the inner most urban areas out into the countryside within and through natural open space corridor networks to provide easy access to urban and rural residents alike?		16% 19% 64%
Major existing public trail corridors, however, are located within park boundaries or on former railroad corridors and dikes located in rural areas that are not easily accessed by residents of the urbanizing areas on a daily basis?		20% 25% 54%

As shown, the survey respondents agreed overwhelmingly with the statements elicited from public and non-profit open space agency and organization representatives concerning trends that are imperiling open space, scenic resources, and public access in the county at the present time.

2.6 Population growth impacts

Survey respondents were asked if in the next 20 years the Skagit County population is projected to increase by another 51,600 people or 46% more than the existing population of 113,100

persons, whether existing policies and programs will be sufficient to protect the county's open space resources.

In your opinion, will <u>existing UGA open space and public access trail conditions, trends, policies, and programs</u> be enough to conserve and protect Skagit County's UGA related open space resources?	51% no 18% yes 32% don't know
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As shown, a majority of the respondents do not think existing policies and programs will be sufficient to conserve and protect Skagit County's UGA related open space resources. However, a significant percent of the respondents may not know what existing policies and programs are. They may also not know whether they are or will be sufficient.

2.7 UGA open space and public access trail priorities

In light of the preceding, survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of the following open spaces within and adjacent to the urbanizing areas (UGAs) of the county in general whether such areas are protected by critical area ordinances, land use agreements, conservation easements, or land purchases by public or private organization efforts.

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

UGA open space conservation needs

Productive and working farmlands adjacent the urbanizing areas?	13% 14% 74%
Mature and older growth forestlands within and adjacent the urbanizing areas?	16% 18% 67%
Wildlife habitat and migration corridors within and through the urbanizing areas?	19% 20% 62%
Scenic landscapes and roadside views entering and leaving the urbanizing areas?	14% 26% 61%
Historical and cultural landmarks and sites within and adjacent the urbanizing areas?	14% 33% 55%

UGA public access activities

Public access trails and facilities that extend through and outwards from the urbanizing areas?	15% 22% 64%
Fishing, swimming, car-top boating,	15% 21% 65%

picnicking, and other day use activities within open space corridor networks in and adjacent the urbanizing areas?	
Public access activities	low / high 1-2 3 4-5
Interpretive trails, exhibits, and centers within open space corridor networks that extend outwards from the urbanizing areas?	16% 34% 52%

As shown, survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated all of the open space conservation and public access trails and activities were of the utmost importance (scores greater than 50% for ratings of 4-5) per the rank orders shown.

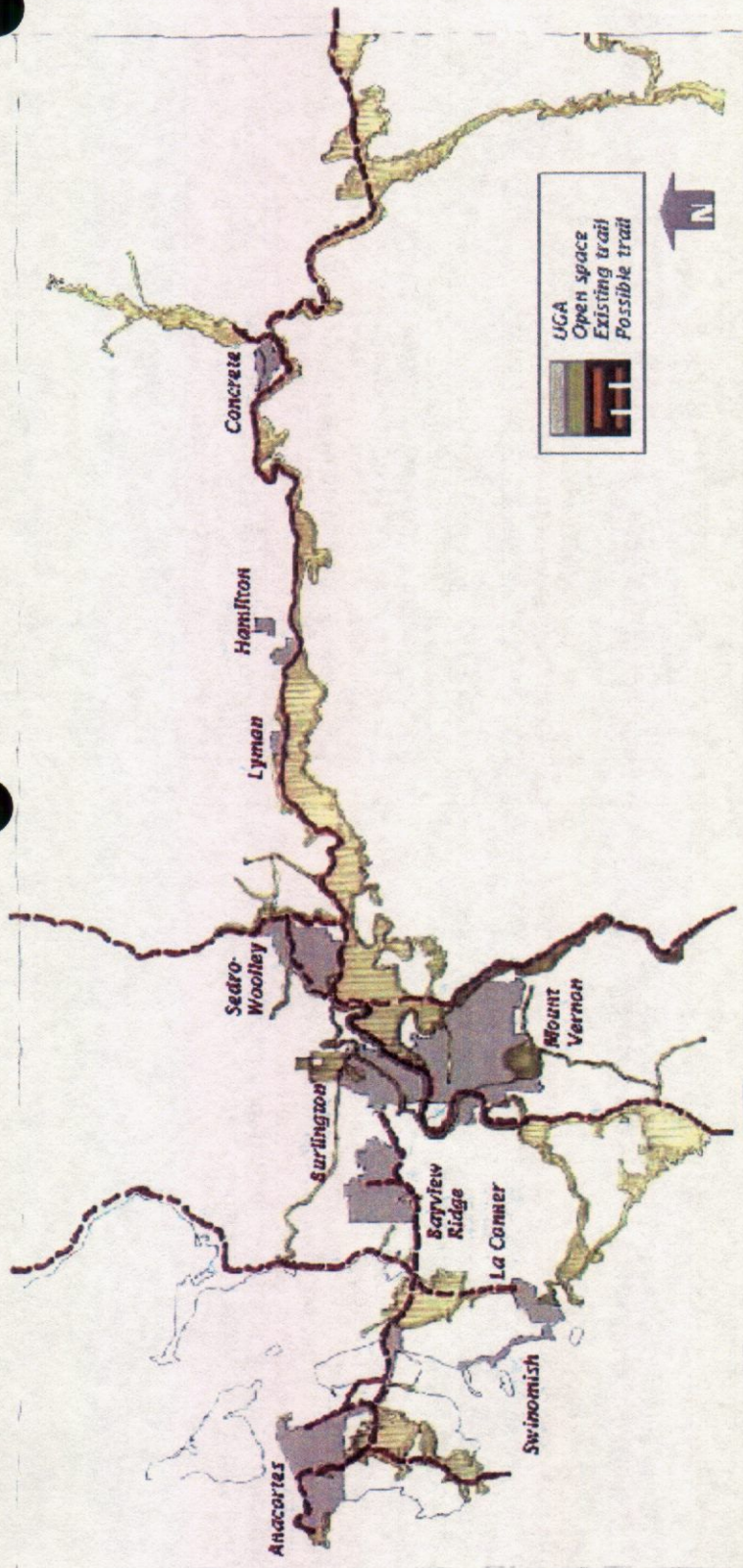
2.8 Conclusions

Based on the results above, a principal purpose of this SCOG planning effort, therefore, is to define concepts and strategies by which to define UCA open space and greenway separators that can also link with the other open space initiatives being carried out in the more rural areas of the county by public and non-profit agencies and organizations.

A secondary purpose of this SCOG planning effort is to devise a UCA open space separator and greenway strategy that will complement existing open space efforts by other public and private agencies and organizations in a manner that will benefit and enhance rather than duplicate or compete with these ongoing and successful efforts.



Photo - historic Rosario Schoolhouse (1891) on Fidalgo Island



Chapter 3: UGA Open Space Concept Plans

3.1 Countywide concept plan

The following proposals are based on the results of the workshop planning sessions and the mail-out/phone-back survey of countywide resident voter households. The proposals are CONCEPTUAL, in some instances, subject to further study and coordination with public and private participants that may modify the eventual project particulars.

The Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Concept Plan is and will be a composite of the open space, recreation, trail, and land use plans developed by each city, sub-area, tribal, port, state, and federal jurisdiction – subject to the updating of these plans and planning elements by each jurisdiction on a

housekeeping basis every year and on a comprehensive basis every 7 years in accordance with GMA requirements.

The individual jurisdictional plans share common open space definitions and objectives consisting of a focus on the Skagit River from Concrete through Hamilton, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, and Mount Vernon; on the Swinomish Channel to La Conner and the Swinomish Indian Reservation; on the Community Forests through Anacortes; and on Deception Pass State Park lands across Fidalgo Island to Whidbey Island.

As shown in the graphics, these UGA corridors could extend around and from the cities outward into the most rural

landscapes and features linking the UGAs into continuous greenway systems across the county using these features as an open space framework.

This concept was vetted in the countywide mail-out/phone-back survey of registered countywide voter households described in Appendix D. Survey respondents were asked to rate the countywide concept on a 1 to 5 scale where 1-2 were the lowest priorities, 3 was a neutral score, and 4-5 were the highest priorities.

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

UGA open space corridors	
Countywide UGA open space corridors - could focus on the Skagit River from Concrete through Hamilton, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, and Mount Vernon; on the Swinomish Channel to LaConner; and on the Community Forests and State Park through Anacortes? As shown in the graphics, these corridors could extend from the cities outward into the most rural landscapes and features linking the UGAs into continuous greenway systems?	12% 18% 71%

As shown, survey respondents gave overwhelming support to this countywide approach to the UGA open space concept.

Public access systems

The UGA open space corridors could be accessed by a network of regional on and off-road multipurpose hike, bike, and some horse trails extending through the open space corridors and the UGAs, and outwards from the UGAs and Skagit County to connect with Whatcom, Snohomish, and Island Counties.

These multipurpose trail systems have been planned on a regional basis by public and non-profit agencies and organizations and include proposals extending north to Bellingham and Whatcom County, east through Rockport to Ross Lake National Recreation Area, south to Arlington and Snohomish County, southwest to Stanwood and Snohomish County, and west through Anacortes and Whidbey Island.

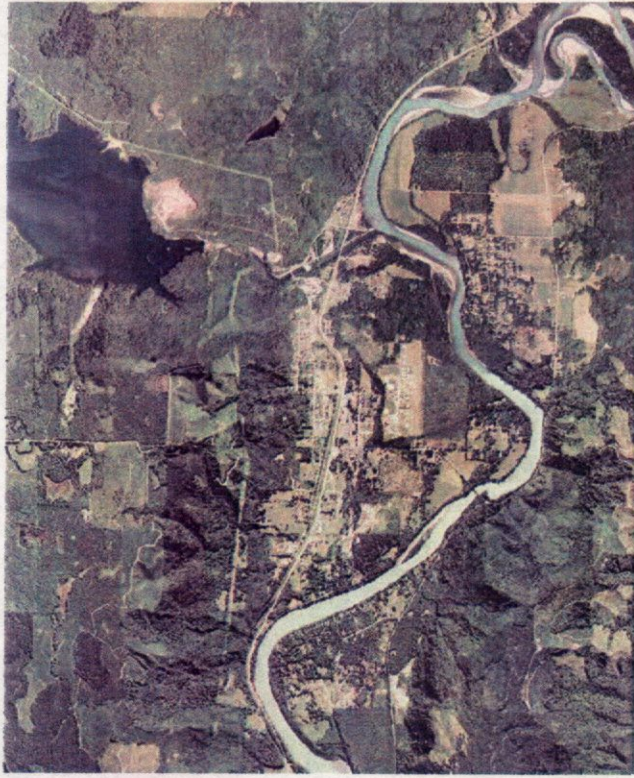
These trail concepts were also vetted in the countywide mail-out/phone-back survey of registered countywide voter households described in Appendix D. Survey respondents were asked to rate the trail proposals on a priority scale.

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

UGA public access systems	
Anacortes-Burlington Trail - could extend west from Burlington along SR-20 through the Bayview Ridge UGA to link with Swinomish Channel and PNW Trails to LaConner and Anacortes? The Anacortes-Burlington Trail would create a countywide trail linkage with other major trail systems?	16% 17% 64%
Cascade Trail - could extend through the Skagit River open space corridor from Rockport through Concrete, Hamilton, Sedro-Woolley, and Burlington? An eastern extension of the trail could link with the Ross Lake National Recreation Area?	13% 22% 63%
Swinomish Channel Trail - could extend north from LaConner along the Swinomish Channel to the PNW Trail and provide access to the estuaries and wetlands in Padilla and Fidalgo Bays.	17% 21% 59%
PNW/Interurban Trail - could extend south from the Interurban Trail in Whatcom County through Bayview to the Swinomish Channel then west through Anacortes to Deception Pass and Whidbey Island?	17% 22% 58%

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

UGA public access systems	
Centennial Trail - could provide access from Snohomish County trail systems past Lake McMurray, Big Lake, the Nookachamps, Skagit River, and Northern State Hospital to link with Whatcom County trail systems to Lake Whatcom, Bellingham, and the Canadian border?	17% 21% 58%
Skagit-Snohomish Trail - could extend from the Nookachamps south through Mount Vernon and Britt Slough then along the South	21% 20% 58%

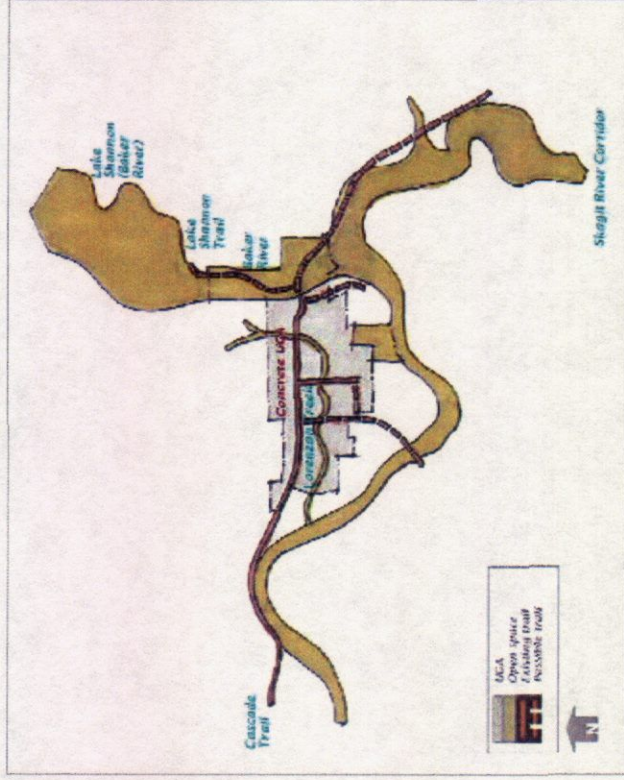


3.2 Concrete Urban Growth Area

Concrete's UGA open space corridor concept - is defined by the Skagit River floodplain around the southern boundary of the UGA, through the Lorenzan Creek and the Baker River riparian corridors, north to Lake Shannon along the Baker River corridor, and north and east by overlapping forest resource zoned lands.

The river corridors and floodplains surround and define the southern limits of feasible urban development. Additional open space definition is provided on the east along the Baker River by the former concrete plant and hydroelectric power plant and on the south below the city airport by city-owned properties.

The open space corridor and buffers along Lorenzan Creek extend through the historic 1909 era downtown, school, park,



and other city assets. Open space fingers could extend further north on Lorenzan Creek headwaters into the city's wooded watershed.

The Cascade Trail - currently extends from Burlington through Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, and Hamilton to Concrete on the former railroad right-of-way and track bed. Current plans propose to extend the trail further east on or adjacent the railroad right-of-way through Rockport to Marblemount and even eventually east parallel to SR-20 into Ross Lake National Recreational Area.

A potential local trail system could extend north from the Skagit River and the Cascade Trail along the Baker River to Lake Shannon Dam, then along the east shore of the lake on and adjacent to Baker River Road.

Fork of the Skagit River to link with Fir Island, Conway, Stanwood and the Snohomish County trail systems.
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As shown, all of the trail proposals were given the highest priority (score 4-5) by a majority of the survey respondents.

The corridor locations shown in the graphics are CONCEPTUAL, subject to more detailed location planning with public and private landowners and organizations prior to actual trail project design and construction implementation.

In concept, the trails are sited along the edge or in some instances across the open space corridors in locations that do not intrude onto sensitive habitats or niches occupied by endangered or threatened wildlife or eco-systems.

The goal is to provide public access along and where appropriate, within open space corridors where the public may enjoy open space assets without risking intrusions that can detract from wildlife preservation or enhancement objectives and from agricultural or forestry operational requirements and private property prerogatives.

Interpretive centers and day-use parks

UGA open spaces preserve and protect significant natural resources, wildlife habitats, historical and cultural landmarks, scenic vistas and viewpoints, and other features of educational, interpretive, and informative interest to residents and visitors.

These features should be provided appropriate interpretive opportunities including trail and viewpoint access, signage, exhibits, and even centers with educational materials and programs.

Where appropriate, open space related day-use park activities including fishing, boating, and camping may also be incorporated as open space adjuncts to increase public access and interpretive opportunities.

The concept of providing interpretive and day-use park activities was also vetted in the mail-out/phone-back survey of countywide registered voter households described in Appendix D. Survey respondents were also asked to rate interpretive center opportunities on a priority scale.

<u>UGA public access systems - activities</u>	<i>low / high</i>
<u>Interpretive centers and day-use parks -</u>	<i>1-2 3 4-5</i>
be installed where appropriate along the trail corridors identified above to increase interpretive opportunities and open space related day-use park activities?	18% 29% 51%

As shown, a majority of survey respondents gave interpretive centers and day-use parks a high priority (score 4-5).

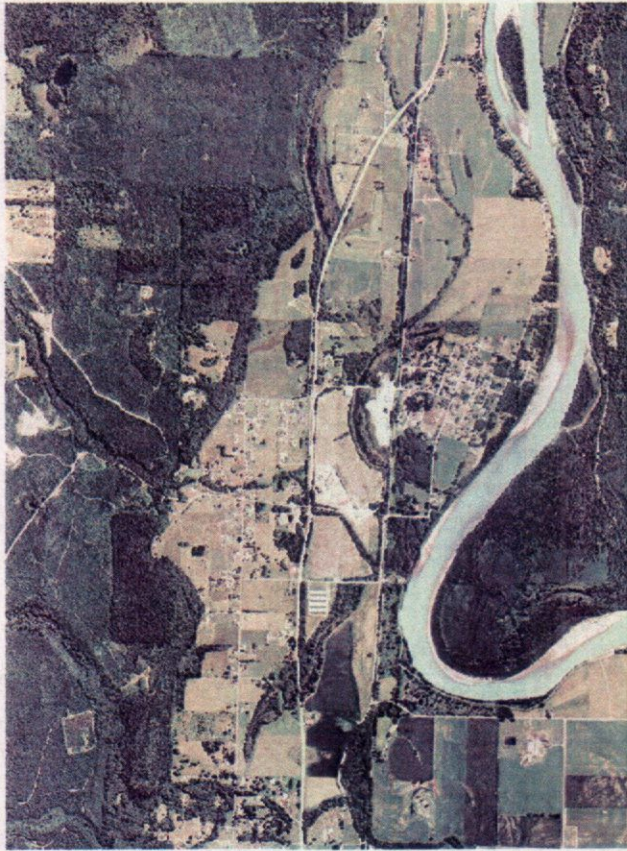
The following pages describe the open space concepts currently adopted in each jurisdiction's current comprehensive plans and currently under consideration by the appropriate jurisdiction's planning and parks staff and advisory planning groups, and by elected officials as determined from a series of public workshops with staff, Parks or Planning Commission or City Council in each jurisdictional area.

Another local trail system could extend south from the downtown across SR-20 and through school grounds and airport boundaries across the Skagit River to access the riverfront and South Skagit Highway/Concrete Sauk Valley Road.

The Concrete UGA concept plan was produced during public workshops conducted with the Town Planner and the Planning Commission and Town Council. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households.

<i>UGA open space corridors</i>	
<i>low</i> 1-2	<i>high</i> 3 4-5
<u>Concrete UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Skagit River around the UGA and extend through the city on Lorenzan Creek and the Baker River, then north to Lake Shannon linking with the downtown, schools, parks, and other assets?	15% 30% 53%

As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.



The Hamilton UGA Open Space concept is currently being developed by the Hamilton Town Council and the Hamilton Public Development Authority under a separate planning process.

3.3 Hamilton Urban Growth Area

Hamilton's UGA open space concept (not shown in the graphics) - is defined by the Skagit River around the southern boundary of the UGA and the slough riparian zone north of the developed town site, on the north by overlapping forest resource zoned lands, and on the east by overlapping agricultural resource zoned lands.

Hamilton's UGA boundaries were recently expanded by the County Commission. The Town Council, with assistance from the Hamilton Public Development Authority, proposed the new boundaries so that the residential and commercial portion of the town can relocate north of SR-20 and out of the Skagit River floodway. This is being done to reduce environmental and

health/safety risks and to minimize repetitive losses due to flooding in the town.

Depending on the final resolution of planning and design studies, the new town's open space system would incorporate critical areas (streams, sloughs, wetlands and their riparian buffers), steep slopes, and a Puget Sound Energy transmission line corridor into the plan. The plan also creates possibilities to link to the surrounding foothills up Red Cabin, Alder, and Muddy Creeks north of the UGA. The existing town site will be designated open space and provides public access to the river.

The Cascade Trail - currently extends from Burlington east through Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, and Hamilton to Concrete on the former railroad right-of-way and track bed.

It is envisioned that a local trail system would be incorporated into the new town plan and connect to the Cascade Trail and the open space created at the old town site along the river.

The Hamilton UGA open space concept will eventually be reviewed and approved by the Hamilton Town Council. The concept was vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households.

<i>UGA open space corridors</i>		<i>low / high</i>	
<i>Hamilton UGA open space corridors (not shown in the graphics)</i>		<i>1-2</i>	<i>3 4-5</i>
Skagit River around the UGA? Depending on the final resolution of planning and design studies currently being accomplished for the city, the open space system could extend up Alder and Mud Creeks to link with local trails and other facilities?		21%	32% 41%

As shown, a significant percent, but not a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a medium to high priority. The results may have been affected by the lack of a concise plan graphic illustrating the potential UGA concept (which is under development at this time).



Lyman concept graphic is being prepared separately.

3.4 Lyman Urban Growth Area

Lyman's UGA open space concept - is defined on the south by the Skagit River floodplain and floodway, by Childs and Jones Creeks riparian corridors through the UGA, and on the south and west by overlapping agricultural resource zoned lands.

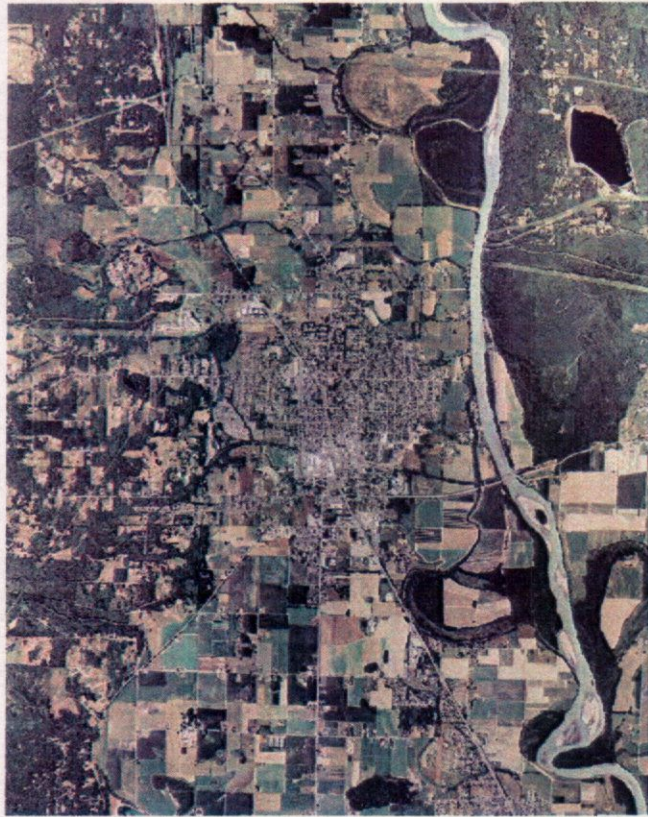
The wooded shoreline along the bends in the Skagit River are frequently flooded and therefore preserved as natural open space - particularly the western slough.

The open space corridors and buffers along Childs and Jones Creeks extend around the town and across SR-20 into the city's former watershed at the headwaters and springs of Jones Creek.

The Cascade Trail - extends from Burlington east through Sedro-Woolley and Lyman's town center then east through Hamilton to Concrete. The trail corridor adjoins the area on the west slough and crosses over Childs and Jones Creeks.

Possible local trail systems could extend from the Cascade Trail north adjacent to Jones Creek tributaries north up the hillside into Washington State Department of Natural Resources forestlands.

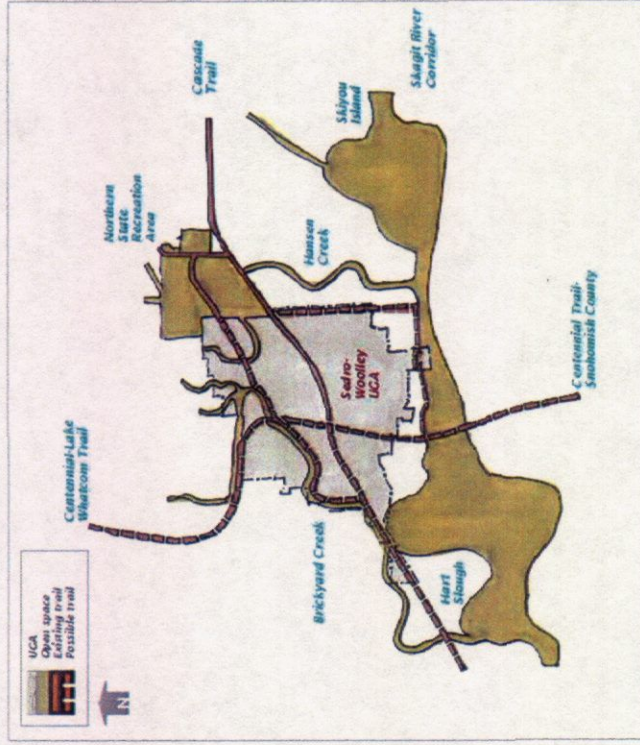
The Lyman UGA concept plan was produced during a workshop with the Town Mayor. The concept was not finalized or vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey of countywide registered voter households.



3.5 Sedro-Woolley Urban Growth Area

Sedro-Woolley's UGA open space corridors - is defined on the south by the Skagit River and Hart Slough floodplains, by Brickyard and Hansen Creeks riparian corridors through the UGA, and by overlapping agricultural resource zoned lands on the south, east, and west.

The Skagit River floodplains and floodway define the southern limits of feasible urban development. Additional linear open space definition is provided by overhead power transmission lines and railroad corridors.



The open space corridors and buffers along Brickyard and Hansen Creeks extend north from the river to link with the extensive landholdings of Northern State Recreational Area (former State Hospital) and the Upper Skagit Reservation lands. Open space fingers could extend further north along the railroad corridors and numerous minor streams that extend off of Brickyard and Hansen Creeks.

The Cascade Trail - extends from Burlington through Sedro-Woolley to the western edge of the downtown core then east of the downtown core through Lyman, Hamilton to Concrete on the former railroad right-of-way and track bed. The

downtown segment will eventually be created to provide a continuous link through the city.

The Centennial-Lake Whatcom Trail – has currently been completed from Snohomish to Arlington at the Snohomish/Skagit County line on the former railroad right-of-way and track bed. The Lake Whatcom Trail segment has been completed around the eastern side of Lake Whatcom from North Lake Whatcom County Park to almost the southern end of the lake on former railroad right-of-way and track bed. The trail plan proposes to eventually link the two segments through Sedro-Woolley on some or all portions of the former and existing railroad corridors though portions may initially or ultimately be routed along or around some segments.

Potential local trail systems could be extended adjacent to Brickyard and Hansen Creeks to create a trail loop from Hart Slough through Northern State Recreational Area and back to the Skagit River.

Another potential local trail could be extended along the north bank of the Skagit River from the Centennial Trail east to Hansen Creek.

The Sedro-Woolley UGA concept plan was produced during public workshops conducted with city planning staff and City Council. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey of countywide registered voter households.

UGA open space corridors

**low /
high
1-2 3 4-5**

<u>Sedro-Woolley UGA open space corridors</u> – could focus on the Skagit River, Hart Slough, and Skiyou Island around the UGA and extend through the city on Brickyard and Hansen Creeks to link with Northern State Hospital County Park as well as the downtown, city trails, parks, schools, and other assets?	14% 23% 59%
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As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.

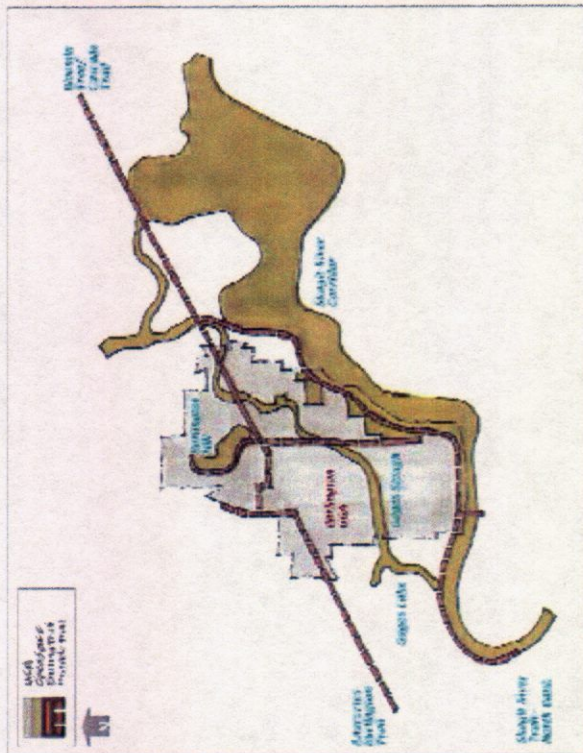


3.6 Burlington Urban Growth Area

Burlington's UGA open space concept - is defined by the Skagit River floodplain around the southern edge of the UGA, by Gages Slough riparian corridor through the UGA, and by overlapping agricultural resource zoned lands on the east, north, and west boundaries.

The Skagit River floodplain and floodways define the southern within and around the original river oxbows.

The open space and buffers along Gages Slough loop from the Skagit River through the center of the city linking parks, schools, commercial areas, and older neighborhoods.



The Skagit River's original route extended north around the city to flow into the Samish River and Samish Bay before cutting the current channel. The former riverbed can also provide an open space extension along the northern developable limits of the city UGA.

The eastern slopes of Burlington Hill are being developed for low density residential uses, through slope stability and geological problems have slowed construction. The western slopes are steeper and largely undeveloped and could provide relief on the hillside.

The Cascade Trail - begins at the western edge of the historic downtown on the former railroad right-of-way and track bed and extends east through Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, and Hamilton to

Concrete. Planning efforts have proposed extending the trail west through the downtown and across I-5 to create a linking trail within or adjacent to SR-20 right-of-way past Bayview to Anacortes.

The Skagit River Trail North Bank proposal – is to extend trail access along the north bank of the Skagit River from Gages Slough on the east through Burlington city parks and open spaces to Mount Vernon's Edgewater Park and areas further south. Depending on more detailed planning with affected property owners and interests, possible trail corridor alternatives could be located on or adjacent river dikes, local roadways, and city parklands.

Possible local trail systems could extend north from the Skagit River past the historic downtown to Burlington Hill adjacent railroad tracks and/or on local roadways, and to and around Burlington-Edison Regional Park and the high school within or adjacent to I-5 right-of-way.

The Burlington UGA concept plan was produced during working sessions with the City Planner. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households.

UGA open space corridors	low / high			
	1-2	3	4-5	
<u>Burlington UGA open space corridors</u> – could focus on the Skagit River and Hart Slough around the UGA and extend through the city on Gages Slough to link with Burlington Hill as well as the downtown, city trails, parks, schools, and other assets.	15%	24%	57%	

As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.

The central segment of the river corridor is very constrained and except for Lions Park North and the sand bar along Dunbar Road, limited by dikes and shoreline improvements.

The open space corridors and buffers along Kulshan, Maddox, and Carpenter Creeks extend through and into the developed areas of the city linking the interior with the Skagit River, Nookachamps Creek and Big Lake, and Britt Sough open space systems.

These finger systems also define the edges and provide access to Beaver Pond and Little Mountain, significant natural and aesthetic resources in the center of the UGA.

The Centennial Trail - may extend along the eastern edge of the UGA within or adjacent or parallel to the original railroad right-of-way, portions of which have since reverted or been acquired by adjoining private property owners and developers.

The trail could link Big Lake, the Nookachamps, Barney Lake, and the Skagit River open spaces with Mount Vernon by Carpenter Creek and the city's Kulshan Trail.

The Skagit River Trail South Bank proposal - is to extend a trail access along the south bank of the Skagit River from the Centennial Trail and Nookachamps Creek on the east through Mount Vernon's Lions Parks, the downtown, and areas further south to Stanwood.

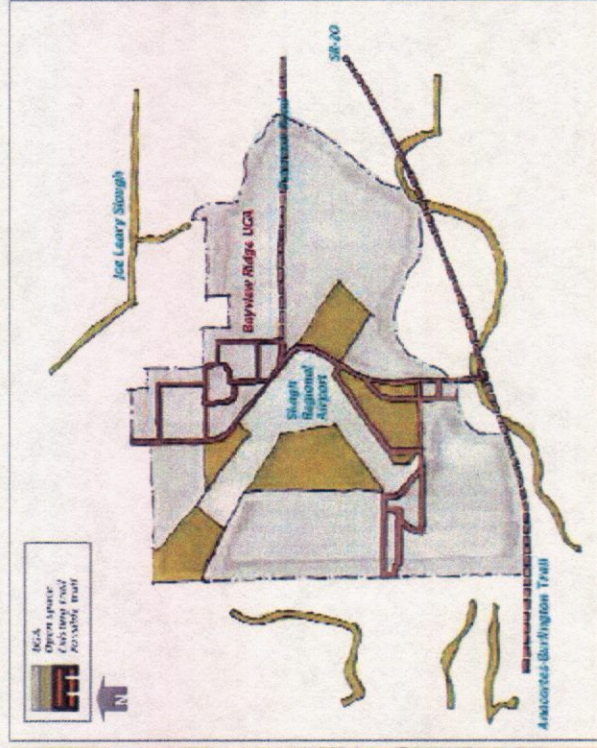
Depending on more detailed planning with affected property owners and interests, possible trail corridor alternatives could be located on or adjacent river dikes, local roadways, and city parklands.

Possible local trail systems could extend through the UGA to link the Centennial and Skagit River South Bank Trails by way of the Kulshan Trail, and adjacent to Beaver Pond, Little Mountain, and Big Lake on trails adjacent to Maddox and Carpenter Creeks, and Britt Slough.

The Mount Vernon UGA concept plan was produced during public workshops with city planning and parks staff, and City Council. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households.

<i>UGA open space corridors</i>		<i>low / high</i>	
		<i>1-2</i>	<i>3 4-5</i>
<i>Mount Vernon UGA open space corridors</i> - could focus on the Skagit River, Nookachamps Creek, Barney Lake, and Britt Slough around the UGA and extend through the city on Maddox and Carpenter Creeks to link with the Kulshan Trail, Beaver Pond, Little Mountain as well as the downtown, city trails, parks, schools, and other assets.		17%	20% 58%

As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.



3.8 Bayview Ridge Urban Growth Area

Bayview's UGA open space concept – is defined by the land buffers surrounding the Skagit Regional Airport runways and storm retention areas, Joe Leary Slough, the riparian stream corridors that extend along SR-20 and west from the airport to Padilla Bay, and agricultural resource zoned land on the east, south, and west boundaries.

The FAA's required runway approach and buffer zones create sizable wooded preserves around the north, west, and south boundaries of the airport. The west edge of the property is adjoined by Paccar's testing facility which also contains sizable wooded buffer areas.

The airport stormwater retention system is located in the south airport boundary and includes a perimeter trail around the system that also extends north through the airport and industrial park to Josh Wilson Road.

The approach and buffer zone extends in open fields to the east across Avon Allen Road. Bayview's subarea plan proposes residential uses be developed to the edge of the buffer areas.

The Anacortes-Burlington Trail proposal – is to develop a trail linkage between the Centennial Trail in Burlington and the Tommy Thompson Trail in Anacortes.

Depending on more detailed planning with affected property owners and interests, possible trail corridor alternatives could be located within or adjacent to SR-20 right-of-way and/or adjacent to the drainage corridors and ditches that extend west to the Swinomish Channel.

The Bayview UGA concept plan was abstracted from public workshops and proposals conducted during the Bayview subarea planning process, and working sessions with Port of

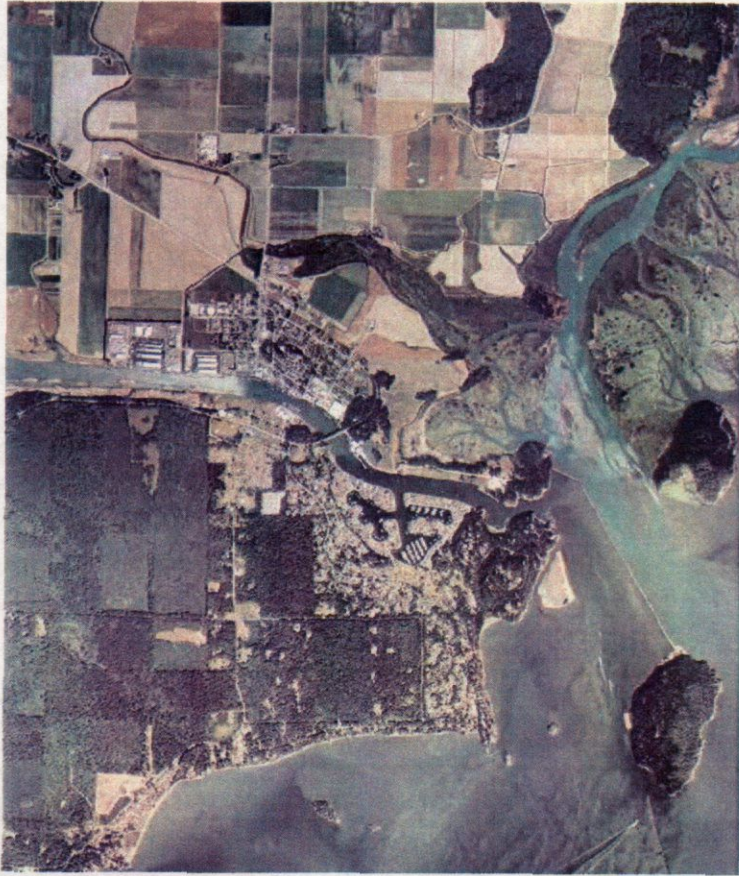
Skagit County staff. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households.

UGA open space corridors

*low /
high
1-2 3 4-5*

<u>Bayview UGA open space corridors</u> - could incorporate the lands surrounding the runways and storm retention areas and extend through the UGA to link with Padilla Bay and Burlington?	17% 27% 53%
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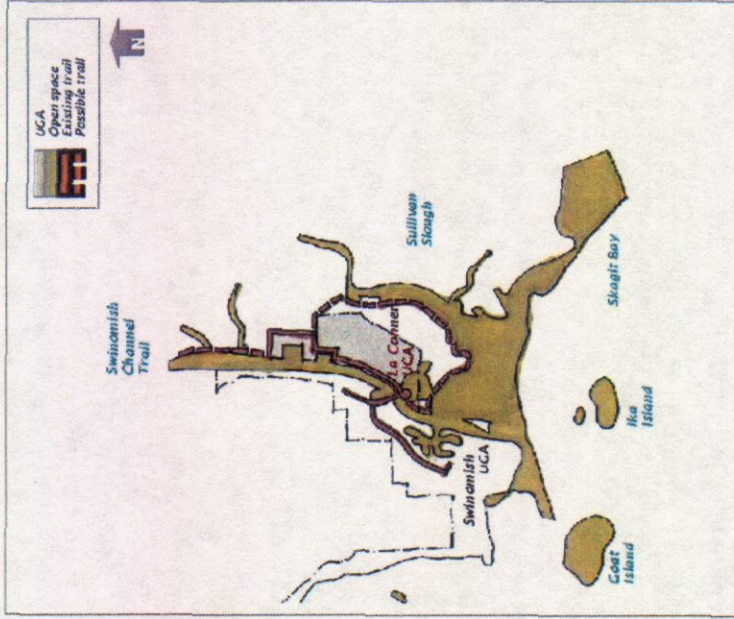
As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.



3.9 La Conner Urban Growth Area

La Conner's UGA open space concept - is defined on the west, south, and east by the Swinomish Channel, Sullivan Slough, and Skagit Bay floodplains, and on the south, east, and north by agricultural resource zoned lands.

Skagit Bay and Sullivan Slough are relatively unconstrained natural estuary and freshwater drainage systems that extend along the eastern boundary of the UGA except where limited by a dike along the northern edge.



The Swinomish Channel is defined on the west edge by topography and along the entire east edge by dikes. A series of ditches drain the open farm fields into the Channel during low tides through a series of tidegates.

The channel through the La Conner UGA has been expanded for marinas and lined with buildings, piers, and docks on or adjacent to filled high ground or the dikes. The city has developed a series of overlook parks, landings, and segmented shoreline trails.

The Swinomish Channel Trail proposal - is to access a proposed ring dike around the town that would restore the town's original flood protection system. The dike would restore the segment on the north of the school and UGA limits.

Depending on more detailed planning with affected property owners and interests, possible trail corridor alternatives could be located on or adjacent the ring dike and extend south along the Channel dike to Skagit Bay, and north along the dike to connect with the Anacortes-Burlington Trail proposal at SR-20.

The Town also proposes to eventually complete development of the shoreline trail system from the marina south through the downtown to Pioneer Park and a linkage with the proposed ring dike trail system.

The La Conner UGA concept plan was produced during public workshop sessions with the Town Planner and Parks

Commission. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households.

UGA open space corridors

low /
high
1-2 3 4-5
16% 24% 56%

<u>LaConner/Swinomish UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Swinomish Channel, Sullivan Slough, and Skagit Bay through and around the UGA and extend into the city, Swinomish Village, and Shelter Bay to link with the downtown, schools, trails, and parks?	
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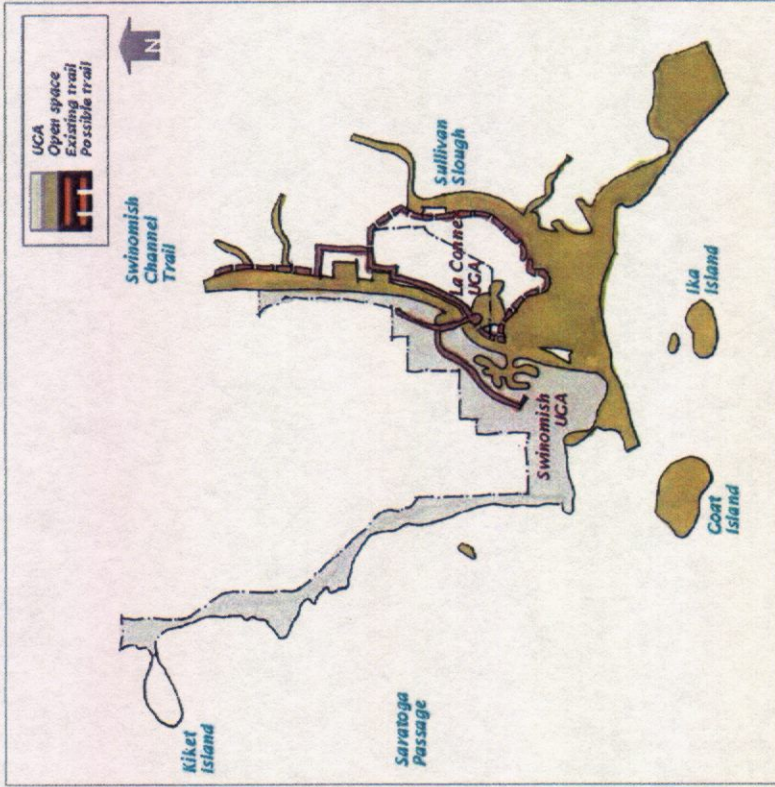
As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.



3.10 Swinomish Urban Growth Area

Swinomish's UGA open space concept - is defined on the east by the Swinomish Channel, on the south by Skagit Bay, Saratoga Passage, and Kiket Island, and on the northeast by forest resource zoned lands.

Skagit Bay shoreline below Eagle Crest and north of the Swinomish Channel jetty create a sandy and gravel beach under the high bank waterfront during low tides from the jetty



through Shelter Bay's Martha Beach to the point of Pull & Be Damned Road along the southern boundary of the UGA. The beach shoreline extends north in Saratoga Passage under mostly high bank waterfront around Hope Island to Kiket Island Road.

The Swinomish Channel defines the east edge of the Swinomish UGA through Shelter Bay marina, which is bordered

by residential development on filled lands, the Tribal fish processing plant and marina, log sorting yard, and scattered rural residential developments.

A possible local trail system could be developed from Pioneer Park in La Conner across the channel on Rainbow Bridge and then through Shelter Bay on Shelter Bay Drive to Martha's Beach, and on Reservation Road through the village to access the Tribe's community center, longhouse, and public facilities. The trail could extend back to the channel shoreline on the former Morris Road alignment to the original swing bridge.

The Swinomish UGA concept plan was produced during working sessions with the Tribal Planners. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households as a combined La Conner/Swinomish UGA concept.

UGA open space corridors

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

<u>La Conner/Swinomish UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Swinomish Channel, Sullivan Slough, and Skagit Bay through and around the UGA and extend into the city, Swinomish Village, and Shelter Bay to link with the downtown, schools, trails, and parks?	16% 24% 56%
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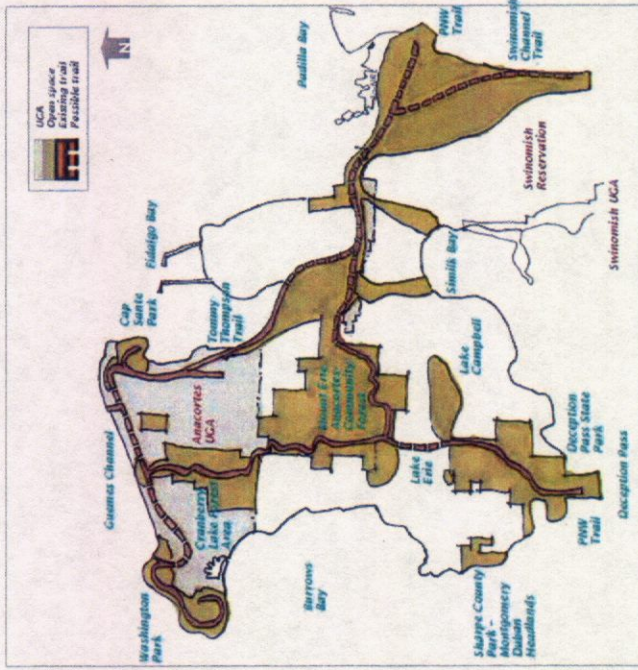
As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.



3.11 Anacortes Urban Growth Area

Anacortes's UGA open space concept – is defined on the east by Similk and Fidalgo Bays, on the north by Guemes Channel, on the west by Barrows Bay, on the south by Cranberry Lake and the Community Forests with some forest resource zoned lands.

The northeast and western edges of Fidalgo Bay have been modified since the city was established in 1891 by a series of piers, docks, marinas, and other waterfront constructions including oil refineries and railroad over water track extensions. The north edge of the city along Guemes Channel has also been modified by a successive series of waterfront and shipping constructions. And the western edge of the city has been excavated and filled for Skyline Marina in Flounder Bay.



The north end of Similk Bay and south end of Fidalgo Bay, however, remain relatively undeveloped composed of a series of significant estuaries, tidelands, and wetlands. The city's Cap Sante and Washington Parks also preserve undisturbed natural shorelines, woodlands, and scenic vistas.

The city's Cranberry Lake Forest Area, Heart Lake State Park, and Mount Erie Community Forests preserve an extensive system of woodlands, wetlands, and lakes extending from the center of the UGA south towards Lake Campbell that is accessed by an extensive system of local trails.

Open space fingers could connect these assets into an extended network of corridors extending around the waterfront and through the forests defining the edges of the UGA and linking with other parks, schools, residential neighborhoods, the historic downtown, and working waterfronts.

The Tommy Thompson Trail – currently extends south on former railroad right-of-way, track bed, and over water trestles from the Port of Anacortes's Cap Sante Marina past the Anacortes Marina and across Fidalgo Bay to SR-20. Future trail planning may extend the trail west within or adjacent to SR-20 to connect with the proposed Swinomish Channel Trail to La Conner, and the Anacortes-Burlington Trail past Bayview to Burlington and the Centennial Trail.

The Pacific Northwest (PNW) Trail proposal – is to extend a trail network south from the Pacific Northwest Trail at Mount Baker west and south through Bellingham and the Chuckanut Mountains to Anacortes, then south across Deception Pass and Whidbey Island to Coupeville, then across the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Port Townsend, and west to the Olympic Mountains.

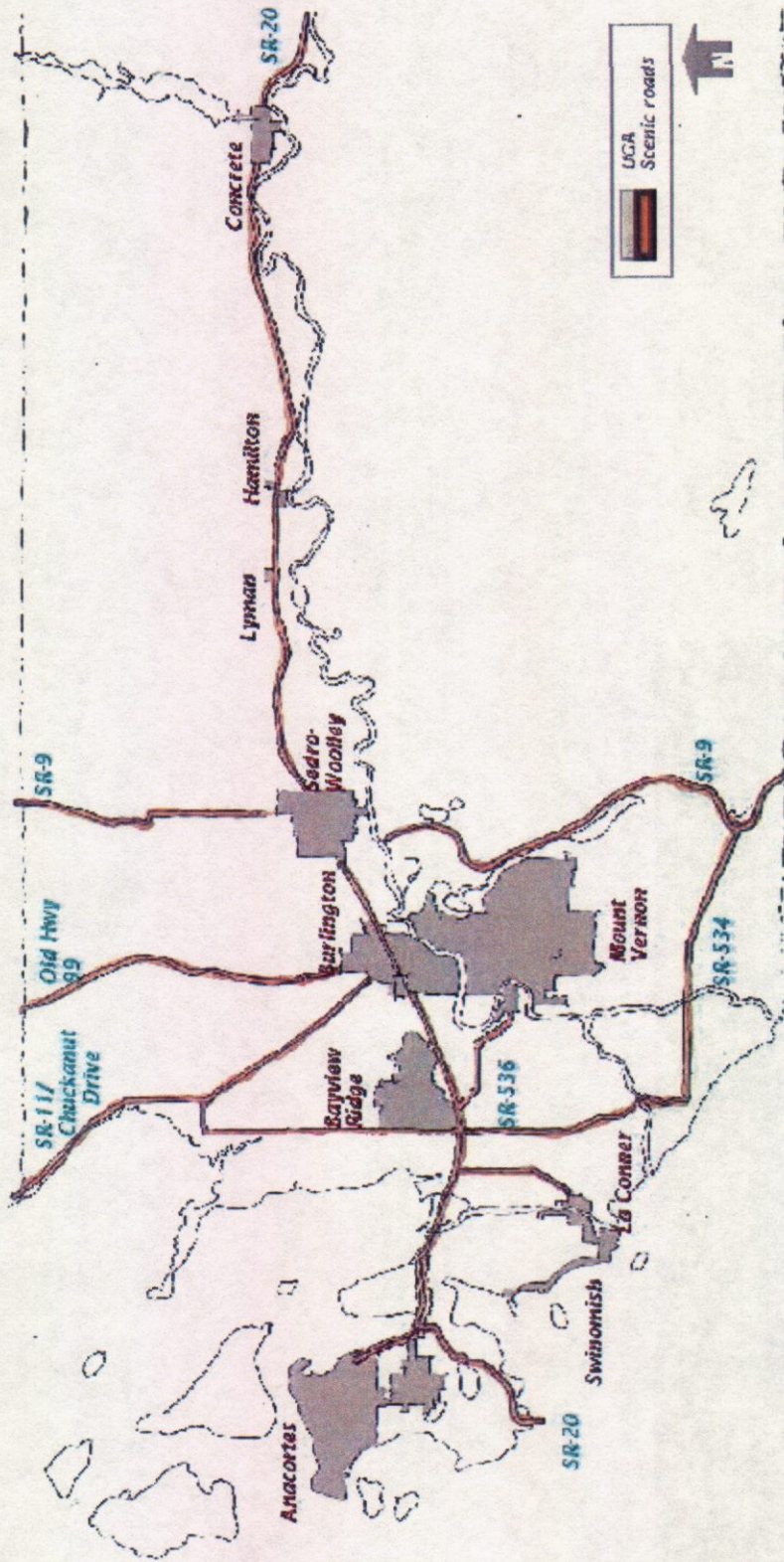
Depending on more detailed planning with affected property owners and interests, possible PNW trail corridor alternatives could be located on or adjacent dikes, roadways, utility rights-of-way, and city and state parklands through different trail segments.

The city also proposes to eventually complete development of the shoreline trail system from the end of the Tommy Thompson Trail at the Cap Sante Marina north through the downtown and waterfront then west to Washington Park. The trail would also provide linkages by ferry across the channel to Guemes Island, and into the San Juan Islands.

The Anacortes UGA concept plan was produced during public workshop sessions with the Park Planner and City Council. The concept was also vetted by the mail-out/phone-back survey with countywide registered voter households.

<i>UGA open space corridors</i>		<i>low / high</i> <i>1-2 3 4-5</i>
<u><i>Anacortes UGA open space corridors</i></u> – could focus on Cranberry Lake and Community Forests, and Deception Pass State Park through the UGA and extend into the city to link with the Tommy Thompson Trail, Cap Sante and Washington Parks, the downtown, marinas, city trails, schools, and other assets.		12% 22% 61%

As shown, a majority of countywide voter household survey participants gave the concept a high priority.



3.12 Scenic Roads

"Rural by Design" scenic overlay districts be established to conserve the "rural by design" scenic aspects (but not change land use allowances) for major roadway entries into and between UGAs including SR-9, SR-11/Chuckanut Drive, SR-20, Old Highway 99, SR-237/Farm to Market Road, SR-530/Sauk Valley Road, SR-534/Conway-Lake McMurray Road, SR-536/Memorial Highway, and other significant rural state highways and county roads.

UGA open space corridors

"Rural by Design" scenic overlay districts

- be established to conserve the "rural by design" scenic aspects (but not change land use allowances) for major roadway entries into and between the UGAs including SR-9, SR-11, SR-20, Old Highway 99, and other significant rural county roads?

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

16% 31% 50%

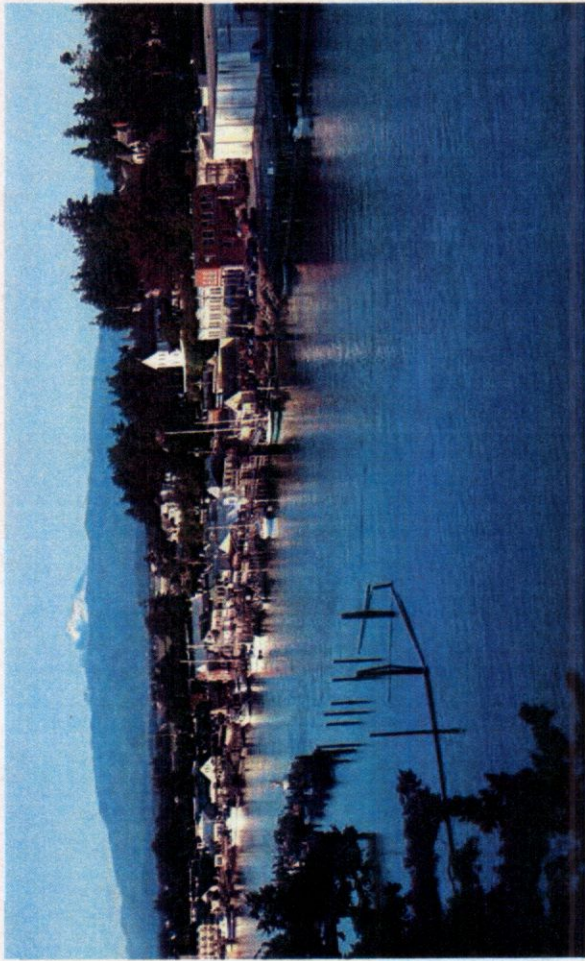


Photo - Swinomish Channel with La Conner in foreground and Mt Baker in background

Chapter 4: Implementation

Following is a summary description of the major tasks determined to be necessary to effectively implement the UGA Open Space Plan. The tasks represent the general priorities established by the SCOG coordinating group, workshops with interest groups and organizations, and the mail-out/phone-back survey of registered voter households.

As shown, a number of parties may be responsible for the lead and management, participation, and supporting aspects of each action – as described in the following summaries. The tasks are grouped according to subject matter and not priority.

4.1 Adopt plan

1 Adopt plan as GMA element – see Appendix A
Skagit County and the participating cities and UGAs including Concrete, Hamilton, Lyman, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, Mount Vernon, Bay View, La Conner, and Anacortes, will complete actions necessary to adopt this planning document as a compliant element of the county, city, and UGA comprehensive and subarea plans in accordance with Growth Management Act (GMA) provisions outlined in Appendix A.

Participants – Board of County Commissioners and City Councils with the assistance of the Skagit County Planning & Development Services Department and the participation of the Samish, Swinomish, and Upper Skagit Tribes, Port of Skagit County, Washington State Departments of Community, Trade & Economic Development (CTED), Natural Resources (DNR), Fish & Wildlife (DFW), Ecology (DOE), US Forest Service (USFS) and National Park Service (NPS), Skagit County Public Utilities District (PUD), Seattle City Light, and Puget Sound Energy (PSE), nonprofit organizations including Skagitians for Farmland Preservation, Nature Conservancy, and Skagit County Land Trust, among others, and citizens of the county.

Action

- Disseminate copies of this plan document – on county and city websites and CDs to appropriate public agencies and interested public and private parties in accordance with GMA adoption provisions.
- Conduct public hearing and record comments with County and City Planning Commissions – of this document as a stand-alone UGA open space element plan and make recommendations to Board of County Commissioners and City Councils in accordance with GMA provisions.
- Conduct public hearing and record comments with Board of County Commissioners and City Councils – of this document, comments received by Planning Commissions, recommendations made by Planning Commissions, and comments provided at hearing in accordance with GMA provisions.
- Adopt this plan and accompanying Capital Facilities Program (CFP) by Board of County Commissioners and City Councils – as an element of county and city comprehensive plans and implementing CFP in accordance with GMA provisions.

4.2 Create an implementation organization

2 Establish a Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) (see Appendix F)

Establish a countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) to coordinate, oversee, and implement UGA open space programs and projects.

Participants – at the Skagit Board of County Commissioner's discretion, the membership of the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) may include members appointed from elected officials or staff of city, tribe, port, state departments, federal agencies, utility companies, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have an interest in UGA open space, trail, and interpretive efforts but who do not present conflict-of-interest

1. Board of County Commissioners

| 2. Planning Commission

3. SCUOSC/Planning & Development Services

4. Parks & Recreation/Public Works Departments

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Board of County Commissioners | |
| 2. Planning Commission | |
| 3. SCUOSC/Planning & Development Services | |
| 4. Parks & Recreation/Public Works Departments | |
| | |
| 5. Concrete, Hamilton, Lyman, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington,
Mount Vernon, Bay View, La Conner, Anacortes | |
| 6. Samish, Swinomish, Upper Skagit Tribes | |
| 6. Port of Skagit County | |
| | |
| 8. CTED, DNR, DFW, DOE, WSDOT | |
| 9. USFS/NPS | |
| | |
| 10. Skagit PUD, Seattle City Light, PSE | |
| 11. Nonprofit organizations | |
| 12. Private and for-profit entities | |

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	By year	Comments
4.1 Adopt plan															
1 Adopt plan as GMA element		A	P	L	P	A	P	P	P	P				X	County and cities
4.2 Create an implementation organization															
2 Establish UGA Open Space Committee (SCUOSC)		A	L	P	A	P	P	P	P	P				X	
4.3 Adopt financing strategy															
3 Adopt impact fees - open space provisions		A	L	P	A	P	P							X	With open space dedications
4 Institute an UGA open space levy		A	L	P	P	P	P							X	Countywide 6 year
4.4 Initiate UGA open space competitions															
5 Establish public benefit criteria		A	P	L	P	P	P	P	P	P				X	
6 Conduct open space RFP		A	L	P	P	P	P	P	P	P				X	Annual competitions
7 Acquire/restore/enhance open spaces		A	L	P	P	P	P	P	P	P				X	
8 Acquire/develop trails		A	L	P	P	P	P	P	P	P				X	
9 Acquire/develop interpretive facilities		A	L	P	P	P	P	P	P	P				X	
4.5 Monitor progress															
10 Conduct progress assessments		A	P	L	P	P	P	P	P	P				X	With every GFP update

issues or perceptions during the submittal, award, or monitoring of subsequent UGA open space fund competitions.

Action

- The Board of County Commissioners will formally approve the role and responsibility - of a Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) organization as the countywide UGA open space facilitating, coordinating, and implementation agent.
- Coordinate UGA open space plans, programs, projects, and other actions - to be accomplished by the county, cities, tribes, port, state, federal, utility, nonprofit, and for-profit participants.
- Engage the public - of the implications of current and forecast urban and rural development trends, the need to establish UGA open space separators and countywide open space and trail networks, and the impact open space issues have on the economic well being and development of the county-at-large.
- Resolve a funding strategy - necessary to effectively finance on a continuous basis the preservation, restoration, enhancement, and management of UGA and countywide networks of open space, trails, and interpretive facilities.
- Monitor implementation - to ensure the actions proposed in this plan are effectively realized by the assigned participants.

4.3 Adopt a financing strategy

3 Consider adopting growth impact fees for open space, trails, and interpretive facilities

Evaluate the option of adopting limited purpose county or countywide open space (park) and trail (traffic) impact fees to be dedicated to UGA and countywide networks of open space, trails, and interpretive facilities in or adjacent the UGAs and of the countywide networks connecting the UGAs.

- Participants - the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) with the participation and approval of the Board of County Commissioners and City Councils, Planning Commissions, Parks & Recreation Departments, Public Works Departments, property owners and developers, nonprofit organizations, and citizens.

Action

- Design and test jurisdiction and public support - for limited purpose open space (park) and trail (traffic) growth impact fees that would assess new residential and commercial developments the cost and value of maintaining the existing level-of-service (LOS) for open space, trails, and interpretive facilities on a UGA countywide basis to match contributions from the UGA open space levy and to be overseen by the Skagit County UGA Open Space Advisory Committee.
- Where feasible, adopt and assess impact fees - to be expended for open space, trails, and interpretive facilities by participating jurisdiction and UGA or on a countywide basis if all jurisdictions participate.
- Capitalize the impact fee revenues - to issue Revenue Bonds with which to initiate request-for-proposal (RFP) competitions for preservation through acquisition of development rights or property only - since restoration and enhancement projects, maintenance and management programs would not create added capacity and therefore not be eligible - with which to maintain the UGA and countywide open space, trail, and interpretive network level-of-service (LOS).

4 Institute countywide UGA open space levy (see Appendix F)

Submit and obtain voter approval of a special property tax levy with which to create a capital fund necessary for preserving, restoring, enhancing, and managing UGA and countywide networks of open space, trails, and interpretive facilities.

- Participants - the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) with active participation and support of city, tribe, port, state, federal, utility, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have an interest in UGA open space, trail, and interpretive efforts.

Action

- Design and test public support - for a special property tax levy to match public and nonprofit donations, grants, loans, and other funding measures with which to create a capital fund necessary for implementing the preservation, restoration, enhancement, and management programs and projects to be

overseen by the Skagit County UGA Open Space Advisory Committee.

- Submit and approve a special property tax levy - to run at a fixed rate for a specified number of years and/or at an initially higher rate until a specified amount is created (at which time the levy sunsets) with which to create a capital fund necessary for implementing UGA and countywide open space, trails, and interpretive network.

- Capitalize the levy revenues - to issue Revenue Bonds with which to initiate request-for-proposal (RFP) competitions for preservation through acquisition of development rights or property, restoration and enhancement projects, maintenance and management programs with which to implement the UGA and countywide open space, trail, and interpretive networks.

4.4 Initiate UGA open space competitions

5 Establish public benefit criteria (see Appendix G)

The Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) will establish performance and participation criteria with which to issue request-for-proposal (RFP) competitions for use of countywide UGA open space levy and optional growth impact fee funds.

- Participants - the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) with active participation and support of city, tribe, port, state, federal, utility, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have an interest in UGA open space, trail, and interpretive efforts.

Action

- Determine UGA open space objectives - including the preservation, restoration, enhancement, and maintenance objectives for each UGA and countywide based on each participating city and community planning area's adopted plans and proposals.

- Define public benefit criteria - to be used to judge and award competitive UGA open space, trail, and interpretive submittals and succeeding contracts including minimum requirements for matching funds, donations, labor, materials, performance agreements, and other particulars.

- Conduct public hearings and approve performance and participation criteria - including mandatory and performance-based project/program objectives and public benefit criteria, and the compliance terms for the awarding and monitoring of UGA open space funds.

6 Conduct UGA open space request-for-proposals (RFP) competitions

Conduct UGA open space request-for-proposal (RFP) competitions where the county, cities, tribes, port, state agencies, federal agencies, utility companies, nonprofit organizations, and private or for-profit entities compete for the opportunity of receiving grants from the UGA tax levy and growth impact fees for preservation, restoration, enhancement, and/or maintenance projects or programs.

- Participants - the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) with potential proposals to be submitted by the county, cities, tribes, port, state departments, federal agencies, utility companies, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have projects and programs that qualify for UGA open space, trail, and interpretive funds.

Action

- Develop a competitive request-for-proposal (RFP) process - governing the submittal of project and program proposals for UGA open space, trail, and interpretive projects and programs.

- Judge proposals - by ranking proposals for compliance with and the furthering UGA open space project or program objectives and the public benefit rating criteria including consideration of open space characteristic intrinsic environmental and wildlife quality, extent of development threat, leveraged funds, UGA edge and rural land transitions, maintenance and management capabilities and commitments, and other factors adopted from task 5.

- Award projects and programs - following public hearings and review procedures, the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) may award UGA open space tax levy and growth impact fee monies to the project and program proposals ranked to realize the most objectives and have the

most open space, trail, and interpretive benefits to the UGAs, adjacent rural lands and uses, and on a countywide basis.

7 Acquire/restore/enhance open spaces

Based on the result of task 6, award and fund proposals that preserve through acquisition of development rights or property title, restore environmental character and wildlife habitat, enhance rural agricultural, forest, or other open space features and activities within, adjacent, or between the UGAs and countywide.

- **Participants** – the county, cities, tribes, port, state departments, federal agencies, utility companies, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have projects and programs that qualify for and receive UGA open space, trail, and interpretive funds.

Action

- **Select project proposals and award funds** – from the UGA open space levy and/or growth impact fees based on the RFP proposal terms, conditions, and submitted performance agreements.
- **Approve contractual terms** – concerning the acquisition of development rights or property title, restoration of environmental and wildlife habitat, enhancement of rural agriculture, forest, or other open space features and activities and the matching funds, labor, materials, and other leveraging and commitments made by the submitting entity.
- **Monitor compliance** – with the contents of the selected proposal and resulting contractual terms from the award of UGA open space levy and/or growth impact fee funds.

8 Acquire/develop trails

Based on the result of task 6, award and fund proposals that acquire trail corridor easements, use rights, or property, develop, maintain, and manage public access trails alongside, within, or between UGA open space networks.

- **Participants** – the county, cities, tribes, port, state departments, federal agencies, utility companies, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have trail

access projects and programs that qualify for and receive UGA open space, trail, and interpretive funds.

Action

- **Select project proposals and award funds** – from the UGA open space levy and/or growth impact fees based on the RFP proposal terms, conditions, and submitted performance agreements.
- **Approve contractual terms** – concerning the acquisition of easements, use rights, or property title, and develop, maintain, and manage public access trails alongside, within, or between UGA open space networks and the matching funds, labor, materials, and other leveraging and commitments made by the submitting entity.
- **Monitor compliance** – with the contents of the selected proposal and resulting contractual terms from the award of UGA open space levy and/or growth impact fee funds.

9 Acquire/develop interpretive facilities

Based on the result of task 6, award and fund proposals that acquire easements, use rights, or property; develop, maintain, and manage publicly accessible signage, exhibits, centers, tours, programs, and other facilities or activities that interpret the environment, wildlife, history or culture, rural land use, or other open space features within, adjacent, or between the UGAs.

- **Participants** – the county, cities, tribes, port, state departments, federal agencies, utility companies, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have public interpretive projects and programs that qualify for and receive UGA open space, trail, and interpretive funds.

Action

- **Select project proposals and award funds** – from the UGA open space levy and/or growth impact fees based on the RFP proposal terms, conditions, and submitted performance agreements.
- **Approve contractual terms** – concerning the acquisition of easements, use rights, or property title, and develop, maintain, and manage publicly accessible interpretive signage, exhibits,

centers, tours, or programs alongside, within, or between UGA open space networks and the matching funds, labor, materials, and other leveraging and commitments made by the submitting entity.

- Monitor compliance - with the contents of the selected proposal and resulting contractual terms from the award of UGA open space levy and/or growth impact fee funds.

4.5 Monitor UGA open space initiatives

10 Issue annual and periodic reports and update the UGA Open Space Plan on a frequent basis

The Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) will issue annual reports and update the UGA Open Space Plan on a frequent basis to ensure the above measures achieve the UGA open space, trail, and interpretive results intended.

- Participants - the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (SCUOSAC) with active participation and support of city, tribe, port, state, federal, utility, nonprofit organizations, and private entities and individuals who have an interest in UGA open space, trail, and interpretive efforts.

Action

- Conduct annual progress assessments - to review action on projects and policies identified in the UGA Open Space Plan and evaluate the:

- Acreage preserved - adjacent, within, or between the UCAs by acquisition of development rights or property and the degree to which the projects resolved development threats, linked with other open space assets, reduced urban/rural edge conflicts,
- Acreage restored - adjacent, within, or between the UCAs and the resulting environmental, wildlife, or rural qualities achieved,
- Acreage enhanced - adjacent, within, or between the UCAs and the increased environmental, wildlife, or rural upgrade realized,
- Miles of public access trails developed, maintained, or managed - adjacent, within, or between the UCAs and

the extent to which the trails connect with other city and county trail systems,

- Interpretive facilities and programs installed, developed, provided, or managed - adjacent, within, or between the UCAs and the extent to which the programs increased public access, awareness, education, and appreciation of the county and city's open space assets.
- Revise and update the UGA Open Space Plan and implementing strategies - and make revisions or adjustments to county, city, and other jurisdiction plans and policies necessary to improve methods, assign responsibilities, or take other measures necessary to be effective.

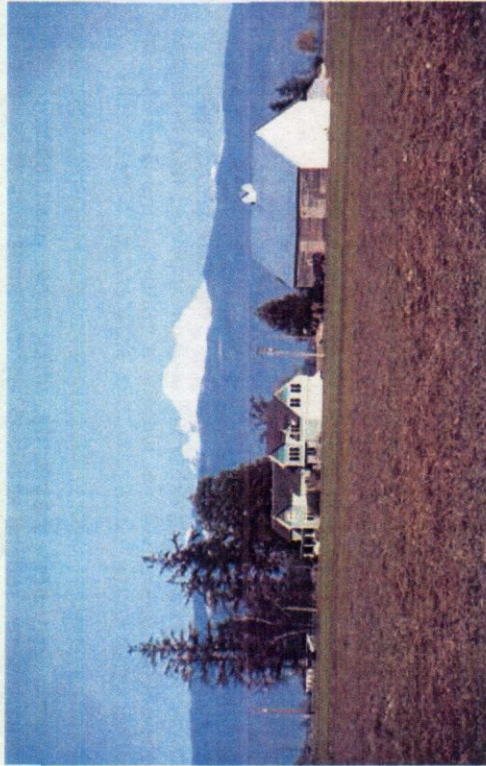


Photo - farmstead and Mt Baker from Fox Island Road



Appendix A: GMA UGA open space requirements & Skagit County policies

Following are abstracted sections of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA – RCW 36.70A) that define urban separator requirements and provisions that deal with the designation, acquisition, management, and other issues involving open space separators.

The sections are presented in the sequence as adopted or described in the RCW. *Specific text is highlighted that contains language and/or provisions that are most pertinent to the objective of creating UGA open space.*

The full text of these sections and the RCW proper is available on the Washington State website at:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/Rcw/default.aspx?Cite=36.70A>

A.1: RCW 36.70A.011 – Findings – Rural lands

The legislature finds that this chapter is intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while

respecting regional differences. Rural lands and rural-based economies enhance the economic desirability of the state, help to preserve traditional economic activities, and contribute to the state's overall quality of life.

The legislature finds that to retain and enhance the job base in rural areas, rural counties must have flexibility to create opportunities for business development. Further, the legislature finds that rural counties must have the flexibility to retain existing businesses and allow them to expand. The legislature recognizes that not all business developments in rural counties require an urban level of services; and that many businesses in rural areas fit within the definition of rural character identified by the local planning unit.

Finally, the legislature finds that in defining its rural element under RCW 36.70A.070(5), a county should foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will: Help preserve rural-based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the economic

prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment; permit the operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land use patterns; be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the land and preservation of open space; and enhance the rural sense of community and quality of life.
[2002 c 212 § 1.]

A-2: RCW 36.70A.060 – Natural resource lands and critical areas – Development regulations

(1)(a) Except as provided in *RCW 36.70A.1701, each county that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040, and each city within such county, shall adopt development regulations on or before September 1, 1991, to assure the conservation of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated under RCW 36.70A.170. Regulations adopted under this subsection may not prohibit uses legally existing on any parcel prior to their adoption and shall remain in effect until the county or city adopts development regulations pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040. **Such regulations shall assure that the use of lands adjacent to agricultural, forest, or mineral resource lands shall not interfere with the continued use, in the accustomed manner and in accordance with best management practices, of these designated lands for the production of food, agricultural products, or timber, or for the extraction of minerals.**

(b) Counties and cities shall require that all plats, short plats, development permits, and building permits issued for development activities on, or within five hundred feet of, lands designated as agricultural lands, forest lands, or mineral resource lands, contain a notice that the subject property is within or near designated agricultural lands, forest lands, or mineral resource lands on which a variety of commercial activities may occur that are not compatible with residential development for certain periods of limited duration.

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The notice for mineral resource lands shall also inform that an application might be made for mining-related activities, including mining, extraction, washing, crushing, stockpiling, blasting, transporting, and recycling of minerals.

(2) Each county and city shall adopt development regulations that protect critical areas that are required to be designated under RCW 36.70A.170. For counties and cities that are required or choose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040, such development regulations shall be adopted on or before September 1, 1991.

For the remainder of the counties and cities, such development regulations shall be adopted on or before March 1, 1992.

(3) Such counties and cities shall review these designations and development regulations when adopting their comprehensive plans under RCW 36.70A.040 and implementing development regulations under RCW 36.70A.120 and may alter such designations and development regulations to insure consistency.

(4) *Forest land and agricultural land located within urban growth areas shall not be designated by a county or city as forest land or agricultural land of long-term commercial significance under RCW 36.70A.170 unless the city or county has enacted a program authorizing transfer or purchase of development rights.*
[2005 c 423 § 3; 1998 c 286 § 5; 1991 sp.s. c 32 § 21; 1990 1st ex.s. c 17 § 6.]

NOTES:

*Reviser's note: RCW 36.70A.1701 expired June 30, 2006.

Intent -- Effective date -- 2005 c 423: See notes following RCW 36.70A.030.

A-3: RCW 36.70A.070 – Comprehensive plan – mandatory elements

The comprehensive plan of a county or city that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall consist of a map or maps, and descriptive text covering objectives, principles,

and standards used to develop the comprehensive plan. The plan shall be an internally consistent document and all elements shall be consistent with the future land use map. A comprehensive plan shall be adopted and amended with public participation as provided in RCW 36.70A.140.

Each comprehensive plan shall include a plan, scheme, or design for each of the following:

(1) *A land use element designating the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of land, where appropriate, for agriculture, timber production, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, general aviation airports, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses.*

The land use element shall include population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth. The land use element shall provide for protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies. Wherever possible, the land use element should consider utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity.

Where applicable, the land use element shall review drainage, flooding, and storm water run-off in the area and nearby jurisdictions and provide guidance for corrective actions to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute waters of the state, including Puget Sound or waters entering Puget Sound....

(3) A capital facilities plan element consisting of: (a) An inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, showing the locations and capacities of the capital facilities; (b) a forecast of the future needs for such capital facilities; (c) the proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities; (d) at least a six-year plan that will finance such capital facilities within projected funding capacities and clearly identifies sources of public money for such purposes; and (e) a requirement to reassess the land use element if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs and to ensure that the land use element, capital facilities plan element, and

financing plan within the capital facilities plan element are coordinated and consistent. *Park and recreation facilities shall be included in the capital facilities plan element....*

(5) *A rural element. Counties shall include a rural element including lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources. The following provisions shall apply to the rural element:*

(a) Growth management act goals and local circumstances. Because circumstances vary from county to county, in establishing patterns of rural densities and uses, a county may consider local circumstances, but shall develop a written record explaining how the rural element harmonizes the planning goals in RCW 36.70A.020 and meets the requirements of this chapter.

(b) Rural development. The rural element shall permit rural development, forestry, and agriculture in rural areas. The rural element shall provide for a variety of rural densities, uses, essential public facilities, and rural governmental services needed to serve the permitted densities and uses. *To achieve a variety of rural densities and uses, counties may provide for clustering, density transfer, design guidelines, conservation easements, and other innovative techniques that will accommodate appropriate rural densities and uses that are not characterized by urban growth and that are consistent with rural character.*

(c) *Measures governing rural development. The rural element shall include measures that apply to rural development and protect the rural character of the area, as established by the county, by:*

(i) *Containing or otherwise controlling rural development;*
(ii) *Assuring visual compatibility of rural development with the surrounding rural area;*
(iii) *Reducing the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development in the rural area;*

(iv) *Protecting critical areas, as provided in RCW 36.70A.060, and surface water and groundwater resources; and*

(v) *Protecting against conflicts with the use of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated under RCW 36.70A.170...*

(6) A transportation element that implements, and is consistent with, the land use element.

(a) The transportation element shall include the following subelements:

(vii) *Pedestrian and bicycle component to include collaborative efforts to identify and designate planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors that address and encourage enhanced community access and promote healthy lifestyles.*

(8) A park and recreation element that implements, and is consistent with, the capital facilities plan element as it relates to park and recreation facilities. The element shall include: (a) Estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a ten-year period; (b) an evaluation of facilities and service needs; and (c) an evaluation of intergovernmental coordination opportunities to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreational demand.

Findings -- Intent -- 2005 c 360: "The legislature finds that regular physical activity is essential to maintaining good health and reducing the rates of chronic disease. The legislature further finds that providing opportunities for walking, biking, horseback riding, and other regular forms of exercise is best accomplished through collaboration between the private sector and local, state, and institutional policymakers. This collaboration can build communities where people find it easy and safe to be physically active. It is the intent of the legislature to promote policy and planning efforts that increase access to inexpensive or free opportunities for regular exercise in all communities around the state."

[2005 c 360 § 1.]

A.4: RCW 36.70A.090 - Comprehensive plan - innovative techniques

A comprehensive plan should provide for innovative land use management techniques, including, but not limited to, density bonuses, cluster housing, planned unit developments, and the transfer of development rights.
[1990 1st ex.s. c 17 § 9.]

A.5: RCW 36.70A.100 - Comprehensive plans - must be coordinated

The comprehensive plan of each county or city that is adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040 shall be coordinated with, and consistent with, the comprehensive plans adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040 of other counties or cities with which the county or city has, in part, common borders or related regional issues.
[1990 1st ex.s. c 17 § 10.]

A.6: RCW 36.70A.160 - Identification of open space corridors - Purchase authorized

Each county and city that is required or chooses to prepare a comprehensive land use plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas. They shall include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas as defined in RCW 36.70A.030. Identification of a corridor under this section by a county or city shall not restrict the use or management of lands within the corridor for agricultural or forest purposes.

Restrictions on the use or management of such lands for agricultural or forest purposes imposed after identification solely to maintain or enhance the value of such lands as a corridor may occur only if the county or city acquires sufficient interest to prevent development of the lands or to control the resource development of the lands.

The requirement for acquisition of sufficient interest does not include those corridors regulated by the interstate commerce commission, under provisions of 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1247(d), 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1248, or 43 U.S.C. Sec. 912. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to alter the authority of the state, or a county or city, to regulate land use activities.

The city or county may acquire by donation or purchase the fee simple or lesser interests in these open space corridors using funds authorized by RCW 84.34.230 or other sources. [1992 c 227 § 1; 1990 1st ex. s. c 17 § 16.]

A.7: RCW 36.70A.165 - Property designated as greenbelt or open space - Not subject to adverse possession

The legislature recognizes that the preservation of urban greenbelts is an integral part of comprehensive growth management in Washington. The legislature further recognizes that certain greenbelts are subject to adverse possession action which, if carried out, threaten the comprehensive nature of this chapter.

Therefore, a party shall not acquire by adverse possession property that is designated as a plat greenbelt or open space area or that is dedicated as open space to a public agency or to a bona fide homeowner's association. [1997 c 429 § 41.]

NOTES:

Severability -- 1997 c 429: See note following RCW 36.70A.3201.

A.8: RCW 36.70A.177- Agricultural lands - Innovative zoning techniques - Accessory uses

(1) A county or a city may use a variety of innovative zoning techniques in areas designated as agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance under RCW 36.70A.170. The innovative zoning techniques should be designed to conserve agricultural lands and encourage the agricultural economy. Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, a county or

city should encourage nonagricultural uses to be limited to lands with poor soils or otherwise not suitable for agricultural purposes.

(2) Innovative zoning techniques a county or city may consider include, but are not limited to:

(a) Agricultural zoning, which limits the density of development and restricts or prohibits nonfarm uses of agricultural land and may allow accessory uses, including nonagricultural accessory uses and activities, that support, promote, or sustain agricultural operations and production, as provided in subsection (3) of this section;

(b) Cluster zoning, which allows new development on one portion of the land, leaving the remainder in agricultural or open space uses;

A.9: RCW 36.70A.210 - County-wide planning policies

(1) The legislature recognizes that counties are regional governments within their boundaries, and cities are primary providers of urban governmental services within urban growth areas. For the purposes of this section, a "county-wide planning policy" is a written policy statement or statements used solely for establishing a county-wide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted pursuant to this chapter. This framework shall ensure that city and county comprehensive plans are consistent as required in RCW 36.70A.100. Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the land-use powers of cities....

A.10: Skagit Countywide Planning Policies - 9. Open space and recreation

Following are abstracted sections of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan that define open space policies. *Specific text is highlighted that contains language and/or provisions that are most pertinent to the objective of creating UGA open space.*

The full text may be viewed at the county website at http://www.skagitcounty.net/Common/asp/default.asp?d=PlanningAndPermit&c=General&p=comp_toc.htm

Skagit County shall:

9. Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.
- 9.1 Open space corridors within and between urban growth areas shall be identified. These areas shall include lands useful for recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas.
- 9.2 To preserve open space and create recreational opportunities, innovative regulatory techniques and incentives such as but not limited to, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, conservation easements, land trusts and community acquisition of lands for public ownership shall be encouraged.
- 9.3 The use of Open Space Taxation Laws shall be encouraged as a useful method of land use control and resource preservation.
- 9.4 Expansion and enhancement of parks, recreation and scenic areas and viewing points shall be identified, planned for and improved in shorelands, and urban and rural designated areas.
- 9.5 Property owners shall be encouraged to site and design new construction to minimize disruption of visual amenities and solar resources of adjacent property owners, public road ways, parks, lakes, waterways and beaches.
- 9.6 Development of new park and recreational facilities shall adhere to the policies set out in this Comprehensive Plan document.
- 9.7 The Skagit Wild and Scenic River System (which includes

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portions of the Sauk, Suitttle, Cascade and Skagit Rivers) is a resource that should be protected, enhanced and utilized for recreation purposes when there are not potential conflicts with the values (fisheries, wildlife, and scenic quality) of the river system.

9.8 Incompatible adjacent uses including industrial and commercial areas shall be adequately buffered by means of landscaping, or by maintaining recreation and open space corridors.

9.9 A park and recreation system shall be promoted which is integrated with existing and planned land use patterns.

9.10 Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities shall be designed to provide a wide range of opportunities allowing for individual needs of those using these facilities.

9.11 School districts, public agencies and private entities should work together to develop joint inter-agency agreements to provide facilities that not only meet the demands of the education for our youth, but also provide for public recreation opportunities that reduce the unnecessary duplication of facilities within Skagit County.

9.12 In planning new park and recreation facilities, Skagit County shall take into consideration natural features, topography, floodplains, relationship to population characteristics, types of facilities, various user group needs and standards of access including travel time.

A.11: Skagit County Comprehensive Plan – Open space policies

Open Space

As discussed in greater detail in the Urban, Open Space and Land Use Profile, there are two major categories of Open Space in Skagit County: public, and private. Open space lands in private ownership play an important role in maintaining ecological, scenic, and natural resource values, but because of their private nature they are not shown on the Comprehensive

Plan/Zoning Map. Public open space lands are those lands in public ownership that are dedicated or reserved for public use or enjoyment for recreation, scenic amenities, natural resource land management, or for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas. *Where identified below to be of regional or statewide importance, such lands are designated on the Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map.* Other publicly held lands, such as local neighborhood parks, scenic roads and highways, shorelines, rivers and streams, and utility corridors, *although not designated as open space on the Comprehensive Plan Map*, nevertheless offer similar open space functions and benefits.

Goal B Open Space

Recognize the important functions served by private and public open space, designate and map public open space of regional importance, and designate open space corridors within and around urban growth areas.

2B-1.1 Public open space areas are those lands in public ownership that are dedicated or reserved for public use or enjoyment for recreation, scenic amenities, natural resource land management, or for the protection of environmentally sensitive. They include:

a. Neighborhood and community parks. These should be linked by open space networks whenever possible.

b. Land that offers special natural resource-based and recreational opportunities, such as: federal, state and local regionally important parks and recreation areas; islands; federal wilderness areas; wildlife refuges; lakes; reservoirs; creeks; streams; river corridors; shorelines and areas with prominent views.

c. Lands which include a significant historic, archaeological, scenic, cultural or unique natural feature.

d. Areas that take advantage of natural processes, wetlands, tidal actions and unusual landscape features such as cliffs and bluffs.

2B-1.2 Of these public open space areas, the County has designated certain ones on the Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map as Public Open Space of Regional/Statewide Importance (OSRSI). These areas are so identified because their recreational, environmental, scenic, cultural and other open space benefit extend beyond the local area to be regional or statewide in significance. They include:

- Deception Pass State Park;
- Montgomery-Duban Headlands Park;
- Burrows Island;
- Saddlebag Island;
- Hope Island;
- Ika Island;
- Huckleberry Island;
- Skagit Island;
- Larrabee, Rasar, and Bayview State Parks;
- PUD #1 Judy Reservoir;
- Skagit Wildlife Refuge;
- North Cascades National Park;
- Noisy Diobsud Wilderness;
- Glacier Peak Wilderness;
- Ross Lake National Recreation Area;
- Mount Baker National Forest;
- Seattle City Light Wildlife Mitigation Lands;
- Rockport State Park;
- WA Department of Natural Resources Natural Resource Conservation Areas and Natural Area Preserves; and
- portions of the Northern State Recreation Area.

2B-1.3 *By December 1, 2007, Skagit County will develop a program to identify and prioritize open space corridors and greenbelts within and between UGAs that include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas. The program will include a list identifying and prioritizing open space and greenbelt lands desirable for public acquisition. Any potential acquisition that may be proposed by such a program will not include any condemnation actions, but instead will be achieved by voluntary donation, CaRD subdivision, or mutually agreeable sale.*

2B-1.4 Private Open Space is privately owned land that has been or will be set aside by the operation of the Critical Areas Ordinance, by voluntary conservation or by other means. These lands may include:

- a. Critical areas* as defined in the Critical Areas Ordinance.
- b. Lands with conservation* and land reserve easements in place.
- c. Lands within urban growth areas* that are wooded and serve a functional purpose in climate, noise, light or pollution control, or provide wildlife habitat or greenbelts.
- d. Lands that can provide for a separation between communities*, minimize or prevent sprawl, provide a buffer between urban and rural areas, or between natural resource lands and rural areas.

2B-1.5 The Current Use Open Space Taxation Program includes properties utilized for agricultural, timber and open space uses as provided in RCW 84.34. Property owners should be encouraged to enroll in the Current Use Open Space Taxation Program.

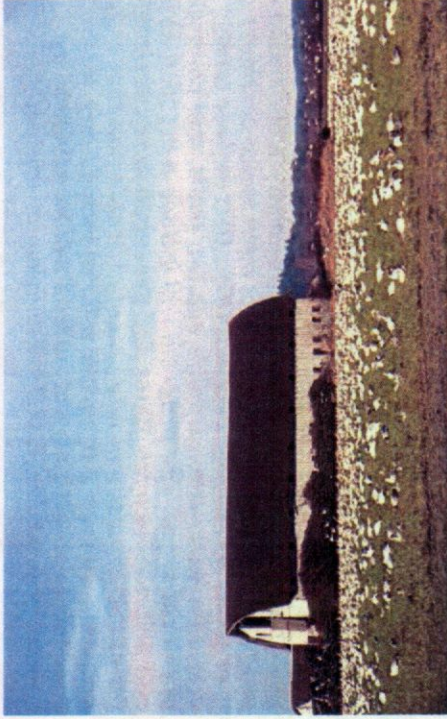
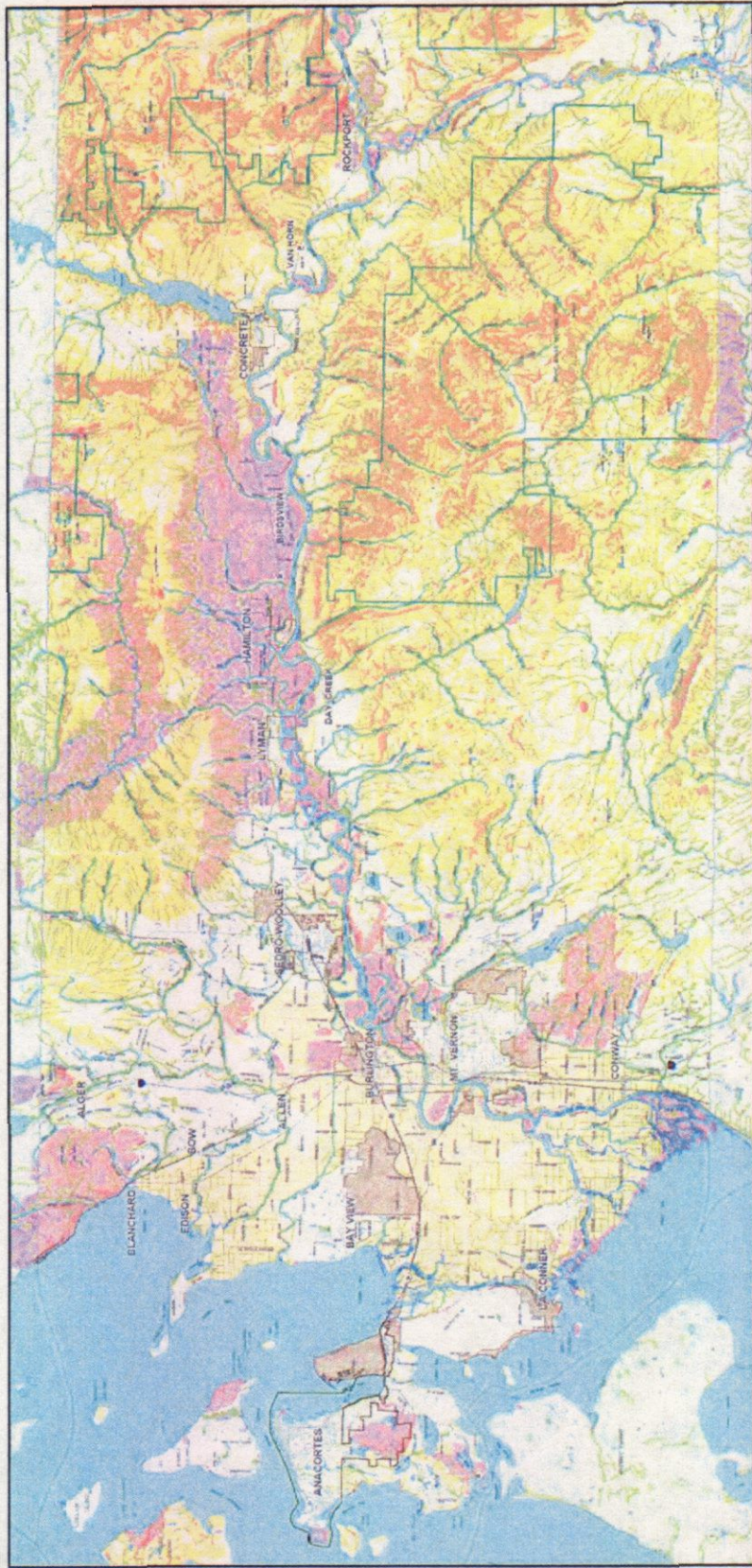


Photo - barn with snow geese on Fir Island Road, Fir Island



Appendix B: Resources

At least 35 public, non-profit, and private organizations are involved in open space preservation, enhancement, and maintenance within Skagit County - though not all are directly involved in such activities in or around the UGAs.

Workshops were conducted with most of these organizations at the beginning of this planning process in order to determine their mission, resources, programs, projects, and other particulars.

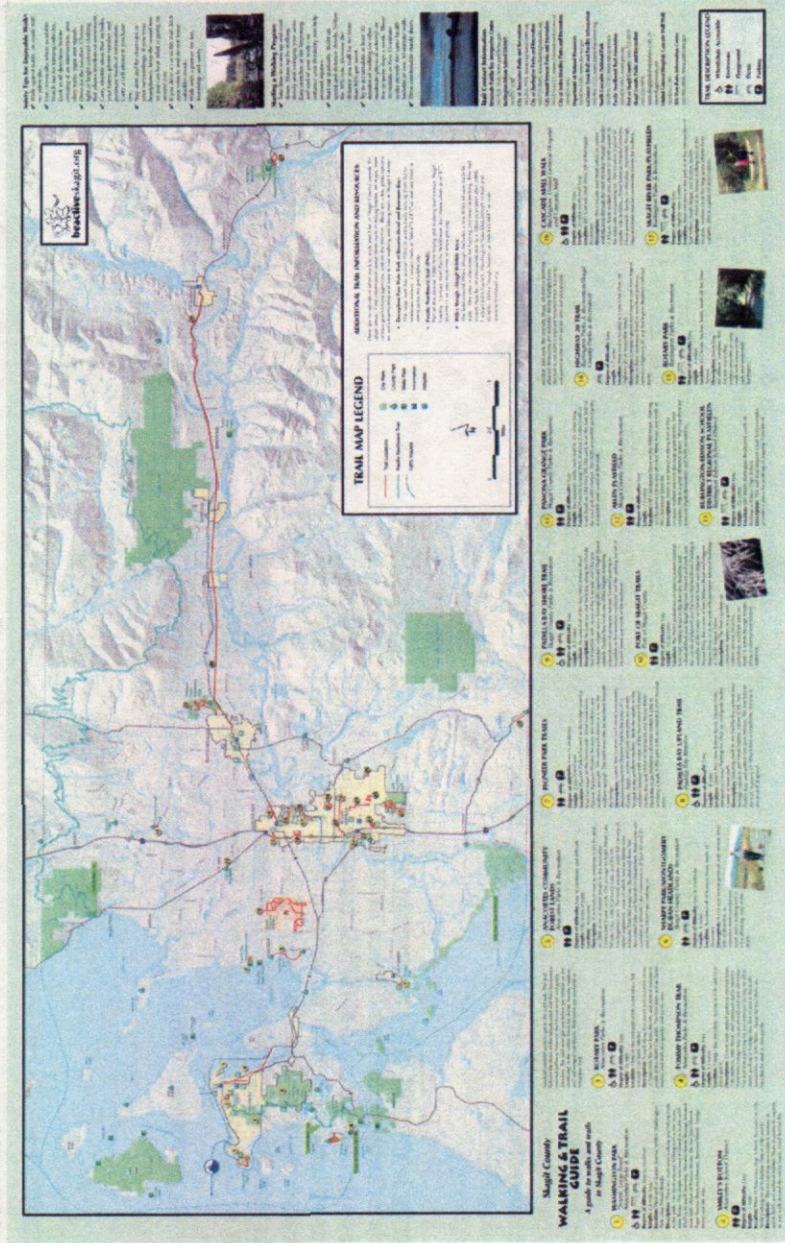
The following pages summarize each organization based on information provided during the workshop sessions, mapping data recorded in Skagit County's GIS system, and organization publications.

Each organization's land holdings are depicted in the graphic at the top of each jurisdiction's page based on the county's current GIS records. The county's records may be incomplete in some instances where the property record searches do not recognize all the titles under which an organization may own easements or lands - or

instances where the title includes other jurisdiction or landholder names or references.

Due to the extreme complexity of the GIS mapping characteristic overlays and map scale, the organization's graphic only shows UGA boundaries in relation to the property easements or title holdings on record for the western portions of Skagit County. The purpose of the graphic is to illustrate the dimensions of each organization's landholdings in relation to the county as a whole and the UCAs in particular.

The simplified organizational landholding graphics are correlated with the water, slope, roadway, and UGA base map shown on the first page of this introduction section. Large scale graphics that may include mapping characteristic overlays are too complex to display in this report format – but are available from the Skagit County GIS Department for those that are interested.



B.1: Active Community Task Force (ACT)

The Active Community Task Force (ACT) grew out of the Healthy Communities Initiative (or Active Community Environments - ACE) established by the Washington State Departments of Health (DOH), Transportation (WSDOT), and Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED) as a means of encouraging healthy lifestyles. Skagit County was one of 8 counties selected to participate in the 5-year Washington State ACEs Pilot Project.

Active Community Environments (ACE) are places where people of all ages and abilities can easily enjoy walking, bicycling, and other forms of recreation. ACEs have sidewalks, on-street bicycle facilities, multiuse

paths and trails, parks, open space, and low cost of free recreation facilities. ACEs encourage mixed use development and a connected grid of streets, allowing homes, work, schools, and stores to be close together and accessible to pedestrians, wheelchair users, older adults, and bicyclists.

ACT's directory of membership includes the Skagit County Public Health Department, Department of Public Works, Skagit Transit, Skagit Valley Hospital, Port of Skagit, Swinomish Tribe, Tesoro Anacortes Refinery, WSDOT, the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG), among others including private parties.

www.scog.net

ACT advises the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Skagit County Council of Governments (SCOG) on non-motorized issues. The TAC incorporates these concerns into recommendations to the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) Policy Boards.

ACT in partnership with the Skagit County Physical Activity Coalition has developed and coordinated the Skagit County Walking and Trail Guides and Skagit County Bike Map. These projects incorporated county GIS mapping services to create the base maps and are intended to familiarize county residents with the trail and biking potentials available in the county.

In 2008, ACT convened local cities, towns, and the county to create a countywide inventory of on and off-road trail and route missing links improvement projects. The "Gap List" was included in the Washington State Department of Transportation's Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan update and serves as a prioritized listing on non-motorized projects for local jurisdictions.

Statewide ACE priority strategies are to:

- Increase physical activity by connecting trails and bike paths
- Support policy in Growth Management plans to include physical activity
- Establishing partnerships with transportation, planners, policymakers, and local health organizations
- Developing Active Living (or Community) Task Forces to work on projects and advise RTPOs
- Conduct ACE assessments

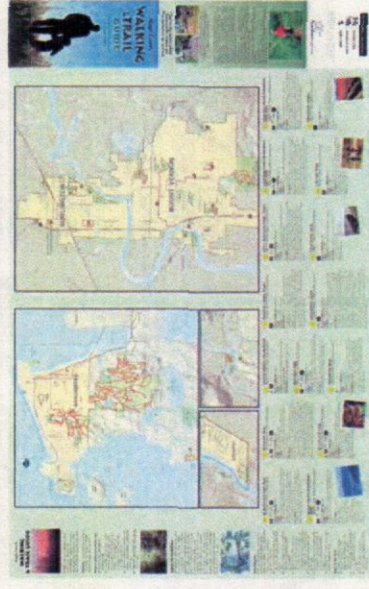
Skagit County ACEs work completed and in progress includes:

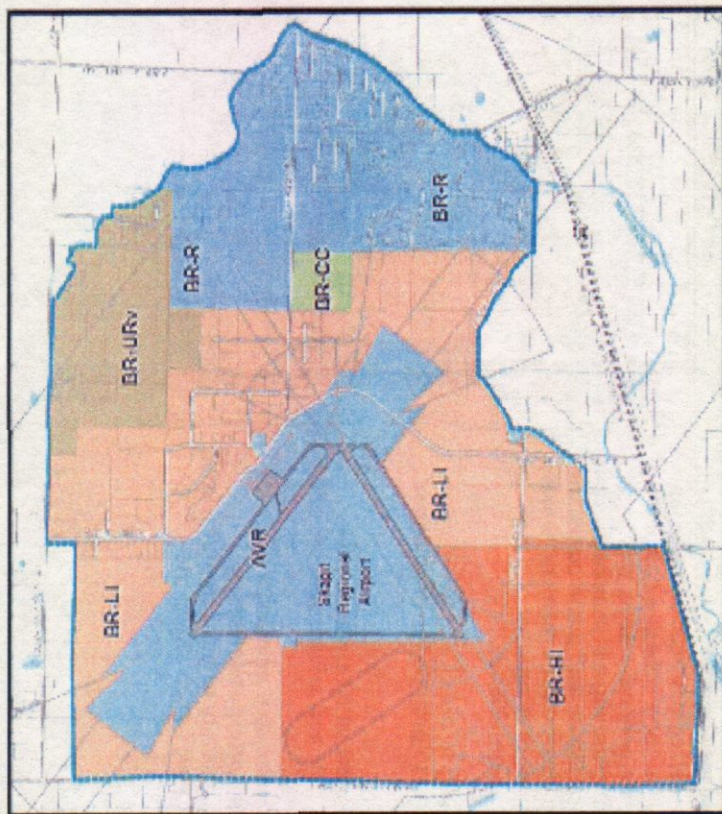
- Established the Active Community Task Force in 2002
- Conducts annual Safe Routes to School (SRTS) trainings and provides technical assistance for local jurisdictions and school districts for SRTS programs and grant writing
- Conducted ACE assessments, including the 2008 assessment of Anacortes, Burlington, LaConner, Mount Vernon, Sedro-Woolley, and Skagit County
- Conducts annual ACE's or Active Living Leadership workshops or forums

- Advocates and supports for trails and non-motorized improvements, such as the Tommy Thompson Trail extension and the Berentson Bridge signage and barrier extension
- In partnership with the Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department and Skagit County Healthy Communities Project, formed the Skagit County Trails Coalition in 1008. The Trails Coalition is working to develop a countywide master trail and bicycle plan.
- In partnership with Skagit County Parks & Recreation, ACT has created a trail monitoring program, which utilizes infrared counters to monitor trail facility usage.
- ACT members participate in comprehensive transportation and non-motorized element plans updates to ensure that they include Physical Activity (PA), open spaces and trails plans.
- ACT members provide expert input to local jurisdictions on non-motorized projects as requested.
- Is partnering with Whatcom, Snohomish, and Island Counties to create a region-wide, multicounty approach to trail planning.

On-going activities for ACE projects

- Applying for grants or other funding sources
- Developing partnerships
- Reviewing and updated comprehensive non-motorized plan elements
- Providing input to policymakers
- Help establish partnerships that would not occur without ACT





B.2: Bayview Ridge Urban Growth Area



The Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan creates a small urban area called a "non-municipal Urban Growth Area (UGA)" on about 3,600 acres located around the Skagit County Regional Airport. If developed as proposed, the area would accommodate about 2,000 of the 50,000 new resident forecast to live in Skagit County in the next 20 years and not accommodated in existing urban growth areas.



The subarea includes the Skagit Regional Airport and a mix of existing urban levels of commercial, industrial, and residential properties plus rural residences and some farms. The remaining undeveloped properties are generally large, providing an opportunity for multiple uses and master planning. The proposed new urban area represents about 3,600 acres of the slightly larger 4,000-acre subarea studied in the plan.

www.skagitcounty.net

A Citizens Advisory Committee worked with the county to prepare the plan, which was then forwarded to the County Planning Commission for review. The Planning Commission focused on the following major issues:

- Airport compatibility and appropriate scale of land use in various safety zones, and
- Infrastructure, especially stormwater management sufficient to protect downstream farms, water, sewer, parks, transportation, schools, and emergency services.

The Planning Commission recommended numerous changes including:

- Deferring the urban residential portion and new industrial and commercial zoning until the county adopts the Bayview Watershed Stormwater Management Plan;

- Allowing new schools in limited circumstances;
- Larger areas for small retail and service businesses;
- Greater protection of residential development where adjacent to industrial uses; and
- More pedestrian and bicycle connections.

The Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan was adopted by the Skagit County Board of County Commissioners in December 2006, then subsequently appealed to the Western Washington Growth Management (GMA) Hearings Board. The Hearings Board decision issued in August 2007 found the urban growth area to be generally consistent with GMA but ordered the county to update the capital facilities plan for providing infrastructure. The compliance schedule called for the county to report back to the Hearings Board in February 2008.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the Bayview Ridge UGA reflect major industrial/commercial property ownerships, existing land use, and topography. Avon-Allen Road and a steep hillside for the boundary on the east, SR-20 and Ovenell Road on the south, Farm to Market Road on the west, and the Port of Skagit County ownership, Josh Wilson Road, and a steep hillside on the north.

The UGA includes urban levels of industrial/commercial and residential development, but in isolated fashion – it is not a cohesive community. The remaining undeveloped properties are generally large, providing an opportunity for master planning. This planning will maximize the public and private resources already invested in, and planning for the UGA by creating a cohesive and more self-sufficient urban community, while insuring compatibility with continued development of the Skagit County Regional Airport and adjacent industrial lands.

Goals

The Subarea Plan for the UGA is designed to provide for the planned and orderly growth of the UGA by:

- Establishing a Bayview Ridge UGA based on its suitability for development and the commitment of public and private services and resources invested in the area;
- Creating a cohesive, thriving community with a diversity of residential, industrial, airport, and community/public uses;
- Taking advantage of the unique opportunity to build upon natural assets of the area, situated on a topographic bench above the floodplain with incredibly scenic views;

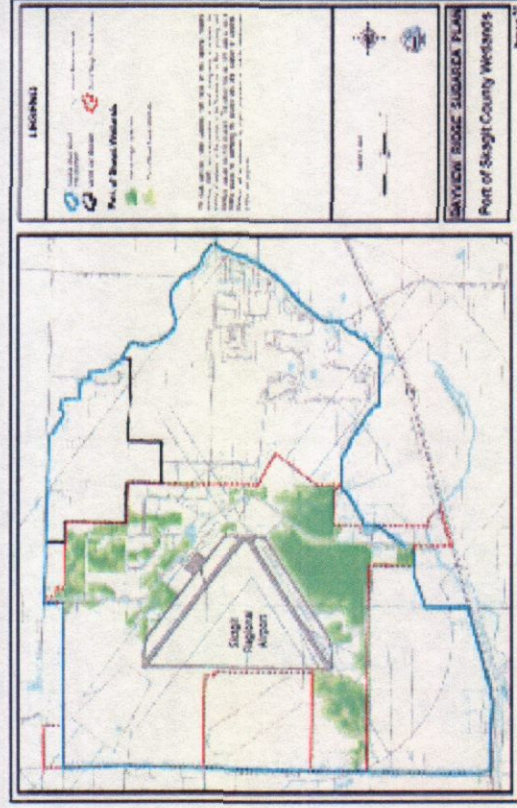
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Appendix B: Resources
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

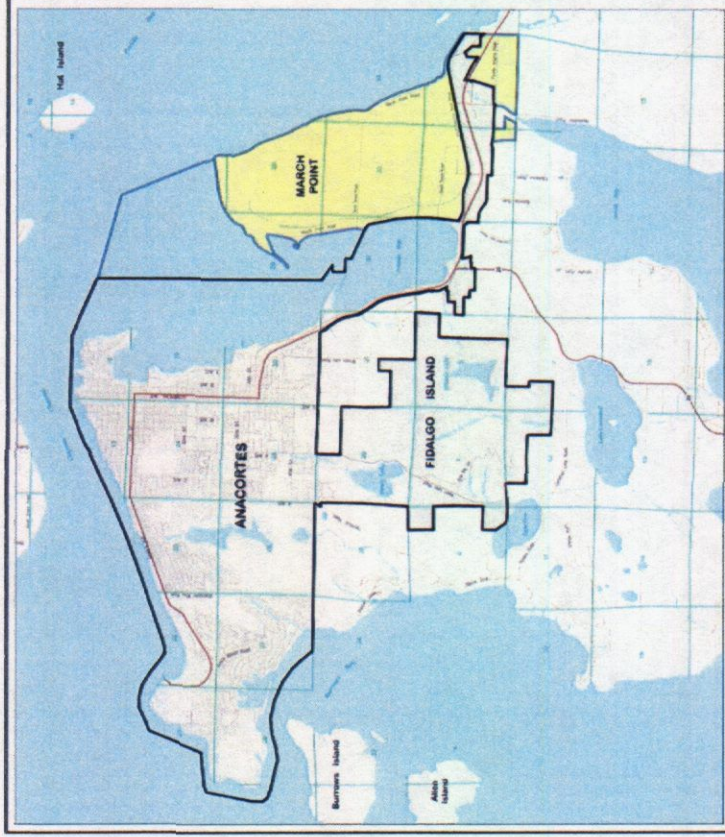
- Providing an opportunity for residents to live, work, and recreate in the same community;
- Encouraging a variety of housing opportunities;
- Creating a safe, pedestrian-friendly internal transportation network;
- Preserving and protecting aviation activity at the Skagit Regional Airport, an essential public facility, consistent with the Skagit Regional Airport Master Plan;
- Providing for industrial development in a planned and coordinated fashion;
- Developing an open space network that provides recreational opportunities, airport safety, and protects and maintains natural resources and critical areas; and
- Creating a Community Center to be a hub of local service provisions and limited commercial activity serving Bayview Ridge residents and employees.

Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

The Bayview Ridge UGA has over 1,023 acres of existing wetlands and buffers. Additional open spaces will be required for each new development project consistent with the Skagit Regional Airport Land Use Compatibility Study findings. A 25-acre community park is also



planned for the area. Additionally, community open space and pocket parks, along with areas for employee recreation, will be addressed in the master site planning process.



B.3: City of Anacortes

www.ci.anacortes.wa.us



Settlement was initiated in Anacortes - on March Point in the 1860s as the bracken-covered prairie was far easier to farm than the surrounding forest lands. Amos Bowman, a civil engineer hired to explore the region by railroad interests, bought land near the present ferry landing, built a wharf, and named the community after his wife - Anna Curtis. In 1882, Bowman published and distributed a promotional map touting the town's potential as a railroad terminus and seaport.

The dream seemed real when Seattle & Northern Railroad (S&N) agents affiliated with the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) began buying acreage. The first train arrived in 1890 though the track was only a connector line to the Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern Railroad (SLS&E). The train's arrival set off land speculation and the population increased from 40 to 3,000 persons in a few months as hotels, warehouses, saw mills, and

other buildings materialized in the vicinity of the present downtown and the city incorporated in 1891. The city's population was 16,400 in 2007. Anacortes city parks serve the entire Fidalgo Island population including city residents which was 23,026 persons in the year 2007 or 6,626 persons more than reside within city limits. Anacortes city is expected to increase from 16,400 persons to 18,300 by the year 2025 while the entire Fidalgo Island area is expected to increase from 23,026 to 29,536 persons by the year 2018.

Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

The Anacortes Planning Department maintains land use regulations that protect critical areas including wetlands, floodplains, geological hazards, woodlands, and wildlife habitat. Significant resources are located at Rosario Strait, Ship Harbor, Cap Sante, Cranberry Lake, Heart Lake Whistle Lake, and Lake Erie - most of which are contained within

Washington Park, Cap Sante Park, and the Anacortes Community Forest Lands.

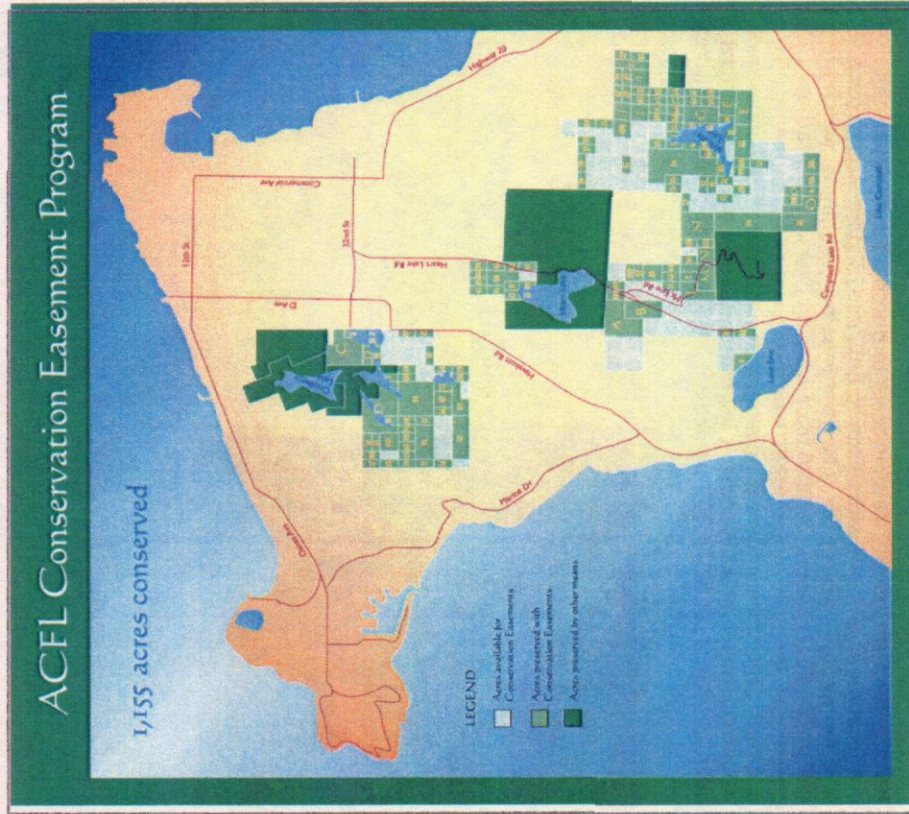
The Anacortes Parks & Recreation Department owns and manages 3,759.7 acres of park, open space, and trail corridors within the city including:

- **Washington Park** - a 220-acre park located on the city's western tip jutting into Rosario Straits and containing woodlands, wetlands, extensive trails, boat launches, picnic shelters, playgrounds, and 75 campsites.
- **Mt Erie** - a 160-acre park located on the summit of Mt Erie on the highest point of Fidalgo Island and containing the city watershed, viewpoints, and trail connections to the Community Forest Lands.
- **Cap Sante Park** - a 49-acre forested promontory located at the eastern edge of Anacortes overlooking the marina, downtown, March Point, Fidalgo Bay, and the Cascade Mountains.
- **Tommy Thompson Parkway** - 3.3 miles of paved multipurpose trail located on the former railroad track bed and 0.4 mile trestle from the downtown across Padilla Bay to March Point.
- **Anacortes Community Forest Lands** - 2,800 acres of city-owned forest lands located within city limits and containing



forested hills, lakes, streams, wetlands, and meadows managed by a full-time forest manager. The forest lands contain 9 looped trails covering 50 miles designed for horses, motorcycles, bikes, and hikers - although some forest areas are restricted to specific user groups.

- **Cranberry Lake Forest Lands** - a 703 acre Community Forest Land holding located around Cranberry Lake with a public access and trailhead parking.
- **Whistle Lake Forest Lands** - a 1,406 acre Community Forest



Land holding located east of Mt Erie and part of the former city watershed with limited access and some trails.

- **Heart Lake Forest Lands** – 532 acre Community Forest Land holding surrounding Heart Lake comprised of DNR land give to the city as well as the former Heart Lake State Park which was transferred to the city in 2003.

Community Forest Lands

Some of these park properties, Mt Erie, in particular, were acquired by donations beginning in the first half of the century. Other properties, such as Cranberry Park, the Whistle Lake basin, and both sides of Heart Lake Road, were acquired by the Water Department from Douglas Allmond's Washington Power, Light & Water Company in 1919 to protect the city watershed.

Initially, most of the timber located on Community Forest Lands was logged by private loggers with permission or sale of the timber harvesting by the city. In 1989, however, following a series of petitions and surveys, all logging for revenue purposes on city property was stopped pending the development of a forest management plan.

A Forest Lands Management Plan was initially developed and

adopted in 1991 and is currently being updated to identify management units, use zones, and critical habitat areas. The plan's implementation is overseen by a 5 member Forest Advisory Board (FAB) that also develops policies acting as stewards for this environmental and recreational resource.

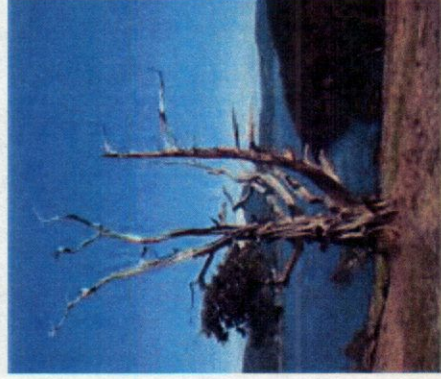
Anacortes City Council also authorized the Forest Lands Endowment Fund that same year to raise monies for the preservation and management of the Community Forest Lands in lieu of timber harvesting.

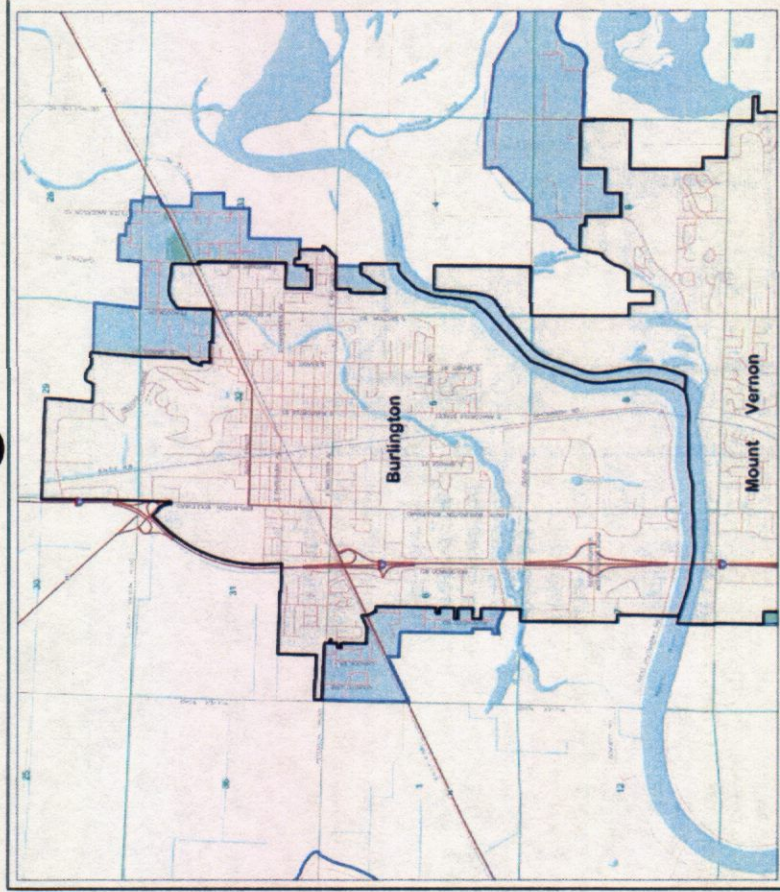
The Friends of the Forest (FoF) and Skagit Land Trust (SLT), private non-profit organizations, separate from the city, are also involved in the fund raising efforts. The objective is to raise sufficient monies with



which forest management costs and additional conservation easements can be financed.

The city, the FoF, and SLT raise monies to purchase additional conservation easements with which to link, consolidate, and expand the Community Forest Lands. The conservation easements, which are held by the SLT, protect the land from logging, mining, and other commercial ventures under public ownership under which the easement cannot be sold, leased, or transferred. Since the Conservation Easement Program's inception in 1998 public donations have raised over \$1,537,000 and acquired easements over 1,450 acres at an average cost of \$1,000 per acre.





B.4: City of Burlington

www.ci.burlington.wa.us

Settlement was initiated in Burlington - later than most other developments in Skagit County. In 1882 the city was a mere logging camp with ox-powered cars and maple-railed tracks for hauling logs to the Skagit River to be towed downstream by the steamer Alki.

During the next decade a farming community developed on the logged-over land serving the newly developed railroad lines extending up the Skagit River and north-south between Bellingham and Seattle. The city incorporated in 1902 developing a downtown adjacent to the main intersection of the railroads along Fairhaven Avenue.

Modern Burlington has developed into a major regional retail center for Skagit County and communities along the I-5 corridor with the development of the Cascade Mall, numerous big box retail centers, and independent big box stores as well as a concentration of car dealerships on Auto Row.

The city's population was 8,728 persons in 2000 with a projected population by 2025 of 12,000 persons within the Burlington urban growth area (UGA).

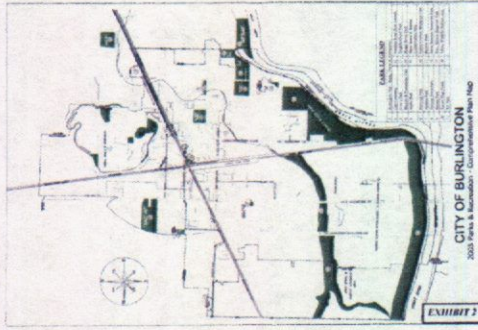
Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

The Burlington Planning Department maintains land use regulations protecting critical areas consisting of floodplains, geological hazardous areas, wetlands, and wildlife habitat including:

- **Gages Slough** - a series of connected wetlands running through the center of town. Most of the city's stormwater is collected in the Slough before being discharged into the Skagit River.

The Burlington Parks & Recreation Department oversees 178 acres of park, open space, and 2.2 miles of trail corridors within the city including:

- **Skagit River Park** - a 132-acre complex located on the north bank of the Skagit River with 22 soccer fields, 8 baseball fields, 24 horseshoe pits, picnic shelter, playground, an off-road remote control car track, and open space within the river floodplain.



UGA open space/farmland preservation

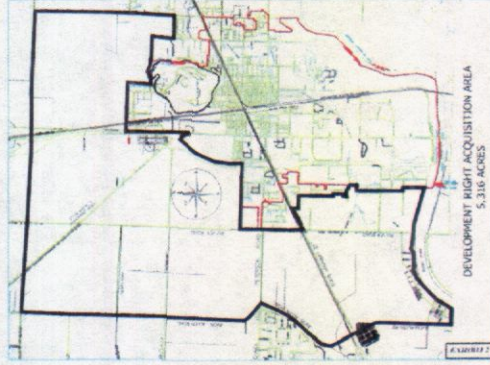
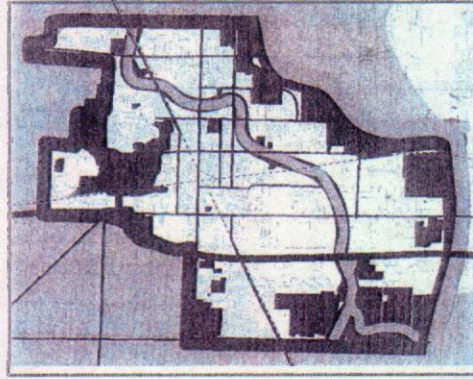
Burlington is also spearheading a program along with Skagit County, Mount Vernon, the Skagitians to Preserve Farmland, and others to protect Agricultural Natural Resource Land around the city limits through the following measures:

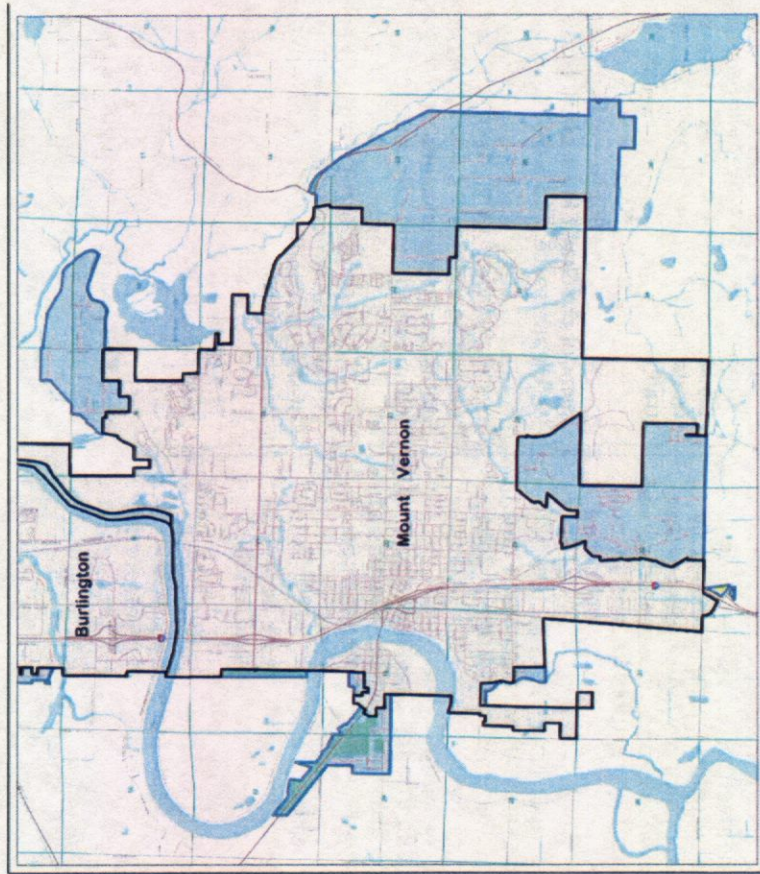
- **Transfer development rights** - a program to facilitate the preservation of threatened farmlands around the city using the Burlington Agricultural Heritage Credit fee program. The fee based approach generates funds from the receiving zones around the city that are deposited in the countywide program that purchases farmland development rights. The city prioritizes the sending zones around the north, west, and east edges of the city urban growth area to create a permanent greenway and buffer.
- **Urban growth area (UGA) limits** - that focuses development density within the established cores including the 48 block downtown using development rights from farmland transfer, new zoning, and design/historic guidelines.
- **Community connections** - that will create a green band of permanent connected open space in and around the city reinforcing

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Appendix B: Resources
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

the limits of future urban growth and enhancing the community's connection to the larger surrounding region. The open space band, which is based on a concept developed by a University of Washington Landscape Architecture studio class in 2004 through a community wide public planning process, will include riverfront, pathways and walkways, interpretive exhibits, wildlife viewing areas, and agricultural resource lands.

The Burlington Agricultural Heritage Credit program is not on line yet while the city completes an economic analysis of the fee structure and resolves the final map boundaries.





B.5: City of Mount Vernon

www.ci.mountvernon.wa.us



Settlement was initiated in Mount Vernon – Mount Vernon was settled in 1870 on reclaimed land from the marshy riverbanks and sloughs of the Skagit River. Few settlers ventured upstream of the huge logjams near present-day Mount Vernon. The logjams were natural, some more than a mile in length and undisturbed for so long that tangles of uprooted trees hosted brush and colonies of small animals and birds.

In 1876, volunteers began removing the logjams in spite of the territorial government's refusal of help. 5 men worked for 2 years – 2

drowning in the effort, before clearing a 250-foot channel through the lower jam which allowed the first steamer to chug upstream to the tiny settlement of Mount Vernon.

In 1879, men also succeeded in cutting an opening through an upper logjam that enhanced Mount Vernon's development, but wrought havoc downstream as loosened logs destroyed farms between the north and south forks of the river around Fir Island.

Harrison Clothier opened a store in Mount Vernon in 1877 and was joined by other merchants who marketed the miners en route to the

gold excitement at Ruby Creek at the headwaters of the Skagit River – now Ross Lake.

The city's population was 28,332 in 2000 with a forecasted population of 47,900 within the urban growth area by the year 2025.

Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

Mount Vernon is defined on the north and west by the Skagit River floodplain, on the east by the Nookachamps Creek and Barney Lake floodplains, by Britt Slough's riparian corridor on the west, through the UGA by Maddox and Carpenter Creeks riparian corridors, on the south by Little Mountain Park, and on the south and west by agricultural resource zoned lands.

The Skagit River floodplains extend up the Nookachamps and Barney Lake on the east boundary of the UGA before being channeled by dikes through the corridor between Burlington, West Mount Vernon, and East Mount Vernon.

The east and south segments of the river corridor are defined by river oxbows and old channel cuts overgrown with woodlands and river habitat. Some portions of these corridors have been preserved through acquisitions and easements, and some public land in Mount Vernon's Edgewater Park has been restored and enhanced for salmon habitat.

The central segment of the river corridor is very constrained and except for Lions Park North and the sand bar along Dunbar Road, limited by dikes and shoreline improvements.

The open space corridors and buffers along Kulshan, Maddox, and Carpenter Creeks extend through and into the developed areas of the city linking the interior with the Skagit River, Nookachamps Creek and Big Lake, and Britt Sough open space systems.

These finger systems also define the edges and provide access to Beaver Pond and Little Mountain, significant natural and aesthetic resources in the center of the UGA.

The Mount Vernon Parks & Recreation Department owns and maintains a significant amount of park and open space resources including:

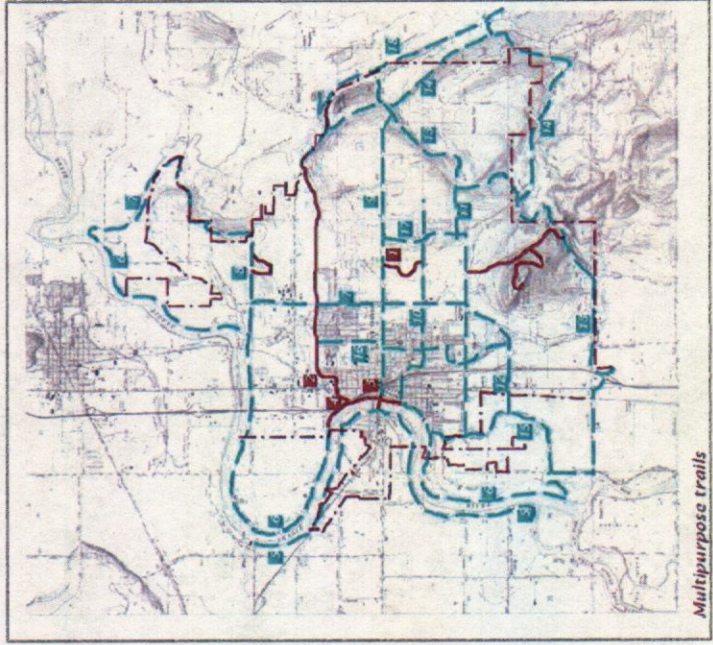
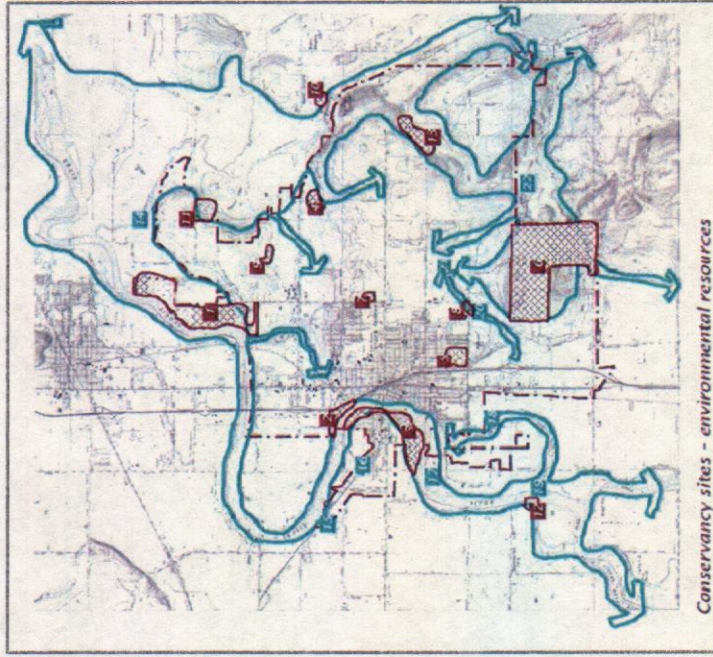
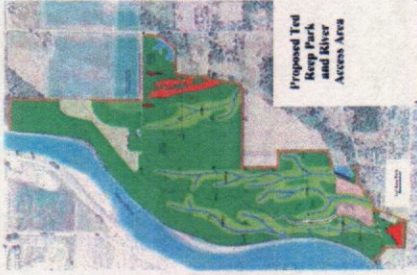
- Little Mountain – a 517.0-acre regional conservancy located on Little Mountain with access from Little Mountain Park and Hickox Roads. The park provides a north extended viewpoint overlook, and south covered viewpoint shelter, portable toilet, 6 picnic tables, hanging launch ramp, 5.0 mile hiking trails, 2.0 mile mountain bike trail, and 17 parking spaces on top of the mountain.
- Edgewater Park – a 66.3-acre community park located on the west bank of the Skagit River extending under Division Street Bridge with 28.5 acres developed with a playground, picnic area, covered stage, 3 softball/soccer fields, boat launch and 14 trailer parking stalls, public restrooms and seasonal toilets, and 10 seasonal campsites, and 150 parking spaces. The park includes 38.1 acres of wetland and woodland conservation area with a salmon stream enhancement and restoration area along the riverbank.
- Ted Reep Park – a 47.4-acre conservancy located on the east bank of the Skagit River with access from Hoag Road providing wetlands, open agriculture fields, and woodlands with 1.5 miles of dirt trail along the bank of the Skagit River.
- Lions Park North – a 15.0-acre conservancy located on the east bank of the Skagit River off Freeway Drive with dirt walking trails, 2.5 acre open space, and 5 on-street parking spaces.
- Bakerview Park Wetland – a 12.0-acre Wetland preservation area extending east from Bakerview Park to Seneca Drive with walking paths, an interpretive and sitting area, wetland restoration, stream enhancement, and salmon rearing pond.
- The Centennial Trail – may extend along the eastern edge of the UGA within or adjacent or parallel to the original railroad right-of-way, portions of which have since reverted or been acquired by adjoining private property owners and developers.

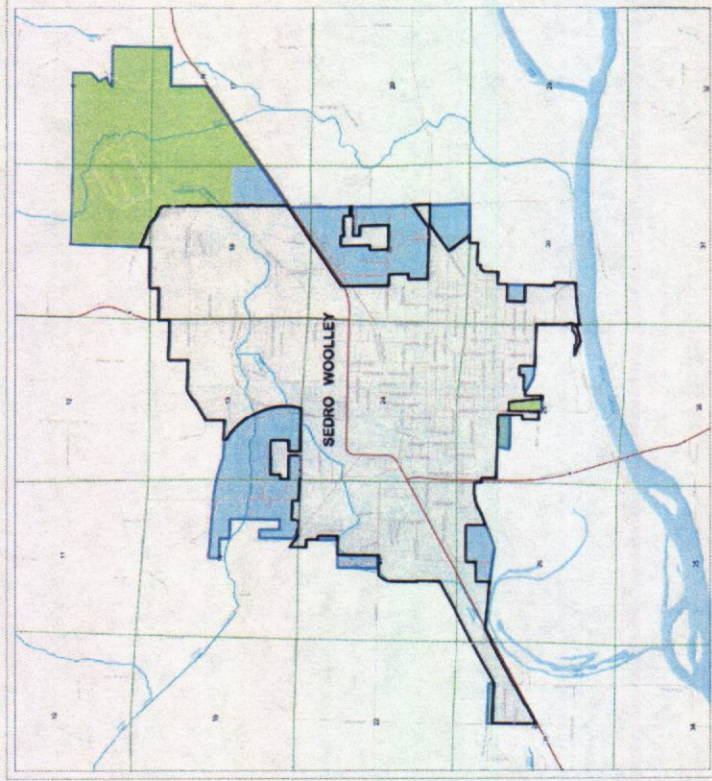
The trail could link Big Lake, the Nookachamps, Barney Lake, and the Skagit River open spaces with Mount Vernon by Carpenter Creek and the city's Kulshan Trail.
- The Skagit River Trail South Bank proposal – is to extend a trail access along the south bank of the Skagit River from the

Centennial Trail and Nookachamps Creek on the east through Mount Vernon's Lions Parks, the downtown, and areas further south to Stanwood.

Depending on more detailed planning with affected property owners and interests, possible trail corridor alternatives could be located on or adjacent river dikes, local roadways, and city parklands.

Possible local trail systems could extend through the UGA to link the Centennial and Skagit River South Bank Trails by way of the Kulshan Trail, and adjacent to Beaver Pond, Little Mountain, and Big Lake on trails adjacent to Maddox and Carpenter Creeks, and Britt Slough.





B.6: City of Sedro-Woolley

www.ci.sedro-woolley.wa.us



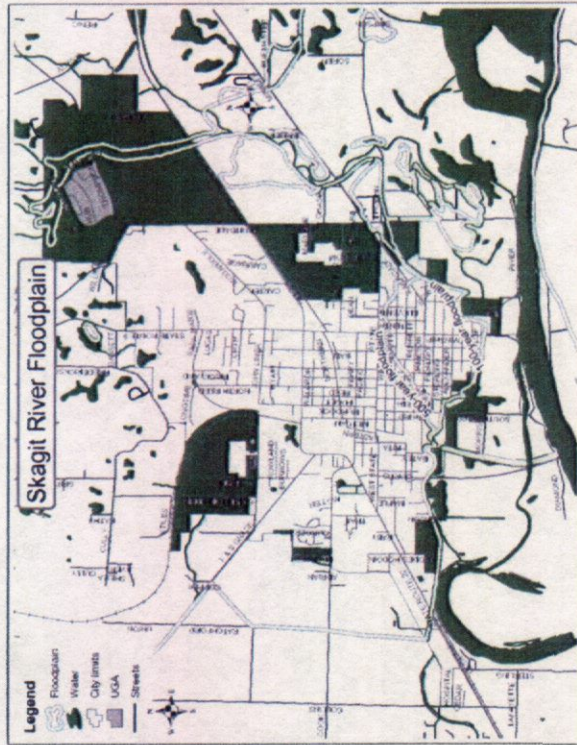
Settlement was initiated in Sedro-Woolley – in 1884 when Mortimer Cook built the first shingle mill and platted a town on the north bank of the Skagit River. Cook threatened to name the town “Bug” in honor of the local mosquito population but town folk campaigned for Sedro, based upon the Spanish “cedra”, meaning cedar.

In 1889, five years after Cook platted Sedro, Phillip Woolley platted a neighboring town slightly to the north to accommodate 3 railroad lines – the Fairhaven and Southern (F&S), Seattle, Lakeshore & Eastern (SL&E

– to become Northern Pacific (NP)), and the Seattle & Northern (S&N) to become the Great Northern (GN)).

Charles Larrabee, a developer from Fairhaven (Bellingham), developed a coal mine just north of Woolley and named his town Cokedale. Four kilns at the mine heated coal to drive off gases and produce a clean, hot-burning fuel used by Northern Pacific (NP) Railroad locomotives. A spur track connected the mine to Woolley, which became the predominant community. In 1898 Sedro and Woolley merged and incorporated as Sedro-Woolley.

Sedro-Woolley’s population was 10,358 in 2000 with a forecasted population of 15,000 in the urban growth area (UGA) by the year 2025.



Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

The Sedro-Woolley Planning Department maintains land use regulations that conserve and protect critical areas including floodplains, wetlands, geological hazardous areas, and wildlife habitat. This includes maintaining the buffers and water quality of Harts Slough, Brickyard Creek, Hansen Creek, and Red Creek.

The Sedro-Woolley Parks Department maintains 44.5 acres of park and open space lands including:

- **Riverfront Park** – a 17.5-acre property located on the north bank of the Skagit River with a boat launch, athletic fields, picnic tables and shelter, and 27 RV and 5 tent campsites. The city also owns a 35.0-acre property that is adjacent to the park but outside of existing city limits that has not been improved for park purposes.

Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department - owns and maintains a number of significant park, open space, and trail assets within and adjacent to Sedro-Woolley urban growth area boundaries including:

- **Northern State Recreational Area (NSRA)** – a 726.0-acre county park is located on the city's eastern edge that includes pasture lands, some wooded areas, wetlands, Hansen Creek frontage, and numerous buildings dating from when the property was used as a state mental hospital. Under a master plan completed in year 2000, over 500 acres of the site will remain undeveloped to support wildlife habitat. The park will showcase the natural, historical, and cultural character of the region and provide accessibility and sustainability. The site will be improved with an Education Center, trail system, and a 40-acre parcel with 100 camping sites.
- **The Burlington-Sedro-Woolley Trail** – a 3.0 mile trail extends from the east edge of Burlington adjacent between railroad and SR-20 right-of-way to the west edge of Sedro-Woolley city limits. Eventually, the trail will be extended through town to connect with the Cascade Trail to provide an uninterrupted trail corridor.
- **The Cascade Trail** – a 22.5-mile, 280.0-acre multipurpose county trail parallels SR-20 from the east edge of Sedro-Woolley to Concrete. The rails-to-trails conservancy project is open year round for hiking, biking, and equestrian trail users.
- **The Centennial Trail** – a 9.2-mile multipurpose county-owned trail corridor is proposed to extend from Arlington in Snohomish County north along former railroad right-of-way through Sedro-Woolley to eventually connect with the Whatcom Lake Trail into Bellingham, and north as the Centennial Trail to Sumas and the Canadian border.



B.7: Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) www.padillabay.gov

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System is administered by the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) under the US Department of Commerce. The system was created under the federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 and includes reserves throughout the coastal United States and Puerto Rico. The system was created to promote scientific research and public education about valuable estuarine resources and to protect representative estuaries for long-term study.

Padilla Bay Reserve, part of NOAA's National Estuary Research Reserve System and the only NERR in Washington State, was designated in 1980 and is managed by the Washington State Department of Ecology. The Reserve owns and manages approximately 11,000 acres of the bay and nearly 200 upland acres.

Thousands of years ago - the Skagit River meandered back and forth between Skagit and Padilla Bays. Huge brackish marshes lay north and south of Bay View Ridge, where the Center is now located.

When settlers arrived in the late 1900s, the Skagit River emptied into Skagit Bay. Agricultural dikes confine the river to its present course. Today Padilla Bay's fresh water comes from a number of small sloughs that drain directly into the bay and indirectly from rivers that flow into Puget Sound and the Strait of Georgia.

Padilla Bay - is part of the Puget Sound and Strait of Georgia estuary. The Bay is an estuary at the saltwater edge of the large delta of the Skagit River approximately 8 miles long and 3 miles across. Because the bay is filled with sediment from the Skagit River, the bottom is very shallow, flat, and muddy. The bay is so shallow that almost the whole bay is intertidal - meaning it is flooded at high tide. The whole bay empties when the tide goes out exposing miles and miles of mud flats that allow unusually large eelgrass meadows to grow. There are nearly 8,000 acres of eelgrass in Padilla Bay.

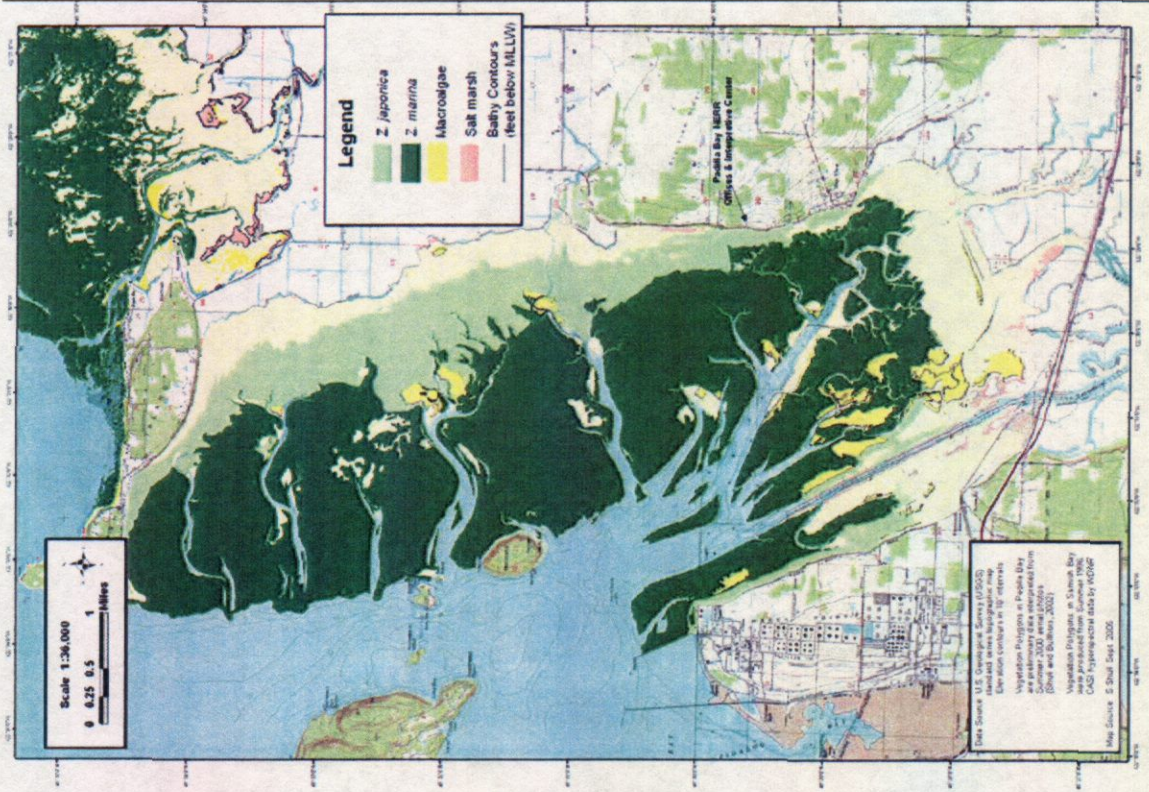
Padilla Bay's eelgrass meadows are the largest in the state, offering feeding areas for migratory waterfowl, nursery areas for young fish and crabs, and habitat for a complex community of organisms. Low tide exposes a vast mud flat supporting millions of worms, shrimp, clams, and other invertebrates.

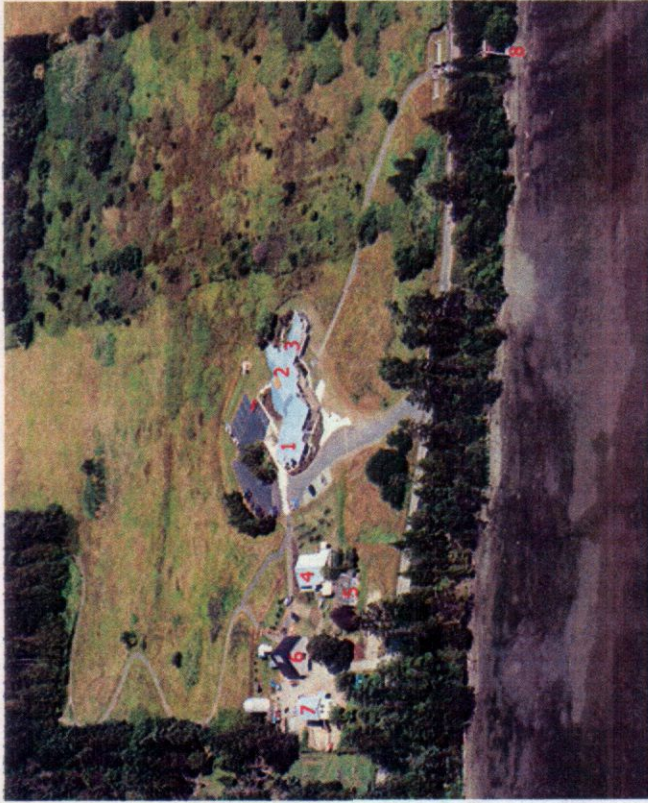
The Coastal Training Program - provides training to professional who deal with coastal issues or work in businesses that affect coastal areas. Other education programs are offered for youth programs, school programs (pre-kindergarten-high school), and programs for the general public covering a wide range of estuarine topics.

Research is conducted at Padilla Bay to monitor plant and animal populations, evaluate sources of pollution, protect water quality, and to understand ecological process operating in the bay and the bay's relationship to greater Puget Sound. Research programs distribute information and data to resource managers and scientists to further understanding of estuaries.

The Breazeale Interpretive Center - sits on 64 upland acres and overlooks the bay. The center provides a place for people of all ages to learn more about estuaries, watersheds, and coastal areas. The center provides interactive exhibits, saltwater aquaria, hands-on room, curriculum and reference library, meeting rooms, a theater, and trails.

Other facilities include a field lab and overnight quarters for visiting researchers. The Breazeale House provides offices for staff and a small meeting room.





Shore Trail – is a level, 2.25 mile dike-top bike and hike trail that follows the southeastern shore of Padilla Bay. The trail includes interpretive signage explaining the natural history and ecology of the Padilla Bay estuary.

Upland Trail – is a 0.8 mile loop winding through meadows and forest habitat with a view of Mount Baker at the top. The trail begins at the parking lot behind the barn and continues halfway as a paved wheelchair access and the balance as a gravel path.

Observation Deck – a walkway from the Interpretive Center extends toward the beach and an observation deck overlooking the bay. A wheelchair access ramp and spiral stairs lead to the beach.

Volunteer and stewardship projects – include a wide variety of activities involving removal of invasive species (thistle, English ivy and holly, blackberry, and Spartina), monitoring of European green crab,

documentation of creosote logs, tires, and other wastes, and surveys of birds, amphibians, plants, and other species.

Upcoming stewardship activities will develop an Upland Management Plan, remove and dispose of old logs, tires, and other debris, classify habitats, and restore plantings.

Other public involvement programs include:

- **Stream Team** – citizen volunteers collecting water quality and monitoring data to assess the health of several sources of fresh water to Skagit County estuaries,
- **No Name Slough** – citizens improving environmental conditions in the watershed,
- **The Demonstration Farm** – an outdoor laboratory testing agricultural practices, providing demonstrations and education on minimizing agricultural non-point pollution impacts to water quality,
- **Padilla Bay Foundation** – member information on opportunities to protect Padilla Bay and support the Reserve,
- **Northwest Straits Commission** – a grassroots effort to protect marine resources in northwest Washington, from the Strait of Juan de Fuca and northern Puget Sound to the Canadian border.

No Name Slough – is the name of a small creek that drains into Padilla Bay at the Padilla Demonstration Farm. The slough is called No Name because the lower reaches are in land so low and flat that it is affected by the tide. This land was diked and drained over a 100 years ago and the water of No Name passes through a tide gage under the Padilla Bay Shore Trail.



The upper reaches of the No Name Slough watershed are on Bay View Ridge – where a lot of growth is projected to occur in coming years. The No Name Slough project is to project ahead what can be done to improve conditions. The watershed study will develop options to address the issues of farm flooding, polluted waters, and fish and wildlife restoration opportunities. Decisions will utilize on-going data being collected on water quantity, water quality, water flow,

and habitat within the watershed.

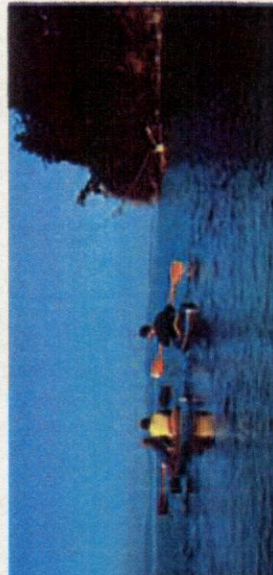
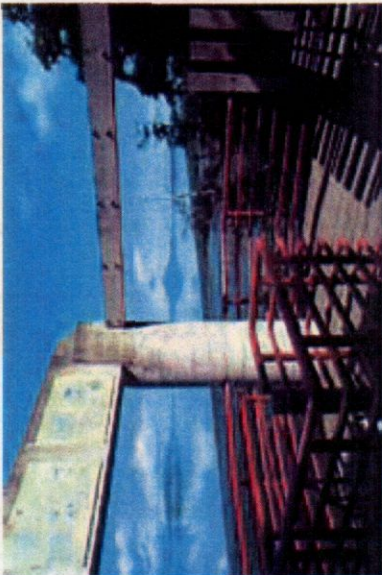
The study is a unique, joint staff effort with the Skagit Conservation District and the Padilla Bay NERR. Both agencies are non-regulatory agencies interested in resource conservation and community solutions to the challenges caused by growth impacts.

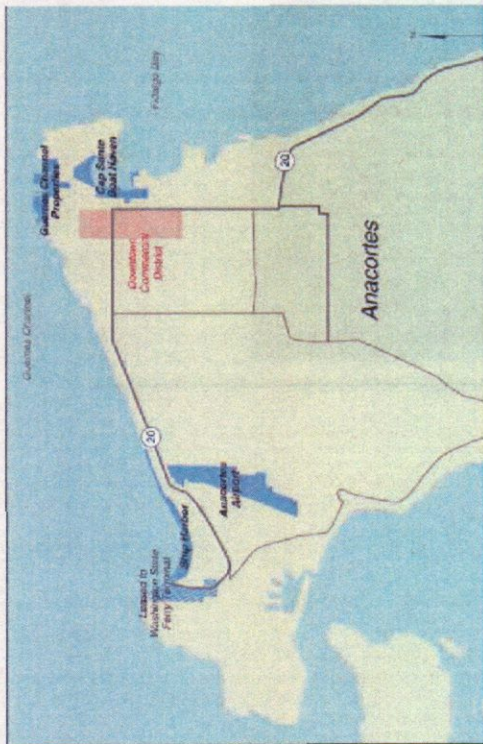
The Demonstration Farm – was purchased in 1994 with funds from a NOAA property acquisition budget to test the effects of agricultural practices on water quality and ecosystem health in the bay, and address long-term solutions using an agricultural research site.

Padilla Bay Reserve is developing an operational plan for the Demonstration Farm with funds from a CZMA Section 308 grant provided by NOAA/OCRM. The operational plan will outline an approach for developing solutions to non-point pollution from agricultural crop production. The Demonstration Farm will provide a valuable link for implementing Section 6217 of the CZMA, as well as local, state, and other federal water quality programs.

Padilla Bay Reserve initiated a collaborative planning process under which demonstration, education, and research activities on the farm will be conducted with local farmers, agribusinesses, Washington State University Agricultural Research & Cooperative Extension, environmental groups, and Padilla Bay Reserve staff.

The plan will be implemented with the same collaborative approach using an advisory panel composed of a similar mix of organizations with expertise, program feedback, and guidance.





B.8: Port of Anacortes



The Port of Anacortes was established in 1926. In 1962 the public authorized an annexation to the Port

District that created the current boundaries. The current port district includes approximately 100 square miles and 23,000 residents. The boundaries include 4 distinct property areas:

- **Cap Sante Boat Haven Area** - supports commercial fishing and a growing variety of commercial ventures, boaters, and tourists. Its open facilities provide one of central Anacortes' best places to stroll along the water.
- **Guemes Channel Properties** - includes marine-related businesses reliant on deep-draft terminal access.
- **Anacortes Airport** - includes small aircraft ventures and light industrial tenants.
- **Ship Harbor Property** - is leased to the Washington State Ferry System for terminals providing access to the San Juan Islands and Vancouver Island, BC.

The Port is overseen by 5 elected commissioners who represent sub-districts. The Port's mission is to partner with public agencies and

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www.portofanacortes.com

private business, development and manage facilities and services that stimulate private job creation and commerce, and protect the quality of life, needs, and desires of area residents.

Port mission tenets are to:

- Be a responsible steward of the public resources, and operate in a manner that maintains a high level of public understanding and confidence in the Port's activities.
- Operate as a primarily self-supporting public enterprise, which will maintain the financial strength necessary to fulfill the Port's mission on a continuing basis.
- Operate in a manner that avoids displacement of private business activity.
- Establish and maintain sound and ethical management practices in all relations with the Port's customers, employees, and the community at large.
- Give priority to the fostering of economic developments that directly or indirectly, lead to the creation and maintenance of family wage jobs.
- Concentrate on developments for which the Port is uniquely qualified consisting primarily marine-related activities and transportation.
- Economically or socially justify all new capital projects.

- Provide services and facilities that do not require continuing subsidy.
- Quality of life means appropriate balance among economical, social, and environmental elements.

The Port's 30 full-time employee equivalents (FTEs) produce \$330,000 per employee the highest revenue per employee in Washington State. In 2007, Port properties hosted over 650 jobs, most of which were in manufacturing and repair.

Comprehensive Plan

Consistent with its mission and in addition to maintaining existing facilities and properties, much of the Port's recently adopted Comprehensive Plan consisted of economic development, environmental stewardship, and public access endeavors. In summary, these efforts included:

- Economic development - Anacortes has established itself as a headquarters for ship building and marine-related industries, a vibrant boating center, and a tourism hub. To assist this process, the Port prioritizes opportunities that create stable employment and promote direct and indirect economic benefits to the region.
- Environmental stewardship - the Port teamed with the Governor's Puget Sound Initiative to fast-track clean-up of 5 Port-owned properties. This effort, called Focus Fidalgo, integrates clean-up, habitat restoration, redevelopment, and public access improvements in a single, coordinated effort.
- Public access - the Port pursues projects that improve the function of its properties while strengthening the community's pedestrian network and open space amenities. The planned Waterfront Loop, a network of pedestrian corridors that will bring the public to the shoreline and connect viewpoints, will be integrated with the Tommy Thompson Parkway and the downtown commercial core.

Project evaluation criteria

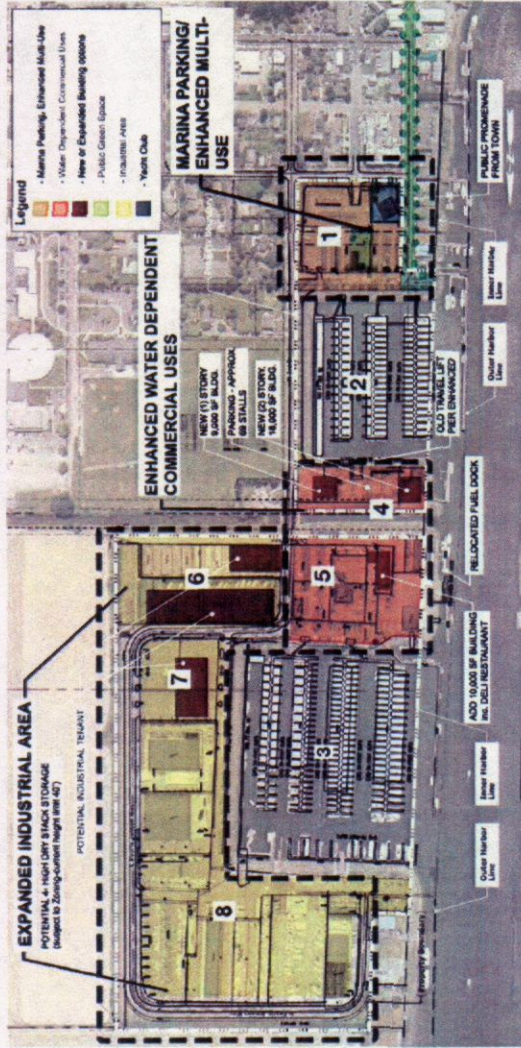
The design, funding, and timing for projects identified in the Comprehensive Plan will depend upon multiple factors, including market demand, financial feasibility, grant availability, and/or private or Port funding sources, and design considerations. Port

Commissioners will evaluate and prioritize projects using a number of evaluation criteria including projects ability to:

- Create partnerships with tenants, environmental groups, associations, governments, etc.
- Retain jobs and stimulate job creation and commerce.
- Protect quality of life by providing public access, amenities, and cultural enhancement.
- Prevent accidents and address public safety issues and comply with regulations.
- Address facility maintenance issues.
- Use funding effectively.



Uplands Preferred Option - Figure 1



Marina Layout - Option 2, Hybrid

www.portofskagit.com

B.9: Port of Skagit County



The Port of Skagit owns and operates 3 key facilities that support 82 businesses and 1,123 employees:

- **Skagit Regional Airport** – is a general aviation facility providing terminal facilities, aviation fuels, a restaurant, and a variety of aircraft maintenance and related services including qualified flight instruction.
- **Bayview Business & Industrial Park** – consists of 1,051.7 acres of forested industrial property including many wetlands interspersed throughout the park and walking trails that connect all parcels. All lots have utilities with a variety of lot sizes that range from 1 to 9 acres.
- **La Conner Marina** – on the Swinomish Channel provides 2 marina basins, 2,400 linear feet of guest moorage, 360 covered berths, 100 open berths, restrooms, showers, and laundry, and a full range of boater's services including service, sales, canvas, and other marine-related.

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Incubator and start up program

The Port offers lease rates at 1/3 the normal market rate during a business's first year, 2/3 the normal market rate during the business's second year, and full price by the third year if the business has a sound business plan and strong potential for sales growth. The business may be entitled to up to a 10 year lease in any available port-owned facility if business goals are met.

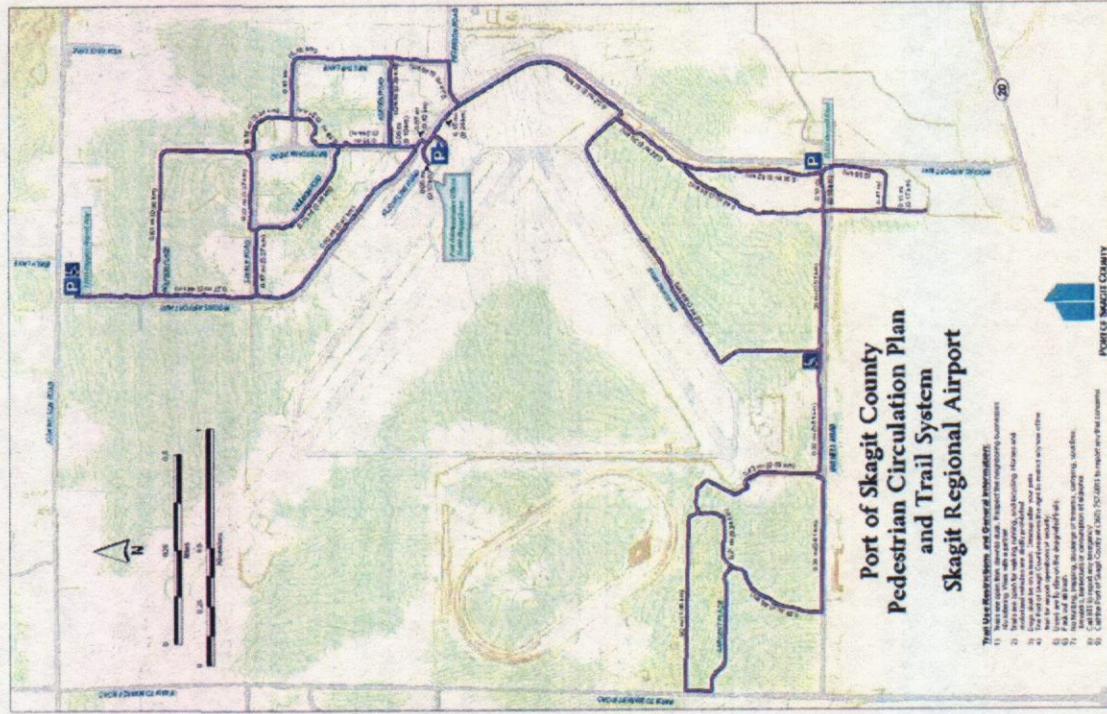
Incubator definition:

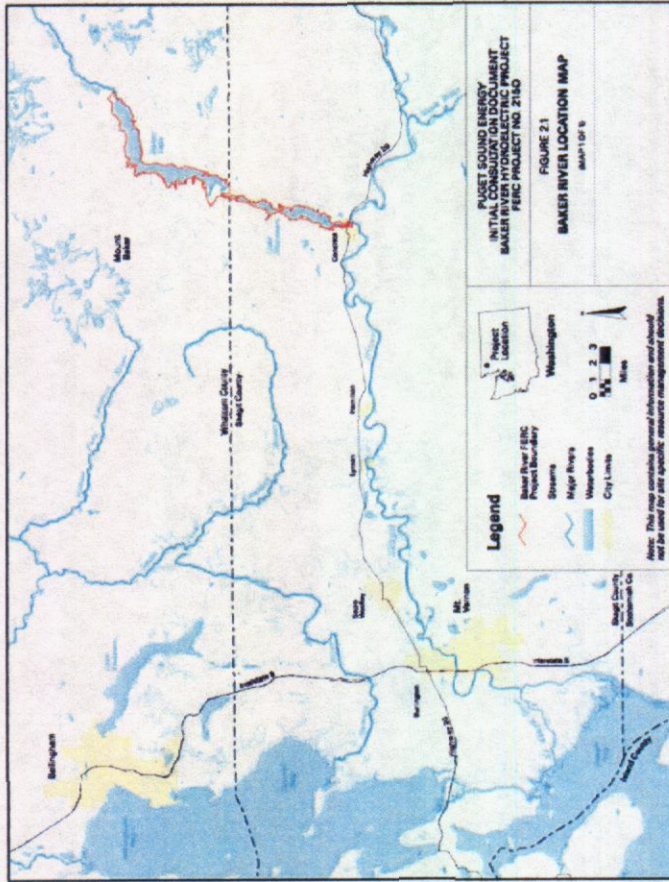
- An existing business moving from a home, garage, yard, or shop.
- Has a business plan defining business goals for employment and revenue over a 3 year period.
- Shows sufficient capital to pay move-in costs and pay operating expenses during incubation period.

Start-up definition

- A new business starting operation in a port-owned facility.
- Has a business plan defining business goals for employment and revenue over a 6 year period.

- Shows sufficient capital reserves or financing to purchase equipment and materials, and pay operating expenses during start-up period.
- Lease may be for 6 years with 1/3 fair market value rent for first year, 2/3 fair market value rent for second year, full fair market value rent for third year, and consumer price index (CPI) adjustments for each of the final 3 years.
- The tenant may move to another port-owned facility during the term of the lease without penalty; buy-out the remaining life of the lease for 25% of the rent due in the remaining lease term, or if moving to another facility off port property.





B.10: Puget Sound Energy (PSE)



Puget Sound Energy (PSE) built and operates 2 hydroelectric dams on the Baker River system – on Baker Lake and Lake Shannon. Both dams are licensed under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and are subject to federal requirements regarding impacts on fish habitat and recreation. Both dams are also subject to US Geological Survey (USGS) hydrologic requirements regarding flood control.

Baker River Watershed

Baker River, a tributary of the Skagit River, is the second largest tributary to the Skagit River, with a drainage area of 297 square miles, contributing an average annual flow of about 16% to the Skagit River. The river's headwaters lie in the northeastern section of the basin

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www.pse.com

along the slopes of Mt Challenger and Whatcom Peak in Whatcom County.

Several entities own lands within the Baker River basin, including the US Forest Service, North Cascades national park, Washington Department of Natural Resources, and Puget Sound Energy (PSE).

The Lower Baker Development - was completed in 1925 and is located approximately a half mile north of Concrete upstream from where the Baker and Skagit Rivers meet. The development consists of the 285-foot Lower Baker dam, reservoir, and associated facilities. The powerhouse contains a single generating unit that is capable of producing 70 megawatts of electricity. The reservoir, Lake Shannon, was created following the dam's completion and is approximately 7 miles long.

The Upper Baker Development – was completed in 1959 and is located on the Baker River roughly 8 miles north of Concrete. A 312-foot concrete gravity dam and an associated earthen embankment (West Pass dike) impound the Upper Baker reservoir. The Upper Baker powerhouse contains 2 generating units with a collective generation capacity of 105 megawatts of electricity. Baker Lake, the reservoir behind the Upper Baker Dam, is about 9 miles long.

When the Baker River dams were built in the deep gorge they blocked access to about 20 miles of upstream habitat for migrating salmon, particularly coho, Chinook, and sockeye – a run of sockeye that was previously the largest run in Puget Sound. For years the salmon making their way upstream had to take their chances with the turbines, resulting in low survival rates.

PSE has a system in place to transport spawning adults upstream into Baker Lake above the dams and truck young salmon downstream and release them back in the river below the dams. The Baker River now contains the only remaining native population of sockeye in Puget Sound.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

FERC originally licensed the Baker River Project for 50 years beginning in 1956 and expiring in 2006. Hydroelectric projects regulated by FERC are required to undergo a re-evaluation process, known as relicensing, prior to the date the original licensing expires.

FERC's relicensing process requires extensive planning – including environmental studies, agency consultation, and public involvement. FERC must ensure that resource agencies, tribes, and public participants are including throughout the process.

In 2004, PSE submitted a license application for the Baker River Hydroelectric Project using FERC's Alternative Licensing Procedures, a new licensing process with an emphasis on collaboration and the involvement of interested parties from the beginning. During the process, more than 100 representatives of the public, tribal organizations, governmental agencies, and special interest groups actively participated.

After 5 years, over 400 meetings, and \$15,000,000 in PSE expenses, the Baker River Hydroelectric Project Comprehensive Settlement

Agreement (Settlement Agreement) was signed. A group of stakeholders representing 23 entities is the largest number of collaborators ever to reach a Settlement Agreement with a licensee and present their case to the FERC. The FERC considers the process and Settlement Agreement to be the poster-child for future nationwide licensing and relicensing agreements. The signing of the Settlement Agreement was celebrated at the Upper Skagit Indians Tribe's Skagit Valley Casino in 2005.

Mitigation

Of the \$180,000,000-plus Protection, Mitigation, and Enhancement package, approximately 83% is going toward aquatic resources. The bulk of this money will go toward building new adult fish collection facilities at the Baker River fish weir in Concrete, transporting those fish to new propagation facilities up on the reservoirs, rearing the next generation to out-migrant size, collecting the out-migrants without allowing them to go through the turbines, and transporting them to release ponds below the dams.

Because of reservoir fluctuation for flood control, this propagation system will rely heavily on hatchery methods to bring sockeye production up to a point of adult return approximately 5 times the current high of 20,000-plus.

Fish passage

In 2008 PSE installed a "floating surface collector", a 1,000 ton apparatus floating above Baker Lake's 280-foot deep bottom to attract and safely capture young salmon for transport around PSE 2 Baker River hydropower dams.

The collector is similar to the original PSE 'gulper', a floating system constructed in the late 1950s to simulate swift river current behind a large, deep-water dam in order to attract and capture young salmon. The gulper was quite successful in the beginning, though sockeye runs suddenly and inexplicably plummeted to a record-low 99 fish returning to spawn in 1985.

PSE augmented the first-generation gulper in the late 1980s with the world's first (and still only) deep-reservoir guide-net system. The 2,000-foot shore-to-shore, 280-foot survey-to-bottom net was installed to prevent small fish from entering Upper Baker Dam's turbines, and steering them toward the gulper. The enhanced system produced a

dramatic turnaround increasing the number of adult sockeye returning to the Baker basin to a record 20,225 fish in 2003.

Despite its effectiveness, the old fish-transport system basically wore out. PSE's new floating surface collector has 4 times the capacity of the old gulper, consisting of a \$50,000,000 120-foot-by-60-foot barge equipped with a series of submerged screens, water pumps, fish-holding chambers, a fish-evaluation station, equipment control rooms, and a fish-loading facility.

The new collector's 4 primary water pumps – each 8 feet in diameter – quadruple the old gulper's speed of simulated "river current" in Baker Lake, providing a stronger attraction for young fish. After the fish are captured, a specially designed system of submerged screens slows the water to prevent fish injury as pumped water is returned back into the lake. Fisheries agencies hope for a 90-95% capture rate of Baker Lake juvenile salmon from the new fish collector compared to an estimated 60% capture rate under the old gulper.

Other mitigation projects under the Settlement Agreement include:

- Improvements to PSE's man-made, naturalistic, sockeye spawning beaches along Baker Lake;
- Construction of a new fish hatchery for raising salmon and trout (with a target to tripling production of Baker sockeye fry to 14,500,000 per year);
- PSE construction of a new trap-and-haul facility below Lower Baker Dam for upstream transport of adult salmon; and
- Additional acquisition or enhancement of wetlands and riparian habitat in the Skagit and Baker River systems.

Water flows

PSE voluntarily releases stored reservoir water during dry summer months to help maintain a targeted minimum flow in the Skagit River with which to protect salmon-egg nests and newly hatching salmon. The target flow of water – about 7,600 cubic feet per second – is collaboratively set by biologists with the National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife, and Skagit River Cooperative.

PSE discharges water from its Lake Shannon and Baker Lake reservoirs to keep the Skagit River's flows above the mark they would otherwise be during natural and drought conditions. During low rainfall, however,

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the flows are not sufficient to replenish the water released from the reservoirs.

Flood control

Baker Lake and Lake Shannon also store water that reduces flooding impacts downriver on the Skagit. PSE cooperates with the Corps of Engineers whenever the Skagit River reaches flood stage of 90,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). At flood stage, the Corps takes over operation of the dams and releases water before the flood peak so that when the flood peaks, they can shut off flow from the Baker River system by refilling the reservoirs thereby decreasing the flooding crest on the Skagit. The revenue loss to PSE is reimbursed by a power transfer from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). This flood control arrangement took an act of Congress and is the only one imposed on a private utility in the US.

The crest of these types of floods is what made the Skagit River such good habitat for salmon in the first place. The river would continually wander about in its floodplain, making new side channels every so often. This diverse habitat, as well as the marshes, wetlands, and logjams, made the lower mainstem of the Skagit River the most productive area for choho and Chinook Salmon. Floods were a net benefit to salmon.

The logjams were cleared, the river constrained between dikes, and the wetland filled. Now all fish are forced to span in the channels where the survival rate is lower than in side channels. By reducing side channel habitat, the rest areas have been taken away where fish migrating downstream used to feed and slowly adapt to salinity. Mortification, or the adaption to saltwater, is a critical part of the salmon's maturation. If the fish are flushed into saltwater too early, they do not survive.

PSE and Skagit County are currently studying the engineering, economic, and environmental effects of providing additional storage at the 2 lake reservoirs for enhanced flood control. Both studies are being reviewed and conducted in cooperation with the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Recreation and wildlife habitat

As part of FERC relicensing requirements, PSE also constructs and maintains a system of trails and recreational facilities in and around

both lakes. The facilities include a visitor center and boat ramp on Lake Shannon at the Lower Baker Dam, and campground, overlook, boat launch ramps, conference and retreat facilities, and campground and cabins at Baker Lake Lodge and Resort at Upper Baker Dam.

And, PSE has and may acquire and establish additional conservation easements for deciduous forest bird habitat, elk foraging habitat, wetland habitat, and bald eagle habitat. Site selections are made by the Baker River Coordinating Committee/Terrestrial Resources Implementation Group.

Puget Sound Energy Foundation



In 2006, PSE established the Puget Sound Energy Foundation to provide charitable contributions to qualifying nonprofit organizations in PSE's service territory and in other areas where PSE generates and purchases power. The mission of the foundation is to energize the communities PSE serves with support for innovative programs. The foundation is focused on 4 sectors:

- Human services
- Environmental stewardship
- Education (workforce development)
- Arts and culture

The foundation began accepting grant requests in early 2007. The grants support programmatic and capital projects with measurable goals and outcomes.

In 2007, the Puget Sound Energy Foundation awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Skagit River Bald Eagle Awareness Team (SRBEAT) to assist in the education and program offerings at the Skagit River Interpretive Center in Steelhead Park in Rockport.

PSE has been a cornerstone partner in the Upper Skagit River Bald Eagle Festival over the last 5 years, and the PSE Foundation grant supports the continued education and information work at the Interpretive Center.

SRBEAT focuses on habitat conservation, stewardship and restoration, and offers opportunities to better understand the wildlife of the Skagit watershed, eagles and salmon in particular.

In 2008, the PSE Foundations plans on awarding more than \$600,000 to 73 nonprofits throughout Washington State.

B.11: Samish Indian Nation



The Samish are closely linked to the Lummi and inhabited Samish, Guemes, Eastern Lopez, Cypress, and Fidalgo as well as other islands in the region. The Samish spoke the Lkungen dialect of Coastal Salish or "Straits Salish". The Samish were a marine-oriented people who collected their subsistence from salmon, shellfish, and other marine life. They also collected sprouts, bulbs, and roots as well as berries and fruits, and hunted waterfowl, shore birds, and deer and elk.

The Samish maintained permanent villages composed of longhouses built of cedar planks during winter months – one of the longest being 1,250 linear feet on the eastern end of Samish Island. During other seasons, they roamed throughout the San Juan Islands to numerous outlying fishing and camping sites.

In the 1840s the Samishes were reduced from over 2,000 members to a single village by measles, small pox, and the ague (flu) and the raids of more-powerful northern tribes. On Samish Bay and Samish Island, the Samishes lived close to the once-powerful Nuwaha villages grouped

www.samishtribe.nsn.us

by anthropologists with the Skagits, many of whom joined with the Samishes at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Samishes were known for their canoe making and gift-giving potlatches, which were attended by tribesmen from all over Puget Sound, Vancouver Island, and the Fraser River country. The Samishes' last large potlatch was held shortly after 1900.

A Nuwaha chief, Pateur (or Pattehus) was said to have signed the 1855 Point Elliott Treaty for the Samishes. Approximately 113 of the 150 Samish members were present at the Treaty signing, though the tribe was left off the final draft of the treaty. After the treaty was ratified, the Samishes were sent to the Lummi and the Swinomish Reservations. Refusing to leave their homelands, many tribal members left the reservations for the territories originally occupied by them including a contingent on Samish Island as late as the 1870s.

Under the Point Elliott Treaty the Samishes were to have had an area set aside for them on the Swinomish Reservation on the western half of March Point. When the reservation boundaries were defined by executive order in 1873, however, the area reserved for the Samish was left out.

As a consequence, a large contingent of the tribe moved to Guemes Island to an area now called Potlatch Beach that was formerly referred to as New Guemes to distinguish it from earlier Samish villages on the island. The Samishes build a longhouse approximately 60 by 480 feet in which over a 100 people lived. Nine principal family heads kept traditional religious beliefs alive in the village.

In 1883, two Samish headmen applied for and received trust allotments for the Guemes Island property under the Homestead Act which protected them for a 20-year period expiring in 1903. Because the Samishes had the only fresh water on the island, much pressure was exerted on them and by 1912 they were forced off their lands as they had been forced off Samish Island some 50 years earlier.

After the breakup of the Guemes Island village, some Salishes remained as squatters, and others moved into various communities in Samish country. Throughout the 1890s and 1900s the Samishes continued to occupy fishing villages on Lopez and Cypress Island in the San Juan Islands, and traveled throughout the islands in large 36 foot long canoes.

The Samishes developed a political organization as early as 1907 and met in their longhouse on Guemes Island and later in Anacortes. Around 1918 the Lower (Samish Flat or Stick Samish) Nuwahas merged with the Samishes. In 1926 the Samishes organized under a formal constitution and bylaws, which were subsequently amended in 1951, 1965, and 1974. In 1996 they were finally and formally recognized by the federal government as the Samish Indian Tribe. Other legal issues regarding the tribe's status are still being clarified in the federal courts

The Samish today

The Samish Indian Nation is a federally recognized Indian Tribe and a sovereign nation. The executive governing body is the 11-member Samish Indian Senate elected to oversee the welfare and



resources of the Tribe, its constitution, economic development, policies, legislation, enrollment, and justice. The Tribe provides the following services:

- Housing
- Preschool and elders services
- Commodities
- Health care and wellness
- Social services
- Cultural restoration and celebration
- Education assistance
- Library and mentoring
- Internet access

Department of Natural Resources

The Samish Indian Nation established the Department of Natural Resources in 2001 to manage a variety of natural resource related grants, studies, and projects of interest. In 2006, as part on an ongoing strategic planning process, the Tribal Council transitioned several environmental and natural resources programs under the Department of Natural Resources including the Center for the Study of Coast Salish Environments.

The mission of the Samish Indian Nation Natural Resource Department is to preserve, protect, and enhance all natural resources within the Samish historical and cultural territory by helping integrate community values, and ecosystem health in every decision that upholds the Tribes Sovereign right for protection of all natural resources.

At the present time, the Department is engaged in a number of water quality studies and projects on Lake Campbell and Lake Erie, Fidalgo Bay, Weaverling Spit, Thomas Creek, and the Fidalgo Bay Watershed in association with the Corps of Engineers, Western Washington University, Northwest Indian Fish Commission, Washington State Departments of Fish & Wildlife and Ecology, Skagit Land Trust, City of Anacortes, and others.

- Fidalgo Bay Water Quality Study – is one of the larger projects being conducted by the Department of Natural Resources. The 1,575-acre water body has been studied along the eastern shores and around March Point close to the refinery, but not in the southern and western shores of the bay. The Department is conducting a 4-year study to collect and analyze data concerning existing surface water conditions and to identify and quantify existing and potential pollutant sources.

The study will also perform an underwater inspection of the railroad/trail rock causeway and railroad trestle crossing Fidalgo Bay that is used as the Tommy Thompson Trail. The inspection will inventory the existing structure and pilings and determine soundness of submerged structures prior to removal.



B.12: Sauk-Suiattle

www.sauk-suiattle.com



The Sauk-Suiattles (Sah-Ku-Me-Hu) are the descendants of peoples of the upper Skagit River watershed that were designated as Skagits by government treaty makers. The Sauk-Suiattle's subsistence patterns and dialect varied from those of the other Skagit peoples of the lower Skagit River and Puget Sound as they had frequent contacts with tribes that resided on the east side of the Cascades.

Their ancestors occupied 5 winter houses, which were situated from the mouth of the Sauk River upstream to Sauk Prairie, an important gathering place of several tribes. They lived farther upstream in summer months. The Sauk-Suiattle were hunters, gatherers, and fishermen in and around the Sauk Prairie area now known as the present town of Darrington.

The Sauk-Suiattle were canoe people, plying the waters of the Sauk, Suiattle, Stillaguamish, Cascade, and Skagit Rivers. Though they lived in the foothills of the North Cascades, they often traveled downriver to Puget Sound to harvest fish, shellfish, and other foods not available in the mountains where they voyaged in large seagoing canoes.

The Sauk-Suiattle also traveled over the Cascades to gather food, herbs, and other necessities. They traded with tribes from eastern Washington acquiring horses and becoming skilled horsemen.

At the time of the Point Elliott Treaty signing in 1855, the Sauk villagers were known as the Sahkumehus and Sabbu-uqus. Their chief, Wawsitkin, refused to sign the treaty because he feared that his people would not receive a reservation of their own if he did. A sub-chief, Dahtldemin, however, did sign.

In 1884, settlers burned a native village of 8 large cedar-board longhouses at the confluence of the Skagit and Sauk Rivers on land that non-Indian settlers had laid claim to under the US Homestead Act. As encroachments continued, some tribal members moved to the Swinomish and other reservations in the region.

In 1946 the Sauk-Suiattles became a tribal entity separate from the Upper Skagits. Tribal affairs are handled by a 7-member council under a constitution and bylaws which were approved by the Secretary of the Interior in 1975. The tribe provides the following services:

- Public safety including tribal police services within the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Reservation and surrounding area,
- Health and social services,
- Daycare and pre-school including family support services,
- Housing including 19 HUD houses,
- Legal services for the Tribal Council, and
- Natural Resources Department

In 1973, the tribe received federal recognition due to their owning a small base of land in common with the Upper Skagits, as well as scattered individual public-domain allotments in Skagit County. The tribe also has fishing rights recognized under the Point Elliott Treaty.

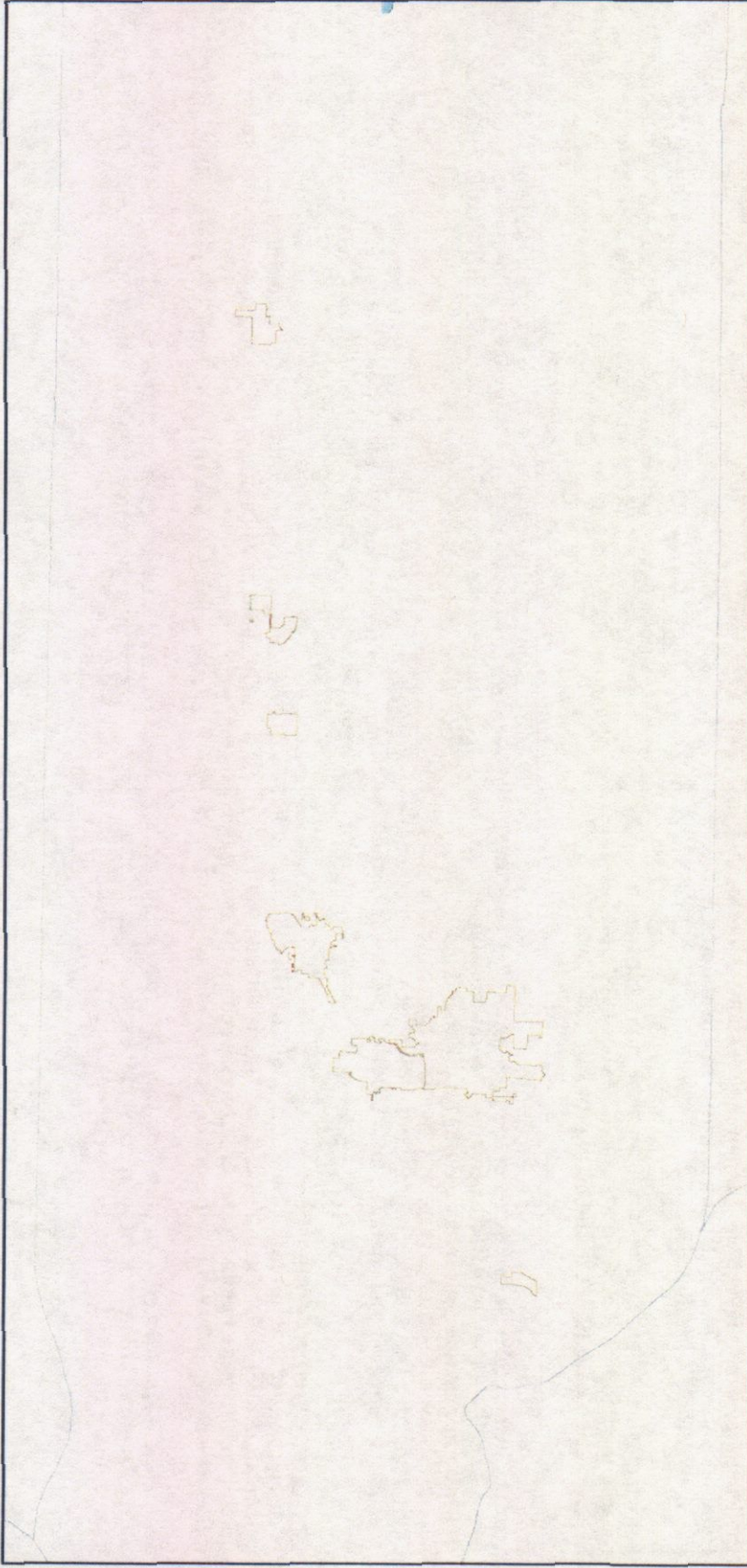
Natural Resources Department

The tribe established a Natural Resource Department to enhance the well-being of the tribe by:

- Providing services that built the internal capabilities of the Tribe,
- Developing Tribal regulations, and
- Managing Tribal resources in an environmentally responsible manner that fit the Tribe's goals, culture, and philosophy.

The Department works with other Tribal departments to ensure the Tribe complies with federal regulations and all aspects of land use, utilities, and projects done for the Tribe provide the best possible beneficial use of its resources.

The tribe is a member of the Skagit System Cooperative organized in 1976 to regulate and enhance fishing in the Skagit River system.



B.13: Seattle City Light (SCL)

www.seattle.gov/light/environment/fish



Making electricity has impacts on the environment. But Seattle City Light (City Light or SCL) wants to make these *light impacts* so SCL operates their business with a commitment to environmental stewardship. SCL's fish and wildlife programs on the Skagit, their

partnerships in environmental education and recreation, and their in-house environmental management are *light impact* in action.

Light impact - is a system for managing environmental and safety workplace goals. Environmental stewardship is a SCL core value. SCL is also committed to providing a safe workplace for all employees. Light Impact provides the structure to plan environment and safety-related goals, to take action toward

meeting those goals, to check their progress, and then to see where improvements need to be made.

Through Light Impact SCL will:

- Achieve and maintain compliance with environmental and safety regulations and policies.
- Reduce negative impacts to the environment through pollution prevention, waste management and water quality programs and fish and wildlife programs.
- Reduce negative impacts to worker health and safety through health and safety programs.
- Continually improve the environment and SCL safety performance.

Salmon are responding to these efforts. Chum and pink stocks spawning below the Skagit River are "extremely healthy, at or near the level they would be with no human intervention" (American Fisheries Society). Chinook stocks in this area are stable and the steelhead stock is healthy.

Bald eagles have benefited also. The healthy chum runs are a reliable food source that supports the largest population of overwintering bald eagles in the contiguous United States.

Wildlife

Seattle City Light developed a comprehensive program to address the needs of wildlife that are affected by their operations. Key aspects of this program include preserving valuable habitat and providing support for wildlife and ecosystems research and monitoring. City Light developed the wildlife program in tandem with local resource specialists, utilizing their detailed knowledge of the needs of the wildlife.

Land acquisition program

To protect critical habitat for wildlife, City Light began purchasing key parcels of land in 1991. Examples of acquisitions include wetlands, upland, and riverine habitats. Target species, such as the bald eagle, influence some purchases but the goal is to benefit multiple species.

Seattle City Light teamed with state and federal resources agencies, Native American tribes, and several conservation organizations to protect more than 14,000 acres in the Skagit and South Fork

Nooksack River basins. Of this total acreage, City Light owns more than 8,000.

Partnerships

City Light joined in partnership with a number of other agencies to preserve wildlife habitat including:

- National Park Service (NPS) - Seattle City Light annually provides funds to the NPS for wildlife monitoring. Examples of projects include population monitoring for bats and harlequin ducks. City Light also provides a research laboratory for the NPS to conduct research on wildlife and the ecosystems they depend on.
- United States Forest Service (USFS) - In support of the USFS's efforts to protect bald eagles in the Skagit River basin, Seattle City Light provides funds for monitoring and planning for this species.
- Land Trusts - secure long-term protection for areas with special significance. Seattle City Light works closely with groups such as The Nature Conservancy and River Network to protect critical habitats for wildlife.

Wildlife Research Program (WRP)

The mission of the Wildlife Research Program is to support research on wildlife resources and wildlife habitats existing in the US portion of the North Cascades ecosystem, including the Skagit watershed. WRP goals are to:

Research - To facilitate the development of new scientific information and methods that extend the understanding, management, and protection of wildlife and ecosystems in the North Cascades, including the Skagit watershed, by:

- Encouraging research that focuses on applied science and management, while still considering projects with broader applicability.
- Encouraging research that meets the long-term wildlife and ecosystem research needs for the North Cascades
- Ensuring that all research that is funded by the Wildlife Research Program meets high professional scientific standards.

Collaboration - To promote interagency/organizational research partnerships (i.e., agencies, tribes, academic institutions, the public, etc.) to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, by:

- Encouraging innovative research studies which involve and benefit multiple land and resource management agencies;
- Encouraging grant proposals which utilize multiple funding sources.

Education - To contribute to the education and training of new researchers and investigators, primarily graduate students, by:

- Ensuring that all major colleges and universities in the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, and Idaho) receive information about the Wildlife Research Program in a timely and effective manner;
- Giving greater value to proposals that provide a graduate research component.

Dissemination - To ensure that information generated by the Wildlife Research Program is easily accessed by natural resource professionals, academic researchers, environmental educators, and the general public, by:

- Requiring research reporting that includes multiple channels for disseminating reports and information funded by the Wildlife Research Program;
- Making the results of Wildlife Research Program projects available on a website;
- Requiring grant recipients to present the results of their studies at an annual researcher's meeting.

Representative Projects

Projects that will be given strong consideration include those that:

- Improve the understanding and management of rare, threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, habitats, communities and ecosystems, and the biological diversity of the North Cascades and Skagit watersheds;
- Contribute to the understanding, control, and eradication (if needed) of invasive exotic plant and animal species in forests, riparian areas, alpine lakes and other sensitive habitats;
- Monitor the effectiveness of management activities (such as restrictions on human uses, road closures, placement of artificial habitat structures, silviculture treatments, planned

dispersal areas etc.) used by resource management agencies to mitigate the impacts of human-induced disturbances;

- Contribute to the management and protection of wildlife species (e.g., grizzly bear, mountain goat, deer, and elk) that are of most concern and importance to the tribes of the Skagit watershed;
- Improve the understanding of how natural processes (such as flooding, fire, migratory and dispersal patterns etc.) have been modified by the Skagit Project and other human-induced ecosystem modifications;
- Establish long-term ecological monitoring, baseline inventories, and pilot studies to understand, manage, and protect the ecological health of sensitive habitats, communities, and ecosystems.

Wildlife research program grants

Seattle City Light offers wildlife research funds to qualifying applicants. The Wildlife Research Program (WRP) was established in response to federal licensing requirements related to the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project. The primary goal of the WRP is to facilitate the development of improved methods for the understanding, management, and protection of wildlife resources in the North Cascades ecosystem. A secondary goal of the program is to contribute to the training of new researchers and investigators.

Key criteria to qualify for research funds:

- Projects must meet all of the WRP's goals as outlined in the Mission and Goals statement;
- Selected projects should complement, contribute to, or build onto the existing body of wildlife research;
- Professional standards must be met for all research funded;
- Projects may not duplicate or substitute for usual agency responsibilities and programs;
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to contribute in-kind services and/or obtain additional funding from other sources;

The application process is competitive through the pre-proposal and full proposal stages. If an applicant is invited to submit a full proposal, there is no guarantee that an award will be made for that project.

Program funding:

- The annual WRP budget is approximately \$85,000 through 2025. The amount of funds disbursed in a given year will depend on the quality of the proposals received; if qualifying proposals are not received, the funds for that year will be added to the next year's budget;
- Grant awards are likely to range from \$5,000 to \$30,000; however, larger awards have been made. The Wildlife Research Advisory Committee (WRAC) may choose to commit future funds to a proposal received in a given year. If this happens, one or more years may pass before additional funds become available.



Process:

- The Wildlife Research Advisory Committee (WRAC), which oversees the WRP, reviews and selects pre-proposals that best meet the program's goals. All applicants are notified in writing of their pre-proposal status;
- Applicants with pre-proposals that pass through the initial screening will be invited to submit a complete proposal. Full proposal guidelines will be mailed to all qualifying applicants along with their notification letter. The WRAC may ask some qualifying applicants to modify their proposals;
- The full proposals will be distributed to independent peer reviewers for scientific review. Peer review comments will be provided to applicants who have submitted a full proposal;
- The WRAC will make final selection and funding decisions; these decisions will be based on how well the proposal meets the WRP's goals and whether the peer reviews are favorable;
- Funds will be made available once successful applicants have entered into a grant agreement with Seattle City

Light.

Contracts and funding:

Successful proponents must enter into a contract with Seattle City Light that stipulates the conditions that must be met during the term of the funding award. 10% of the final contract amount is withheld until the applicant has completed all contract requirements and submitted a final invoice. Researchers may only submit invoices for work that has actually been completed; no upfront payments are made.

While there may be more than one principal investigator for a project, one agency/organization must assume the lead role. For each project, Seattle City Light enters into a grant agreement with only one agency/organization; multi-party agreements are not permissible.

Priorities research topics

The resource agencies on the Wildlife Research Advisory Committee have identified a number of priorities for wildlife research in the Skagit watershed and North Cascades/western Okanogan ecoregions:

U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) habitat use, population estimate, and/or demographic rates
- Mountain goat (*Oreamnos americanus*) demographic rates
- Marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) nesting habitat selection
- Effects of noise and human disturbance on marbled murrelet nesting behavior and productivity.
- Northern spotted owl/barred owl (*Strix occidentalis/Strix varia*) interactions
- Quality of potentially suitable habitat and abundance of potential prey for the Pacific fisher (*Martes pennanti*)
- Evaluation of Oregon spotted frog (*Rana pretiosa*) reintroduction sites.
- Grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*), lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), and gray wolves (*Canis lupus*): habitat use, population estimates, and/or demographic rates of these species.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

Impacts/benefits of the hydroelectric projects in the Skagit watershed.

- Federal or state candidate, threatened or endangered wildlife species in the North Cascades (includes spotted owl, marbled murrelet, wolverine, fisher, grizzly bear, gray wolf)
- Priority species or animal aggregations, as identified by federal or state agencies or tribes for the North Cascades, because of their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance (elk, mountain goats, etc.)
- Wildlife or ecosystem relationships for WDFW's Priority habitats in the Skagit watershed (see <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phshabs.htm>)

North Cascades National Park:

- Occurrence, distribution, habitat use, and demographics of wolverines and lynx in the North Cascades National Park Service Complex.
- Demographic rates of mountain goats.
- Effects of recreational use on wildlife species (for example, corvids as an indicator in campsites or trail corridors; effects on mountain goat behavior and demographics; impacts on marmot populations or behavior).
- Abundance, distribution, habitat use, and/or demographic rates of wolves in the North Cascades National Park Service Complex. Is there a breeding pack of wolves within the park?
- Abundance and distribution of coyotes (*Canis latrans*). Is their distribution expanding due to climate change and development?
- Are wildlife species (deer, elk, goats, bear, etc) being hunted at sustainable levels?
- Abundance, distribution, and genetic diversity of the Cascade frog (*Rana cascadae*) within the North Cascades
- Distribution of the northern spotted owl in the North Cascades. Distribution, abundance, and population dynamics of high-elevation mammal populations including marmots, pikas, heather voles.
- Impacts of climate change on wildlife within the North Cascades ecosystem and responses of wildlife to climate change For example:

- What species are expected to be most affected by climate change or the combination of climate change and on-going habitat conversion outside NCNP boundaries?
- Are high-elevation pollinator populations changing?
- How is climate or the combination of climate and habitat fragmentation influencing the distribution of predators? And how will changes in predator distributions change prey abundance and distribution - Is this already occurring?
- How will or is climate affecting high-elevation mammal populations such as marmots, pikas, heather voles?
- What is the status of ptarmigan populations? Will they be or are they already affected by climate change?
- Are species that are on the edge of their range changing in distribution or abundance due to climate change (e.g. red squirrels and Columbia ground squirrels)?
- Are hybridization rates along suture lines (such as red squirrel and Douglas squirrel) changing with the influence of climate change?



B.14: Skagit Conservation District (SCD)



The Skagit Conservation District (SCD) is dedicated to maintaining Skagit County's renewal natural resources. The District is composed of farmers, landowners, and concerned citizens.

The SCD is a legal subdivision of Washington State government organized under "Conservation District Law" RCW Title 89, Chapter 89.08.

The SCD is administered by a 5-member board of supervisors made up of local landowners. The board is assisted by other volunteers who serve as Associate Supervisors. The SCD is a member of the Washington Association of Conservation Districts and the National Association of Conservation Districts.

The board provides the on-the-ground assistance for Best Management Practices (BMP's) to District cooperators and landowners from the SCD staff and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS). Cost-shared assistance is obtained for implementation of specific BMP's through the Farm Service Agency (FSA) as incentives to cooperators.

District priorities and goals include:

- Protect and improve the quality of surface and ground water
- Watershed planning and implementation
- Riparian reforestation and enhancement
- Forest stewardship
- Wildlife habitat enhancement
- Conservation education

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- Protection and preservation of prime farmlands
- County government assistance
- Increase district capacity

These goals are met through SCD's extensive technical assistance and public outreach programs. SCD staff work with private partners, state, and federal agencies, agricultural and environmental organizations, and other conservation districts. The SCD is funded through grants, an annual native plant sale, and state general-fund money requiring a dollar-for-dollar match.

Much of the technical assistance provided to landowners and land users consist of helping them adopt conservation BMPs. SCD technicians provide farm conservation planning services free of charge to cooperators who request assistance. The SCD Service Forester uses an ecosystem management approach in Forest Stewardship planning services offered to non-industrial private forest landowners.

SDC public outreach and education efforts including hosting workshops on many topics including septic system maintenance, livestock management, forest management, and encouraging citizen involvement in watershed protection. SCD's education and volunteer programs include Watershed Masters, Beach Monitors, and Stream Team as well as working with schools to foster development of environmentally aware adults.

The SCD has a proven track record for putting conservation on the ground and involving volunteers in watershed education, monitoring, and restoration projects. The SCD's programs reduce soil erosion and prevent sediment build-up, Help dairies achieve nutrient management

standards, increase wildlife habitat on private land, establish riparian enhancement projects, target shellfish protection by correcting nonpoint pollution, and education local citizens about their watersheds.

SCD operations:

- Encourages and promotes the preservation and optimum beneficial use of agriculture, range, and forested lands.
- Helps landowners plan and implement "Best Management Practices" (BMP) that reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and water conservation, as well as protect the natural resource base of SCD.
- Provides education and technical assistance to non-industrial forest landowners.
- Furnishes soils information, conservation maps, and knowledge of BMO's to landowners and land managers.
- Implements program aimed at protecting the water resources of Skagit County.
- Initiates surveys, research studies, comprehensive plans, demonstration, and implementation projects on public and private lands within the District.
- Conducts responsible and accountable management and financial business.
- Provides federal, state, and local governmental agencies with conservation leadership.

SCD engineering services

SCD offers civil and environmental engineering services for soil, water, and habitat conservation projects in Skagit County. SCD works with private landowners, non-government organizations, dike and drainage districts, and tribal and local government agencies to provide assistance with project planning, feasibility studies, engineering design, permitting and construction management on projects that help conserve natural resources. In some situations, SCD assists in obtaining grant funding for project construction.

SCD's engineering services program specializes in designing and permitting wetland and salmon habitat restoration and enhancement projects. Recent projects have included:

- Stream channel design
- Replacing culverts to improve fish passage

- Fish ways
- Modification of tide gates to allow tidal flow and fish passage
- Constructed wetlands
- Bioengineering bank and shoreline stabilization

Selected recent wetland and salmon habitat engineering projects include the following:

- Port Stanley Lagoon Tidal Flow Restoration - on Lopez Island that replaced a conventional tidegate at the outlet of Lopez Island's estuary.
- Dry Slough Fish Passage and Tidal Flow Restoration - on Fir Island implemented a mitigation project involving installation of a self regulation tidegate through a dike to restore fish passage and tidal influence into Dry Slough in cooperation with Skagit County Dike District 22.
- No Name Slough Feasibility Study and Stormwater Management Projects - carried out an assessment of environmental conditions in a small coastal watershed and used the result to complete an engineering feasibility study and concept design of several projects to improve water quality, drainage, and in-stream habitat in the watershed.
- Crescent Harbor Salt Marsh Restoration - on Whidbey Island designed and constructed with the assistance of Naval Air Station Whidbey and the Skagit River System Cooperative a suite of projects to restore tidal connectivity into 200 acres of the Crescent Harbor salt marsh.
- Tenmile Creek Channel Restoration - in Whatcom County removed about 300 feet of creek from an agricultural drainage ditch to a constructed channel matching local "reference morphological and in-stream habitat conditions.
- Cascade River Park Fish Passage Improvements - in Skagit County worked the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group and the Cascade River Park homeowners association to remove 4 culverts that blocked fish passage.
- McClellan Creek Fishway Construction - in Whatcom County worked with WDFW and a large agricultural landowner to design, permit, and construct fish passage improvements past 2 irrigation water impound dams on McClellan Creek.
- Fidalgo Bay Shoreline Stabilization - in Anacortes working with a private landowner and the city of Anacortes to design and permit a project to stabilize and eroding shoreline on Fidalgo Bay.

▪ Samish River Bioengineered Bank Stabilization - in Skagit County

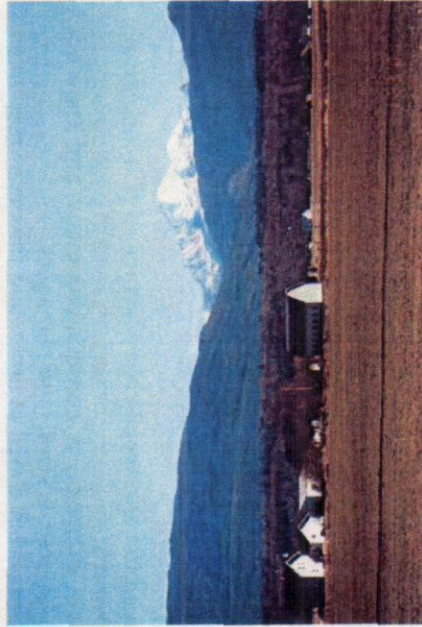
worked with a private landowner to design, permit, and construct an innovative bioengineered bank stabilization project along the Samish River.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), is a new tool for landowners. CREP enhances and protects water quality, fish habitat, and stream stability through the use of riparian buffers. The program is flexible, administered locally, designed to compensate the landowner for being a good land steward, and helps address Endangered Species Act (ESA) concerns.

CREP is a voluntary program to establish forested buffers along streams where riparian habitat is a significant limiting factor for salmonids. In addition to providing fish and wildlife habitat, the buffers improve water quality and increase stream stability.

Land enrolled in CREP is removed from production and grazing, under 10-15 year contracts. In return, landowners receive annual rental payments and signing bonuses. Landowners are reimbursed for 100% of the eligible costs for buffer establishment and maintenance. In addition, landowners may be reimbursed for livestock exclusion fencing, livestock watering facilities, and in the case of small stream, livestock crossings.



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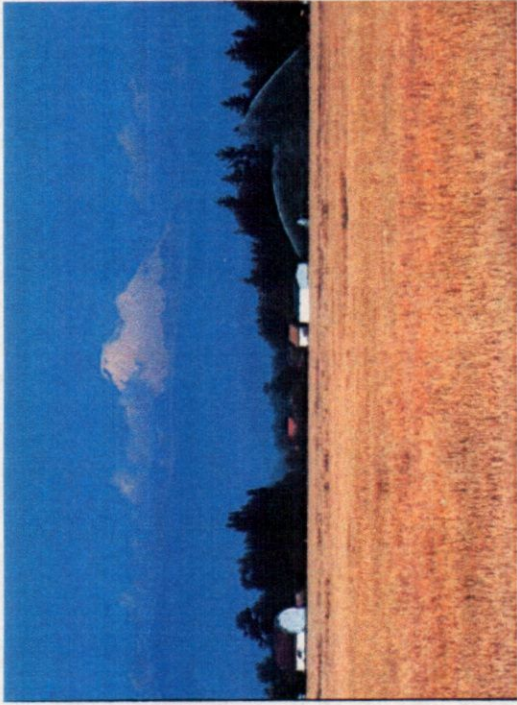
CREP pays to remove invasive plants such as red canary grass and Himalayan blackberry - which do not provide beneficial riparian functions, and whose rapid growth often displaces native plants.

CREP flexibility

CREP recognizes site variability. The buffer boundary can be moved toward or away from the stream at different locations to meet landowner needs, as long as the average meets the buffer standard. Producers can enroll all or a portion of the eligible streams on their land. They can enroll one or both sides of the stream. There is no minimum of maximum acreage to enroll.

The program is administered by USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). A Skagit Conservation District (SCD) Resource Specialist will visit the property to make a no-obligation site assessment. The Resource Specialist will discuss buffer design options and provide estimates of the rental rate and signing bonus.





B.15: Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB)

www.skagitcounty.net

The Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) makes recommendations to the Skagit County Commissioners and the County Administrator on agricultural plans, policies, and programs concerning:

- existing and proposed legislation and regulations affecting agriculture;
- land uses as they impact agriculture;
- ways to maintain, enhance, and promote agriculture and agricultural products in the region; and
- any other agricultural issues as requested by the County Commissioners and/or consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB) is comprised of a 12 member County Commissioner appointed board that includes 4 members from each of the 3 Commissioner District, a representative from Washington State University Agriculture Extension, and a staff representative from the Skagit County Planning & Development Services Department. The Board also has a Skagit County Natural Resources Lands Policy Coordinator.

Board members serve 3-year terms that can be reappointed and are staggered to ensure a consistency on the committee.

- The Board's sub-committees are working on the following issues:
- Flooding as it affects agriculture lands
 - Drainage and irrigation
 - Critical Areas Ordinance and agriculture related buffers
 - Agriculture land conversions
 - Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code updates

Links to related information:

WSU Skagit County Extension: <http://skagit.wsu.edu/WesternWashingtonAgAssoc.>;
<http://www.fidalgo.net/~wwaa/homepage.htm>
 Washington Farm Bureau: <http://www.wsfb.com/Cattleman>: <http://www.washingtoncattlemen.org/index.htm>
 Dairy: <http://agr.wa.gov/foodanimal/dairy/>



B.16: Skagit County Forest Advisory Board (FAB)

www.skagitcounty.net

The Skagit County Forest Advisory Board (FAB) advises and makes recommendations to the Skagit County Commissioners and the County Administrator on forestry plans, policies, and programs including, but not limited to:

- existing and proposed legislation and regulations affecting forest lands in Skagit County, local forest product and affiliated industries;
- land uses as they impact forestry; ways to maintain, enhance and promote active forest management and the related forest product manufacturing in the County; and
- any other forestry issues as requested by the County Commissioners and/or consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The FAB is comprised of a 12 member County Commissioner appointed board that includes 4 members from each commissioner district. Board members serve 3-year terms that can be reappointed and are staggered to ensure a consistency on the committee.

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The Board is currently working on the following issues:

Forest Practices and Timber Supply

Washington State forests are among the highest quality, most productive and efficiently operable in the world. Washington has very stringent Forest Practice rules and a federally approved Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), which has caused the elimination of additional acres of productive timber land in attempting to provide some regulatory certainty. It is imperative that rules affecting forest management be developed pursuant to complete scientific analysis to ensure that the viability of both the public resources and the forest practices industry are protected.

- Regulatory restrictions on domestic timber supply have pushed demand outside the Country, where environmental laws are less stringent or non-existent.
- With the shut-down of the Federal lands to timber harvesting and the ever increasing demand for forest products, the pressure for resource materials has shifted to private land owners.

- The cost of regulation is making it more attractive for forest landowners to convert their forest land to uses other than timber production.

Forest Health

Forest health, which is the result of the affects of both disease and fire threat, is a major concern for all Skagit County residents. Recreational users, forest managers and urban dwellers are all affected by declining forest management that would otherwise promote healthy forests. Skagit County must adopt policies that allow and encourage improvement of forest health and reduction of fire hazard.

- Lack of management on Federal lands may cause devastating forest health issues that can migrate to all other adjacent land owners.
- The County should encourage participation in fire planning such as Fire-wise Program.
- Encourage forest land owners to utilize programs and available funding sources to help in managing forests.

Economic Contribution

Government ownership and special land use set asides shift the tax base and land use options to smaller areas and fewer users. Government entities should manage their lands to provide an economic base for the local economy. Lands set aside should not enjoy special tax incentives; and recreational opportunities on those lands must be available to all citizens.

- Although rich in renewable natural resources, the largest landowner in Skagit County, the United States Forest Service, provides little to the tax base or economy of Skagit County.
- GMA supports maintaining the viability of resource based industries – conflicting land uses should be eliminated.
- Global Warming – Active intensive management of lands to generate forest products is known to increase levels of carbon sequestration as compared to no action. Actively managed forest lands provide carbon sequestration, which provides cleaner air, clean water, habitat for fish and wildlife and provide an overall benefit to the public at the expense of individual landowners.

Local Issues

Continue to monitor and support issues of statewide long-term significance.

- Blanchard Mountain Plan
- Whatcom County lawsuit
- Skagit County Comprehensive Plan
- No net loss of productive forest land

Links to related information:

Future of Forestry Forum:

<http://www.nwenvironmentalforum.org/2008handouts.html> ;

Forest Practice Rules:

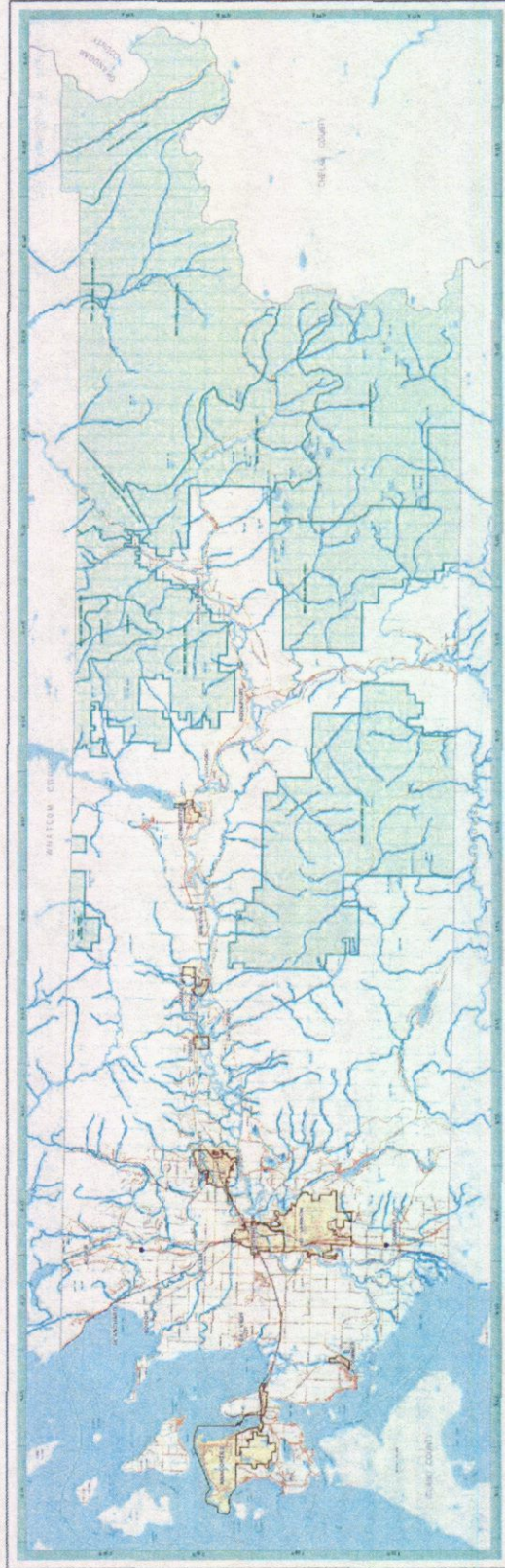
http://www.dnr.wa.gov/BusinessPermits/Topics/ForestPracticesRules/Pages/fp_fpi.aspx

DNR offices:

<http://www.dnr.wa.gov/AboutDNR/Regions/Pages/Default.aspx> ;

Blanchard Forest, a working forest:

http://www.dnr.wa.gov/ResearchScience/Topics/StateTrustLandsForestManagement/Pages/blanchard_forest.aspx



B.17: Skagit County

www.skagitcounty.net



Mesekwiguilse, Sbaleoch, Misskaiwhwa, Sahkumehhu, Noowahatah, Squinahmish, Swinomish, and Samish.

Eleven Native American groups inhabited the area now known as Skagit County - the Chobahabish, Kikialius, Nooquachamish,

Skagit County was originally part of Whatcom County but was split off in 1883 and named after the local Native American Tribe. The county is approximately 1,735 square miles in area, 24 miles from north to south, and 95 miles from east to west.

The county contains diverse features including glaciated peaks just over 9,000 feet above sea level at Mount Logan in North Cascades National Park, rolling foothills surrounding the 90-mile Skagit River, the second-largest river in the state, the river floodplain and delta, and the leeward islands of the San Juan Archipelago.

Historical development

La Conner - the first non-native intruders to the area built a small number of cabins on Fidalgo Island in 1858. Settlement spread to the head of Fidalgo Bay with dike improvements opening the tidal flats to farming. The first trading post was established in the La Conner area in 1867. By 1870, the lower Skagit Valley was beginning to be partially settled though travel was limited to boats. Monthly steamboat services were initiated between Seattle and Skagit City in 1874.

Lyman - was settled in the early 1870s with the development of a lumber and shingle mill.

Mount Vernon - 2 large log jams on the Skagit River initially limited the development of Mount Vernon. The jams were dismantled in 1874 opening portions of the river channel to navigation. The channel was completely cleared 10 years later allowing navigation to up river settlements, logging areas, and coal and iron mines. By 1889 at least 15 steamboats provided service between Seattle and Mount Vernon. The Great Northern Railway (GN) extended rail service to Mount Vernon in 1891.

Burlington - a logging camp was established in the Burlington area in 1882 with several shingle mills to follow. By 1891, the Great Northern Railway (CN) made Burlington the center of transportation.

Sedro-Woolley - up river navigation in 1884 spurred development of the towns of Sedro (a Spanish reference to the large cedars in the area) and Woolley (named after the founder of a lumber mill) which merged to form the city of Sedro-Woolley.

Anacortes - speculation activities over a possible railroad extension to Anacortes generated a growth boom in the settlement in 1890. Although Anacortes never became a terminus, the railroad still caused construction of shingle mills, fish plants, lumber mills, and a box factory.

Marblemount - began as a tent saloon and later trading post during the 1890s gold rush.

Hamilton - was established in the early 1900s to mine local coal and iron deposits.

Rockport - was founded in 1901 as the eastern terminus of the railroad line from Anacortes.

Concrete - was founded in 1909 following the discovery and mining of limestone deposits.

Skagit County had a population of 102,978 persons in the year 2000 of which 68,868 or 67% resided within urban areas. By the year 2025, the county is expected to have a population of 149,080 persons or 45% more than in the year 2000 of which 105,750 or 71% will reside within urban areas.

Land use

Skagit County includes 1,109,112 acres of which:

- 47% or 519,342 acres are located within public open space of regional or statewide importance (ORSI),
- 43% or 473,779 acres are located within natural resource zone



- lands for forest, rural, or agriculture purposes, 7% or 81,204 acres are located within rural village, intermediate, and reserve lands,
- 0.06% or 703 acres are located within commercial and industrial lands outside of incorporated areas and urban growth areas, and
- 3.1% or 34,084 acres are located within incorporated cities or urban growth areas of which 67% or 22,675 acres are within incorporated cities.

The county has a variety of open space lands including greenbelt corridors within and around urban growth areas, greenbelts connecting critical areas, land receiving open space tax incentives, resource lands, conservation easements, rural open space areas, park lands, and significant historic, archaeological, scenic, and cultural lands.

As a result of the planning effort being conducted herein, the county will develop a program to identify and prioritize open space corridors and greenbelts within and between UGA that include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connections of critical areas. The program will include a list identifying and prioritizing open space and greenbelt lands desirable for public acquisition of title or development rights. Any potential acquisition that may be proposed will not include any condemnation actions; any potential acquisition for land for open space or greenbelts shall only be achieved by voluntary donation, CaRD subdivision, or mutually agreeable sale.

Open spaces, parks, and trails

Public agencies own 579,784.5 acres of land within Skagit County for park and recreation purposes of which:

- 95.8% or 555,200 acres are owned by the National Forest or National Park Service,
- 3.2% or 18,602.1 acres are owned by the State of Washington Parks & Recreation Commission for State Parks, Department of Natural Resources for timber harvest, or Department of Fish & Wildlife for fish hatcheries or water fishing access,
- 0.7% or 3,799.4 acres are owned by cities and towns,
- 0.3% or 1,710.3 acres are owned by Skagit County Parks & Recreation (SCPR), and
- 0.08% or 473 acres are owned by other agencies including Seattle City Light, Puget Sound Power & Light Company, among others.

The listing above does not include open space or farm or wildlife conservancies owned by private and non-profit groups such as the

Skagit Land Trust, Skagitonians for Farmland Preservation, Nature Conservancy, San Juan Land Trust, and others.

Except for city and town parks, these public and private open space lands are located in the rural most areas of the county away from urban growth areas.

Skagit County Parks & Recreation (SCPR) owns and operates the following major open spaces, wildlife habitat, resource parks, and trail facilities (not including athletic and neighborhood parks):

- **Big Rock (Richard M Hoag Memorial Open Space) Park** – 13-acre wildlife and hiking area located on SR-9 east of Mount Vernon with rocky hilltop and valley viewpoints.
- **Cascade River Park** – 40-acre riverfront parcel recently harvested and replanted with timber.
- **Grandy Lake** – 22-acre wildlife, boating, fishing, and camping site located on Baker Lake Road north of Concrete donated by Scott Paper Company for recreational use.
- **Howard Miller Steelhead Park** – 93-acre wildlife, boating, fishing, and camping site located on Rockport Park Road near Rockport with cultural artifacts and bald eagle viewing. Approximately 80 acres is devoted to open space and hiking trails.
- **Montgomery-Duban Headlands Park** – 37-acre wildlife site located on Rosario Road near Anacortes.
- **Northern State Recreation Area** – 726-acre wildlife, picnic, and hiking site located on Hemlock Road east of Sedro-Woolley. Under a recent master planning effort, over 500 acres of the park will be retained in an undeveloped state to support wildlife habitat and nature interpretive trails.
- **Pilchuck Forest** – 81-acre property once owned by a timber company and



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maintained in a natural, open space state located along the Centennial Trail corridor.

▪ **Pomona Grange Park & Interpretive Trail** – 15-acre wildlife, picnic, and trail site located on Old Highway 99 north of Burlington bordered by Friday Creek and a state fish hatchery. The park includes old growth forest and nature interpretive trail.

▪ **Pressentin Park** – 41-acre wildlife site located off SR-20 near Marblemount with woodlands, open terraces, and meandering trails.

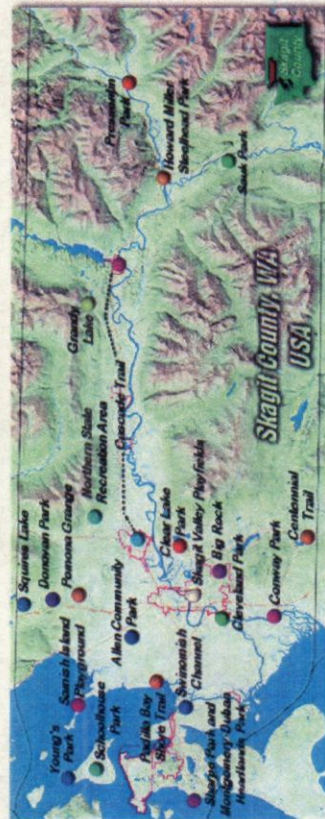
▪ **Sauk Park** – 30-acre wildlife, fishing, and camping site located on SR-20 near Concrete along the Sauk River.

▪ **Sharpe Park** – 75-acre wildlife and picnic site located on Rosario Road near Anacortes.

▪ **Young's Park** – 13-acre wildlife, fishing, and picnic site located on Guemes Island Road on Guemes Island. The day-use waterfront park provides a nature area and kayak launch with views of Mount Baker and the San Juan Islands.

Trails:

- **Burlington-Sedro-Woolley Trail** – 3.0-mile, 6.8-acre hiking/jogging trail located alongside the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad and SR-20.
- **Cascade Trail** – 23-mile, 280-acre multipurpose trail corridor on former railroad track bed paralleling SR-20 and the Skagit River from Sedro-Woolley to Concrete.
- **Centennial Trail** – 0.5 mile trail corridor on former railroad right-of-way extending north from Arlington and the Snohomish County 26-mile trail south to Snohomish.





- Padilla Bay Shore Trail - 2.1-mile, 15-acre multipurpose trail and wildlife site located on top of a dike along Padilla Bay off Bay View-Edison Road near Bay View. The park is co-managed with the Department of Ecology.
- Squires Lake Park & Trail - 4.0-mile trail corridor and 57-acre wildlife site on Old Highway 99 near Alger with the lake and wetlands. The site is co-managed with Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Department.

Shoreline access:

There are 29 shoreline access points in the county including 15 locations that access saltwater shoreline some of which are only accessible by boat, 7 locations to access lake shorelines, and another 7 that access streams.

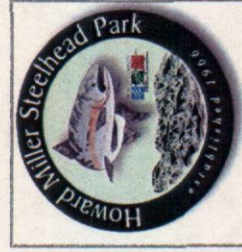
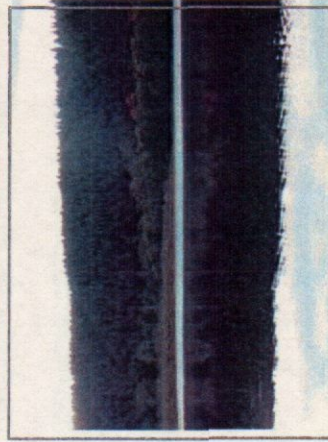
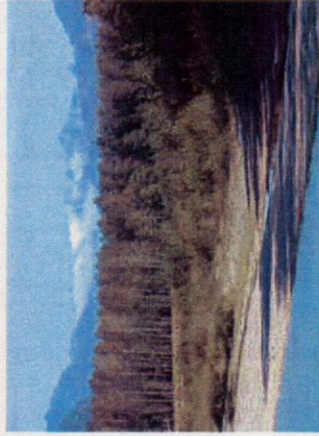
Skagit Parks Foundation

The Skagit Parks Foundation (SPF) is a non-profit organization established to assist Skagit County Parks & Recreation (SCPR) with the acquisition, development, and management of the Skagit County parks, open space, and trail system, and recreational related programs. The Foundation partners with a variety of organizations including Boy Scouts, Starbucks, and other public and private organizations.

Some of SPF's recent projects include:

- Mud Lake Project - a kiosk and interpretive signage improvement along the Centennial Trail,

- Adopt-a-Trail - program that recruits community organizations to help maintain county trail corridors,
- Art in the Parks - supporting Skagit Artists Together and their efforts to place artworks in county parks,
- Howard Miller Steelhead Park - rebuilding the picnic shelter at the park,
- Northern State Recreation Area (NSRA) - developing horse, bike, and hike trails in the park boundaries,
- Skagit-Sauk Reach Trail Project - developing a trailhead for off-road trail excursions.



B.18: Skagit County Public Utilities District (PUD)

www.skagitpud.org



Skagit Public Utility District Number 1 (Skagit PUD) operates the largest water system in the county, providing 9,000,000 gallons of piped water to approximately 70,000 people every day. The PUD maintains nearly 600 miles of pipelines and has over 31,000,000 gallons of storage volume.

Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley receive the majority of the PUD's water. Due to public demand for quality water, the PUD also provides service to unincorporated and remote areas of the county. The District's service area includes part of Fidalgo Island at the west end of the county and extends as far east as Marblemount. From north to south, the District's service area starts in Conway and extends north to Alger/Lake Samish. PUD water originates in the protected Cultus Mountain watershed area east of Clear Lake from 4 streams. Melting snow and season rainfall are diverted from an uninhabited, 9 square mile, forested area, located high about the mountains.

Water from this pristine area is piped to Judy Reservoir, where it covers 124 surface areas and stores approximately 1,500,000,000 gallons of water. The water is then treated and filtered to meet Safe Drinking Water Act regulations, using modern water treatment technologies. In the future, water will also be pumped from the Skagit River to Judy Reservoir during critical periods or when the stream run low.

Skagit PUD is a municipal corporation governed by 3 elected commissioners, who serve 6-year terms. The commissioners represent the same geographical districts as the Skagit county commissioners. The positions are non-partisan and elections are staggered every 2 years.

Resource conservation and stewardship are increasing concerns of the PUD. Recognizing the value of water resources in Skagit County, the PUD is a member of the Skagit Watershed Council and is actively participating in efforts to protect ins-stream flows.

The vision of the PUD - is to be recognized as an outstanding regional leader and innovative utility provider that embodies environmental stewardship and sound economic practices.

The mission of the PUD - is to provide quality, safe, reliable, and affordable utility services to its customers in an environmentally-responsible, collaborative manner.

The values of the PUD are:

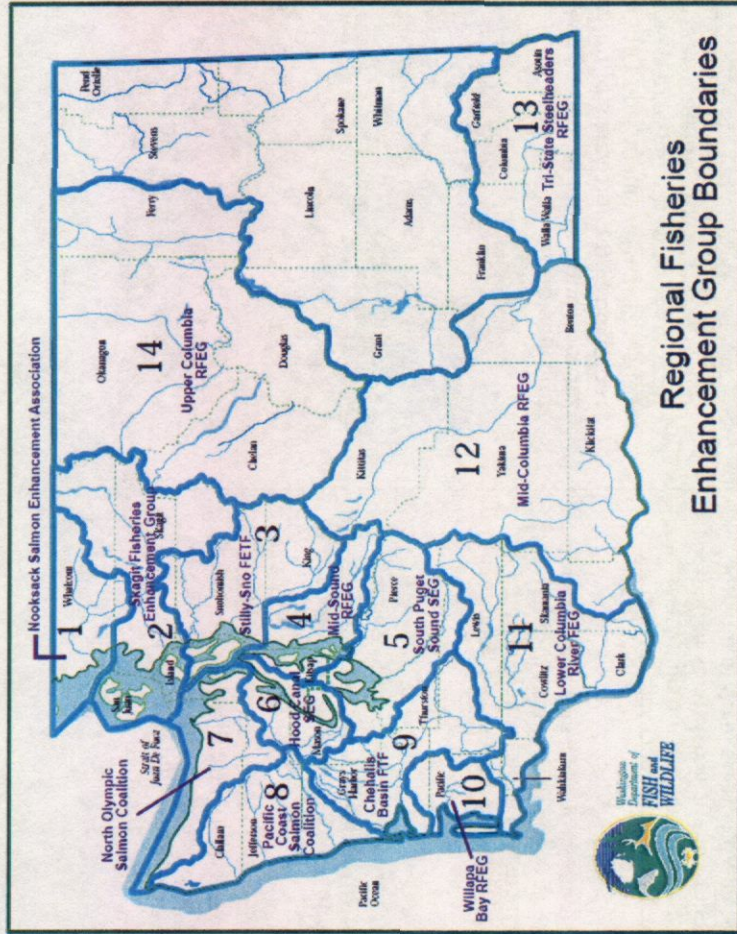
- Quality
- Reliability
- Environmental responsibility
- Response service
- Low cost
- Economic responsibility

Pressure on Skagit PUD water resources comes from many sources, including population growth in-stream flows (protecting fish, wildlife, and recreation), and business needs. Water systems using their water efficiently allow growth in their communities and water for other environmental uses. The efficient use of water helps ensure reliable water supplies are available to PUD customers.

In 2007, The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) established a Water Use Efficiency Program to ensure efficient operation and management of water systems. DOH specified requirements on water suppliers to set conservation goals and report annually on their performance to customers and DOH.

Through a public forum in 2007, the PUD established measurable water-saving goals for the next 6 years for both the supply and demand sides of the PUD distribution system. These goals will provide a benchmark for achievement and play a significant role in defining the success of the PUD's water use efficiency program.





Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Boundaries

B.19: Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFE)

www.skagitfisheries.org

The Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFE) is a nonprofit organization formed in 1990 to engage communities in habitat restoration and watershed stewardship in order to enhance salmon populations.

As a non-governmental organization, SFE has unique cooperative relationships with local land owners, conservation groups, government agencies, and tribes. Through the hard work of volunteers and professional restoration crews, SFE has been recognized as a local leader in salmon restoration.

As one of 14 Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups in Washington State, SFE is part of a coordinated effort to education and involve the

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public in salmon enhancement activities across the state at the community level. SFE regional boundaries include the Skagit River watershed, the Samish River, and the watersheds of the San Juan Islands, and North Whidbey Island.

The mission of the SFE - is to build partnerships that education and engage the community in habitat restoration and watershed stewardship in order to enhance salmonid populations.

Volunteers are the backbone of SFE and are recruited and educated to achieve SFE's goal of increase public awareness for salmon enhancement. All volunteer projects are based on education through

hands-on activities. Opportunities exist for volunteers of all ages and in all seasons.

Community Education

Educational projects and presentations are designed to increase public awareness and the community excited about saving salmon resources. SFEG visits schools, community groups, and service clubs to deliver educational presentations and teach the community about salmon.

SFEG partners with many organizations including North Cascades Institute (NCI) to deliver the Skagit Watershed Educational Project to classrooms, sponsor stream clean-ups, and arrange service projects for students of all ages. SFEG is available for speaking engagements including interactive presentations to educate community members about watersheds and salmon restoration.

In partnership with other agencies and organizations, SFEG offers several workshops for adults through the years. At the workshops volunteers learn about stream restoration and ways they can help restore salmon to healthy populations. Volunteers learn to monitor physical and biological components of aquatic ecosystems to help determine their ability to support anadromous fish, or simply learn about things they can do at home to make their backyard stream more "salmon-friendly".

SFEG is also available to visit community groups to give presentations on salmon habitat restoration projects in the local area. Presentations focus on a variety of subject areas including salmon biology and habitat requirements, habitat restoration techniques, and volunteer opportunities.

Restoration projects

Improving salmon habitat is the primary way SFEG seeks to enhance salmon resources. Habitat loss and environmental degradation continue to threaten the clean, healthy, and cool water salmon need to survive.

SFEG projects are designed to improve and protect local watersheds by offering assistance to local landowners. In addition to salmon, SFEG projects also benefit the other 80% of wildlife species that depend on health watersheds such as frogs, song birds and deer.

Willing property owners make salmon enhancement possible. Without cooperative landowners to lead the way there would be no opportunities for salmon restoration activities in the watersheds. WFEG works with local landowners who are interested in protecting salmon resources to implement restoration projects on their property in a non-regulatory fashion. SFEG assistance is often free and landowner participation is completely voluntary. SFEG works with willing landowners to do the following types of restoration projects:

- Riparian projects including revegetation
- Fencing
- Improving fish passage including culvert replacement, building bridges, and building weirs
- In-stream projects including logs in creeks, channel enhancement, stream bank stabilization
- Nutrient enhancement

Some of SFEG's recent restoration projects include:

- East Fork Nookachamps Creek – SFEG added 6 large woody debris structures to enhance rearing habitat and to restore the riparian zone of this 33-acre Wetland Reserve Program conservation easement site. Other project elements included removing 500 cubic yards of fill, installing perch poles for raptors, and stripping reed canary grass sod flow lower portions of the field.



- **Deepwater Slough** – SFEG's restoration removed invasive plant species and reestablished the dominant scrub-shrub plan, sweetgale of this slough located in the Skagit Wildlife Area of the Skagit River delta.

- **Thunder Creek** – SFEG conducted invasive species control on Himalayan blackberry and Japanese knotweed and planted native trees and shrubs in the riparian zone along Thunder Creek and Samish River.

- **NP Creek** – SFEG is seeking funds to remove an old bridge and concrete sill and replace it with a bridge and install rock weirs in the 1.5 mile upstream channel of this tributary stream of the upper Samish River near Wickersham.

- **Day Creek** – SFEG will host a workshop series with a variety of partners in the watershed in order to engage local landowners in an educational and stewardship program for the 1.25 miles of habitat and 11.25 acres of riparian area.

- **Iron Mountain Ranch** – SFEG will partner with Skagit Land Trust, Seattle City Light, Washington Sate Salmon Recovery Funding Board, and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation to protect 2 miles of intact shoreline and 236 acres of wildlife habitat along the middle of the Skagit River. SFEG volunteers will plant trees and shrubs along the riparian zone to stabilize the bank and reduce stream temperatures, and install fences to protect the replanted area from animals and people until it stabilizes.

- **Finney Creek** – SFEG placed over a 100 log jams to increase channel roughness and complexity, and sediment storage and gravel sorting, and to accelerate natural pool development in this tributary of the lower portion of the Wild & Scenic corridor of the Skagit River in partnership with the US Forest Service, Crown Pacific Timber Company, and local landowners.

- **McElroy Slough** – SFEG will help plant and restore 1 mile and approximately 9 acres of estuary area for anadromous fish use within the slough. It will also help improve access to 5 miles of Colony Creek, a half mile of Whitehall Creek, and 3 miles of

Harrison Creek to potentially recreate at least 24 acres of estuary habitat.

- **Ennis Creek** – SFEG will help restore 50 acres of wetland property and plan and build a bridge crossing over Innis Creek Road in this tributary to the Samish River Basin.

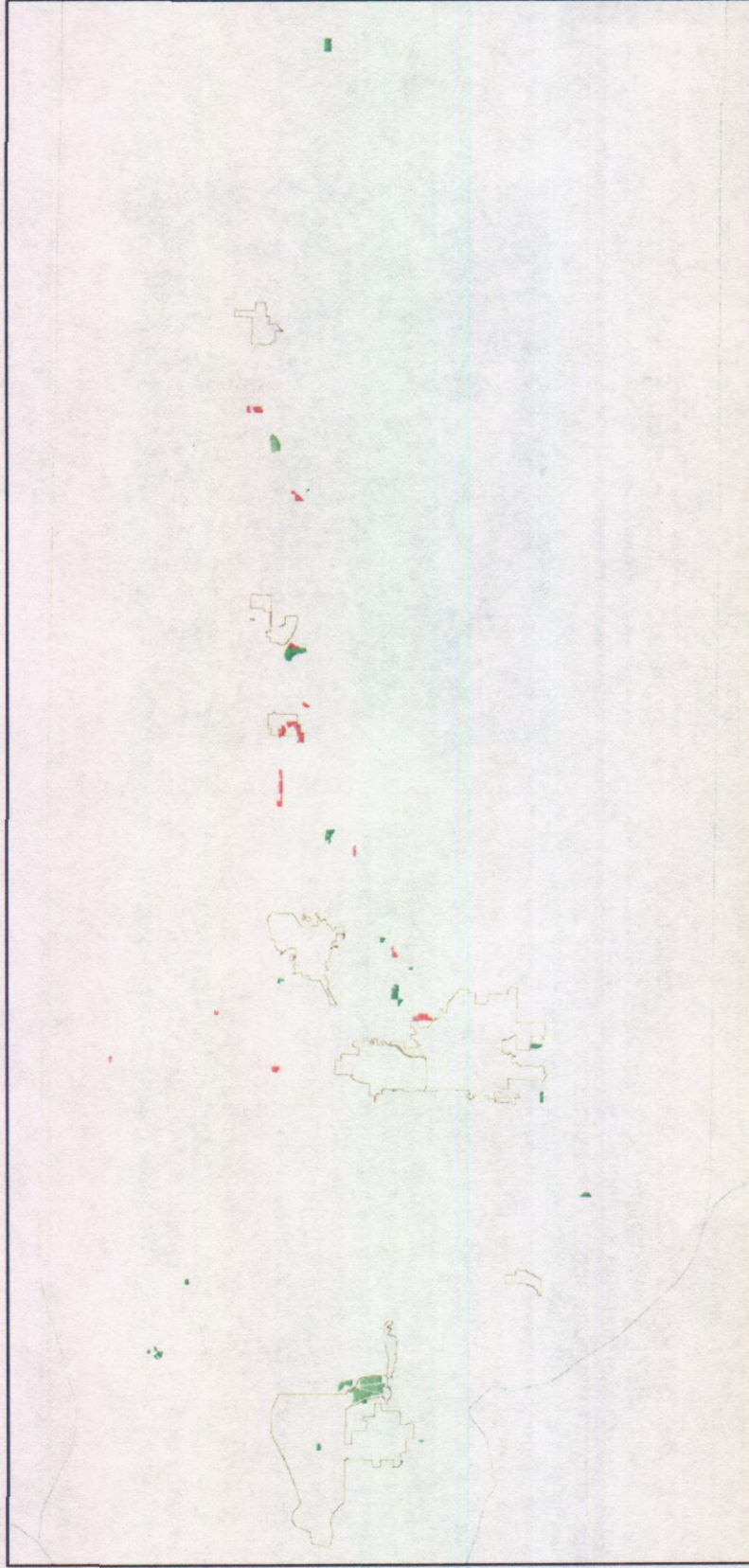
Project monitoring

Monitoring is an essential element of salmon enhancement. The purpose of monitoring programs is to evaluate the effect of restoration work to improve watershed conditions and salmon resources. Volunteers are involved in all SFEG monitoring programs.

Monitoring may involve visiting a restoration site once a week, once a month, or once a year depending on the goals of the study. Results of monitoring programs help guide designs for future restoration projects and document successes to funding entities. SFEG monitoring programs include:

- Stream structure monitoring
- Macro-invertebrate monitoring
- Vegetation monitoring
- Spawning surveys





B.20: Skagit Land Trust (SLT)

www.skagitlandtrust.org

The Skagit Land Trust (SLT) was founded in 1992 by 3 visionary leaders and 31 Charter Members to help protect the scenic shorelines and open space, wildlife habitat, wetlands, agricultural, and forest lands of the mainland and islands of Skagit County for the benefit of current and future generations. The Trust currently has 4 staff, 15 Board members, and 40 active volunteers who are joined by over 550 members.

Skagit Land Trust focuses on permanently protecting all types of natural and resource lands with exceptional conservation value throughout all of Skagit County - and is the only organization within the county that has such a diverse mission. To do so, the Trust works in collaboration with over 20 local and regional organizations to leverage limited resources to achieve common goals.

Staff and volunteer resources

The Trust's professional staff have degrees in environmental planning, economics, and anthropology, among others, and

experience as former public planners for counties and tribes, wildlife rangers, and non-profit corporations.

Trust volunteers monitor properties as part of stewardship programs, as well as plant trees, fix fences, mow fields, clear brush, pull weeds, and otherwise maintain and restore lands, in addition to providing office assistance.

The Trust protects open space in a variety of ways including land or fee simple purchase, purchase of development rights or conservation easements, and through gifts or land donations or land sales in exchange for other conservation properties. The Trust works with a variety of other conservation groups and agencies, and with individual private landowners to do so.

Land Conservation Strategy - 2001

The Skagit Land Trust developed the following land conservation strategy in November 2001 to guide long-term conservation strategies (the strategy is to be updated on an on-going basis):

- **9 critical "values" were identified as deserving protection** - 1) forests, 2) freshwater wetlands, 3) rivers and streams, 4) estuaries and tidelands, 5) rocky shorelines, 6) special species, 7) open space and landscape connectivity, 8) scenic views, and 9) rural landscapes.
- **19 key "landscapes were identified through GIS ranging from** - saltwater islands to the Chuckanut Foothills, Lake Cavanaugh, and the Middle and Upper Skagit River. The landscapes were evaluated and rated according to the condition of, and threat to, the 9 critical values.
- **6 landscapes were rated high priority** - Middle Skagit, Chuckanut Foothills/Upper Samish, Upper Skagit, Devil's Mtn/Big Lake, Lower Nookachamps, and Fidalgo Island/Pleasant Ridge though no one area was considered more important than another. The 6 landscapes are the current focus of the Trust's land



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conservation efforts.

- **Other areas in the county** - the Trust will continue to enlarge areas already protected either by Trust or other conservation organizations. The Trust will also continue to respond, as resources permit, to requests from landowners for property protection in other areas of the county.
- **Opportunity assessment** - the Trust uses a second rating procedure to evaluate and assess one potential opportunity against another in order to determine which opportunities to pursue with limited resources.

Evaluation policies

In November 2003 the Trust adopted the following criteria to guide rather than limit the actions of the Trust. The criteria are intended to provide guidance regarding the suitability of proposed projects to the mission and goals of the Trust. The criteria must typically be met for the Trust to consider a property for acquisition as a conservation property, though the Board will consider potential acquisitions not meeting the criteria on a case-by-case basis. The Trust encourages gifts of lands that lack conservation values for resale to generate funds to support the Trust's mission - these criteria are not appropriate for lands acquired for unrestricted resale.

A. Purpose and goals criteria

To qualify for selection, property should meet all of the following applicable elements:

- (1) The property is located in Skagit County. Acquisitions may be made in Whatcom, Island, and Snohomish Counties if, after consultation with the appropriate land-conservation groups in those counties, it is agreeable with the landowner and the Trust Board deems it appropriate.
- (2) Protection of the property will conserve wildlife habitat, wetlands, agriculture and forest lands, scenic views, open space or shorelines.
- (3) The property is in relatively undisturbed natural condition or has potentially important conservation values that can be restored.
- (4) The property is of sufficient size that its conservation values are likely to remain intact, even if adjacent property is

developed, or sufficient neighboring property is protected, or is likely to be protected in the near future.

Or

Properties within an urban/urban growth area (UGA) should be considered that have intrinsic natural, scenic, and/or open space values and/or provide connections to existing or planned trails, open space, parks, and other public facilities. These lands will: 1) meet the mission of the Trust; 2) enhance community awareness of the Trust; and 3) provide a public benefit.

In addition, a parcel of land within an urban/urban growth area (UGA) should meet several of the following criteria:

- Allow for public access
- Is consistent with approved public programs and plans
- Protects natural, scenic, and open space values
- Provides for outdoor recreation opportunities
- Provides for outdoor education and interpretive opportunities
- Contains unique features or values within the local or regional landscape
- Preserves or provides for the opportunity to restore local or regional landscape processes
- Will protect a valued parcel of land from an existing or likely threat
- Potential partners and stewards are willing to participate in the management of the parcel

For Conservation Easements only:

- (5) The donor is willing to convey a Conservation Easement on the property through a legally binding agreement that is perpetual and enforceable.
- (6) The proposed acquisition meets the conditions of the Trust's Stewardship Endowment Policy.

B. Public Benefit Criteria

To qualify for selection, a property must meet one or more of these elements:

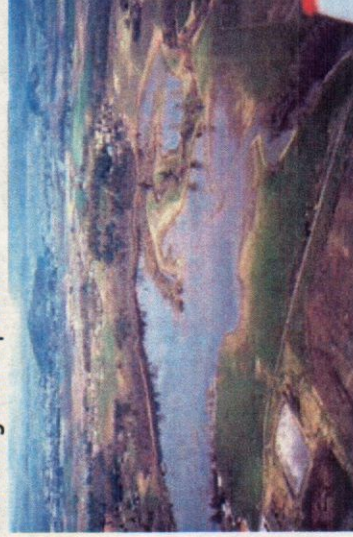
- (1) It provides habitat for plant or animal species classified by the Federal government as sensitive, candidate, proposed, or listed as threatened or endangered; or state listed priority habitats and species.
- (2) It provides crucial habitat for other important native plants or animals.

- (3) It contains or has the potential to contain ecosystems of educational or scientific value.
- (4) It contains wetlands, floodplains, riparian corridors, or aquifer recharge areas which provide watershed and water quality protection benefits for community water supplies or wetlands habitat.
- (5) It buffers significant wildlife habitat from residential, commercial or industrial land uses.
- (6) It buffers or enhances adjacent existing preserves or recreation areas.
- (7) It provides a corridor that connects parcels with significant wildlife values to other parcels with like conservation value.
- (8) It connects parcels of land or eliminates in-holdings in areas protected for conservation by the Trust of other organizations.
- (9) It protects scenic views that can be seen from public roadways, waterways, or recreation areas.
- (10) It protects significant forest or farmland.
- (11) It contains saltwater shorelines.
- (12) It contains unique or outstanding physical/geologic characteristics.

C. Disqualifying criteria

A property may pass the Purpose and Goals Criteria and the Public Benefit Criteria and still may not be appropriate for Trust involvement. Any one of the following elements would normally disqualify proposed acquisition.

- (1) The property's values are primarily scenic but are not readily visible or accessible to the general public.
- (2) The property is small and there is little likelihood of adjacent properties being protected.
- (3) The area proposed for protection is part of a development proposal that would, on

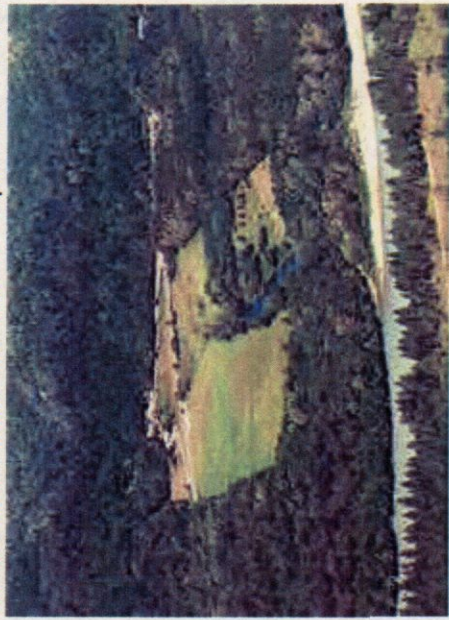


aggregate, significantly degrade conservation value of the land. Adjacent properties are being, or are likely to be developed in a manner that would significantly reduce the conservation value of the proposal under consideration.

- (4) The land or Conservation Easement would likely be unusually difficult to manage or enforce, due to such things as multiple or fractured ownership, boundary disputes, destructive trespassing, fencing restrictions, irregular parcel configuration or difficult access.
- (5) The landowner insists on provision in a Conservation Easement that the Trust believes would seriously diminish the conservation value of the easement or the Trust's ability to enforce the easement.
- (6) Acquisition of land or an easement would require unreasonable management or enforcement costs in relation to the conservation value of the land.
- (7) The property is found to be irreparably damaged or contaminated.
- (8) Negative ethical or public perceptions exist in connection with the proposal that cannot be adequately resolved.
- (9) Property may create significant liability to the trust.

Conservation easements

A conservation easement is a recorded, legal agreement between the landowner and the Trust that places perpetual restrictions on the use of the land. The Trust is responsible for enforcing such restrictions



into perpetuity.

Conservation easements range from restrictions limiting residential or commercial use of the land to those that state the land will remain forever wild.

The title stays in the landowner's name and the land may be used as before, leased, sold, or passed along to the landowner's heirs; always, however, subject to the restrictions of the easement.

- Most conservation easements are voluntary donations benefiting the public by protecting valuable land. The value of the restrictions may be considered a charitable gift.
- Each easement is specifically tailored to the needs and desires of the landowner and to protect the identified conservation values of the land.
- Easements are recorded with the title to the land ensuring protection forever.
- The long-term role of the Trust is to assume responsibility and legal right, through a Stewardship Fund, to enforce the terms of the agreement. The Trust usually asks for a tax-deductible contribution from the easement donor to offset the cost of future stewardship expenses.
- The property remains in private ownership, and subject to the conditions of the easement, may be used as before, leased, sold, or passed onto heirs.
- An easement does not grant public access to the property unless agreed to by the owner. *Generally, the Trust tries to keep properties open to the public if possible even though that costs more to monitor and maintain – unless the nature of the property is too sensitive to allow access.*

Cooperative efforts

The Trust teamed with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to work with landowners with important salmon habitat in the upper Skagit River area. TNC received a grant from the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) to identify and purchase high priority salmon habitat from willing sellers. TNC completed a land inventory and assessment identifying the most important habitat areas, but did not have the staff resources or experience with acquisitions and easements to complete the work. The Trust is providing that resource in the cooperative effort.

Assets

Skagit Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization recognized by the IRS. Over 75% of the Trust's operating budget comes from financial contributions of its more than 550 members. As of March 2006, the Trust owned and protected through easements more

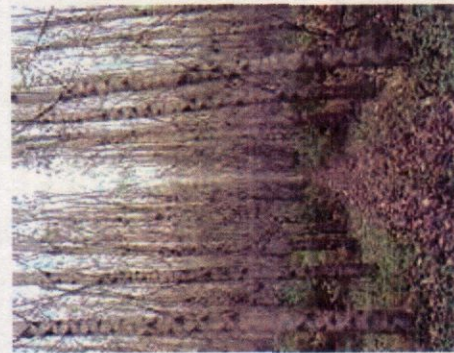
than 4,500 acres including more than 18 miles of shoreline worth more than \$3,559,000. Following are current Trust assets:

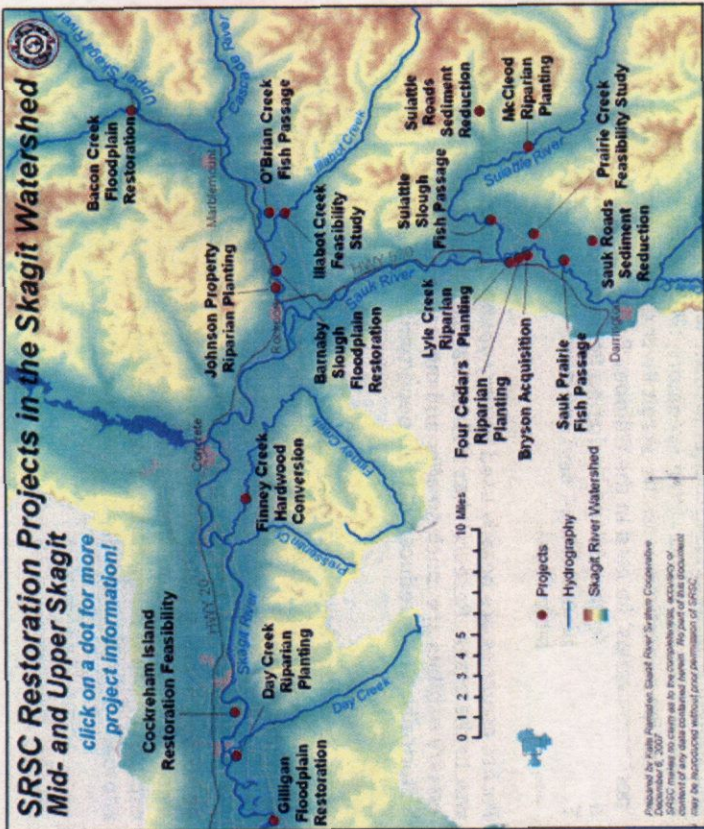
Protected acres

Conservation easements	3,164
Trust-owned lands	849
Trust-assisted projects	1,202
<i>Total protected acres</i>	<i>5,215</i>

Conservation values protected

Forested habitat	3,390 ac
Agricultural lands	564 ac
Lakes and wetlands	572 ac
Intertidal habitat	532 ac
River shoreline	22 miles
Saltwater shoreline	11,060 lf





B.21: Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC)



The Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC) provides natural resource management services for the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe and the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. The SRSC works to actively improve fisheries management within their usual and accustomed fishing areas. These areas include the Skagit and Samish River basins, and were ceded to the US through treaties signed in 1855. Fisheries management carried out by SRSC includes harvest and hatchery management, research, environmental review, habitat restoration, and a range of other activities.

The SRSC is governed by a 6-member Board of Directors 3 of which are appointed by the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe and 3 by the Swinomish Tribe. The

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www.skagitcoog.org

Board elects a member to hold the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. The Board ensures SRSC follows and adheres to goals, policies, and directives of the member tribes.

SRSC granting agencies include, but are not limited to:

- Department of Interior-Bureau of Indian Affairs
- US Forest Service
- Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office/Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- Washington State Department of Ecology
- Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife

- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- Seattle City Light
- Pacific Salmon Commission
- The Nature Conservancy

Environmental Services

The Environmental Services program at SRSC provides environmental review of activities authorized by local, state, and federal permits that may affect fisheries habitat. Review of off-reservation permits ensures that fish habitat is protected in project designs. Environmental Services staff works with project proponents through permit processes with specific review of project design elements to protect fish and shellfish habitat.

Environmental Services staff also work with local, state, and federal governments on projects undertaken that may affect fish habitat such as roads, bridges, and levees. Program staff work with utilities that operate hydroelectric dams in the Skagit River Basin to implement their Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) licenses and multi-party Settlement Agreements arrived at through FERC relicensing processes to reduce the impact of large hydroelectric dams on fish and fish habitat.

Salmon Recovery

The Salmon Recovery program at SRSC provides the technical analysis for tribal and state fisheries managers to use to negotiate annual salmon fishing plans and long-term salmon recovery and management plans. This is accomplished by developing and negotiating annual forecasted abundances of Skagit River system salmonids.

Salmon Recovery also proposes and oversees the research needed to develop these plans and respond to public misconceptions about Indian fishing.

Research

The Research Department at SRSC works locally and regionally for salmon recovery through rigorously applied research, the Work add to the region's knowledge of salmon, supports the need for habitat restoration, and identifies effective restoration techniques.

Research Department staff collects and analyzes data on fish habitat use, fish response to recovery efforts including habitat restoration, and



linkages between habitat conditions, landscape processes, and land uses. The research efforts are coordinated with federal, state, and local agencies, as well as volunteer groups.

A topic of research has been the role of estuaries in recovering the wild Skagit Chinook salmon populations listed under the Endangered Species Act. Chinook populations have declined in part due to estuary habitat loss and degradation, much of it caused by dredging, diking, and shoreline-hardening. Estuaries provide important habitat to feed and protect young salmon from predators. SRSC looks for estuary restoration opportunities in the Skagit River delta and in smaller 'pocket estuaries' located in the Whidbey Basin (the water between the mainland and Whidbey Island, including Possession Sound, Port Susan, Saratoga Passage, and Skagit Bay) and northern Skagit County (Padilla, Samish, and Fidalgo Bays).

Pocket estuaries are heavily used by very young Chinook salmon on the way to the ocean. Research has shown that Skagit delta and pocket estuary habitats are much smaller and more fragmented than historically, which reduces rearing opportunity for salmon.

Restoration

SRSC has a long history of identifying, designing, and implementing projects that strive to recover freshwater and estuarine habitat for salmonids.

The Restoration program's guiding philosophy is focused first on protecting existing functioning ecosystem processes, and second on recovering landscape processes that are not functioning within an expected natural range of variation. The program's habitat restoration approach is firmly committed to implementing the principles of

conservation biology on the landscape scale using both proven and innovative techniques at the site level. SRSC projects have included:

- **Riparian planting** – establishing native riparian shrubs and trees to help reduce stream temperature, invasive species, and offer a source of large woody debris in the future.
- **Dike removal** – removing selected dikes or portions of dikes to help restore sediment transport processes, and restore natural flow regimes to off-channel habitat.
- **Road decommissioning and upgrade/culvert and bridge replacement** – projects help to reduce the risk of mass wasting that inputs sediment into waterways. Culvert upgrade or removal, waterbars, in-sloping, and armoring helps to improve drainage.

Timber, Fish, & Wildlife (TFW)

The Timber, Fish, & Wildlife (TFW) program interacts with agencies and forest landowners in the Skagit and Samish River basins to help protect fish and wildlife habitat as well as cultural resources from negative impacts of timber activities. The work is informed by 2 key recognitions:

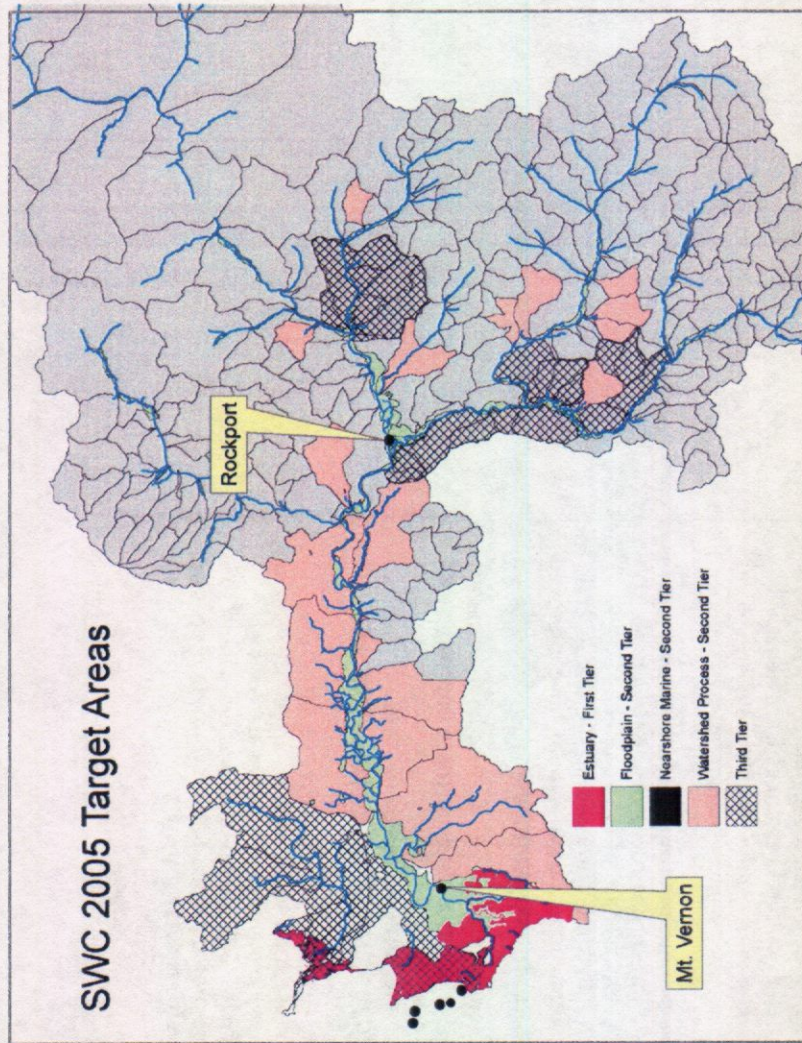
1. Past timber practices have significantly impacted fish habitat and other resources. Logging and forest road construction have been ongoing for over a century, yet awareness of environmental consequences has only been fully appreciated within the last several decades, during which forest practices and regulations have improved tremendously.

The TFW program strives to ensure that goals of these improvements are met, by providing

- Familiarity with local fisheries resources,
- Technical expertise on relevant watershed processes, and
- Monitoring and applied research.

2. Managed forests, in many cases, contain healthy habitats. Forestry is a less intensive form of land use than agriculture or urban development, and allows many protections as well as decades of inactivity between harvest cycles. SRSC focuses efforts on making sure that high-quality habitats are protected and habitat-forming processes are allowed to continue toward recovery.

SWC 2005 Target Areas



B.22: Skagit Watershed Council

www.skagitwatershed.org

The Skagit Watershed Council was formed in 1997 as a community partnership for salmon. The Council supports and endorses voluntary restoration and protection of natural landscape processes that formed and sustained the habitats to which salmon stocks (as well as other native aquatic and riparian dependent species) are adapted. By collaboration, technical assistance, and education, the Council seeks to fulfill the mission of understanding, protecting, and restoring the production and productivity of the Skagit and Samish watersheds in order to support sustainable fisheries.

The Council adopted a 3-point program of restoration, education, and celebration and a defined audience of:

- Member organizations and their constituents;
- Elected and appointed officials,
- Key individuals, and
- The general public.

The Skagit Watershed Council is incorporated in Washington State as a not-for-profit organization and is recognized by the IRS as a publicly supported 501(c)(3). Governance is through a 7-10-member Board of

Directors who serve 3-year terms. Membership is open to those organizations that support the goals of the Council. Active membership is achieved through regular engagement in the affairs of the Council, at both the committee and Board Levels.

The Skagit Watershed Council is the Designated Lead Entity under Washington State Legislation ESHB 2496, a salmon recovery planning act, and is responsible for submitting a habitat restoration project list to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB).

The Council's Standing Committees include: Restoration and Protection and its sub-committees Project Review, Combination Project, Protection, feasibility and Monitoring, and Research.

The committees undertake the primary, substantive work of the Council. The Committee Chairperson (or designee) makes committee reports and recommendations regarding specific issue at the regularly scheduled monthly Council meetings. Committee chairs, with the help of staff, ensure that the efforts of their committees are consistent with the mission and goals of the Council.

Membership

The Skagit Watershed Council's current members include:

Fidalgo Fly Fishers
Long Live the Kings
Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
Natural Resources Conservation Service
North Cascades Institute
North Cascades National park
Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
People for Puget Sound
Public Utility District #1 of Skagit County
Puget Sound Anglers - Fidalgo Chapter
Puget Sound Energy
Seattle City Light
Skagit Audubon Society
Skagit Conservation District
Skagit County
Skagit County Marine Resources Committee
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
Skagit Land Trust

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Skagit River System Cooperative
Swinomish Tribal Community
The Nature Conservancy
Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
WA Department of Ecology
WA Department of Fish & Wildlife
WA Department of Natural Resources
Western WA Agricultural Association
Wild Fish Conservancy

Skagit Basin 3-Year Work Plan

The Skagit Basin 3-Year Work Plan identifies a comprehensive list of actions targeted at the recovery of Chinook salmon populations in the Skagit watershed.

The Work Plan and accompanying 3 year list were developed in 2006 by the Skagit Watershed Council, the lead entity, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, Skagit River System Cooperative, and Seattle City Light with information provided by The Nature Conservancy, Skagit Land Trust, Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, Skagit Conservation District, Skagit County, US Forest Service, and Western Washington Agricultural Association. The 2007 revision of the Work Plan and List modified only the Habitat Capital Projects section; all other sections remain the same.

The Work Plan takes as its foundation the Skagit Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan, which was developed by the Skagit River System Cooperation (SRSC) and Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW). Additional habitat and research projects, as well as community-building, capacity-building, and outreach programs, have been added. The proposed actions also provide valuable habitat benefits to non-listed species including pink, chum, and coho salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.

The fundamental objectives of the Work Plan are to:

- Improve the abundance of those species that are listed under the ESA. This will be achieved by protecting and restoring those areas most important to the survival of these fish during critical periods in their life-history, including migration and foraging habitat in the middle and lower Skagit, and brackish water habitat important to growth and smoltification (i.e., physiological transition from freshwater to

saltwater) provided in the Skagit Delta, Skagit Bay, Swinomish Channel and pocket estuaries.

- Improve the strongest populations of Chinook salmon to sustainable and harvestable numbers.
- Sustain and improve life history variability and genetic diversity of Chinook salmon throughout the watershed. Protecting and restoring rearing habitat in the streams and rivers of the upper watershed areas will improve the abundance of stream-type fish. Restoring a broad range of historically important habitats will improve the life history diversity of Chinook salmon life by providing a wider variety of habitats to these species. Improving habitat diversity is the most important step towards improving life history diversity.
- Develop and implement a set of rapid recovery actions that reduce the extinction risk of the weakest populations in the watershed.
- Build organizational capacity among project sponsoring organizations.
- Develop board-based partnerships and community support for salmon recovery through public outreach and education.
- Improve the watershed's capacity to fund and complete large-scale protection and restoration projects by fostering long-term partnerships among agencies, tribes, conservation groups, and other local stakeholders.
- Support a strong research and monitoring program that will guide the recovery process in the future.
- Implement an adaptive management process that will continually refine and redirect recovery actions.

Recent Skagit Watershed Council SFRB-funding project summary 2000-2003

Only projects on the 3-Year List are funded with Salmon Recovery Funded Board (SRB) monies. The following projects have been funded between 2000-2003 with Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SFRB) monies in accordance with SWC priorities and assessments:

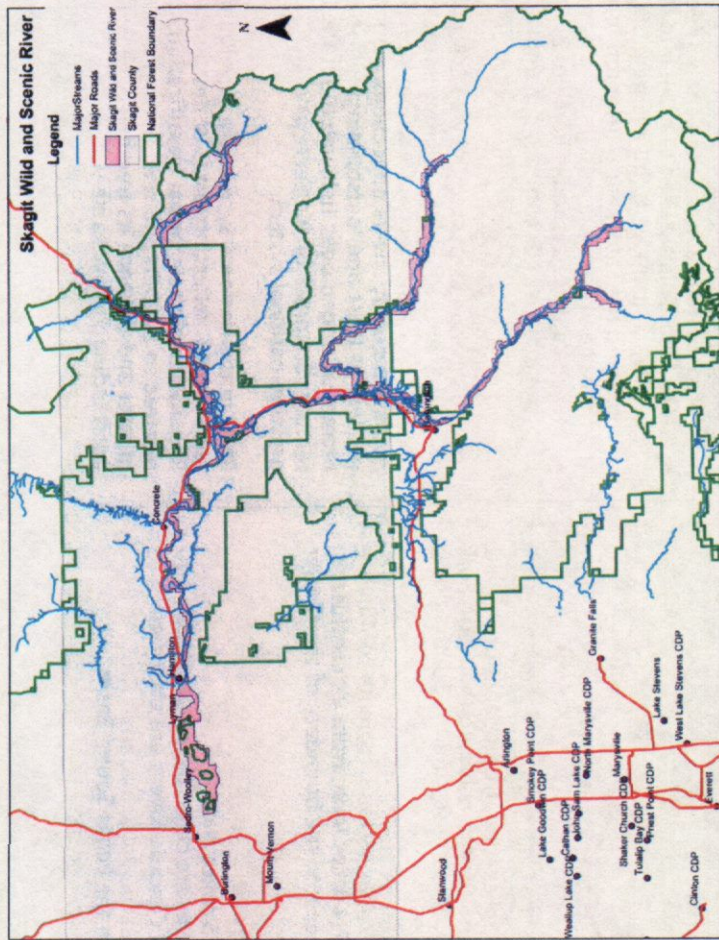
- Youngs Slough Conservation Easement - acquisition of permanent conservation easement on 60-acre parcel adjacent to mainstem Skagit River and side-channel habitat sponsored by Skagit Land Trust
- Dashiell Tract Protection Project - fee-simple acquisition of parcel adjacent to Sauk River sponsored by The Nature Conservancy
- Upper Suittale River Habitat Project - fee-simple acquisition of 185-acre parcel adjacent to upper Suittale River sponsored by The Nature Conservancy
- Nookahamps Riparian Restoration - riparian restoration at selected locations in Nookachamps basin sponsored by Skagit Conservation District
- McElroy Sough Estuary Restoration - estuarine habitat restoration near Blanchard sponsored by the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Guse Acquisition - fee simple acquisition of 60-acre parcel north of Darrington on the Sauk River sponsored by Seattle City Light
- Day Creek Acquisition - fee simple acquisition of 2 parcels (50 acres) adjacent to Day Creek near mainstem Skagit sponsored by Skagit Land Trust
- Assessing the Willingness of Landowners - to answer the questions "what is it going to take?" to get landowner participation sponsored by the Skagit Watershed Council
- Middle Skagit Inventory and Assessment - identification and analysis of targeted protections projects between Sedro-Woolley and Concrete sponsored by the Skagit Land Trust
- Bishop Easement and Restoration - conservation easement and riparian planting on 37-acre parcel adjacent to the middle Skagit sponsored by the Skagit Conservation District
- Edgewater Park Off-channel Slough Project Study - study to assess feasibility of side-channel habitat reestablishment at park in Mount Vernon
- Samish Watershed Riparian - riparian planting projects in Samish basin based on recent inventory and analysis sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Skiyou Slough Habitat Project - easement, fee simple acquisition, riparian planting, and fish passage adjacent to and near Skiyou Slough sponsored by Skagit Conservation District
- Finney Road Phase I Erosion Control - road upgrades in upper Finney Creek basin sponsored by Skagit Conservation District

- Nookachamps Restoration Phase II – riparian planting projects based on inventories area in Nookachamps basin sponsored by Skagit Conservation District
- Samish Acquisition and Restoration – easements and riparian planning on 3 parcels (80 acres) adjacent Samish River sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Daniels Acquisition and Restoration – fee simple acquisition and riparian planting on 85-acre parcel adjacent to Samish River sponsored by Skagit Conservation District
- Neff Acquisition and Restoration – acquisitions and riparian/wetland planting on 132-acre parcel adjacent to Samish River sponsored by Skagit Conservation District
- Wiseman Creek Feasibility Study – study to assess feasibility of restoration options for degraded Wiseman Creek sponsored by Skagit County
- Lake Creek Fish Passage – fish passage to large wetland and tributary to Lake Creek sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Lorenzan Creek Fish Passage – fish passage to Lorenzan Creek and wetland area near Concrete sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Spartina Management – removal of invasive species Spartina in Skagit Bay sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Deepwater Slough Invasive Species Removal – removal of invasive species (blackberry, knotweed) and planting at Deepwater sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Boyd Pond Fish Passage – fish passage to large pond and small tributaries near Suak River near Darrington sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Shoeshell Road Fish Passage – fish passage on creek below Bottomless Lake near Sedro-Woolley sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Finney Roads Phase II Sediment Reduction – road improvements in Finney Creek basin for sediment reduction sponsored by Skagit Conservation District
- Sauk Sediment Reduction – road improvements in Sauk Prairie and Dan Creek basins for sediment reduction sponsored by SSC
- Illabot Alluvial Fan Project Assessment and Feasibility Study – feasibility study to assess restoration alternatives at Illabot Creek alluvial fan area sponsored by SSC

- Goodman Road Erosion Control – road improvements in Dutch Creek area in upper Sauk for sediment reduction sponsored by Skagit Conservation District
- Middle Skagit Habitat Protection – acquisition and conservation easements on targeted parcels for permanent protection in middle Skagit (approximately from Sedro-Woolley to Concrete). Priority parcels were identified through Middle Skagit Inventory and Assessment sponsored by Skagit Land Trust
- Marblegate Slough Floodplain and Passage Improvement – construct bridge to replace undersized culvert on Marblegate Slough in upper Skagit near Marblemount sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Powerline Channel – construct and reconnect off-channel habitat in upper Skagit near Illabot Creek sponsored by Skagit Conservation League (SCL)
- Lower Day Creek Feasibility Study - feasibility study to assess restoration alternatives in lower Day Creek area sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Upper Skagit Assessment and Acquisition – acquisition and conservation easements on targeted parcels for permanent protection in upper Skagit sponsored by The Nature Conservancy
- Prairie Creek Assessment and Feasibility Study – feasibility study to assess restoration alternatives in Prairie Creek area in upper Sauk sponsored by SSC
- Lower Finney Creek Instream enhancement – strategic placement of LWD in section of Finney Creek to improve water quality conditions, channel morphology, and riparian conditions sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Verdoes Reach Restoration – restoration of degraded section of East Fork Nookachamps and riparian zone sponsored by Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Big Bend Reach Habitat Restoration and Protection Feasibility Study – feasibility study to assess restoration alternative in section of Skagit River from the Nookachamps to the north and south forks of the river at Fir Island sponsored by the city of Mount Vernon
- Hart Slough Easements – permanent conservation easements on about 450 acres adjacent to Hart Slough in middle Skagit sponsored by Skagit County
- Wiley Slough Restoration Design – develop 90% design for restoration of tidal and riverine processes at Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife land sponsored by Department of Fish & Wildlife and SWC

- Vandersar Restoration – restoration of riparian and wetland vegetation and fish passage in Ross Island Slough area sponsored by Seattle City Light
- South Fork Levee Setback Acquisitions and Restoration – acquisition and restoration of 37-acre area of off-channel/wetland and riparian habitat adjacent to mainstem Skagit near Conway sponsored by Skagit County Dike District #3
- Edgewater Park Off-channel Restoration – restoration of off-channel Skagit River habitat at park in Mount Vernon sponsored by city of Mount Vernon
- Fornsbys Creek SRT – reconnection about 5 miles of fish habitat adjacent to Swinomish Channel and restore riparian vegetation to about 1.3 miles of habitat sponsored by Swinomish Tribal Community
- Minkler Lake Acquisition – acquire about 107 acres in middle Skagit River floodplain adjacent to Minkler Lake sponsored by Skagit Land Trust

Approximately 41% of Skagit Watershed Council funded projects were for protection, 36% for restoration, 17% a combination of protection and restoration, and 6% for feasibility studies.



B.23: Skagit Wild & Scenic River System



The Skagit Wild & Scenic River System (SWSRS) was established by Congress in 1978. The system includes 158.5 miles of the Skagit and its tributaries – the Sauk, Suiattle, and Cascade Rivers. Management of the SWSRS is consistent with the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act Section 10(a) direction to protect and enhance the values that caused the SWSRS to be included in the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System:

- Free-flowing characteristics and water quality of the 4 rivers; and
- Outstanding remarkable wildlife, fish, and scenic qualities.

The SWSRS flows through a variety of land ownerships of which 50% is privately owned, 44% is National Forest System lands, and 6% is state

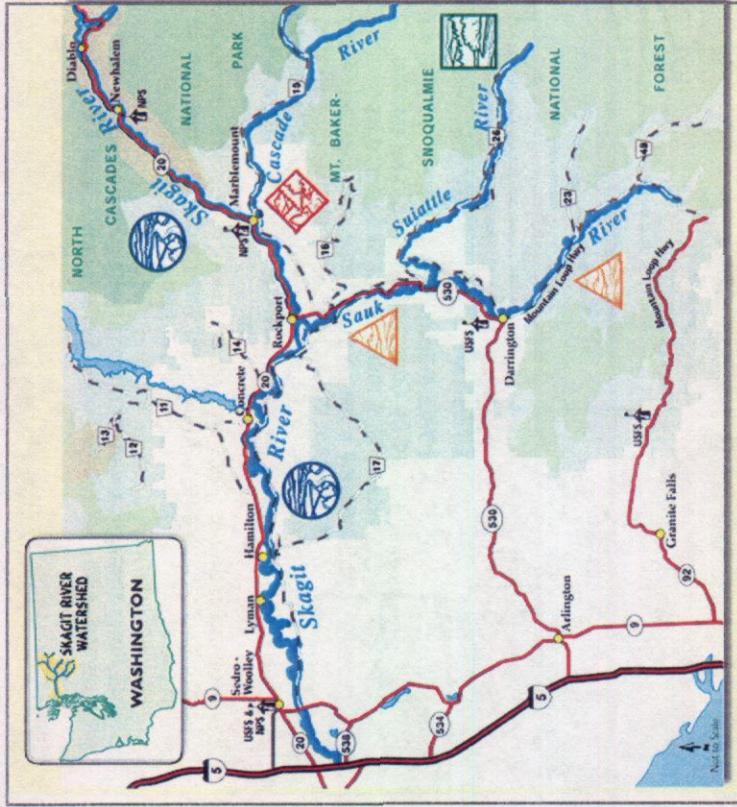
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www.fs.fed.us/r6/mbs/skagit-wsi

and other public agency ownership. The SWSRS is managed by the US Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service, Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

The SWSRS begins at Bacon Creek near the boundary of the Ross Lake National Recreation Area (RLNRA) in the North Cascade National Park Service complex and extends just east of Sedro-Woolley at the PUD pipeline crossing. Segments of the Sauk, Suiattle, and Cascade Rivers are included in the SWSRS.

The Cascade River segment - is 21.8 miles long, from its confluence with the Skagit River near Marblemount east to the forks: the North Fork (1 mile) to the boundary of the North Cascades National Park, and the South Fork to the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness.



The Sauk River segment - is 50.8 miles long, from its confluence with the Skagit River near Rockport, south to and including the North Fork to the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, and the South Fork as far as Elliot Creek.

The Suiattle River segment - is 27.4 miles long, from its confluence with the Sauk north to Darrington, east to the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area at Milk Creek.

SWSRS Facts

- SWSRS corridor is generally 0.25 miles wide.
- The 58.5 miles of the Skagit River are classified Recreational, 100 miles of the Sauk, Suiattle, and Cascade Rivers are classified Scenic.
- The Skagit is the largest river in the Puget Sound Basin.

- 3 special bird species visit the river system each year - the trumpeter and tundra swan, and the majestic bald eagle.
- 5 salmon species are found in SWSRS: chinook, coho, pink, chum, and sockeye.
- 4 Native American tribes live on the SWSRS: the Upper Skagit, Sauk-Suiattle, Samish, and Swinomish.
- 10,000,000 gallons of water drain every day from over 2,900 streams in the Skagit River watershed making it the largest watershed in the Puget Sound Basin, providing over 20% of the water flowing into Puget Sound. Only the Columbia and Sacramento Rivers are larger on the west coast of the US.
- Mount Baker has an elevation of 10,773 feet, Glacier Peak is 10,541 feet - both are heavily glaciated.
- The entire watershed of the Skagit River Basin covers 3,100 square miles, the Cascade River covers 185, the Sauk-Suiattle River covers 732, the Baker covers 297, and the Skagit covers 1,306.
- 376 lakes and 11 reservoirs are scattered amongst the glaciers and rocky peaks of the Skagit River watershed.
- 394 glaciers feed the entire SWSRS - 177 glaciers feed the upper Skagit, 5 feed the lower Skagit. 57 glaciers flow into the Cascade, 96 drain the Sauk-Suiattle, and 63 feed the Baker River.
- The Sauk-Suiattle used to drain into the Sound by way of the Stillaguamish River until a large mudflow from Glacier Peak blocked the Sauk near Darrington forcing the river to flow north into the Skagit.
- The Skagit watershed is home to 276 wildlife species, 25 fish, 17 amphibians, 10 reptiles, 73 mammals, and 174 birds.

Wild & Scenic Rivers Act

In 1968 Congress passed the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act to preserve forever in a free-flowing condition some of the nation's most precious rivers. To qualify, rivers or sections of rivers must be free-flowing and possess at least one "outstandingly remarkable value" such as scenic, recreational, geologic, fish, wildlife, historical, cultural, or other similar feature. Congress or the Secretary of the Interior may add rivers to the growing national system.

River in the National System are classified as wild, scenic or recreational, reflecting levels of development and natural conditions. Regardless of their formal classification, these rivers are generally referred to as "wild and scenic rivers". Each river is administered to protect and enhance its free-flowing characteristics, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values. The Act's underlying principles are:

- Keep designated rivers free-flowing,
- Protecting outstanding natural and cultural values,
- Allow existing uses of rivers to continue where they do not conflict with river protection,
- Build partnerships among landowners, river users, tribal nations, and other levels of government.

The Act may also:

- Improve understanding of river values and processes.
- Deepen the awareness, acceptance, and appreciation of river conservation.

Development has increased significantly since the Skagit River was designated in 1978. The convergence of abundant natural resources and increasing demands on those resources creates an environment that is on the one hand passionately prized, and on the other hand threatened.

This climate and the SWSRS designation have provided abundant opportunities for working in partnerships at the watershed scale to fulfill river stewardship responsibilities. Some of the many aspects on SWSRS management are:

- Involvement in basin-wide watershed restoration and protection
- Monitoring of natural and cultural resources and public use
- Management and recovery of threatened and endangered species
- Limited capacity to meet demand for community education and outreach
- Public concern with floodplain management, flood damage, and control
- Increasing demand for recreation opportunities, access, and visitor services and facilities
- Demand for hydropower production
- Need for infrastructure protection

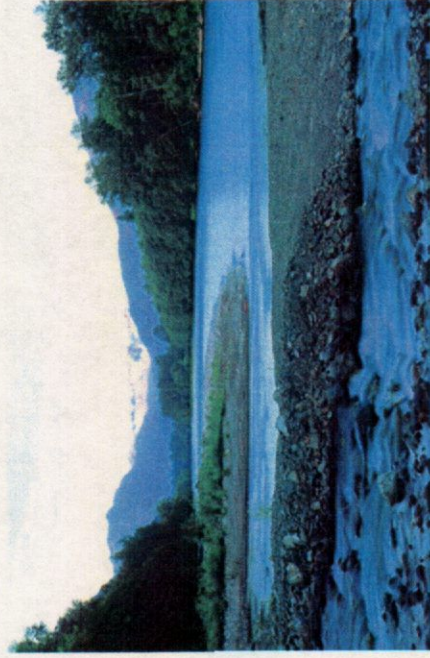
Forest Service involvement – the Forest Service does not have authority to regulate the use of private lands within the SWSRS. As the lands were prior to

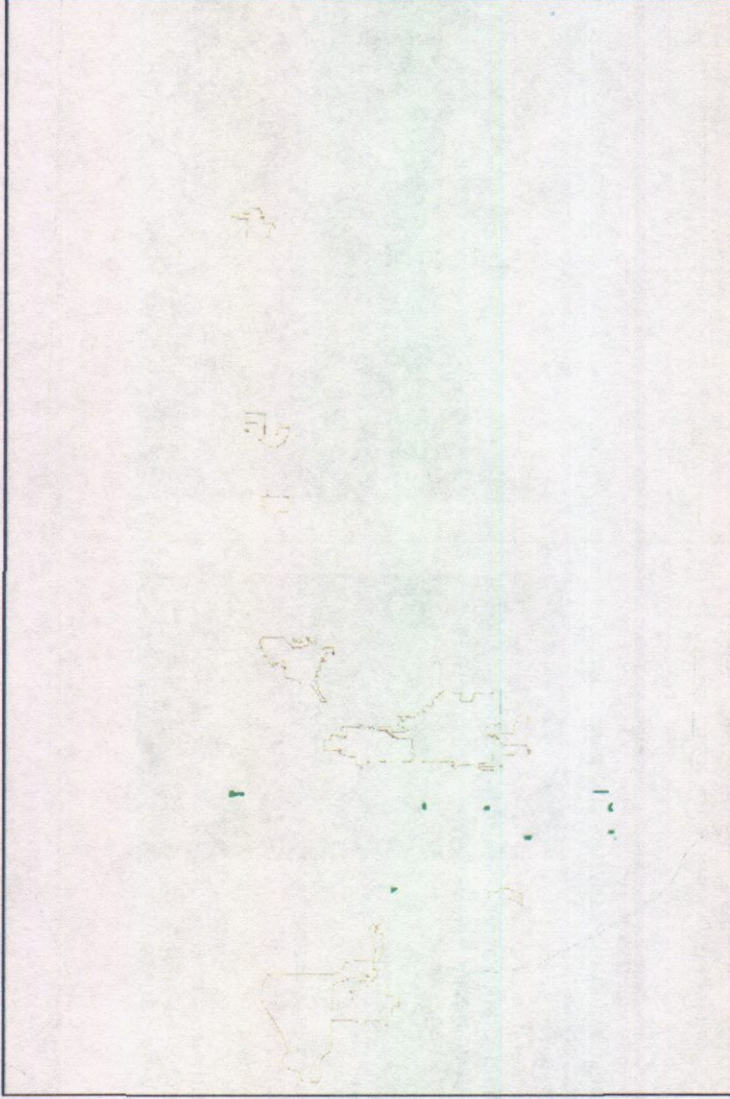


designation, nonfederal lands remain subject to state and county laws and regulations.

The Forest Service is only involved in projects on private lands when the proposal is in the river's bed or its banks and is assisted by another federal agency (e.g. technical assistance, funding, or permitting). The Forest Service may also be involved in nonfederally assisted project proposals in the river's bend or its banks or in upland activities (e.g. timber harvesting) if the Service is requested to provide advice to another agency.

The role of the Forest Service on nonfederal lands is to monitor activities within the river corridor and, for any proposed activity that is likely to have adverse impacts on the values of the river system, to work cooperatively with state and local agencies, and landowner(s) to resolve. The Forest Service may provide technical assistance to find ways to alleviate or mitigate the potential threat. If state, county, and local laws and regulations and/or technical assistance fail to protect river values, the Forest Service has the authority for limited purchase of private lands from willing sellers in fee title or a scenic or access easement.





B.24: Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland (SPF)

www.skagitonians.org

Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland (SPF) is a membership-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed in 1989 by local farmers dedicated to preserving Skagit County's farmers, farming, and farmland. SPF focuses on protecting farmland from competing uses and enhancing the economic viability of farming itself. SPF supports wildlife, fish, water, and land conservation efforts, and builds strategic alliances.



SPF presumes a healthy Skagit Valley agricultural community depends on 4 elements:

- Farmland protection
 - Economic viability
 - Agricultural infrastructure
 - Community support
- Cooperation between farm organizations, governmental entities, environmental organizations, and the real estate industry is essential to the long-term success of farming in the Skagit Valley.

SPF Strategic Plan 2005-2010

SPF's mission - is to ensure the economic viability of Skagit County agriculture and its required infrastructure through farmland protection, advocacy, research, education, and public awareness.

SPF values

SPF endeavors are guided by the following 6 principles:

- Stewardship of the land - protecting farmland benefits for everyone by leading efforts to protect and enhance farming and farmlands. SPF supports wildlife, fish, water, and land conservation efforts with a focus on protecting farming from competing uses.
- Strategic and collaborative leadership - working with community leaders and policy makers at the local, state, and national levels to demonstrate the importance of building strategic alliances.
- Responsive, responsible, and persistent - for the community's heritage and quality of life for this and future generations.
- Financial prudent - conducting business with integrity and fiscal responsibility.
- Community based, civic minded, and visible - actively participating in local land use planning processes and in community events to ensure the success of the SPF mission.
- Economic viability and quality of life - working for a healthy community that supports farmers as responsible stewards of the land.



SPF goals and objectives

SPF's goals are to preserve Skagit Valley as a working agricultural region and landscape by protecting farmland through acquisition of permanent property restrictions and by defending farming as an economically viable way of life. SPF seeks to ensure that Skagit farming remains a permanent part of the region's identity for the benefit of:

- Local stewards and residents - whose livelihoods depend on the land
- Puget Sound citizens and visitors - who enjoy the natural beauty of a pastoral landscape
- Waterfowl, raptors, salmon, and other wildlife - that depend on the managed farm landscape as habitat

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To assure the long-term protection of this regional asset, SPF has operated since 1992 as a land trust, as an advocate for farmland protection, and as an education and community-building organization.

As a Land Trust - SPF's vision is to permanently secure the critical mass of farmland in the Skagit Valley. The most cost effective way to protect farmland is to acquire rights for development (by purchase or donation) from willing landowners before the properties become too expensive for farming uses. Conservation easements restrict use of the land for farming, in perpetuity.

As an advocate for Skagit farming - SPF participates in maintaining and creating policies at the local, state, and federal level that presume a future for farming; works to implement programs to protect farmland; and creates partnerships for land protection with other conservation organizations, such as Skagit Land Trust, Trust for Public Land, American Farmland Trust, and The Nature Conservancy. SPF is also a key participant in the Skagit Watershed Council.

As a community-building organization - SPF sponsors community education, annual cultural and recreational events (Celebrate Skagit Harvest), informs the public about farmland issues, and builds community support in the Skagit Valley and throughout Puget Sound for Skagit farmland protection.

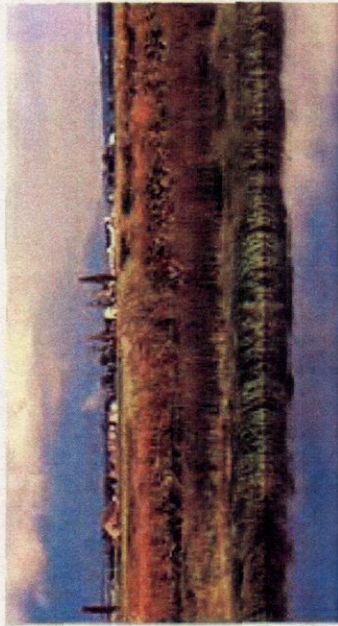
Farmland Legacy - SPF, using the results of an Elway Research poll commissioned by SPF and the Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC), helped convince Skagit County Commissioners to impose a property tax levy to establish

Conservation
Futures and the
Farmland Legacy
program that
purchases
development rights
from willing
farmers.



2002 farmland easements

	easements	acres
SPF	10	324
Conservation Futures	36	3,060
Skagit Land Trust	9	79
Total	55	3,463



B.2.5: Swinomish Nation

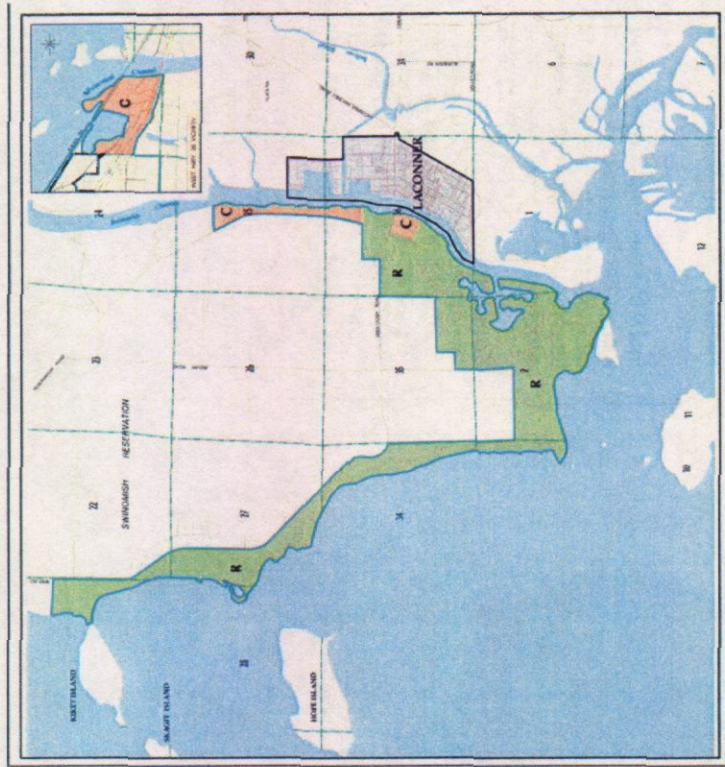


The Swinomish were closely related to the Skagit tribe but were a separate people and inhabited portions of northern Whidbey Island and all of the islands in Similk Bay and northern Skagit Bay including Hope, Skagit, Kiket, Goat, and Ika, as well as Smith Island on the west coast of Whidbey and Hat Island in Padilla Bay. A small related band, the Squinimishes occupied the mouth, estuary, and delta of the Skagit River on the north, forming a buffer between the Swinomishes and the Lower Skagits. The Swinomish spoke the northern Lushutseed dialect of Coastal Salish.

The Swinomish were a marine-oriented people collected as much as 70% of their subsistence from salmon and other fish and marine life. They also gathered berries, and after contact with white fur traders, raised potatoes.

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www.swinomish.org

The Swinomish maintained permanent villages composed of longhouses built of cedar planks during winter months. During other seasons, they roamed to outlying fishing and camping sites of various degrees of permanency. The more-or-less contiguous Swinomish villages were relatively independent of each other composed of several families under leaders whose positions were determined by material wealth and standing. None of the leaders had complete control over all of the villages. Potlatch and other ceremonies established social standing and helped maintain social contacts among the villages.

Epidemics in the 1800s seriously reduced the Swinomish populations by as much as 80% in some areas. In 1855 territorial representatives estimated the Swinomish numbered between 150 and 200 people.

The Swinomishes were among the tribes who located on the 7,449-acre Swinomish Reservation which was set aside near the mouth of the Skagit River on Fidalgo Island on the Swinomish Sough under the Point Elliott Treaty in 1855. Most members of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Swinomish Reservation are descendants of the Swinomish proper, the Skagits, and the Samish.

In the 1850s, the Swinomish and others came under the influence of the Roman Catholic faith administered by Father Casimir Chirouse and the Oblate fathers. The reservation was subsequently managed by the Tulalip Agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), which was assigned to Catholics under the President Ulysses S Grant Peace Policy. The BIA prohibited spirit dancing and other practices, and ancient longhouses were abandoned and burned during epidemics.

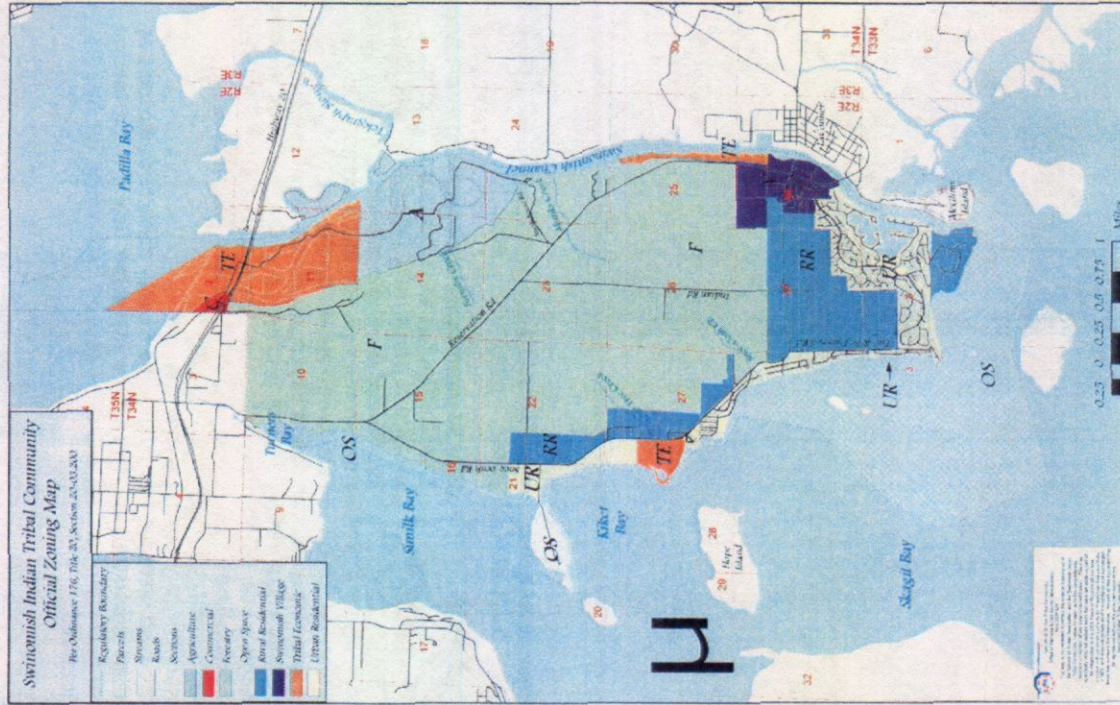
In 1887, Congress passed the Dawes Act which called for American Indians to be assimilated into the dominant society, and which also promoted an agrarian way of life. Tribal lands were subsequently allotted to individual members who received 80 or 160 acres of reservation land. Un-allotted land was then designated surplus and made available for sale to non-Indian buyers. The Dawes Act provisions reduced the acreage of the original Reservation and created the checkerboard of tribal, individual, and non-Indian ownerships which exists today.

In 1935, the Swinomish tribe voted to accept the provisions of the new Indian Reorganization Act and voted upon a federal charter, tribal constitution, and by-law, which were approved by the Secretary of the Interior in 1936. The Swinomish Indian Senate became the constitutional governing body.

Cooperative Land Use Program

The Swinomish Tribe became an Honoring Nations 2000 honoree as a result of the tribal Office of Planning & Community Development's Cooperative Land Use Program. The program is based on a memorandum of agreement and understanding between the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community and Skagit County that provides a framework for conducting permitting activities within the boundaries of the checkerboard reservation.

Since 1996, both governments have followed a common Comprehensive Land Use Plan and used similar procedures to administer it, exemplifying a mutually beneficial government-to-government relationship.



The Swinomish today

The Swinomish Tribal Community is a federally recognized Indian Tribe and a sovereign nation. The enrolled membership is about 778 and the Indian population living on or near the reservation are approximately 1,000. The executive governing body is the 11-member Swinomish Indian Senate, whose members are elected to 5-year terms.

The Tribe is the principal employer on the reservation, with 175 full time equivalent employees providing the following services:

- Swinomish Office of Planning & Community Development
- Fish rearing and hatchery facility
- Fish processing plant
- Tribal water system
- Police department in cooperation with the Skagit County Sheriff's Department
- Swinomish Northern Lights Casino and concessions
- Social services
- Housing and utility authority
- Northwest Indian College work training program
- Swinomish Tribal Health Center

The Swinomish urban growth area (UGA) population (which includes the Shelter Bay residential community on reservation leased land) was 2,664 in 2000 and is projected to grow to 3,650 by the year 2025.

Swinomish Water Resources Program

The Swinomish Water Resources Program is administered by the Swinomish Office of Planning & Community Development and committed to environmental protection, restoration, and enhancement in order to protect human health and welfare, and the environment.

Water quality monitoring is part of the integrated, Reservation-wide environmental protection effort.

Regulated waters of the reservation support the production, preservation, and enhancement of fish, shellfish, and other aquatic resources. Regulations and enhancement programs aim to increase water quality and quantity that will improve natural fish and shellfish populations and the aquatic resources upon which they depend.

Some of the Tribe's recent water quality improvement and habitat restoration projects include:

- Fornsbys Creek Restoration – to install self-regulating tidegates and reintroduce saltwater into former estuarine wetlands,
- Lone Tree Creek Restoration Project – to remove 2 blocking culverts and replace with a footbridge and arched culvert, and
- Lone Tree Creek Water Quality Improvement Project – to study the Lone Creek watershed to determine pollution sources and reduce the pollution by designing an in-channel treatment in conjunction with channel restoration.

The Tribe also works with the Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC) on fisheries management and natural resource services, and other agencies in Skagit County on restoration and enhancement projects.

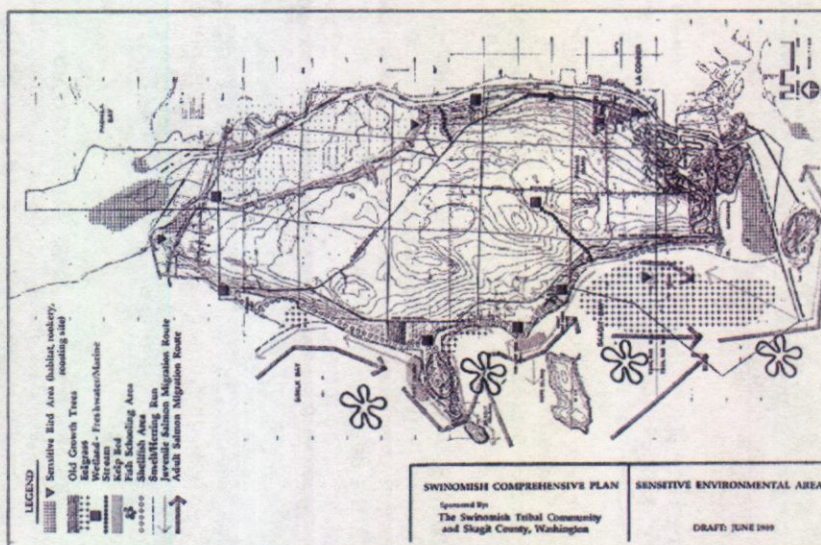
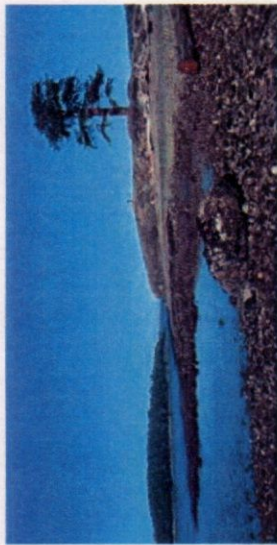
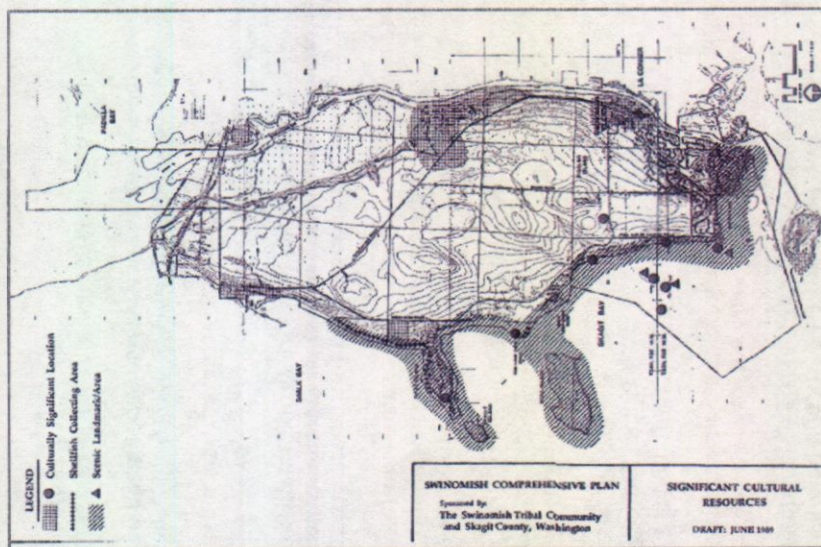
Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

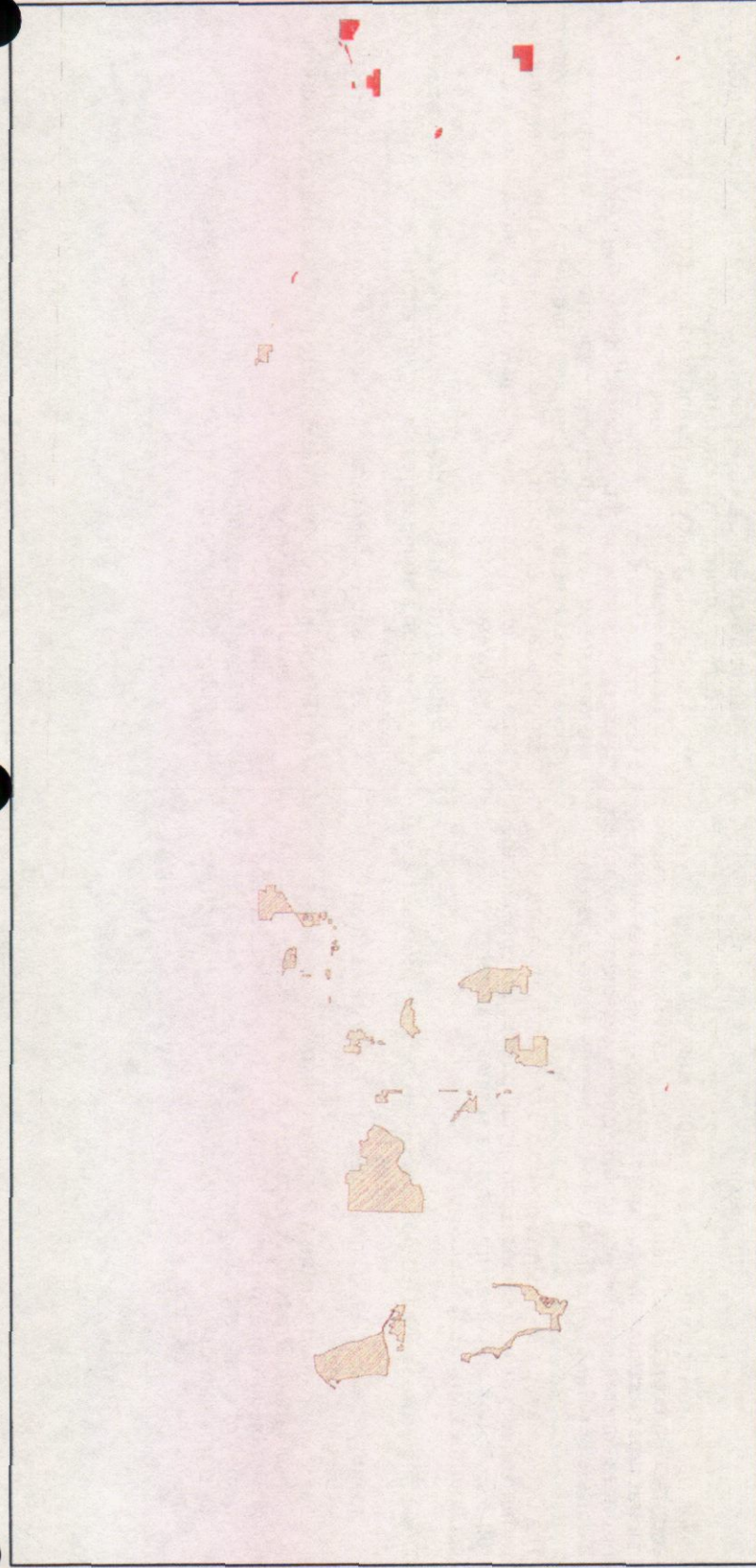
The Swinomish's UGA is defined on the east by the Swinomish Channel, on the south by Skagit Bay, Saratoga Passage, and Kikiet Island, and on the northeast by forest resource zoned lands.

Skagit Bay shoreline below Eagle Crest and north of the Swinomish Channel jetty create a sandy and gravel beach under the high bank waterfront during low tides from the jetty through Shelter Bay's Martha Beach to the point of Pull & Be Damned Road along the southern boundary of the UGA. The beach shoreline extends north in Saratoga Passage under mostly high bank waterfront around Hope Island to Kikiet Island Road.

The Swinomish Channel defines the east edge of the Swinomish UGA through Shelter Bay marina, which is bordered by residential development on filled lands, the Tribal fish processing plant and marina, log sorting yard, and scattered rural residential developments.

- The Swinomish Channel Trail proposal – could be extended from Pioneer Park in La Conner across the channel on Rainbow Bridge and then through Shelter Bay on Shelter Bay Drive to Martha's Beach, and on Reservation Road through the village to access the Tribe's community center, longhouse, and public facilities. The trail could extend back to the channel shoreline on the former Morris Road alignment to the original swing bridge.





B.26: The Nature Conservancy – Washington www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/washington

The Nature Conservancy's mission is to preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.



- Since the Conservancy's founding in 1951, the organization has:
 - protected more than 117,000,000 acres of land and 5,000 miles of rivers worldwide – and operated more than 100 marine conservation projects globally,
 - attracted more than 1,000,000 members,
 - worked in all 50 states and more than 30 countries, and

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- addressed threats to conservation involving climate change, fire, fresh water, forests, invasive species, and marine ecosystems.

The Conservancy's biodiversity approach to conservation has caused the organization to focus on large scale projects and work in partnerships with publicly owned natural areas and working lands.

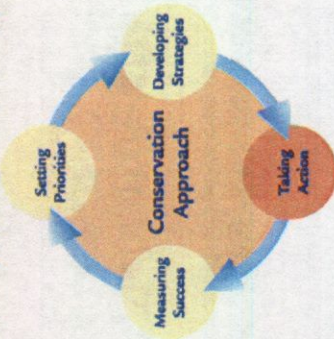
Core concepts

Ecoregions – are large units of land and water typically defined by climate, geology, topography, and associations of plants and animals – like the Skagit Watershed. Ecoregions, not political

boundaries, provide the framework for capturing ecological and genetic variation in biodiversity across a full range of environmental gradients.

Conservation by Design

The Conservancy developed a strategic, science-based planning process called Conservation by Design that helps the organization identify the highest-priority places – landscapes and seascapes that, if conserved, promise to ensure biodiversity over the long term.



The Conservation by Design concept is relatively straight-forward – set priorities through ecoregional planning and global habitat assessments, develop strategies as multiple scales to address ecoregional priorities and global threats, take direct conservation action, and measure conservation results.

Priorities – are set through global major habitat type assessments and through ecoregional planning. Scientific assessments of major habitat types examine the 30+ major habitat types and establish priorities for conservation at a global scale. Assessments examine biodiversity richness and threats to biodiversity and ecosystems.

The Conservancy also designs portfolios of conservation areas within and across ecoregions. Ecoregional portfolios represent the full distribution and diversity of native species, natural communities, and ecosystems.

Designing ecoregion-based portfolios is an iterative process based on 5 steps:

- Identify the species, communities, and ecosystems in an ecoregion,
- Set specific goals for the number and distribution of these conservation targets to be captured in the portfolio,
- Assemble information and relevant data on the location and quality of conservation targets,
- Design a network of conservation areas that most effectively meets the goals, and

- Identify the highest priority conservations areas wide-ranging targets and pervasive threats for conservation action.

Strategies - are developed with other organizations to meet the goals and priorities considering ecological and critical threats as well as the social, political, and economic conditions in play. The objective is to create solutions that meet the needs of species and ecosystems as well as people.

Actions - are varied, but typically include:

- Investing in science to inform decision-making,
- Protecting and managing land and waters,
- Forging strategic alliances with groups from other sectors,
- Creating and maintaining supportive public policies, practices, and incentives,
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of governments and non-governmental organizations to achieve conservation results,
- Developing and demonstrating innovative conservation approaches,
- Building an ethic and support for biodiversity conservation, such as community restoration projects,
- Generating private and public funding, including debt-for-nature swaps

Success – is measured by how well the biodiversity the maintenance of viable biodiversity, the abatement of critical threats, and effective protection and management of places where action is taken with partners. The results of the measurements are used to guide management actions, resource allocations, and future investments.

In addition to assessing the Conservancy's conservation impact, the organization also measures its organizational performance including:

- The number of landscapes where the Conservancy is directly engaged,
- The number of other areas where the Conservancy is working to ensure conservation,
- Membership,
- Private fund-raising growth, and
- Public dollars secured for conservation areas.

Conservation methods – private lands conservation

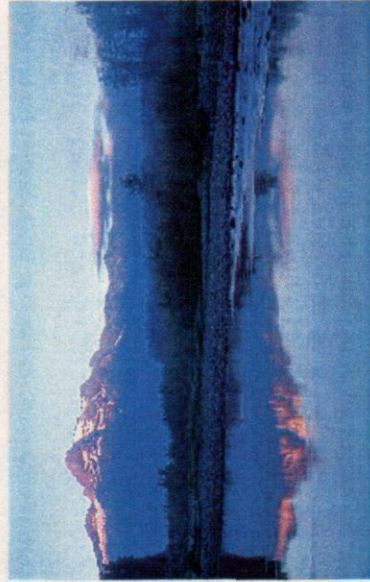
The Conservancy works with landowners, communities, cooperatives, and businesses to establish local groups that can protect land using land trusts, conservation easements, private reserves, and incentives.

Conservation buyers - in recent years, the Conservancy has begun working with private, conservation-minded individuals, or "conservation buyers", interested in acquiring and protecting ecologically-valuable lands. The Conservancy identifies and purchases target properties within priority conservation areas, or in zones that buffer and surround core natural areas. The Conservancy then widely and publicly markets the property, seeking a buyer committed to protecting the property's important natural values and willing to ensure the land's long-term conservation by placing a conservation easement on the land. The value of the land before and after the conservation easement restrictions is established by professional, independent appraisals. The Conservancy prohibits sales of conservation lands to any related parties.

Washington State

In Washington State, the Conservancy is actively working to safeguard 6 landscapes including the Skagit River & Delta, Port Susan Bay, Moses Coulee & Beezley Hills, Ellsworth Cree, South Puget Sound Prairies, and the Tieton River Canyon.

The Conservancy has been working in the Skagit River basin for the past 30 years or since 1976. What started as an eagle sanctuary



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evolved into a watershed-wide, seas-to-summit program with a vision to safeguard an entire watershed and coastal ecosystem in a way where humans and natural communities can thrive.

According to the Conservancy, the Skagit's salmon runs are the healthiest south of Canada and essential to the watershed's vitality. The salmon nourish hundreds of wintering bald eagles and dozens of other fish and wildlife species, including the next generation of salmon. Mudflats, estuaries, and brackish marshes in the greater Skagit Delta draw tens of thousands of Wrangell Island snow geese each winter, along with trumpeter swans, black brants, green-winged teals, long-billed dowitchers, and countless other shorebirds. As many as 800 raptors, including the endangered peregrine falcon, also descend on the delta.

Upper Skagit - the Conservancy buys land from willing sellers, whenever that is the most effective strategy to advance the ecological health of the region. Recent acquisitions include 67 acres on the Sauk River that is interconnected with protected areas already owned by Seattle City Light, Washington State DNR, and the Conservancy that contain spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and trout, as well as wintering grounds for bald eagles. However, the Conservancy also recognizes that privately owned, working lands - farms, ranches, forests, also play a key role in ensuring the health and diversity of this ecosystem.

The Conservancy is also involved with more than 100 local landowners over the past 4 years to eliminate patches of knotweed along dozens of miles of the Sauk and upper Skagit Rivers. And, the Conservancy is lending expertise in a collaborative process with some 30 other partners to inform and agree to improve water flows on the lower 55 miles of the Skagit River.

Skagit Delta - the Conservancy is also focused on the Skagit Delta and recently began an innovative "Farming for Wildlife" program that will test new treatments for farmlands of benefit to farmers



and shorebirds.

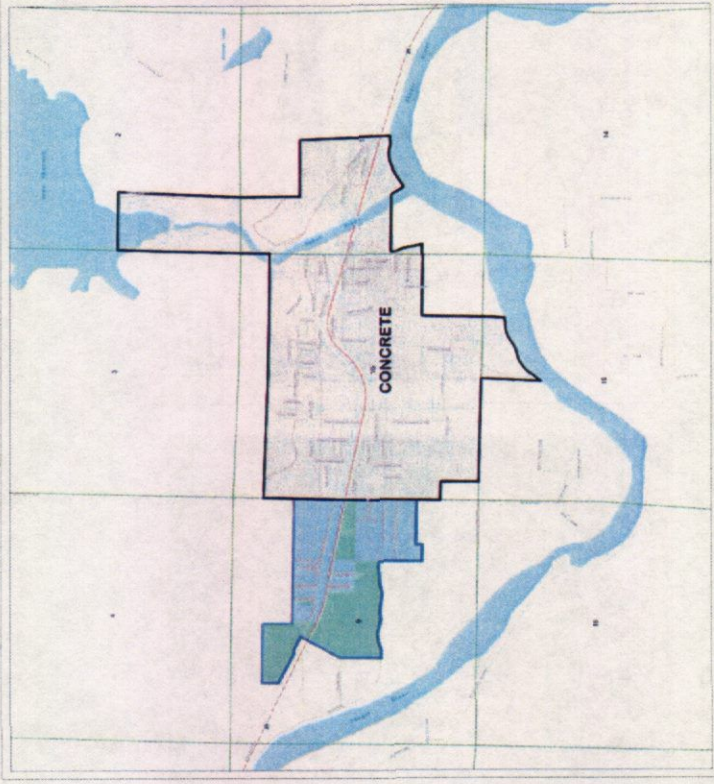
The program leases farmland and pays farmers to plant wildlife-friendly cover crops for a period of up to 3 years - after which, the land may be certified for organic crops since the soils will have been free of fertilizers and insecticides for the leased period.

The Conservancy is also cooperating with the Swinomish Tribe, the Skagit River Cooperative Systems, Western Washington Agricultural Association, Washington State University, Skagitians to Preserve Farmland, and Dike District 3 on a restoration plan for Fisher Slough and the Carpenter Creek watershed that could modify field drainage practices to improve fish habitat and drainage efficiency.

Fisher Slough is completely constrained on both banks by levees built decades ago to create farm fields out of tidal marshes. Carpenter and Fisher Creeks occasionally overtop the levees and flood the farm fields destroying the farm crops. The proposed restoration plan may pull the levees back from the slough to create more than 60 acres of tidal marsh and improve flood protection for farm fields located upland of the levees.

The project would acquire 45 acres along the slough, relocate the levee to create an alluvial fan, and replant the fan to create wetland and upland habitat for salmon, shorebirds, waterfowl, and neotropical songbirds.

In 2005 the EPA granted the Conservancy's Skagit Delta Project \$774,000 to help preserve farmland and aid in wild salmon recovery.



B.27: Town on Concrete

www.townofconcrete.com



Settlement was initiated in Concrete - by settlers who came to log the area and operate mills on the Skagit River in a settlement known as Minnehaha.

Amasa Everett, who discovered coal downriver at Hamilton, also found clay and limestone in the Concrete area. Everett carried samples to New York financiers, who formed the Washington Portland Cement Company in 1892 and built the processing plant on the east bank of the Baker River. As a consequence, the settlers of Minnehaha renamed the community Cement City.

The production of cement proved to be so profitable that in 1880 the Superior Portland Cement Company opened a plant on the west bank of the Baker River in a community known as Baker.

In 1909 the two small communities merged and renamed the town Concrete. The two cement companies also merged although the two concrete silos at each end of town reflect the early division of the companies and communities.

A mile-long aerial tramway from the quarry to the plant carried limestone directly over Main Street, and wayward chucks sometimes fell on pedestrians until the company installed a safety net. Workers were largely immigrants from southern Italy who put in 12-hour days 7 days a week. The plant closed in 1968.

A bridge was constructed over the Baker River in 1916 at the east end of town adjacent to the cement plant. The bridge design called for steel construction since that was determined to be cheaper. However, the cement company donated cement for the construction lowering the

cost enough to make the bridge feasible. The bridge was once of the first reinforced concrete long-span highway constructions and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Puget Sound Power & Light Company (PSP&L) built Baker Dam northeast of Concrete in 1924 to supply electricity to the Bellingham area creating Shannon Lake - a major recreational feature. The state's largest colony of nesting Osprey is located along the shores of the lake.

Concrete had a population of 960 persons in 2000 which declined to 845 in 2008. Concrete is estimated to have a population within the urban growth area of 1,350 persons by the year 2025.

Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

The Concrete Planning Department maintains land use regulations that protect critical areas including wetlands, floodplains, geological hazards, timberlands, and wildlife habitat. Significant features within the Concrete urban growth area include the buffers along Baker River and below Baker Dam, Lorensan Creek, and the numerous springs and streams on the hillsides above town.

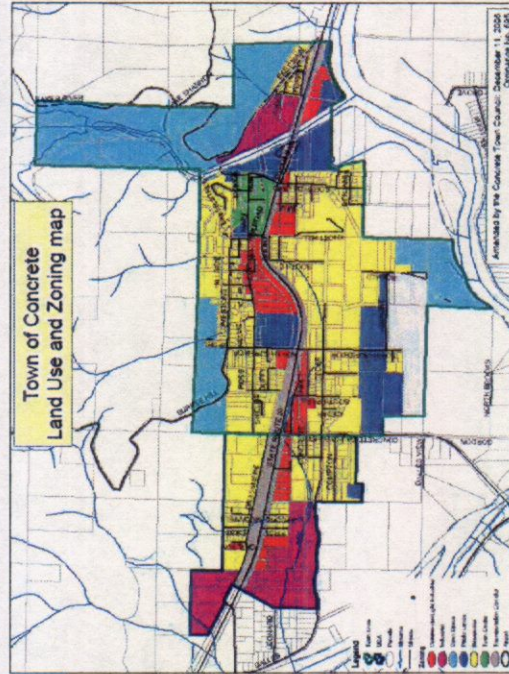
The city owns 11.13 acres of park and open space land including:

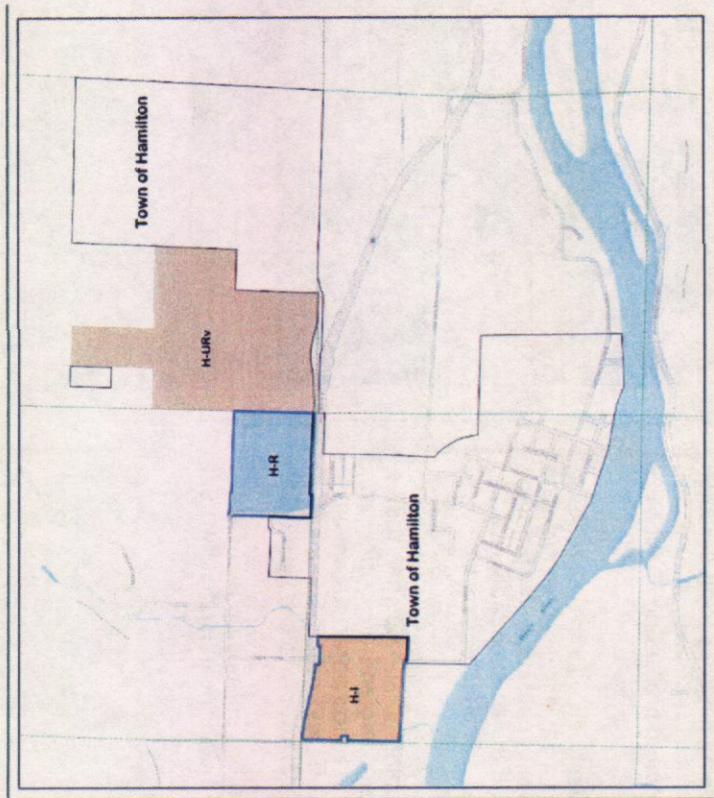


- **Silo Park** - a 10.0-acre parcel located on the west end of town adjacent to SR-20 that was a donation of the Lonestar Cement Company. The park includes one of the original cement company silos.

Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department - owns and maintains a number of significant park, open space, and trail assets within and adjacent to the Concrete urban growth area boundaries including:

- **The Cascade Trail** - a 22.5-mile, 280.0-acre multipurpose county trail parallels SR-20 from the east edge of Sedro-Woolley to Concrete. The rails-to-trails conservancy project is open year round for hiking, biking, and equestrian trail users. The county plans on eventually extending the trail east to Marblemount and the Ross Lake National Recreational Area (RLNRA).





B.28: Town of Hamilton

Settlement was initiated in Hamilton - by Amasa Everett when Everett found coal and iron deposits in the nearby mountains. Everett commissioned natives to haul the coal downstream to Skagit City from which it was shipped by steamer to San Francisco.

Hamilton was platted in 1877 on the north bank of the Skagit River and below Cumberland Creek with Iron Mountain on the east and Coal Mountain on the west. Development of the mines was initially inhibited by the inability of steamers to make the trip up river to the town. By 1890, steamers were able to navigate the river, and in 1891 the railroad arrived, after which serious work was commenced on mining activities attracting a population of upwards of 1,500 persons. The town was incorporated soon after in 1891.

The town, however, suffered serious damage during Skagit River floods in 1892, 1894, and 1896 although it survived and mining continued. A

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huge fire in 1925, however, destroyed most of the business district from which the town never fully recovered.

The town's population was 309 in 2000 with a projection of 450 persons by the year 2025.

Hamilton Public Development Authority

The Town chartered the PDA to undertake, assist with or otherwise facilitate authorized activities for the purpose of improving the general living, economic and environmental conditions within Hamilton and unincorporated areas of Skagit County in the vicinity of Hamilton. Please put the floodway habitat restoration component in the context of this larger overall intent.

Based on the Authority's initial work, the Town Council amended the charter in 2006 to specify that:

- Acquired floodway lands were to be used for fish and wildlife habitat, and activities that maintain or restore natural river functions and processes such as channel migration.
- Low-impact public access and hunting be acceptable, but not required, uses for acquired lands, and
- River processes take precedence over other land use activities, meaning that no flood protection will be provided, and fish and wildlife functions will be maintained through permanent legal mechanisms, following acquisition of the property or appropriate easements.

The Authority's scope of work was to include the restructuring of the town's development to move the town site north across SR-20 and out of the floodway including work necessary to:

- Prioritize the acquisition of properties and transfer of development rights to the new town site, if applicable.
- Remove acquired residential structures and outbuildings within the former town site once the properties had been acquired,
- Restore the habitat for the prioritized floodway areas – riverfronts and sloughs,
- Coordinate with a Technical Committee on habitat restoration efforts,
- Develop an implementation plan with funding opportunities and grant applications, and
- Contribute to the permitting and required processing under NEPA and SEPA.

At the present time, the Authority has identified a 157 acre proposed urban reserve and other UGA expansions areas necessary to facilitate the town's relocation, prepared initial grant applications for funding, and initiated acquisition negotiations with the affected property owners.

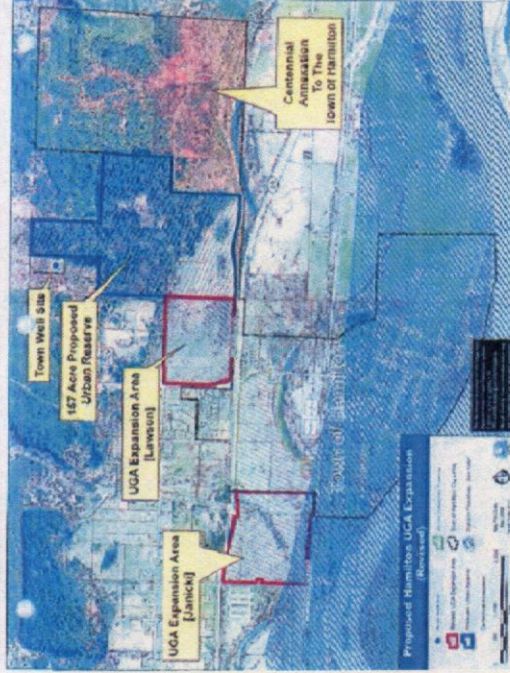
Hamilton's UGA

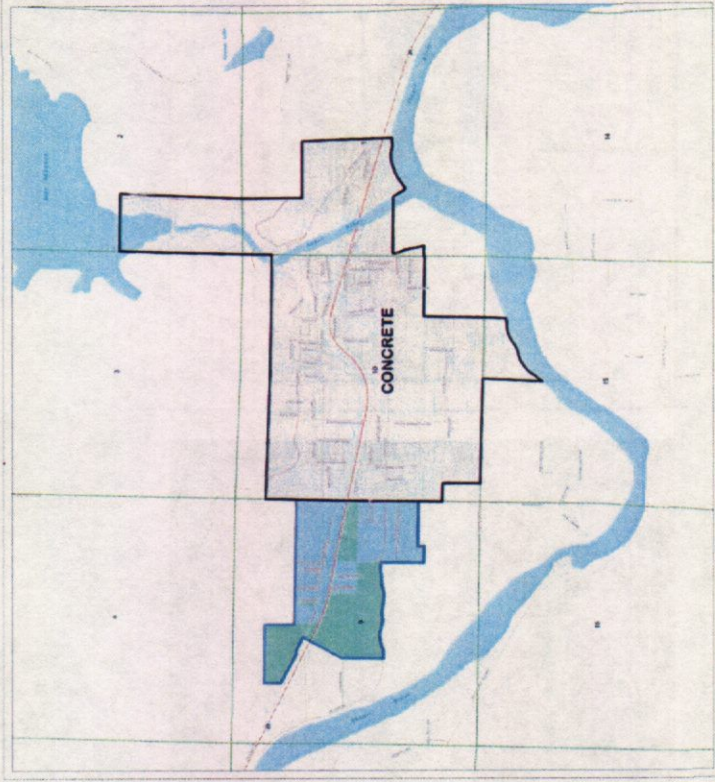
Depending on the final resolution of planning and design studies, the new town's open space system would incorporate critical areas (Muddy Creek, Davis Slough, Carey's lake, and other streams, sloughs, wetlands and their riparian buffers), steep slopes, and a Puget Sound Energy transmission line corridor into the plan.

The plan may also link to the surrounding foothills up Red Cabin, Alder, and Muddy Creeks north of the UGA. The existing town site

will be designated open space and provided public access to the river.

- **The Cascade Trail** - currently extends from Burlington east through Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, and Hamilton to Concrete on the former railroad right-of-way and track bed. A local trail system may be incorporated into the new town plan and connect to the Cascade Trail and the open space created at the old town site along the river.





B.27: Town of Concrete

www.townofconcrete.com



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In 1909 the two small communities merged and renamed the town Concrete. The two cement companies also merged although the two concrete silos at each end of town reflect the early division of the companies and communities.

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Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

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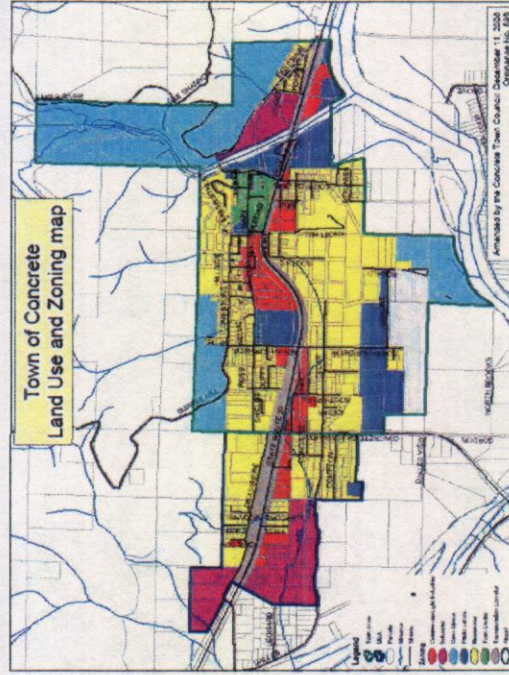
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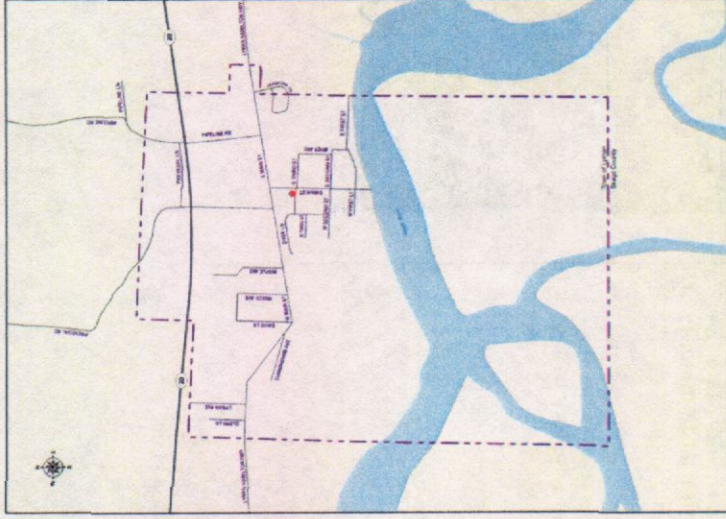


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B.30: Town of Lyman

www.townoflyman.com



Settlement was initiated in Lyman

– as early as 1860 when settlers from the east coast and mid-west traveled up the Skagit River about 30 miles to where the Skagit Indian village was located near the present-day site of Lyman. About 2,000 native Americans of the Skagit Tribe lived in the area until the early 1920's when a smallpox epidemic decimated the tribal numbers by about 80%.

Beginning in 1873, the Lyman area was logged and timber was shipped down river to market. Otto Klement arrived around 1880 and established a trading post consisting of a store, hotel, and saloon. Klement's outpost became a gathering place for hunters, timber cruisers, and adventurers bound from Mukilteo to Lyman. A post office

was included in Klement's trading post in 1881 when a mail route was established by Congress to Lyman.

The Town of Lyman is designated a heritage community since it was founded during Washington's territorial period of 1853-1889.

The town's population was 409 in 2000 with a projected population of 550 persons by the year 2025.

Critical areas, open spaces, parks, and trails

Lyman is defined on the south by the Skagit River floodplain and floodway, by Childs and Jones Creeks riparian corridors through the UGA, and on the south and west by overlapping agricultural resource zoned lands.

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Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

The wooded shoreline along the bends in the Skagit River are frequently flooded and therefore preserved as natural open space – particularly the western slough.

The open space corridors and buffers along Childs and Jones Creeks extend around the town and across SR-20 into the city's former watershed at the headwaters and springs of Jones Creek.

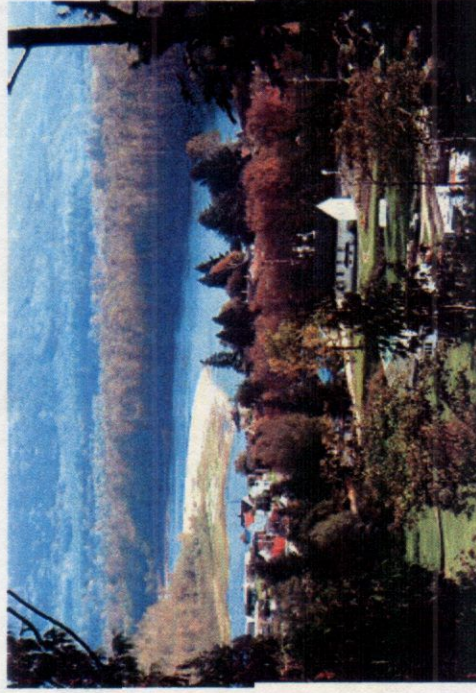
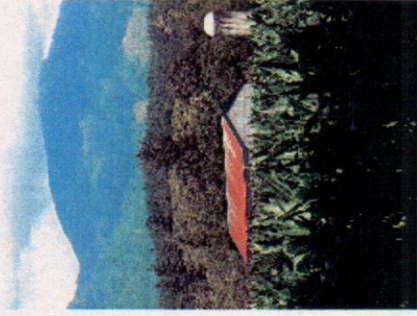
- **The Cascade Trail** – extends from Burlington east through Sedro-Woolley and Lyman's town center then east through Hamilton to Concrete. The trail corridor adjoins the area on the west slough and crosses over Childs and Jones Creeks.

Possible local trail systems could extend from the Cascade Trail north adjacent to Jones Creek tributaries north up the hillside into Washington State Department of Natural Resources forestlands.

Minkler Mansion

The Mansion was built by Birdsey Minkler in 1891, who settled in the area in 1877 and became one of the area's first lumber mill operators. Minkler was elected to represent Skagit County in the first state assembly when Washington State was granted statehood in 1889. In 1906, Minkler was unanimously nominated for the office of state senator, and was re-elected for a second term with a large majority of the vote.

The Mansion is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was acquired from the Minkler family to serve as the town's new city hall and honor the Mansion's central place in Lyman's history as the town approaches its 2009 Centennial.



B.31: Upper Skagit Tribe of Indians

The Upper Skagit people are descendants of 4 tribes of 11 tribes that inhabited villages on the Upper Skagit and Sauk Rivers. The Skagit River Valley was home to a number of Native American tribes known as the Coastal Samish, which comprised 2 linguistic groups: The Straits including the Clallam, Lummi, Smaish, and Semiahmoo tribes; and the Lushootseed including the Skagit, Snohomish, Snoqualmie, Swinomish, and Upper Skagit.

The Upper Skagits occupied the Skagit River from Diablo to the Skagit River delta. The Upper Skagits had close ties with the Sauks of the Sauk River, a tributary of the Skagit, and the Suiattles of the Suiattle River, a Sauk River tributary. Archaeological digs have revealed evidence of human habitation in the Upper Skagit River basin dating to 8,500 years ago.

The river sustained the culture that inhabited the valley and the tribes flourished using the natural resources including salmon, shellfish, sea mammals, upland game, camas root, and cedar trees. The Upper Skagits built permanent winter villages of cedar longhouses along the riverbanks from Mount Vernon to Newhalem until the tribes were compelled to relocate in the mid-1800s.

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Headmen of the upper Skagit basin were among the signatories to the Point Elliott Treaty in 1855. One who attended but did not sign the document was the prophet-cultist Slaybehtkud, who came from east of the Cascades Mountains to join the Skagits. After the treaty, Slaybehtkud united 10 extended and autonomous village bands of the Upper Skagit River and its tributaries.

Following the Treaty signing and for 60 years afterward, the government claimed the Upper Skagits did not constitute a single tribe since they lived in villages as bands and, therefore, were not entitled to a reservation allotment.

The Upper Skagits today

The Upper Skagits operate under a constitution and bylaws approved by the Secretary of the Interior in 1974. They are governed by a 7-member Upper Skagit Tribal Council with the chairperson elected annually from among the tribal members by popular vote.

The tribe operates the following programs:

- Family services programs including outpatient care, public health, nutrition, and mental health,
- Part-time sanitarian services including supervision of contaminated solid waste, food handling permits, health inspections, water quality and sewage management, vector control and solid waste disposal

The tribe filled a claim for land compensation in 1951 which overlapped a similar claim by the Lower Skagit Tribe. The tribe amended the petition in 1958 and officially changed their name to Upper Skagit Tribe of Indians to avoid any duplication with the Lower Skagit Tribal claims. In 1968 the tribe was awarded compensation for the low payment they originally received for their lands under the Point Elliott Treaty.

Tribal members live in numerous scattered public-domain allotments in Skagit County. Between 1977 and 1982, the tribe secured federally funded grants and contracts which it used to purchase a 25-acre tract on Bow Hill north of the former tribal headquarters in Burlington. The land was purchased from tribal members who owned individual allotments in that area.

In 1981 the tribe purchased a 74-acre parcel adjacent to Skagit County's Northern State Recreational Area (NSRA) east of Sedro-Woolley from a private owner, placed the land in trust, and declared it to be Upper Skagit Tribal reservation land along with the Bow Hill land holding. In the years since, the tribe developed a community center, administrative offices, and housing on the Sedro-Woolley reservation property.

The tribe also opened the Skagit Valley Casino Resort at Bow that includes a 103-room hotel and conference center. And, the tribe bought into the Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine that includes a hotel, conference center, 2 golf courses, and other amenities.

Natural resources

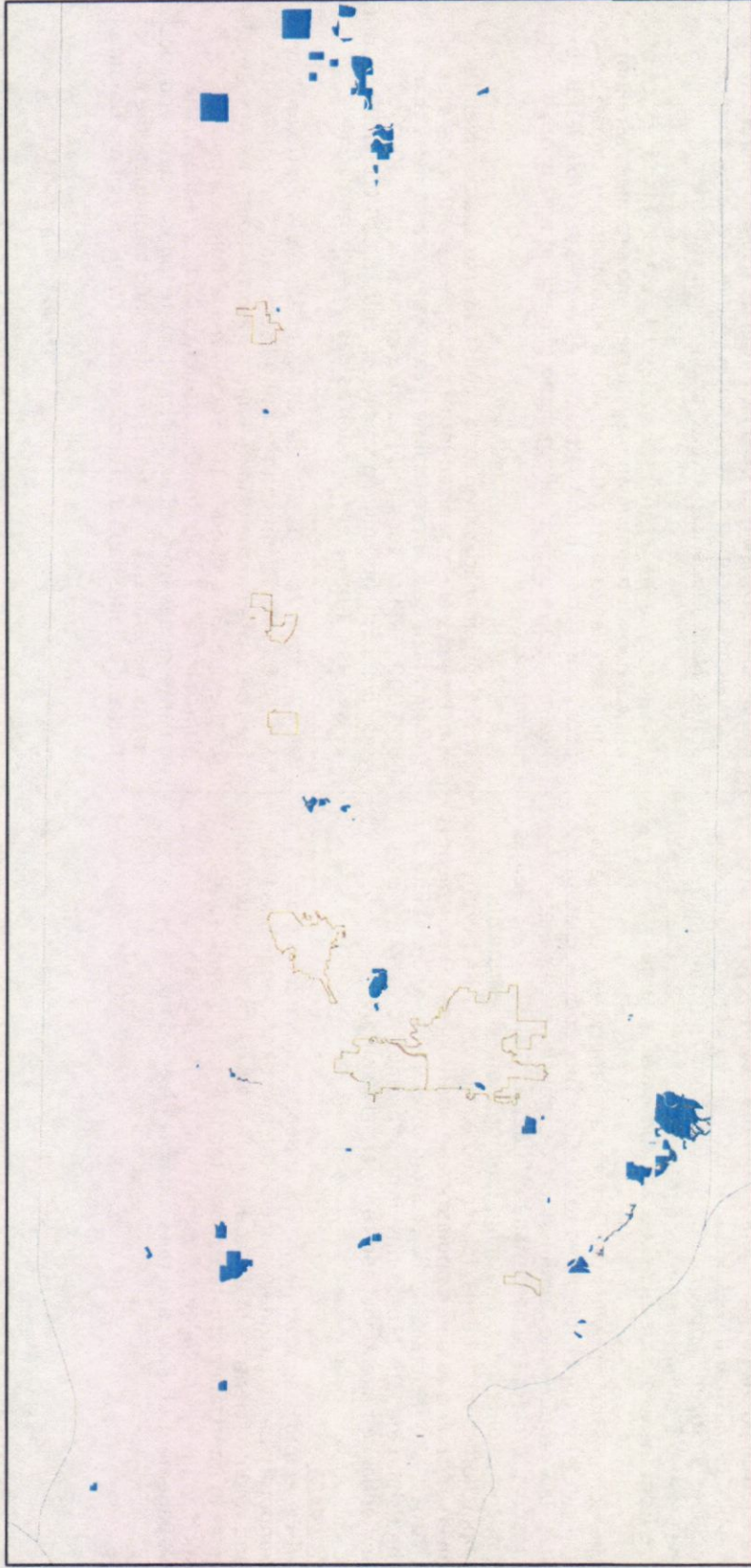
The Upper Skagits are members of the Skagit River Cooperative, which was organized in 1976 to regulate and enhance fishing in the Skagit River system.

The tribe began its chum enhancement program in 1990 to increase harvestable numbers for tribal ceremonial and subsistence use, as well as nontribal fishing in the terminal area of the Skagit River. The tribe built a hatchery consisting of 2 circular tanks that hold adult chum

salmon before spawning. The tanks are also a centerpiece of the tribe's Kids Fishing Days each spring, when they are stocked with rainbow trout for invited preschoolers to catch.

The tribe was recently awarded an EPA grant to upgrade their environmental programs, facilities, and services to comply with federal and state mandates.

The tribe recently optioned and evaluated a site in La Conner on the Swinomish Channel for a fish processing plant. They were unable to proceed with the plant proposal, however, due to poor geological characteristics of the site and property.



B.32: Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) www.wdfw.wa.gov

The Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife's (WDFW) mission is to provide sound stewardship of fish and wildlife. The health and well-being of fish and wildlife is important not only to the species themselves, but to humans as well. Often, when fish and wildlife populations are threatened, their decline can predict environmental hazards or patterns that also may have a negative impact on people.

In pursuit of this mission, the Department of Fish and Wildlife strives to achieve these goals:

- Department-wide leadership that is effective, efficient and results in public confidence in department management.
- An environment of respect and trust within the department fostering quality management and decision making.
- Recruitment, development and retention of a diverse, effectively deployed and well-trained workforce.
- An informed public, participating in policy development and contributing to quality decision making.



- Partnerships with public and international entities, tribal leaders, public volunteers and service groups to share responsibility for fish and wildlife.
- Effective practices partnerships with landowners and land use decision makers to maintain and enhance habitat.
- Maximum fishing, hunting and non-consumptive recreational opportunities compatible with healthy, diverse fish and wildlife populations.
- Sustainable management of marine resources to maintain the economic well-being and stability of the state's fishing industry and to enhance recreational and commercial fishing in state and offshore waters.

Department Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife was formed in 1994 with the merger of the former departments of Fisheries and Wildlife. In 1995 with the passage of Referendum 45, the vote of the people transferred control of the agency from the Governor to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. The Commission includes 9 citizens appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. 3 commissioners are from east of the Cascades, three are from the west side and three are appointed at large.

The Commission appoints the Director and approves the operating and capital budgets submitted to the Governor and Legislature. State law requires the Commission to establish policies that preserve, protect and perpetuate wildlife, fish, shellfish, as well as fish and wildlife habitat. Fishing, hunting, and recreational opportunities must be maximized and compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations. In addition, the Department is charged with maintaining the economic well-being and stability of the fishing industry. To do this, it must promote orderly fisheries and enhance recreational and commercial fishing.

Capacity:

WDFW employs approximately 1,800 people on a full-time or temporary basis, including some of the most knowledgeable fish and wildlife scientists in the country. These experts play important roles in interstate and international management organizations, such as the Pacific Salmon Commission, the Pacific Fishery Management Council, and the Columbia River Compact.

On the wildlife side, WDFW scientists deal with a range of issues from controlling dangerous animals such as bears and cougars, to restoring native species, such as caribou and western pond turtles. Some of these species are in danger of extinction.

Other WDFW employees enforce poaching laws, design culverts friendly to migrating fish, protect fish and wildlife habitat, teach safe hunting, manage valuable public lands, represent the state's interest in international negotiations, and a host of other activities. Employees are assigned to Olympia, regional offices in Spokane, Ephrata, Yakima, Mill Creek, Vancouver, Montesano and 17 field-level watershed teams - including an office in LaConner.

Organizationally, 5 programs headed by Assistant Directors report to WDFW's Director and Deputy Director including: Business Services, Enforcement, Habitat, Wildlife, and Fish. Additionally, the agency has strengthened its Intergovernmental Resource Management Division to better coordinate fish and wildlife needs and values with other governmental entities including counties, states, Native American Tribes, and foreign countries.

The agency manages more than 826,817 acres of land, which offer critical habitat to native animal species, and provides recreational opportunities to state citizens. WDFW also manages some 583 access sites to fresh and salt water, as well as to public lands for hunting, dog training, hiking, hang gliding, and many other popular activities.

WDFW also manages the world's most diverse and complex fish hatchery system organized into 16 complexes with more than 90 rearing facilities. Those facilities, each year, collect more than 300,000,000 fish eggs and produce more than 171,300,000 salmon, 8,500,000 million steelhead, and 25,600,000 million trout, as well as warm water fish such as bass, perch, and walleye.

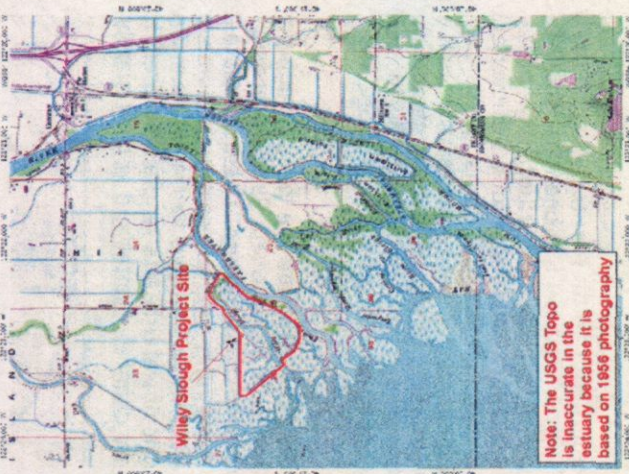
WDFW's total 2003-05 Biennial Budget Request is approximately \$282,100,000. Fishing and hunting license sales and other user fees deposited in the Wildlife Fund supports slightly more than 21% of the operating budget. The State General Fund supports approximately 29% of the Department's budget request. The balance comes from other dedicated state funds, federal and local funds. Federal and local funds are designed to mitigate the loss of fish and wildlife habitat. Approximately two-thirds of the funding is

dedicated to specific uses either by statute or as provisos in the Appropriations Act.

To improve its financial management, WDFW simplified, consolidated, and modernized its hunting and fishing license sales system 4 years ago. The automated system is more customer friendly for persons buying licenses, and brings license accounting practices into the 21st century. The automated system makes it far easier to identify license sales trends as WDFW collects some \$25,000,000 annually from the sale of more than 2,000,000 licenses through 575 vendors throughout the state. During Fiscal Year 2005, the Department will be analyzing the automated licensing system to determine how best to issue recreation licenses after the current contract with MCI runs out on June 30, 2006.

Persons without hunting or fishing licenses are required to purchase and display auto decals when using WDFW facilities. These conservation decals help WDFW recover the true cost of managing its lands used by non-hunting and fishing constituents.

Finding adequate funding to support Department activities is a real challenge. Therefore, WDFW is increasingly turning to partnerships with enthusiastic volunteers who perform a wide array of services for the benefit of fish and wildlife. These services include enhancing and restoring habitat; raising thousands of salmon and other fish species; removing non-native plants, such as Spartina; conducting educational tours at hatcheries and wildlife areas; serving as the eyes and ears of enforcement officers in programs such as Stream



Appendix B: Resources
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

Watch; feeding elk and other wild animals during the winter and clipping adipose fins from salmon and steelhead to distinguish them as hatchery fish for future fisheries.

Wiley Slough Restoration Project

The Wiley Slough Restoration project is a collaboration between the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Skagit Watershed Council, the Skagit River System Cooperative, and several Federal agencies and private interests.

The intent of the partnership is to develop a design for restoring an historic tidal and riverine system, thereby benefiting the diversity of fish and wildlife species that rely on estuaries, including salmon and a wide variety of migratory birds.

The partnership will rehabilitate natural processes at the Wiley Slough site that will be largely self-sustaining and in turn will support natural fish, wildlife and vegetative communities common to estuarine habitats in Puget Sound. To this end, the design approach focuses on restoring important physical processes (tidal and riverine flooding). The project will be designed in a way that protects interests of adjacent land owners, promotes wildlife oriented recreational activities consistent with the restoration objectives, and considers the perspectives of stakeholders affected by the project.

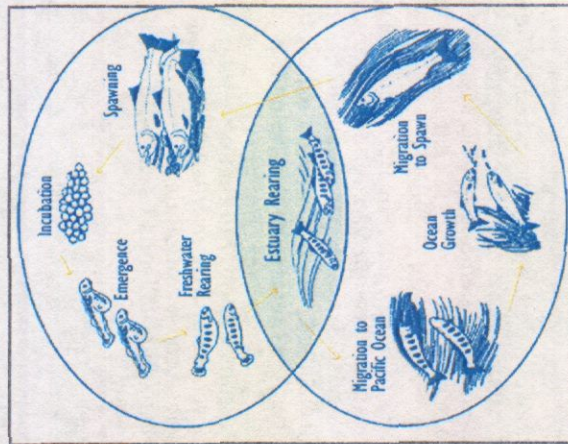
Funding and support for the project is provided by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Department of Agriculture, the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership, the US Fish and Wildlife Service Puget Sound Coastal Program, the Coastal Wetlands Program, Seattle City Light, and the Intensively Monitored Watershed Project.

The Wiley Slough Project is located directly south of what is commonly referred to as the "Headquarters" area of the Skagit Wildlife Area. The project is completely contained on public land managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Conditions:

Estuarine habitat in Puget Sound has declined dramatically since Euro-American settlement (Bortleson et al. 1980, Collins and Montgomery 2001). In the Skagit delta approximately 60% of tidal emergent habitat has been lost and 94% of tidal scrub shrub habitat has been lost (Hood, unpublished data). These areas provide critical habitat for a wide variety of fish and wildlife, including shorebirds, ducks, geese, swans, raptors, river otters, beaver, harbor seals, and many fish, most notably juvenile salmonids. Of the salmonids, chinook are the most dependent on estuarine rearing habitat and Puget Sound Chinook are listed as threatened by the Endangered Species Act (64 Federal Register 14308, March 24 1999).

Dikes have isolated the Wiley Slough project area from the key processes of riverine and tidal flooding, thereby altering sediment transport and storage. These processes are crucial to forming and maintaining a variety of estuarine habitat conditions. Construction of the Wiley Slough dikes, to drain and convert the project site to agricultural use, has resulted in direct loss of about 16 acres of tidal channel habitat and approximately 160 acres of intertidal marsh habitat.



However, there have been additional off-site impacts as a result of dike construction: 20 acres of intertidal channel habitat have been lost seaward of the dikes due to sediment deposition resulting from loss of tidal prism landward of the dikes (Hood 2004).

Additionally, the lower reach of Freshwater Slough has lost sinuosity and associated channel habitat diversity, probably due to loss of floodplain area via dike construction, which caused greater confinement of flood flows within

Freshwater Slough (Hood 2004).

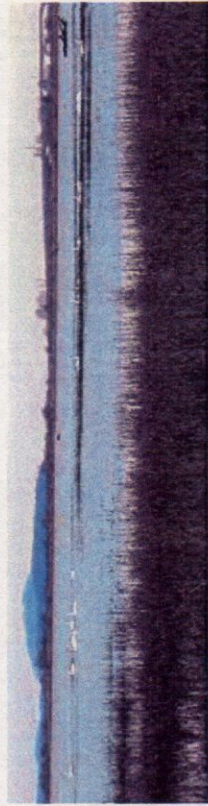
These off-site impacts from dike construction indicate that off-site areas will also likely respond to habitat restoration efforts that include significant dike removal. Thus, habitat restoration and project monitoring require a landscape-scale perspective.

The project area is located in a transition zone between forested riverine tidal and estuarine emergent habitats. However, vegetation has been significantly altered from historical conditions. The project area has been diked, drained and converted to agriculture, with cereal grains planted annually. Much of the natural forest, shrub, and herbaceous vegetation have been eliminated. Secondary forested areas exist along dikes and small berms adjacent to vestigial tidal channels.

All native anadromous fish and most native resident fish that would be expected to use the project site are currently excluded from the project site, as are other estuarine organisms dependent on tidal channel habitat. The site is extensively managed for put-and-take pheasant hunting and waterfowl (i.e., cereal grain is produced and seasonally flooded to attract and feed wintering waterfowl), but is also used by passerines.

Off-site (seaward of the dikes) impacts to fish and wildlife have occurred as a result of the loss of 20 acres of tidal channel habitat in lower Wiley Slough and the loss of channel sinuosity and associated habitat diversity in lower Freshwater Slough. Fish and





wildlife taxa likely to have been directly affected by loss of off-site habitat include salmon, bull trout, cutthroat trout, sturgeon (in pool habitat), shorebirds (feeding on sandbars), waterfowl (in channel habitat on low tides), and harbor seals.

Goal:

The proximate goal of the Wiley Slough restoration project is to restore natural processes, conditions, functions, and biological responses to the project area (approximately 175 acres), specifically, by removing dikes to restore riverine and tidal flooding to the project area. Restoration of natural estuarine process will result in the restoration of estuarine habitat for a wide variety of fish, wildlife, and other organisms. This is the ultimate goal of the restoration project. Taxa of particular management interest are Chinook salmon (Federally listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act), other salmonids, and wintering waterfowl. Process-based restoration will provide maximal benefits to a wide variety of estuarine fish and wildlife while incurring little long-term maintenance or costs.

Primary Project Objectives

- Specific project objectives for the restored area are as follows:
- Restoration of tidal and riverine flooding (natural process) to the marsh surface to allow unrestricted movement of water, sediments, nutrients, detritus and organisms across the marsh surface (natural function).
 - Restoration of channel habitat for juvenile salmonids inside (16.3 acres) and outside (20.5 acres) of the dike to be removed (natural condition).
 - Restoration of native marsh vegetation (natural condition/biological response) to the site to support detrital food chains (natural function/process) for juvenile salmonids (biological response) as well as provide food plants for wintering waterfowl (biological response).

All three of these objectives will significantly contribute to improvements in the quantity and quality of estuarine habitat on site and near the site (e.g., downstream portions of Wiley Slough sedimented in due to loss of upstream tidal prism) for a wide variety of native fish and wildlife, including juvenile salmonids and waterfowl.

Secondary Objectives

While the primary goals and objectives are concerned with habitat restoration to benefit critical estuarine fish and wildlife, additional objectives related to human use can be compatible with the primary goals and objectives of the project, such as:

- Provide waterfowl hunting opportunities.
- Improve the existing boat launch to reduce current maintenance needs.
- Facilitate public access to the site for watchable wildlife opportunities.
- Provide for agricultural drainage and flood protection.
- Retain the Skagit Wildlife Management Area headquarters in its current location.

These goals are secondary to the primary, habitat-related goals.





B.33: WA Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

www.dnr.wa.gov

DNR owns 3,000,000 and manages an additional 2,600,000 acres of forest, range, agriculture, aquatic, and commercial lands within Washington State that generate over \$200,000,000 annually to support public schools, universities, prisons and other state institutions, and fund county services such as libraries, firefighting, and hospitals.

DNR revenue producing activities on state trust lands include sustainable management and harvest of timber and forest products, leasing of agricultural lands (for orchards, vineyards, row

crops, dryland crops, and grazing), mineral leases, and leasing of communication sites and commercial properties. Since 1970, DNR managed "trust" lands have generated \$6,000,000,000 for trust beneficiaries, counties, and the state general fund.

DNR also manages Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCAs) and Natural Area Preserves (NAPs) that protect unique and threatened native ecosystems, and that offer educational and research opportunities.

DNR manages all state forestlands to provide fish and wildlife habitat, clean and abundant water, and public recreational access. The Department protects public resources by regulating forest practices (or timber harvests) and preventing and suppressing wildfires on more than 12,700,000 acres of state, private, and federal land. The



Department also collects data about existing native ecosystems and species to provide an objective, scientific basis for determining protection methods and areas.

The management of Washington's State Trust Lands is governed by the Board of Natural Resources composed of the elected Commissioner of Public Lands, the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, the UW and WSU Deans of the Colleges of Forest Resources, Agriculture, and Home Economics, and a county representative selected by the counties benefiting from State Forest trust lands.

The Department is organized around 13 Divisions, each focused on a specific business area, and 7 regions including the Northwest Region office in Sedro-Woolley that manages 387,000 acres of state forest lands for forestry, farming, and commercial uses in Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, Island, and Snohomish Counties. The NW office also manages more than 35,000 acres of natural areas that protect high-quality wildlife and plant habitat and provides low-impact public use at 28 recreational sites and 118 miles of trails for hiking, horseback, and ORV use within the region.

State Forest Lands

The largest state landholdings are state forest tracts of land managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR owns forestlands scattered principally within

the Cascade foothills adjacent to US National Forest holdings, and in tracts located on the San Juan Islands.

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) controls and manages a wide variety of property within Skagit County. These holdings include properties designated:

- urban land - for urban development or revenue enhancement,
- school trust lands - managed for the Washington Common School Indemnity & Escheat (CSI&E) that provide revenue for the state schools building programs, and
- institutional lands - held for use by other agencies.

State tidelands

When Washington State was established on 11 November 1889, the state claimed ownership of all beds and shores of navigable waters up to and including the line of ordinary high water (mean high tide) or the tidelands. This claim included the tidelands or beach between mean high tide and mean low tide that had been used for public access for centuries before the federal government granted these lands to the state.

The 1889 Washington State Legislature authorized the sale of public tidelands including the beach rights to private individuals and adjacent property landowners. From 1889 to 1971, when all sales were discontinued, the state sold approximately 60% of all public tidelands in the state to private owners prior to the discontinuance.

Private ownership allows the owners to use the tidelands as private property that at times have included the right to erect structures, bulkheads, and other obstructions to public passage. Under state law, private property owners also have the right to control the use of privately-owned tidelands - particularly for recreational uses such as picnicking, swimming, camping, fishing, clamming, boating, and other activities.

In the early 1970s, the state rescinded the option of selling tidelands and retained tidelands as public property for public use and/or revenue benefit. DNR manages the remaining public tidelands within the state.



Uplands - are parts of the almost always-dry beach area located above the high water tide mark - although portions may be covered by extremely high tides or during storms. Uplands may be barren of vegetation and may consist of sand dunes, gravel bars, tide pools, or log and storm debris covered earthen shorelines. Private parties own uplands except where public agencies have acquired title for parks, state uplands, road right-of-way, or other public facilities.

Tidelands - are the beach areas alternately covered and uncovered by the rising and falling tide. Tidelands are barren of vegetation and may consist of sand, gravel, or mud deposits and beaches. Tidelands may be publicly or privately owned. However, even when publicly owned, the upland property may be in private ownership - meaning some public tidelands may be landlocked or not be accessed from other public landholdings.

The swash line - or small floating debris that has been left on the beach when the tide is out - usually mark the boundary of the ordinary high tide. On some waterfront properties, however, the upland ownership extends to the meander line - which is some distance offshore from the line of ordinary high tide. In this instance, the property line will be located beyond the area normally indicated by the swash line.

DNR's public saltwater tideland holdings are classified and mapped by the department based on width of ownership and type of use. Generally, department maps include public use beaches, beaches leased to private parties, environmentally sensitive beaches, and beaches otherwise not suitable for public use. The department does not map tidelands less than 200 feet in length or freshwater ownership. DNR maps identify 3 types of tideland parcels around the county shoreline:

- Mean low tide to extreme low tide (which is about +3.0 feet above the mean lower low tide of 0.0 feet and the extreme low

tide which is -4.5 feet below the mean lower low tide of 0.0 feet or a total range of 7.4 feet.)

- Mean high tide to extreme low tide.
- Mean high tide to extreme low tide (which is +13.0 feet above the mean lower low tide of 0.0 feet and the extreme low tide which is -4.5 feet below the mean lower low tide of 0.0 feet or a total range of 17.4 feet.

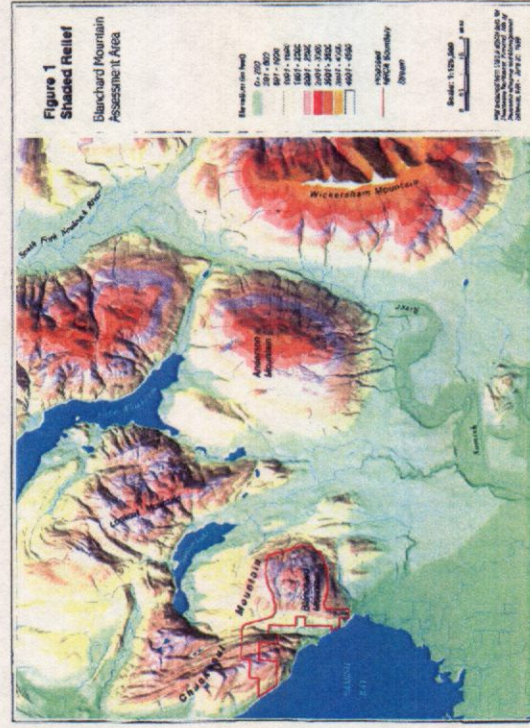
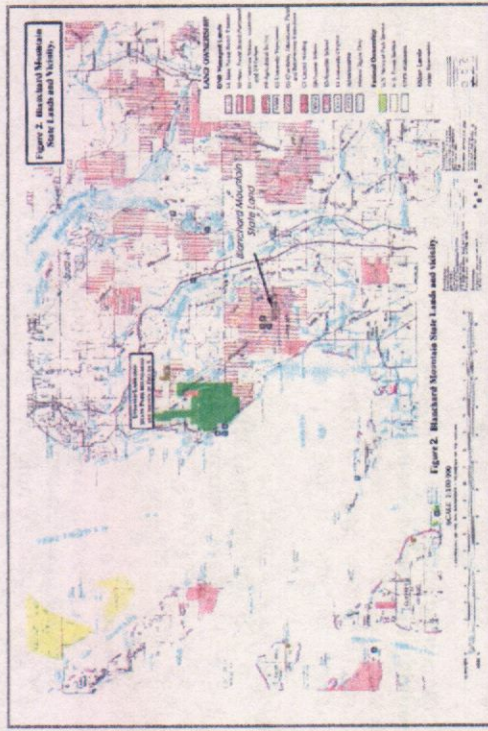
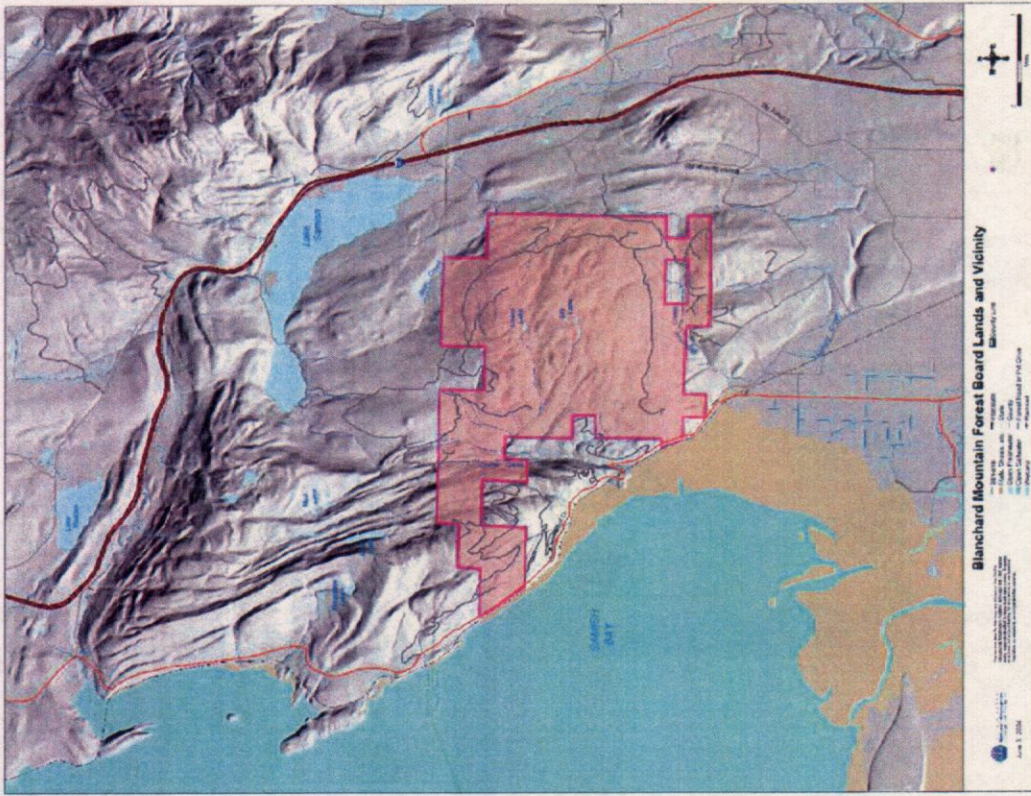
DNR tideland holdings in Skagit County are located in stretches along Samish, Padilla, Fidalgo, Burrows, Similk Bays.

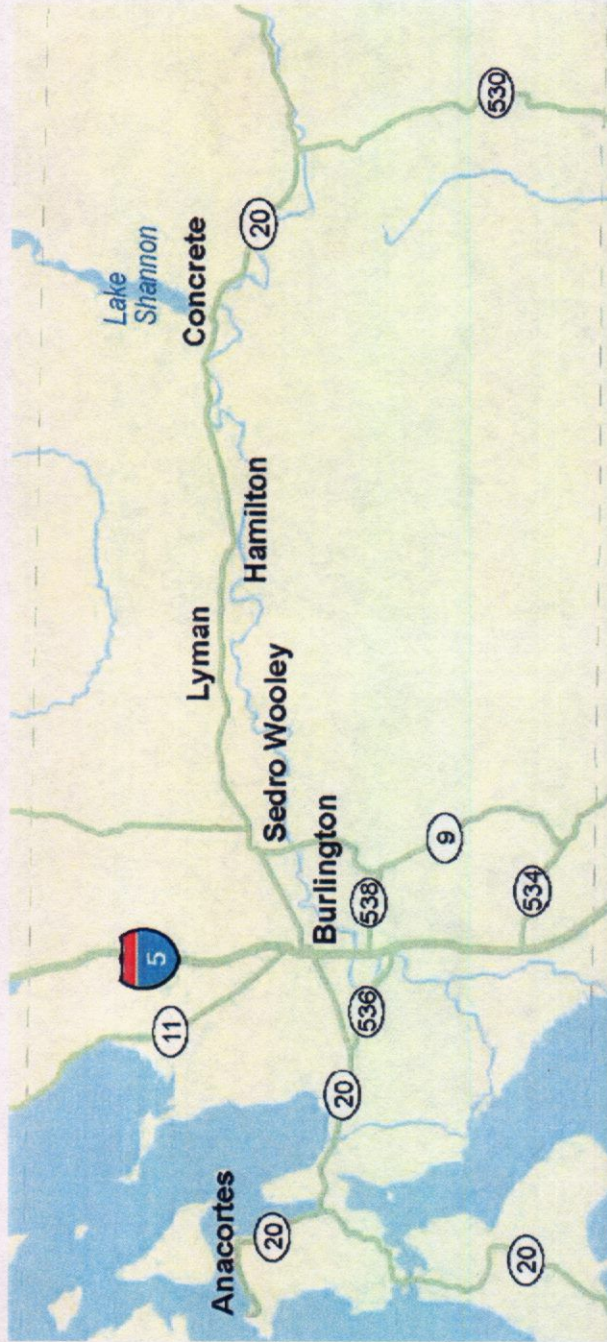
Blanchard Mountain

In 2007, the Commissioner of Public Lands adopted management strategies for the 4,827-acre state forestlands located on the top of Blanchard Mountain on the north border of Skagit County. Blanchard Mountain is an integral part of a forested corridor that extends from Puget Sound to the Cascade Mountains and from Skagit farmlands north through the Chuckanut Mountains to Bellingham.

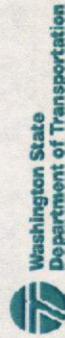
The strategies were developed by a 10-member Blanchard Forest Strategies Group that included representatives from Skagit County, Burlington-Edison School District, along with timber, environmental, and recreational interests. The Group's mission was to formulate a conceptual framework that would blend the continued revenue production of the state trust forestlands with diverse habitats, and different types of experiences for visitors.

The adopted strategies concept will manage a core of about 1,600 acres on top of the mountain for older forest conditions to provide an experience similar to an 'unmanaged forest' as well as scenic vistas for recreational visitors. Trails will link to Larrabee State Park to the north and Samish Bay in the southwest. Working forest interpretive exhibits will be located along different non-motorized trails throughout the mountain to provide education experiences.





B.34: Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) www.wsdot.wa.gov



As a partner in regional transportation planning, WSDOT supports Skagit County's efforts to guide development of multi-modal links between and through Skagit County communities. Close coordination will be required as open space connection concepts that involve state highways are more fully developed. In order to help define WSDOT's role in implementation of the *Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Concept Plan*, the following summary provides general information about WSDOT; describes statewide strategies to improve partnerships and support bicycling and walking as an integrated part of Washington's transportation network; and describes WSDOT's role in ongoing planning for non-motorized transportation in Skagit County.

Who we are and what we do

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is the steward of a large and robust transportation system, and is responsible

for ensuring that people and goods move safely and efficiently. In addition to building, maintaining, and operating the state highway system, WSDOT is responsible for the state ferry system, and works in partnership with others to maintain and improve local roads, railroads, airports, and multi-modal alternatives to driving.

WSDOT at a glance

- 18,389 state highway lane-miles
- 3,600 bridges including the 4 longest floating bridges in the US
- 42 safety rest areas
- 23 ferry vessels active in the largest vehicle-ferry system in the world
- 20 ferry terminals
- 24,000,000 ferry passengers annually
- \$15,000,000,000 capital improvement program
- 7,200 full-time employees

Source: www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/

Skagit State Routes

State Routes	Miles in Skagit County
Interstate 5	24.97
SR-9	29.15
SR-11	14.11
SR-20	85.53
SR-20 Spur	7.78
SR-530	14.96
SR-534	5.08
SR-536	5.38
SR-538	3.67
Anacortes Terminal	Marine highway connection
Total	191.63

WSDOT works towards achieving 5 goals: safety, preservation, mobility, environmental quality, and system stewardship. These goals are consistent with the statewide transportation policy goals established by the Legislature. The mission of the Washington State Department of Transportation is to keep people and business moving by operating and improving the state's transportation systems vital to our taxpayers and communities.

In pursuit of this mission, the Department is responsible for developing strategies to improve bicycle and walkway connections; increase state, regional, and local coordination; and reduce congestion. (RCW 47.06.100) We support all modes of transportation to give people transportation choices.

Washington State Bicycle Facilities and Walkway Plan
Plan Web site: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/PDF/BikePedPlan.pdf>

The state law (RCW 47.06.100) calls for the Washington State Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan to provide an assessment of statewide bicycle and pedestrian transportation needs and include strategies for: improving connections, increasing coordination, and reducing traffic congestion. The plan also satisfies the federal requirement for a long-range bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways plan.

Established goals:

This plan established important goals for reducing bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities by five percent per year, while doubling biking and walking over the next 20 years. Achieving these goals will require Regional Transportation Planning Organizations and local agencies, in particular, to prioritize improving conditions for bicycling and walking. The goals and associated performance measures are as follows:

- **Preservation:** Ensure no net loss in pedestrian and bicycle safety, and mobility.
- **Safety:** Target safety investments toward known risk factors for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Mobility:** Increase bicycling and pedestrian transportation choices.
- **Environment:** Walking and bicycling will be part of Washington State's strategy to improve public health and address climate change.
- **Stewardship:** Improve the quality of the transportation system by improving transportation access for all types of pedestrians and bicyclists, to the greatest extent possible.

Plan Summary:

Biking and walking are increasing in Washington, particularly in cities where housing infill is occurring. Bicycle commuting has increased 75% in the past 10 years. Biking and walking currently account for about 6% of statewide commute trips. In the Puget Sound Region, bicycling and walking account for 9% of all trips. In several urban core areas across Washington, bicycling and walking account for 15% of all trips.

Doubling current levels of bicycling and walking is achievable. In Washington State, more than half of all trips are less than 3 miles, yet 80% of these trips are made by car. Commuting to work accounts for about 20% of all vehicle miles traveled, so 80% of all the vehicle miles we drive are for other purposes. Bicycling and walking account for 5-7% of non-commute trips currently and many more of these trips could be accomplished by biking and walking as gas prices rise.

The State's safety record must continue to improve. In the 10 year period between 1997 and 2006, 103 cyclists and 706 pedestrians died on Washington's roads. Walkers and cyclists are killed at a

disproportionate rate. Bicyclists and pedestrians account for 6% of all trips statewide and are involved in 13% of all fatal traffic collisions.

The highest priority investments are connections within cities and urbanizing areas, particularly where housing and employment mix. Based on analysis of the data and information available, the greatest opportunity for improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility is improving crossings, connections, and trail systems within cities and urbanizing areas. Higher speed, higher volume arterials within cities often act as barriers to bicycling and walking.

Public support is strong for building safe places to walk and ride bikes. The statewide survey conducted by WSDOT showed that 86% of Washington residents have biked or walked for transportation over the past year. 70% percent of Washington residents surveyed support an increase in spending to create more safe places to bike and walk if current transportation funds are used; over 50% of citizens supported a tax increase.

Washington has limited resources to improve the built environment for biking and walking, for enforcement of biking and walking laws, and for providing public education. Bicycle and pedestrian engineering improvements are approximately 2% of the transportation budget.

WSDOT identified more than \$1,600,000,000 in unfunded bicycle and pedestrian improvements statewide. A review of adopted 6 and 10 year local plans and state highways found \$1,600,000,000 in conceptual solutions to make that transportation system safer and better for bicycling and walking. Of this \$1,600,000,000, approximately 20% has been grouped by WSDOT into the categories of Gap Projects, School Related Projects, and No Net Loss in Safety Projects on state highways.

Washington needs more and better intra-county bicycle and pedestrian connections and links to schools, transit, and ferries. The most frequent comment received during plan development was the recognition of the need for more and better intra-county connections and links to schools, transit, and ferries. This underscores the important role Regional Transportation Planning Organizations play in bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

Washington needs more commitment and better coordination to improve conditions for bicycling and walking. In order to continue to improve conditions for bicycling and walking and help reverse the rising rate of obesity in Washington State, local governments, transit providers, regional and state agencies will have to take coordinated implementation steps.

Next Steps:

WSDOT's *Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan* lists more than \$1,600,000,000 in unfunded bicycle and pedestrian improvements identified by local communities. Continued coordination with local and regional agencies, transit providers, and developers is needed to secure funding and implement identified improvements. It is important that local comprehensive plans identify bicycle and pedestrian facility needs so they can be addressed when capital programs are developed and included in the cost estimate of these programs.

Regional coordination

There are over 190 miles of state highways in Skagit County that provide important regional connections. The volume and speed of vehicles on these routes sometimes limit safe bicycle and pedestrian access when designated facilities do not exist. It is important to establish appropriately designed crossings and create corridors that safely connect these communities. Many times these routes can be accommodated along state facilities; but sometimes a safer, more cost effective connection could be located on other separated trails, paths and roadways. Multi-modal corridors identified as either needing to adjoin or cross state highways, require that safety standards can be met prior to approval. Several items in the state bicycle and pedestrian transportation plan are focused on these issues.

Community planning undertaken through the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) and the Active Community Task Force (ACT) has focused on a region-wide approach that will facilitate governmental coordination. The cities, Skagit County, WSDOT and Skagit Transit worked together to ensure that strategic corridors are aligned and are included in long range planning. The result of these discussions was the identification of a network of practical corridors that, if fully developed, would increase multi-modal mobility between cities and establish inter-county connections to Whatcom, Snohomish, Island, and

San Juan counties. This process identified areas that were needed to safely complete these corridors. These "gaps" in the system will be the priority for future development. They still need to be fully scoped and included in regional plans so they can be eligible for future public private partnerships.

Regional partners understand that funding is too limited to address all roadways, so the group is focused on routes that provide the greatest connectivity. These improvements would have the greatest impact on future bicycle and pedestrian use, but even these do not have dedicated funding. Partnerships must be established and coalitions must be developed to secure the public and private investments needed for these plans. Skagit County's Open Space planning is one step towards providing the predictability and guidance necessary to develop appropriate countywide connections. It is expected that this work will be further refined, routes established, scopes of work developed that meet safety and community standards, and that this work will be included in the long-range planning for participating jurisdictions.

Appendix C: Goals and objectives

The following goals and objectives were developed from the results of the workshops with open space agencies and organizations throughout Skagit County:

C.1: General goals

C.1.1: Land use – establish open space separators between the developing urban areas, and transitions between urban and rural land uses using Skagit County's UGA open spaces.

C.1.2: Natural resources – protect sensitive natural resources including important aquatic and wildlife habitat, and productive farmlands and woodlands, by preserving natural spaces and rural resources within Skagit County's UGA open spaces.

C.1.3: Scenic resources – preserve scenic landscapes and views that are important to the character of each community by including the resources within Skagit County's UGA open spaces.

C.1.4: Cultural resources – protect and enhance important cultural, historical, and archaeological features by including them within Skagit County's UGA open spaces.

C.1.5: Interpretation – provide opportunities for education and awareness programs by including interpretive natural and cultural exhibits and trails in Skagit County's UGA open spaces.

C.1.6: Recreation – provide a recreational network of walking, jogging, biking, and horse trails that access potential interpretive and scenic resources within and adjacent Skagit County's UGA open spaces.

C.1.7: Transportation – provide safe and direct non-motorized (hiking, biking, and horse) routes adjacent and through Skagit County's UGA open spaces.

C.2: Land use

C.2.1: Separators – create open space networks that define "place" boundaries establishing breaks or separations between Concrete and Sedro-Woolley, Sedro-Woolley and Burlington, Burlington and Bayview Ridge, and transitions between urban and rural areas along SR-9, SR-20, Chuckanut Drive, and McLean Road, among others.

C.2.2: Public/private network opportunities – define a planned network of open spaces so that private developments can contribute or link privately-owned open space systems to be part of or extensions of the overall UGA open space system as in, for example, the Eaglemont Development in Mount Vernon.

C.2.3: Flood control – include floodplains and flood-prone lands and the river dike and drainage systems along the Baker and Skagit Rivers, Nookachamps Creek, Gages Lake and Slough, Britts Slough, and Swinomish Channel in UGA open spaces.

C.3: Natural resources

C.3.1: Aquatic habitat – protect and enhance fresh and saltwater aquatic resources including fisheries, water fowl, and other species habitat in the Baker River, Skagit River including the North and South Forks, Samish River, Nookachamps Creek, Swinomish Channel, and Samish, Padilla, Fidalgo, Burrows, Similk, and Skagit Bays, and significant freshwater bodies such as Shannon, Gages, Barney, Heart, Whistle, Erie, and Campbell Lakes, as well as estuarine rearing and foraging resources in Skagit, Similk, Padilla, and Samish Bays that encompass, adjoin, and extend UGA open spaces.

C.3.2: Wildlife habitat and corridors – protect and enhance wildlife habitat including plant species, birds, and mammals within the marine, estuarine, freshwater, and terrestrial environments that encompass, adjoin, and provide migration corridors within and between UGA open spaces.

C.3.3: Agricultural lands – protect heritage, prime soils, and working farms in the Skagit River Valley, Nookachamps Creek, Skagit River Delta, and Fir and Fidalgo Islands by including them within UGA open spaces.

C.3.4: Woodlands – protect old growth, working forests, and significant woodland stands on US Forest Service, DNR, and other public and private properties on Burlington Hill, Little Mountain, and the Community Forest on Mount Erie by including them within UGA open spaces.

C.4: Scenic resources

C.4.1: Landscapes – protect existing scenic landscapes especially those that exemplify unique features that are visible from UGA open space viewpoints including Cap Sante Point, Mount Erie, and Little Mountain, are incorporated into major parks such as Northern State Recreation Area and Deception Pass State Park, and are prominent features of protected areas such as Padilla and Skagit Bays.

C.4.2: Scenic byways – protect scenic roads, rivers, and shorelines by preserving rural and marine land uses and activities, natural environments and vegetation, and scenic or visual features along UGA open space road and shoreline edges especially including the established SR-11 and SR-20 scenic byway corridors.

C.4.3: Viewpoints – protect and enhance scenic viewpoints that look into and onto visual landscapes including prominent high points such as Cap Sante Point, Mount Erie, Little Mountain, and Burlington Hill, as well as strategic overlooks or look-into places alongside and within the UGA open space network at the Baker and Skagit Rivers, Gages Slough, Nookachamps Creek, and Swinomish Channel.

C.5: Cultural resources

C.5.1: Landmarks – protect and interpret cultural, historical, and archaeological places, sites, and structures within the UGA open space system such as the cement and powerhouse

C-2

Appendix C: Goals and objectives
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

structures in Concrete, Northern State Hospital in Sedro-Woolley, BNSF Railroad facilities in Burlington, river steamboat landings and waterfront improvements in Mount Vernon, historical business district in La Conner, railroad jetty and marine waterfront in Anacortes.

C.6: Interpretation

C.6.1: Interpretive exhibits, trails, and centers – create and incorporate education and awareness programs and facilities within UGA open space systems such as the Padilla Bay and Tommy Thompson Trails, and Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NEER) interpretative center.

C.7: Recreation

C.7.1: Regional multiuse trails – develop a network of regional or countywide multiuse (hike, bike, and horse) trails including the Cascade, Centennial, PNW, and Skagit-Snohomish Trails adjacent, through, and into countywide and UGA open spaces to increase access, awareness, and interpretive opportunities provided that such access does not jeopardize critical wildlife habitat, working farmlands or forests, or other private resources and properties.

C.7.2: Community connections – link the regional or countywide multiuse trails with city or local trails that increase urban and rural resident access to parks, recreational areas, schools, public facilities, commercial, and employment areas in Concrete, Hamilton, Lyman, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, Mount Vernon, Bayview Ridge, La Conner, and Anacortes UGAs.

C.7.3: On/off-road linkages – where necessary and appropriate, extend regional and local multiuse trails within public road and utility rights-of-way that adjoin, cross, or access countywide and UGA open spaces to avoid off-road wildlife habitat intrusions, working farm or forest conflicts on a seasonal, interim, and sometimes permanent basis where it cannot be avoided.

C.7.4: Water trail linkages – where possible, connect on/off-road trails with water trails on the Guemes and San Juan Island Ferries and private excursion boat routes on the Skagit River, Swinomish Channel, Padilla, Similk, and Skagit Bays to increase public access and interpretive opportunities.

C.7.5: Accessibility – provide for disability access to encourage the use and enjoyment of all people with physical disabilities to the maximum extent possible similar to what has been provided on the Tommy Thompson, Padilla Bay, and Cascade Trails.

C.8: Transportation

C.8.1: Interconnections – link non-motorized transportation routes on SR-9, SR-11, SR-20, SR-237, SR-530, and SR-534 with the off-road Cascade, Centennial, PNW, and Skagit-Snohomish Trails systems to provide an interconnected network that parallels and provides access to UGA open spaces.

C.8.2: Rural access – extend non-motorized transportation routes outward from the UGAs to provide access to rural areas and landscapes as well as the UGA open space extensions on a countywide basis such as the biking designations on McLean

Road, Whitney-LaConner Road, and Chuckanut Drive.

C.8.3: Entry points – link non-motorized transportation routes with the surrounding counties and region specifically including on-road alignments on SR-9, SR-11, SR-20, SR-237, SR-530, and SR-534.

C.8.4: Water trails – designate hand-carry and other non-motorized water craft routes that flow alongside and through countywide and UGA open spaces on the Baker River, Skagit River including the North and South Forks, Samish River, Swinomish Channel, and Samish, Padilla, Fidalgo, Burrows, Similk, and Skagit Bays.



Photo – Rosario Beach, Deception Pass State Park, Fidalgo Island

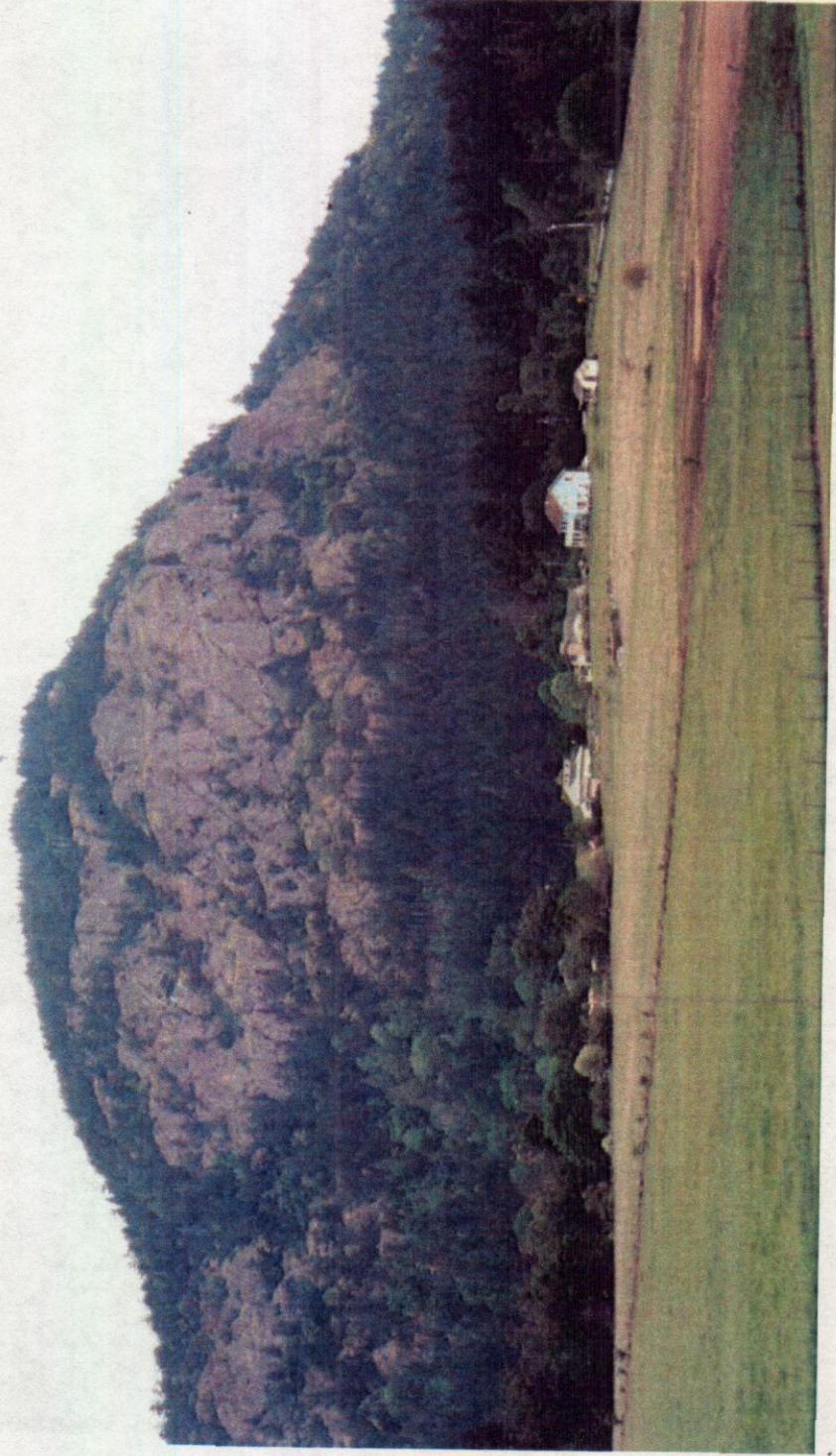


Photo - Mt Erie, Community Forest, Anacortes

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Appendix C: Goals and objectives
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

Appendix D: Mail-out/phone-back survey

In June 2007 a random sample of resident voter households in Skagit County was contacted to participate in a controlled sample survey concerning open space needs and priorities.

450 households agreed to participate in the survey and were mailed a copy of a summary description of the plan and a copy of the questionnaire. Survey results were compiled for the first 200 households who completed the surveys by follow-up telephone call - the number planned for in the original survey scope.

The resulting survey results are accurate to within 8+/- percent of the opinions of the general population. The statistics are rounded and may not add to 100 percent and do not list "don't know" responses. The statistics also account for undecided, did not know, or refused a response (which generally ranged from 0-7% depending on the question). The question numbers are listed in the left column and began with number 5 as 1-4 are reserved for questionnaire numbering. Following is a summary of the results for the total sample group.

Following are the summary results of the survey ranked in priority on a scale of 1 to 5 where 4-5 is the best condition or highest priority and 1-2 is the poorest condition or least priority. For analysis purposes, a 3 rating is considered to be an average condition or priority where the survey respondents could go in either direction (50:50 split) should a specific policy, plan, or program be proposed at this time. The undecided, did not know, or refused were not included in this summary analysis.

D.1: Survey participant characteristics

Question number

63	Which area of the county do you live in?	27% Anacortes area 6% LaConner area 2% Bayview area 9% Burlington area 28% Mount Vernon area
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		1% Lyman area 2% Hamilton area 1% Concrete area 12% Sedro-Woolley 14% Other county area
64	How long have you lived in the county?	0-1 2-5 6-10 10+ yrs 0% 13% 8% 80%
65	What type of housing do you live in?	own rent 95% 6%
66	What age group are you in?	18-24 25-34 35-49 50-64 65+ 0% 3% 14% 55% 29%

Place of residence - the distribution of survey participants closely approximates the distribution of households across the county with larger percentages residing in the cities compared with the smaller cities and rural areas.

Length of residence - heavily favors long time residents, which is likely to be common of frequent voters.

Tenure - survey occupants were predominantly owners, which is also likely to be common of frequent voters.

Age groups - were heavily represented in the middle to senior age spans (50+) compared to young to middle age adults (18-49) which is partly a reflection of older length of residence and the voting populations of the county.

D.2: Existing UGA open space and trail conditions

Survey respondents were asked to rate the following open space conservation and public trail access conditions within and adjacent to the urban growth areas (UGAs) in Skagit County in general on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the poorest and 5 the best condition possible.

poorest/best
1-2 3 4-5

q# UGA open space conservation efforts

7	Protection of prime agricultural soils and working farmlands adjacent to urbanizing areas?	31% 33% 36%
8	Protection of scenic areas and landscapes including viewpoints and vistas from hilltops and along entry roads into urbanizing areas?	25% 38% 36%
5	Conservation of wildlife habitat – especially within the Skagit River and its tributaries as they flow through the urban areas?	27% 42% 30%
9	Identification and preservation of historical and cultural landmarks, sites, and features within and adjacent to urbanizing areas?	27% 41% 30%
6	Preservation of woodlands – particularly mature, older forest stands within the urbanizing areas?	39% 34% 26%
13	Picnic grounds, shelters, and other day use activity areas in open space systems in the urbanizing areas?	21% 42% 36%
11	Public access trails for hike, bike, and horse (including handicap accessible) to or through open spaces in the urbanizing areas?	31% 37% 31%
12	Waterfront access for fishing, swimming, kayaking, and canoeing in open spaces in the urbanizing areas?	33% 35% 31%
10	Interpretive markers, exhibits, trails, and centers located in open spaces within or adjacent to urbanizing areas?	32% 41% 25%

As shown, the survey respondents did not rank any open space or trail feature to be of a best condition overall. In some instances, the respondents indicated conditions were equal (rating 3) or of worse condition (rating 1-2) than those that considered them to be in good condition (rating 4-5).

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Appendix D: Mail-out/phone-back survey
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

D.3: Open space trends in urbanizing Skagit County

Survey respondents were asked to what degree they agreed with the following statements made during workshops with open space organizations concerning trends that may be affecting the conservation of open spaces and trail developments within the UGAs of Skagit County.

dis-/agree
1-2 3 4-5

q# Open space trends

14	Skagit County has some of the most valuable and productive wildlife habitats, woodlands, and farms in the region if not the country?	7% 10% 85%
18	Open spaces within the UGAs should be interconnected to flow through the cities into the surrounding countryside in a manner that conserves important assets and provides some logical and visible corridor networks?	11% 16% 73%
19	Open space conservation efforts must do more than just preserve land – conservation programs should also restore, enhance, and manage the land to provide the valuable natural and ecological functions it once did?	14% 17% 70%
17	Open spaces that are being created are often small, landlocked preserves within new residential developments that are not linked to a continuous open space network for the surrounding city or its residents – or between cities and urbanizing areas?	14% 21% 63%
15	An unacceptable amount of these valuable open space assets (wildlife, woodlands, and farms) are rapidly being lost to urban development within UGAs?	18% 19% 63%
16	An unacceptable amount of these valuable assets are also being lost to rural type land uses including roadside stands, hobby farms, big box houses, and other developments adjacent UGAs?	28% 25% 46%

dis-/agree
1-2 3 4-5

q# Scenic resources

20	Skagit County has some of the most diverse and scenic resources in the region including mountain, valley, waterfront, farms and viewpoints?	2% 8% 90%
22	Rural roads and byways, especially the entry roads into and out of the urbanizing areas should retain an open and rural character ("rural by design") that is not cluttered with commercial uses, advertising, and other urban characteristics?	15% 16% 70%
21	"The view from the road", however, is rapidly disappearing or being blocked or replaced with roadside clutter consisting of advertising signs, rural commercial uses, hobby farms, and/or inappropriate buildings or developments?	21% 19% 59%
23	Skagit County public access trail systems and park activities could extend from open space corridors within the urbanizing areas out into the countryside to access some of the most diverse and scenic features in the county and region?	12% 17% 72%
25	Public access trail systems and park activities should extend from the inner most urban areas out into the countryside within and through natural open space corridor networks to provide easy access to urban and rural residents alike?	16% 19% 64%
24	Major existing public trail corridors, however, are located within park boundaries or on former railroad corridors and dikes located in rural areas that are not easily accessed by residents of the urbanizing areas on a daily basis?	20% 25% 54%

As shown, the survey respondents agreed overwhelmingly with the statements elicited from non-profit open space organizations concerning trends that are imperiling open space, scenic resources, and public access in the county at the present time.

D.4: Population growth impacts

Survey respondents were asked if in the next 20 years the Skagit County population is projected to increase by another 51,600 people or 46% more than the existing population of 113,100 persons, whether existing policies and programs will be sufficient to protect the county's open space resources.

26	In your opinion, will <u>existing UGA open space and public access trail conditions, trends, policies, and programs</u> be enough to conserve and protect Skagit County's UGA related open space resources?	51% no 18% yes 32% don't know
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As shown, a majority of the respondents do not think existing policies and programs will be sufficient to conserve and protect Skagit County's UGA related open space resources. However, a significant percent of the respondents may not know what existing policies and programs are. They may also not know whether they are or will be sufficient.

D.5: UGA open space and public access trail priorities

In light of the preceding, survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of the following open spaces within and adjacent to the urbanizing areas (UGAs) of the county in general whether such areas are protected by critical area ordinances, land use agreements, conservation easements, or land purchases by public or private organization efforts.

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

q# UGA open space conservation needs

29	Productive and working farmlands adjacent the urbanizing areas?	13% 14% 74%
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q#	UGA open space conservation needs	low / high			
		1-2	3	4	5
28	Mature and older growth forestlands within and adjacent the urbanizing areas?	16%	18%	67%	
27	Wildlife habitat and migration corridors within and through the urbanizing areas?	19%	20%	62%	
30	Scenic landscapes and roadside views entering and leaving the urbanizing areas?	14%	26%	61%	
31	Historical and cultural landmarks and sites within and adjacent urban areas?	14%	33%	55%	

q#	UGA public access trails and activities	low / high			
		1-2	3	4	5
33	Public access trails and facilities that extend through and outwards from the urbanizing areas?	15%	22%	64%	
34	Fishing, swimming, car-top boating, picnicking, and other day use activities within open space corridor networks in and adjacent the urbanizing areas?	15%	21%	65%	
32	Interpretive trails, exhibits, and centers within open space corridor networks that extend outwards from the urbanizing areas?	16%	34%	52%	

As shown, survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated all of the open space conservation and public access trails and activities were of the utmost importance (scores greater than 50% for ratings of 4-5) per the rank orders shown.

D.6: UGA open space and trails plan proposals

Under the proposed UGA open space and trails plan, public and private governments and organizations may jointly conserve and restore wildlife, forests, farms, scenic areas, historical, and cultural sites within and adjacent to the UGAs of the county. The survey respondents were asked to rate the following proposals - as shown on attached preliminary concept graphics.

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Appendix D: Mail-out/phone-back survey
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

q#	UGA open space corridors	low / high			
		1-2	3	4	5
35	<u>Countywide UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Skagit River from Concrete through Hamilton, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, and Mount Vernon, on the Swinomish Channel to LaConner, and on the Community Forests and State Park through Anacortes? As shown in the graphics, these corridors could extend from the cities outward into the most rural landscapes and features linking the UGAs into continuous greenway systems?	12%	18%	71%	
43	<u>Anacortes UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on Cranberry Lake and Community Forests, and Deception Pass State Park through the UGA and extend into the city to link with the Tommy Thompson Trail, Cap Sante and Washington Parks, the downtown, marinas, city trails, schools, and other assets.	12%	22%	61%	
38	<u>Sedro-Woolley UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Skagit River, Hart Slough, and Skiyou Island around the UGA and extend through the city on Brickyard and Hansen Creeks to link with Northern State Hospital County Park as well as the downtown, city trails, parks, schools, and other assets?	14%	23%	59%	
40	<u>Mount Vernon UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Skagit River, Nookachamps Creek, Barnes Lake, and Britt Slough around the UGA and extend through the city on Maddox and Carpenter Creeks to link with the Kulshan Trail, Beaver Pond, Little Mountain as well as the downtown, city trails, parks, schools, and other assets.	17%	20%	58%	

q# UGA open space corridors

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

39	<u>Burlington UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Skagit River and Hart Slough around the UGA and extend through the city on Gages Slough to link with Burlington Hill as well as the downtown, city trails, parks, schools, and other assets.	15% 24% 57%
42	<u>LaConner UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Swinomish Channel, Sullivan Slough, and Skagit Bay through and around the UGA and extend into the city, Swinomish Village, and Shelter Bay to link with the downtown, schools, trails, and parks?	16% 24% 56%
36	<u>Concrete UGA open space corridors</u> - could focus on the Skagit River around the UGA and extend through the city on Lorenzan Creek and the Baker River, then north to Lake Shannon linking with the downtown, schools, parks, and other assets?	15% 30% 53%
41	<u>Bayview UGA open space corridors</u> - could incorporate the lands surrounding the runways and storm retention areas and extend through the UGA to link with Padilla Bay and Burlington?	17% 27% 53%
37	<u>Hamilton UGA open space corridors</u> (not shown in the graphics) - could focus on the Skagit River around the UGA? Depending on the final resolution of planning and design studies currently being accomplished for the city, the open space system could extend up Alder and Mud Creeks to link with local trails and other facilities?	21% 32% 41%

q# UGA major trails and activities

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

49	<u>Anacortes-Burlington Trail</u> - could extend west from Burlington along SR-	16% 17% 64%
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20	through the proposed Bayview UGA to link with Swinomish Channel and PNW Trails to LaConner and Anacortes? The Anacortes-Burlington Trail would create a countywide trail linkage with all of the other major trail systems?	
44	<u>Cascade Trail</u> - could extend through the Skagit River open space corridor from Rockport through Concrete, Hamilton, Sedro-Woolley, and Burlington? An eastern extension of the trail could link with the Ross Lake National Recreation Area?	13% 22% 63%
48	<u>Swinomish Channel Trail</u> - could extend north from LaConner along the Swinomish Channel to the PNW Trail and provide access to the estuaries and wetlands in Padilla and Fidalgo Bays.	17% 21% 59%
47	<u>PNW/Interurban Trail</u> - could extend south from the Interurban Trail in Whatcom County through Bayview to the Swinomish Channel then west through Anacortes to Deception Pass and Whidbey Island?	17% 22% 58%
45	<u>Centennial Trail</u> - could provide access from Snohomish County trail systems past Lake McMurray, Big Lake, the Nookachamps, Skagit River, and Northern State Hospital to link with Whatcom County trail systems to Lake Whatcom, Bellingham, and the Canadian border?	17% 21% 58%
46	<u>Skagit-Snohomish Trail</u> - could extend from the Nookachamps south through Mount Vernon and Britt Slough then along the South Fork of the Skagit River to link with Fir Island, Conway, Stanwood and the Snohomish County trail systems.	21% 20% 58%

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

q# 50	Interpretive centers and day-use parks – be installed where appropriate along the trail corridors identified above to increase interpretive opportunities and open space related day-use park activities?	18% 29% 51%
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low / high
1-2 3 4-5

q# 51	Scenic corridors “Rural by Design” scenic overlay districts – be established to conserve the “rural by design” scenic aspects (but not change land use allowances) for major roadway entries into and between the UGAs including SR-9, SR-11, SR-20, Old Highway 99, and other significant rural county roads?	16% 31% 50%
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As shown, survey respondents **gave overwhelming priorities** to all of the open space, public access trail, and scenic corridor proposals - with the exception of Hamilton UGA for which there were no graphic representations.

However, the percents that did not have an opinion increased up to 7% for questions about some of the more rural UGAs where residents may not be as familiar with the physical proposals - and/or may not have been as interested.

On the other hand, survey respondents gave overwhelming support to all UGAs where graphics illustrated open space and trail proposals consistent with the county-wide theme, indicating their support for a county-wide as opposed to a parochial or local-only approach.

D.7: Role and responsibility alternatives

The county and cities could conserve UGA open space and trails proposed above under different policy priorities. Survey respondents were asked to prioritize the **following functions that could be pursued by the county and cities for the**

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Appendix D: Mail-out/phone-back survey
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

conservation of open space and trails within and adjacent to the UGAs.

Role and responsibility alternatives		low / high 1-2 3 4-5
53	Coordinator – the county and cities create plans, financing strategies, and implementation programs but may be an active agent as well as a facilitator involving as many other public, non-profit, and private organizations as possible to conserve, restore, enhance, and manage <u>regional UGA related</u> open spaces and public access trails and activities?	14% 16% 66%
52	Regional conservator – the county and cities be the principal agents to conserve, restore, enhance, and manage <u>regional UGA related</u> open spaces and public access trails and activities to the benefit and use of all residents on a countywide basis?	23% 25% 48%

As shown, survey respondents overwhelmingly favored a coordinator approach where public agencies involved as many other organizations as possible compared to a county-city or public agency approach primarily.

D.8: Joint venture opportunity and partner options

Besides Skagit County and the cities – the federal and state governments, tribes, ports, public utility and dike districts, non-profit organizations, and a variety of other public and private agencies own and maintain open spaces and trails within the county. Survey respondents were asked to rate joint venture projects to conserve open spaces and trails within and adjacent to the UGAs with the following organizations.

q#	UGA open spaces and public access trail systems	low / high 1-2 3 4-5
55	With non-profit organizations – like the Nature Conservancy, Skagitians for	12% 20% 66%

	Farmland Preservation, or Skagit Land Trust?	
54	<u>With other public agencies</u> - like federal and state agencies, tribes, ports, utility and dike districts?	14% 22% 63%
56	<u>With for-profit organizations</u> - like Puget Sound Energy (PSE), wetland mitigation developers, and private recreational facility developers and operators?	31% 25% 42%

As shown, survey respondents overwhelmingly favored non-profit and other public agencies. The survey respondents were somewhat receptive to the idea of also involving private organizations, though approval would likely depend on specifics.

D.9: Financing alternatives

Skagit County and its cities, like all jurisdictions in Washington State must structure fiscal policies to reflect recently adopted restraints on the use of property, license, and other taxes for the financing of general governmental services including the conservation of UGA open spaces and trail networks.

The following questions outline a number of alternative methods for conserving, restoring, and enhancing open space and trails within and adjacent the UGAs for your evaluation. The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) could adopt some, most, or all of the following ways and methods for structuring the way the county and cities deliver and finance UGA open spaces and trails depending on the results of this survey, and in some cases subsequent voter approvals.

D.10: Real estate excise, fuel tax, license fee, and sales tax options

Subject to voter approval, the Skagit County Commissioners could institute a variety of optional fees and taxes to be

dedicated exclusively to the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and management of UGA open spaces and public access trail systems on a countywide basis. Survey respondents were asked to rate each of the following optional approaches.

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

Optional UGA open spaced dedicated fees and taxes

60	<u>Local Option Sales Tax</u> - an additional 0.1% sales tax (equal to \$0.10 for a \$100 purchase) to be paid by residents and tourists to be dedicated <u>exclusively</u> to UGA open spaces and public access trail systems on a countywide basis?	38% 16% 47%
57	<u>Real Estate Excise Tax (REET-3)</u> - an additional 0.25% assessment of the sales price of all real estate property (equal to \$250 per \$100,000 of sale price) paid by the purchaser to be dedicated <u>exclusively</u> to the acquisition, restoration, enhancement, and management of UGA open spaces and public access trail systems on a countywide basis?	49% 11% 40%
59	<u>Local Option Fuel Tax</u> - an additional \$0.023 per gallon sales tax to be paid by residents and tourists to be dedicated <u>exclusively</u> to UGA open spaces and public access trail systems on a countywide basis?	57% 13% 30%
58	<u>Local Option Vehicle License Fee</u> - an additional \$15.00 per vehicle license registered in the county to be dedicated <u>exclusively</u> to UGA open spaces and public access trail systems on a countywide basis?	55% 17% 28%

As shown, survey respondents were marginally supportive of a Local Option Sales Tax - and not at all in favor of a 3rd REET, Local Option Fuel Tax, or Local Option Vehicle License Fee for the tax and fee amounts indicated where the funds generated

would be exclusively used for open space and public access trail purposes.

Approval to use the Local Option Sales Tax would depend on what extent a referendum on the issue would motivate the 16% who rated the proposal a 3 or mid-level priority at this time and in the abstract description provided.

D.11: Property tax levy

As an addition or as an alternative to any of the above tax and fee options, the Skagit County Commissioners could institute a limited duration property tax levy as a means of financing the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and management of UGA open spaces and trails on a countywide basis. A countywide approach would share revenues between the county, cities, and/or other public or non-profit agencies that provide regional UGA related open space and public access trail system conservation projects and programs. Survey respondents were asked to rate this method.

low / high
1-2 3 4-5

q#		Amount per year
61	<u>Countywide UGA approach</u> - where revenues are shared between county, cities, and/or other public and non-profit agencies that provide <u>regional UGA related</u> open space and trail projects and programs?	36% 23% 39%
62	If a levy were to be put on the ballot to finance <u>regional UGA related open space and trail projects and programs on a countywide basis</u> , how much, if anything, would your <u>household</u> be willing to pay <u>per year</u> for this source of funding?	\$0 27% \$1 - 99 19% \$100-249 32% \$250+ 8% Don't know 14% Mean = \$89.40

As shown, survey respondents were almost evenly split statistically between favoring and not favoring a property tax levy that would be exclusively used for open space and public

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access trail purposes. Survey respondents were more receptive to the use of the Local Option Sales Tax than the property tax levy.

Even so, 59% indicated a willingness to pay some amount for a levy (compared to 27% that would not and 14% that did not know) for which the mean number was \$89.40 per household per year.

Approval to use a property tax levy or the Local Option Sales Tax would likely depend on what extent a referendum on the issue would motivate the respondents who rated the proposal a 3 or mid-level priority at this time and in the abstract description provided.

A proposal to use either approach will likely require more detailed descriptions of how much would be raised (and required of a levy or tax) to initiate more specific identified actions under what coordinating strategies to conserve open space, provide public access trails and activities, and protect scenic roads on a county-wide basis.

D.12: Comments

Survey respondents were asked if they had any specific comments or recommendations to make about the proposed UGA open space and public access trails plan or the survey ~ of which 57% of the respondents provided comments or suggestions described in the full technical results.

Appendix E: Financial resources

An analysis was accomplished of recent financial trends in Skagit County and the impact federal and state program mandates, revenue sharing, and the county's urbanization have on the discretionary monies available for open space. The analysis also reviewed trends in county revenues and the affect alternative revenue sources may have on open space and trail project and program financial prospects. Following is a brief summary of major findings.

E.1: Revenue and expenditures - general government

Skagit County's annual general governmental expenditures are derived from the combination of general, special revenue, debt service, and enterprise funds - as well as state and federal grants. Following is a brief summary of the revenue accounts of most interest and application to countywide open space and trail projects and programs.

D.1.1: General fund

The General Fund is derived from property taxes, licenses and permits, intergovernmental revenues including state and federal grants, service charges and fees, fines and forfeitures, and other miscellaneous revenues. General funds are used to finance most government operations including staff, equipment, capital facility, and other requirements - *and can be used to fund open space programs. None of the following general fund accounts, however, are currently funding open space projects and programs for the reasons outlined in the following descriptions.*

- **Property tax** - under Washington State's constitution counties may levy a property tax rate not to exceed \$1.80 per \$1,000 of the assessed value of all taxable property within the county jurisdictional limits. *In the year 2005, the county General Fund property tax rate was \$1.7832 per \$1,000 assessed value or 99% of the allowable maximum.*

The total of all property taxes for all taxing authorities, however, cannot exceed 1.0% of assessed valuation, or \$10.00 per \$1,000 of value. If the taxes of all districts exceed the 1.0% or \$10.00 amount, each is proportionately reduced until the total is at or below the 1.0% limit.

In 2001, Washington State law was amended by Proposition 747, a statutory provision limiting the growth of regular property taxes to 1.0% per year, after adjustments for new construction. After years of appeal, the Washington State Supreme Court upheld Proposition 747 in 2007 limiting all jurisdictions in the state to a maximum increase per year of 1.0% over the total amount of revenue raised in the year before, after adjustments for new construction. Any proposed increases over this amount are subject to a voter referendum.

The statute was intended to limit local governmental spending by controlling the annual rate of growth of property taxes. In practice, however, the statute reduces the effective property tax yield to an annual level far below a county's levy authorization, particularly when property values are increasing rapidly.

As a result, city and county jurisdictions are losing their effective sources of revenue as revenue levels fall below the annual impacts of inflation and below the level of investment or cost population growth impacts are requiring in new infrastructure and services.

Generally, the county has not appropriated very much of the annual General Fund budget for capital improvements - including no open space acquisition programs. Skagit County has building and infrastructure construction requirements, but given the declining buying power of annual county budgets, not had the capital resources available to initiate major construction projects from the general funds or non-dedicated funds accounts.

The 1% statutory limit on local property tax yields combined with the sporadic and undependable nature of federal and state grants and revenue sharing prevents and discourages the county from making long term capital investments in infrastructure necessary to support the county's development.

- **Property tax levy lid lifts (resetting the rate)** - Proposition 747, the statutory provision limiting the growth of regular property taxes to 1.0% per year, can be waived by referendum approval of a simple (50%) majority of Skagit County's registered voters.

Voters can be asked to approve a permanent resetting of the property tax levy rate that would adjust the amount of revenue the county can generate. The new total revenue that can be generated by a resetting of the rate would be subject to the same annual 1.0% limitation, however, and the total amount of revenue and the resulting property tax rate would start to decline again in accordance with the proposition.

However, the adjusted rate and revenue could be dedicated exclusively to finance specific capital improvement projects - such as open space and trail projects and programs that involve **construction, maintenance, and operations** aspects that a majority of the voters are willing to pay for under the adjusted or reset rate.

- **Limited purpose property tax levy lid lifts** - RCW 84.55.050(3)(C) authorizes referendum approval of a simple (50%) majority of registered county voters the resetting of the property tax levy rate on a temporary basis where the rate is adjusted until a specific amount of revenue has been generated to finance **construction, maintenance, and operation** of a project or program - after which the rate reverts to the original or a specified amount defined in the referendum.

A "plain vanilla" lid lift lasts as long as the funds are dedicated to the specified purpose. The levy amount bumps up in the 1st year to the new total rate specified in the ballot proposition then increases subject to the 1% limitation in growth thereafter.

There is a 9-year limit to the special purpose levy lid lift ... "if the limited purpose includes making redemption payments on bonds". Otherwise, the duration of the limited purpose levy lid lift may be for as long as the ballot specifies and the voters will approve.

- **Sales tax** - is the second largest General Fund revenue source and may be used for any legitimate public purpose. The county has no direct control over this source. The taxes are collected and distributed by the state and may fluctuate with general economic and local business conditions.

- **Local Option Sales Tax (LOST)** - in 2000 the Washington State legislature approved special statutory authorization allowing Peirce County to add and collect an additional 1/10th of 1% of the sales tax for the sole purpose of financing improvements to regional parks.

Validated by voter approval, the additional taxes tax funds are used to acquire, develop, and maintain parks owned, operated, and support by Pierce County and/or local city and park jurisdictions such as the Tacoma Metropolitan Park District.

The legislature has since authorized this additional optional add-on to be available to other counties within the state.

D.1.2: County Roads Fund

The County Roads Fund is derived from property taxes, gas taxes, license fees, inter-governmental revenues including state and federal grants, service charges and fees, and other miscellaneous revenues. The County Road Fund is used to finance most roadway operations including staff, equipment, capital facility, and other requirements.

The County Roads Fund may also finance non-motorized transportation improvements and recreational trail projects that provide a connection between destinations. ***Generally, however, due to the rising cost of roadway maintenance and the 1.0% limitation on revenue growth, Skagit County has not been able to finance much on or off-road non-motorized***

transportation improvements from the following revenue sources:

- **Property tax** - the County may levy up to \$2.25 per \$1,000 assessed value for road construction and maintenance needs on the assessed value of taxable property within the unincorporated area of a county - or a total of \$4.05 for Roads and the General Funds combined. *In the year 2005, the county's Road Fund property tax rate was \$1.9454 per \$1,000 assessed value or 86% of the allowable maximum.*

Like the General Fund property tax, the Roads Fund property tax is also subject to Proposition 747's limit on the growth of the regular property tax levy at 1.0% per year, after adjustments for new construction. Any proposed increases over this amount are subject to a voter referendum.

Any amount that is not charged up to the maximum at the time of the referendum, however, may be "banked" for future authorization - meaning the base rate may be increased up to the allowable limit at the time the 1.0% limitation was invoked in 2007.

- **Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET-PTR)** - Washington State (RCW 82.44) collects an annual excise tax paid by motor vehicle owners and administered by the Department of Licensing. Cities and counties receive a percent of the base tax allocation that must be spent on police and fire, or roadway improvements.

RCW 47.30.050 requires that local governments collect and dedicate not less than 0.005% of the total amount of MVET funds received during the fiscal year for the purpose of developing paths and trails (the Paths and Trails Reserve). The Paths and Trails Reserve was established to provide for the development and maintenance of paths and trails within the right-of-way of public roads.

Skagit County currently allocates this amount in a Special Paths account that is dispensed for on-road non-motorized improvements.

- **Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax - Arterial Streets (MVFT-AS)** - RCW 82.36 collects an annual tax paid by gasoline distributors and administered by the Department of Licensing. Cities and counties receive a percent of the base motor vehicle fuel tax receipts. The revenues must be spent for highway purposes including the construction, maintenance, and operations of streets, roads, and *non-motorized transportation systems*.

- **Local Option Fuel Tax (LOFT)** - RCW 82.80 authorizes a countywide voter approved tax equivalent to 10% of the statewide Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax and a special fuel tax of \$0.023 cents per gallon.

LOFT revenue may be distributed to the county on a weighted per capita basis. Revenues must be spent for highway (city streets, county roads, and state highways) construction, maintenance, or operation; the policing of local roads; or highway related activities - *including non-motorized transportation systems*.

- **Licenses and permits** - includes revenues generated from vehicle and truck license fees. Generally, these fees are used to pay for the inspections, processing, and other charges necessary to perform supporting highway and transportation services.

- **Local Option Vehicle License Fee (LOVLF)** - the Transportation Improvement Act (ESSB 6358 - RCW 82.80) authorizes countywide (no county levy - which does not require voter approval) local option fees up to \$15.00 maximum per vehicle registered in the county. Revenues are distributed back to the county and cities within the county levying the tax on a prorated per capita basis (1.0 for population in incorporated areas).

Revenues may be spent for "general transportation purposes" including the construction, maintenance, and operation of county streets, county roads and state highways, policing of local roads, public transportation, high capacity transportation, transportation planning and design and other transportation related activities - *including non-motorized transportation*.

- **Washington State intergovernmental revenue** – includes state grants or pass-through revenues, usually earmarked for specific programs. State grants are allocated under the Urban Arterial Trust Account (UATA) and Transportation Improvement Account (TIA) with a 20% matching requirement for alleviating roadways with traffic congestion or accident problems, and/or caused by economic development or growth. Both funds may be used for multi-modal improvements ***including non-motorized transportation systems***.

- **Federal intergovernmental revenue** – includes federal grants or pass-through revenues, usually earmarked for specific programs. Federal grants are allocated under the Federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Programs under this Act include the Surface Transportation Program (STP), Transportation Enhancement Program (STP-EH) and Safety Program (STPS). Funds which may be used for multi-modal improvements ***including non-motorized transportation systems***. The US Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration administer federal governmental grants and pass-through funds.

D.1.3: Special revenues (taxes and fees)

Special revenues are derived from state and local option taxes dedicated to specific expenditure purposes, such as conservation futures, the real estate excise tax, motel and hotel tax, public art, criminal justice, convention center, and the like. Some special revenues may be used to finance limited capital facilities, such as open space projects and programs, where the local option allows.

Following is a description of local option taxes that may be used for open space purposes and the extent to which Skagit County is currently using them.

- **Real Estate Excise Tax (REET)** – RCW 82.46 gives county governments the option of adding up to three 0.0025% increments to the real estate excise tax (REET) for the sole purpose of financing local capital improvement projects –

including open space and trail systems. REET funds may not be used to finance operation and maintenance requirements.

Skagit County has adopted 2 REET options. ***If approved by county voters, the county could adopt the 3rd REET option to be dedicated solely to park, recreation, and open space purposes if approved by county voters.***

REET is a viable financing tool for open space and trail acquisition and development projects. However, since REET funds are used for all county capital requirements, the funds may not be as easy to expense for open space and trail purposes as in years past when the county's General Fund was more significant and able to fund other county capital facility requirements.

- **Conservation Futures (CF)** – RCW 84.34 gives county governments the option of enacting by Council resolution or submitting a property tax levy for voter approval for the countywide acquisition of development rights or easements for the purpose of preserving open space, habitat areas, wetlands, agricultural, and timber lands.

The program may assess a range of rates per \$1,000 assessed value property tax on all taxable properties in the county, and dedicate the funds to the acquisition of farm, forest, open space, and recreation land.

A citizen-based Conservation Futures Advisory Committee must review and prioritize all projects submitted by eligible jurisdictions within the county including non-profit corporations or associations.

Skagit County's Conservation Futures currently funds the Farmland Legacy program that purchases development rights in the Ag-NRL zoning district. In conjunction with federal grants and non-profit ventures, the program is currently acquiring easements on about 700-900 acres per year. In 2005, the county's Conservation Futures tax rate was \$0.0576 per \$1,000 assessed value and generated \$603,777 in annual revenues.

D.1.4: Debt service funds

Debt service funds are derived from a dedicated portion of the property tax or general fund proceeds to repay the sale of general obligation (voted) and Councilmanic (non-voted) bonds. Both types of bonds may be used to finance open space and trail acquisitions – but not maintenance or operational costs.

- Councilmanic (limited or non-voted) bonds - may be issued without voter approval by the County Commission for any facility development purpose. The total amount of all outstanding non-voted general obligation debt may not exceed 1.5% of the assessed valuation of all county property – *or \$173,920,497 in the year 2005 based on a total taxable property value of \$11,594,699,782.*

Limited general obligation bonds must be paid from general governmental revenues. Therefore, debt service on these bonds may reduce the amount of revenue available for current operating expenditures and the financial flexibility the County Commission may need to fund annual budget priorities. For this reason, Councilmanic bonds are usually only used for the most pressing capital improvement issues.

- Unlimited general obligation bonds - must be approved by at least 60% of resident voters during an election which has a turnout of at least 40% of those who voted in the last state general election. The bond may be repaid from a special levy, which is not governed by the 1.0% statutory limitation on the property tax growth rate.

Total indebtedness as a percent of the assessed valuation that may be incurred by limited and unlimited general obligation bonds together, however, may not exceed:

- 2.5% - provided that indebtedness in excess of 1.5% is for general purposes (*in 2005, the 2.5% lid equaled \$289,867,495 including the 1.5% Councilmanic option*),
- 5.0% - provided that indebtedness in excess of 2.5% is for utilities, and

7.5% - provided that indebtedness in excess of 5.0% is for parks and open space development.

Monies authorized by limited and unlimited types of bonds must be spent within 3 years of authorization to avoid arbitrage requirements unless invested at less than bond yield.

Councilmanic and Unlimited General Obligation or GO Bonds may be used to construct but not maintain or operate facilities. Facility maintenance and operation costs must be paid from general governmental revenue or by voter authorization of special annual or biannual operating levies or by user fees or charges.

D.1.5: State grants

Washington State funds and administers a number of programs for wildlife habitat, open space, and non-motorized transportation and trails purposes using special state revenue programs.

- Endangered Species Act (ESA) - a Department of Ecology administered water quality program provides grants for up to 75% of the cost of water quality/fish enhancement studies. Referendum 39 monies can be applied to open space developments that propose to restore, construct or otherwise enhance fish producing streams, ponds or other water bodies.
- Washington Wildlife Recreation Program (WWRP) - provides funds for the acquisition and development of conservation and recreation lands. The Habitat Conservation Account of the WWRP program provides funds to acquire critical habitat, natural areas, and urban wildlife categories. The Outdoor Recreation Account of the WWRP program provides funds for local parks, state parks, trails, and water access categories.
- Capital Projects Fund for Washington Heritage - initiated on a trial basis in 1999, and since renewed, provides funds for the restoration and renovation projects for historical sites and buildings by local governments and non-profit agencies. The program is administered by the Heritage Resource Center (HRC).

- **Boating Facilities Program** - approved in 1964 under the state Marine Recreation Land Act, the program earmarks motor vehicle fuel taxes paid by watercraft for boating-related lands and facilities. Program funds may be used for fresh or saltwater launch ramps, transient moorage, and upland support facilities.

- **Aquatic Lands Enhancement Act (ALEA)** - initiated on a trial basis in 1985, and since renewed and expanded, uses revenues obtained by the Washington Department of Natural Resources from the lease of state owned tidal lands. The ALEA program is administered by the Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO - formerly the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation or IAC) for the development of shoreline related trail improvements and may be applied for up to 50% of the proposal.

- **Washington State Public Works Commission** - initiated a program that may be used for watercraft sanitary pump-out facilities.

D.1.6: Federal grants

Federal monies are available for the construction of outdoor park facilities from the National Park Service (NPS) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO - formerly the IAC) administers the grants.

- **NPS (National Park Service) grants** - usually do not exceed \$150,000 per project and must be matched on an equal basis by the local jurisdiction. The RCO assigns each project application a priority on a competitive statewide basis according to each jurisdiction's need, population benefit, natural resource enhancements and a number of other factors.

In the past few years, project awards have been extremely competitive as the federal government significantly reduced the amount of federal monies available the NPS program. The state increased contributions to the program over the last few years using a variety of special funds, but the overall program could

be severely affected by pending federal deficit cutting legislation.

Applicants must submit a detailed comprehensive park, recreation, and open space plan to be eligible for NPS funding. The jurisdiction's plan must demonstrate facility need, and prove that the jurisdiction's project proposal will adequately satisfy local parks, recreation, and open space needs and interests. Due to diminished funding, however, RCO grants have not been a significant source of project monies for city, county, or other local jurisdictions in recent years.

- **TEA21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century)** - can be used to finance on and off-road non-motorized trail enhancements along major and minor arterial collectors roads or sometimes, within separate trail corridors. The program was adopted in 1993 and is administered by the Regional Transportation Organization (RTO) on behalf of the US Department of Transportation.

Applicants must demonstrate the proposed trail improvements will increase access to non-motorized recreational and commuter transportation alternatives.

- **National Recreational Trails Program (NRTTP)** - is the successor to the National Recreational Trails Act (NRFTA). Funds may be used to rehabilitate and maintain recreational trails that provide a backcountry experience. In some cases, the funds may be used to create new "linking" trails, trail relocations, and educational programs.

D.1.7: Enterprise funds

Enterprise funds are derived from the user fees and charges levied for utility operations including water and sewer, storm drainage, regional water, solid waste, and cemetery. Enterprise revenues may be used to pay operating costs, retire capital facility debt, and plan future replacement and expansion projects.

Enterprise funds may be created for an open space activity that has a revenue source sufficient to finance all costs. Enterprise

funds have been used on a limited basis for gun ranges, golf courses, equestrian centers, marinas, and similar self-financing operations – and may be used for storm mitigation banks or ponds or similar activities that charge fees.

E.2: Revenue prospects

Based on the preceding analysis, the following options could be used to finance countywide open space projects and program:

D.2.1: User fees and charges

Skagit County could enact by resolution an increasing array of special user fees, charges, and special assessments to pay for open space projects and program. One of the most promising may be the:

- Local Option Vehicle License Fee (LOVLF) - described earlier which allows up to an additional \$15.00 fee to be added to vehicle license fees for the purpose of *constructing, operating, and maintaining* non-motorized transportation.

The LOVLF fee could be used to develop the on and possibly some of the off-road trail proposals that frame and provide access to the UGA open space networks on a countywide basis.

Based on 2005 vehicle registrations within the county, the \$15.00 added fee would generate at least \$2,251,800 annually if enacted for non-motorized transportation or trail purposes.

D.2.2: Optional local dedicated taxes

Skagit County could seek voter approval to enact a variety of the special taxes and fees. One or more of the most promising may be those described earlier including the:

- Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) - which, if approved by voter referendum, could add *on a continual basis* an additional \$0.010 per \$1.00 of retail sales to be dedicated exclusively for *acquisition, operation, and maintenance* of open space projects and programs on a countywide basis.

Based on year 2005 retail sales statistics, LOST would generate at least \$924,868 annually for open space purposes and be paid by in-county residents as well as out-of-county residents and tourists.

- Real Estate Excise Tax (REET 3) - which, if approved by voter referendum, could generate *on a continual basis* \$0.0025 per \$1.00 of real property sales to be dedicated exclusively for *acquisition* of open space and trail projects and programs on a countywide basis.

Based on year 2005 real estate sales, REET 3 would generate at least \$164,134 annually for open space purposes and would be paid exclusively by in-county property sales and acquisitions.

- Local Option Fuel Tax (LOFT) - which, if approved by voter referendum, could add *on a continual basis* up to an additional \$0.023 per gallon of gas to be dedicated exclusively for non-motorized transportation *construction, operation, and maintenance* on a countywide basis.

Based on year 2005 estimated gasoline sales by county residents (not including sales to out-of-county residents and tourists, LOFT would generate at least \$1,425,990 annually for open space purposes and be paid by in-county residents as well as out-of-county residents and tourists.

D.2.3: General levy rate referendums

Skagit County could seek voter approval to reset or lift the levy rate lid on a permanent or temporary special purpose basis in accordance. One of the most promising options may be the special purpose levy lid lift described earlier where:

- Property Tax Levy (PTL - Levy Lid Lift) - which, if approved by voter referendum, could add *on a limited duration* (to be specified in the referendum but typically 6 years) an additional property tax to be dedicated exclusively for the *acquisition, operation, and maintenance* of open space projects and programs on a countywide basis.

Based on year 2005 assessed values, a \$0.00011 rate per \$1.00 valuation or \$24.48 annually for an average county house value of \$222,500 would generate \$1,641,082 annually, a \$0.00016 rate or \$35.60 annually would generate \$2,387,028 annually, or a \$0.00022 rate or \$48.95 annually would generate \$3,282,163 annually.

E.3: Regulatory approaches

In addition to the financing sources analyzed above, Skagit County could also use some of the following regulatory approaches to creating open space and trail systems using the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) and Growth Management Act (GMA) provisions.

D.3.1: SEPA impact mitigation – subdivision regulations

County subdivision policies require developers of subdivisions within the county, or on lands that may eventually annex to adjacent cities, to provide suitably designed and located open spaces, woodland preserves, trail systems, and other park or recreational facilities.

Such facilities may include major components of the open space and trail system that may be affected by the project's location or development. The county may also consider requiring developers provide acceptable long-term methods of managing and financing open space and trail maintenance and enhancement requirements. Attractive management systems could include:

- **ownership by a non-profit organization** - like a land trust, conservancy, or other agency who assumes responsibility for all operation and maintenance responsibilities and costs,
- **ownership by a homeowners or common property owners association** - who may contract maintenance responsibilities and assess property owner's annual costs, or
- **dedication of property** - to the county or an adjacent city or park district who assumes maintenance responsibilities using local city or park district funds.

The county should not accept title and maintenance responsibility unless the land or facility will be a legitimate open space and trail element that may be supported using public financing.

The county may be contracted by any of the other agencies to provide or oversee an operation and maintenance contract on the owner's behalf provided all county costs are reimbursed by an approved method of local financing.

D.3.2: GMA growth impact fees

Skagit County could expand upon the growth impact fee provisions provided in the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). Park and traffic impact fees could be applied to all proposed residential developments within the unincorporated county as a means of maintaining existing park, recreation, and open space and traffic levels-of-service (ELOS).

The ordinances could estimate the impact each development project will have on the open space and trail components of the park and traffic LOS within a countywide or UGA local service zone and make provisions for setting aside the resources, including lands or monies, necessary to offset the project's regional or local open space and trail impacts.

The dollar value of the project's open space and trail impacts could be offset by the project developer of an amount equal to the combined facility acquisition and development costs that the county and/or another providing agency would incur to maintain the same existing level-of-service (ELOS).

A developer may be allowed to choose any combination of land or cash mitigation measures including credit for any open space or trail facilities to be included within the project development. The ordinance should consider the following when determining the types of mitigation measures or development credits to be made available to the developer:

- **will the open space or trail** - be available to the public,

- have a designated owner - responsible for continuing operation and maintenance (the owner may be a common property owner's association, park district or other agency), and
- correspond to and not exceed or vary from - the types of open space and trail facilities that are being impacted (a developer could provide but should not be able to take full credit value for facilities for which there is no shortage, impact or local interest).

Land contributions can be accepted in lieu of monies if the lands will be suitable sites for future open space and trail systems. Land and monies accumulated under the proposed ordinance must be invested within a reasonable time of impact assessment or be returned to the contributing developer.

The county could conduct periodic program reviews with residents, user groups, cities, park districts, and other agencies to decide the most efficient and representative way of delivering the open spaces and trails mitigated by the ordinance.

D.3.3: Inter-local agreements

Skagit County should work with the cities to determine an equitable means whereby the open space and trail components of park and traffic impact fees can be collected from residential developments occurring within the urban growth area outside of existing city limits, but within the area each city eventually expects to annex.

A joint growth impact fee could be collected where the county and city maintain the same local and regional or citywide level-of-service (LOS) presently existing within the incorporated (city) and unincorporated (county) sections, and for the urban growth area in total.

A common fee could be collected by each agency then shared on a project by project basis for open space and trail improvements benefiting the residents of the UGAs as well as the county-at-large.



Photo - barn on Fidalgo Island

Appendix F: UGA Property Tax Levy & Open Space Advisory Committee

AN ORDINANCE of Skagit County related to policies for the implementation of the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan and Program including the submission of a property tax levy as allowed by RCW 84.55 to provide an estimated amount of tax revenues for the purpose of acquiring through purchase or easement, restoring, enhancing, developing, and maintaining a network of UGA open spaces, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facilities.

WHEREAS, the Growth Management Act (GMA) stipulates Skagit County must have environmental element plans that protect critical areas such as floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, geological hazards, and significant wildlife habitat and migration corridors; and resource lands including working and productive forestlands, agricultural lands, and mines; and cultural resources including historical sites and landmarks, scenic views and aesthetic landscapes; and

WHEREAS, the GMA also stipulates Skagit County's Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) must have open space separators or definitions that incorporate the above in addition to park and recreational sites and facilities, regional and community trails, open space linkage corridors, and interpretive facilities; and

WHEREAS, multiple public, non-profit, and private agencies and organizations are currently actively preserving, protecting, restoring, enhancing, and managing wildlife, forestland, agricultural, and scenic open space resources through land purchases, easements, development and use agreements, among other methods in rural Skagit County including along the Skagit River, in the Skagit River agricultural valley, in the Skagit River delta, and in Padilla Bay, among other locations; and

WHEREAS, these agencies and organizations are not pursuing lands within or adjacent to Skagit County's UGAs due to cost, complexity, parcel fragmentation, policy confusions, and other factors such that there is a gap in projects, programs, and funding necessary to implement a Skagit Countywide UGA Open

Space Plan that meets GMA requirements; and

WHEREAS, a mail-out/phone-back survey of registered county voter households indicated clear and significant majorities favored the implementation of a Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan that creates and links open space separators, regional trail linkages, interpretive facilities, and scenic roads and byways around the UGAs with the open spaces being created by public, non-profit, and private agencies and organizations; and

WHEREAS, the survey of registered voter households also indicated significant majorities also favored the enactment of a financing method to provide for the UGA open space funding gap that matched and partnered or joint ventured with existing and potential public, non-profit, and private agency and organization efforts and resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, SKAGIT COUNTY DOES ORDAIN:

Section 1: Findings

1.1: The general fund of Skagit County does not have sufficient resources - to provide for the acquisition whether by purchase or easement, restoration, enhancement, development, and maintenance of open spaces, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facilities within, adjacent, and between the UGAs.

1.2: The Skagit County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) recognizes the need - to provide funds for the acquisition, restoration, enhancement, development, and maintenance of existing and future UGA related open spaces, regional trail corridor linkages, and interpretive facilities.

1.3: The Skagit County Board of County Commissioners finds and declares it is in the best interests of the County - that its voters have an opportunity to vote on the question of whether to acquire, restore, enhance, develop, and maintain UGA open

spaces, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facilities the cost of which is to be paid from an increase in the County's regular property tax levy above the limitations established in RCW _____ for a period of 10 years commencing in the year 20__.

1.4: The Skagit County Board of County Commissioners finds and declares that an emergency exists - requiring the submission to the qualified electors of the County the proposition whether the County shall levy regular property taxes above the limitation established in RCW 84.____ for their ratification or rejection at a special election on _____.

Section 2: Use of UGA Open Space funds

It is intended that proceeds from the additional tax levied pursuant to this ordinance shall be applied to acquire through purchase or easement, restore, enhance, develop, and maintain UGA open spaces, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facilities as outlined in Exhibit A: the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan. Interest earnings on such proceeds shall also be applied to these purposes. The allocations are intended to be as follows:

2.1: Land acquisitions - approximately ____% of the proceeds and interest of the levy are intended to be dedicated to land acquisition through fee simple, land easements, or other preservation method.

2.2: Development and improvement - approximately ____% of the proceeds and interest of the levy are intended to be dedicated to the restoration, enhancement, development, and improvement of UGA open spaces, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facilities.

2.3: UGA open space preservation endowment - approximately ____% of the proceeds of the levy are intended to be set aside to accrue interest. Interest earnings are to be spent on the maintenance of properties acquired or developed with UGA open space levy funds.

2.4: Funds raised thereby - shall also be used for all administrative and implementation costs to the County in

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Appendix F: UGA Open Space Advisory Committee
Skagit County UGA Open Space Plan

carrying out this program.

2.5: The above described program components are only illustrative guidelines - for implementation of the Skagit Countywide UGA open space program. In annual County budgets or by separate ordinance, the County shall from year to year determine the budget and allocations among the program components, change the scope of activities or the emphasis, and within a budget year reallocate unexpended and unencumbered funds from one program to another. Proceeds and appropriates unexpended at the end of any budget year shall automatically be carried over to the next budget year.

Section 3: UGA Open Space Advisory Committee

The Skagit County Board of County Commissioners shall establish a UGA Open Space Advisory Committee that shall provide citizen advice regarding the use of UGA Open Space Levy funds to acquire through purchase or easement, restore, enhance, develop, and maintain UGA open spaces, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facilities within and adjacent Skagit County's UGAs.

3.1: Committee membership - shall consist of 9 members who shall be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. Each member shall be a citizen of the United States, an elector of Skagit County, a resident of the State of Washington for at least 3 years and of Skagit County for at least 2 years prior to appointment to the Committee. Members shall be appointed from among community-minded citizens who are active in civic matters, supportive of the intent and objectives of the UGA Open Space Plan and Program, and geographically representative of the county's UGAs. The Committee may make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for re-appointment and replacement of its members.

3.2: Terms - members shall be appointed to serve for a term of 3 years. Any vacancy in the membership of the committee shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment with the replacement filling the remainder of the unexpired

term. Members may serve for no more than 3 full consecutive terms.

3.3: Compensation-conflicts of interest - committee members shall serve without compensation from Skagit County, or from any trust, donation or legacy to Skagit County for their services; this limitation shall not preclude a member of their firm receiving compensation from the County under contract or otherwise for services rendered outside their duties as a Committee member; provided, that any Committee member having an interest or who contemplates acquiring an interest in any particular transaction, contract, or project must disqualify them self from any official action contributing towards an official recommendation to the County on that subject.

3.4-Authority and duties - the UGA Open Space Advisory Committee shall be authorized to do the following:

3.4.1: Evaluate current and future conditions, needs, opportunities, and priorities - and identify and develop annual and long range open space land, regional trail linkage, and interpretive facility acquisitions whether purchase or easement, restorations, enhancements, improvements, and maintenance project and program lists that implement the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan for the county-at-large and each UGA.

3.4.4: Develop procedures and processes for soliciting requests-for-proposals (RFPs) - from public, non-profit, and private agencies and organizations for Skagit Countywide UGA open space, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facility projects and programs.

3.4.4: Develop public benefit evaluation and selection criteria for RFP submissions - from public, non-profit, and private agencies and organizations for Skagit Countywide UGA open space, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facility project and program submittals.

3.4.4: Award (on the Board of County Commissioners behalf) Skagit Countywide UGA open space levy funds - for UGA open

space, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facility projects and programs.

3.4.4: Monitor compliance and expenditures - for UGA open space, regional trail linkages, and interpretive facility projects and programs.

3.4.5: Issue annual evaluation reports and consult with the Board of County Commissioners and the public-at-large - identifying current UGA open space conditions and the actions taken each year to further the implementation of the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan.

3.4.6: Issue in the annual report or at any time the Committee deems appropriate, any revisions, modifications, or other actions that should be undertaken - to improve upon funding sources, RFP solicitation, public benefit criteria evaluation, project and program awards, project and program compliance and expenditures that would improve upon the Plan or its implementation.

Section 4: Organization

4.1: A chair and vice-chairperson - shall be elected annually from the Committee members and may serve for up to 3 consecutive 1-year terms. The Committee shall adopt its own rules of procedure and shall have authority to make by-laws for the conduct of its business under this Ordinance.

4.2: The Committee shall hold at least 1 regular meeting each month - on such date as shall be fixed and publicly advertised by the Committee at its regular place of meeting. Additional meetings may be held as the Committee deems necessary. All meetings of the Committee shall be public meetings; provided that, to the extent necessary or appropriate, the Committee shall consider the selection of sites and the acquisition of real property in purchase or easement confidentially in executive session when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of increased price.

4.3: Written minutes and records of meetings and actions of the Committee shall be kept - and all such records shall be public.

4.4: Skagit County Planning & Development Services Department staff - shall provide appropriate support to the Committee.

Section 5: Effective dates

This Ordinance establishing a Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Advisory Committee shall be in effect for so long as a UGA Open Space Levy (whether the current proposed levy or any successor thereto) is in effect in the County or there are funds collected through such a levy to be expended. In the event that the proposed UGA Open Space levy or any successor thereto expires without being replaced or extended, the Committee shall be disbanded.

Section 6: Election-ballot title

The Skagit County Board of County Commissioners requests that the Auditor of Skagit County, as an ex officio supervisor of elections, find the existence of an emergency pursuant to RCW 29A 04.330 (2) and call and conduct a special election in the County on _____, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified voters of the County for their approval the proposition authorizing the County to increase its regular property tax to \$____ per thousand of assessed valuation on all of the taxable property within Skagit County, for collection in ____ and to increase such levy for each of the 9 succeeding years as allowed by RCW 84.55 to be used for the cost of UGA open space and regional trail acquisition, restoration, enhancement, development, and maintenance as set forth in this ordinance.

The County Clerk is authorized and directed to certify to the County Auditor of Skagit County, Washington, as an ex officio supervisor of elections, as least 45 days prior to the _____ election date, a copy of this ordinance and the proposition to be

submitted at that election in the form of a ballot title in the following form pursuant to RCW 29A.36.071:

SKAGIT COUNTY **PROPOSITION NUMBER ____**

Skagit County's Proposition Number ____ concerns a levy for UGA open space and regional trails.

For the purpose of funding the acquisition, restoration, enhancement, development, and maintenance of UGA open spaces and regional trails, this proposition would authorize Skagit County to increase its regular property tax levy up to \$____ per \$1,000 for collection in _____, and to levy the additional amount for 9 succeeding years together with annual increases thereon as allowed under RCW 84.55. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes _____
No _____

Passed by this Board of County Commissioners this ____ day of _____, 200__.

Appendix G: UGA Open Space - Public Benefit Rating Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate properties or programs submitted for funding consideration under the proposed UGA Open Space program by the UGA Open Space Advisory Committee (UGA-OSAC).

Initial evaluations may simply add the number of checked boxes to determine which projects score the highest for funding consideration. Eventually, the UGA Open Space Advisory Committee may perfect a graduated scoring system that prioritizes the categories listed and the scores that may be achieved by applicant submittals.

1: Land use

1.1 Separators - does the property or program create open space networks that define "place" boundaries establishing breaks or separations between Concrete and Sedro-Woolley, Sedro-Woolley and Burlington, Burlington and Bayview Ridge, and transitions between urban and rural areas along SR-9, SR-20, Chuckanut Drive, and McLean Road, among others?

1.2: Public/private network opportunities - does the property or program define a planned network of open spaces so that private developments can contribute or link privately-owned open space systems to be part of or extensions of the overall UGA open space system as in, for example, the Eaglemont Development in Mount Vernon?

1.3: Flood control - does the property or program include floodplains and flood-prone lands and the river dike and drainage systems along the Baker and Skagit Rivers, Nookachamps Creek, Gages Lake and Slough, Britts Slough, and Swinomish Channel in UGA open spaces?

2: Natural resources

2.1: Aquatic habitat - does the property or program protect and enhance fresh and saltwater aquatic resources including fisheries, water fowl, and other species habitat in the Baker

River, Skagit River including the North and South Forks, Samish River, Nookachamps Creek, Swinomish Channel, and Samish, Padilla, Fidalgo, Burrows, Similk, and Skagit Bays, and significant freshwater bodies such as Shannon, Gages, Barney, Heart, Whistle, Erie, and Campbell Lakes, as well as estuarine rearing and foraging resources in Skagit, Similk, Padilla, and Samish Bays that encompass, adjoin, and extend UGA open spaces?

2.2: Wildlife habitat and corridors - does the property or program protect and enhance wildlife habitat including plant species, birds, and mammals within the marine, estuarine, freshwater, and terrestrial environments that encompass, adjoin, and provide migration corridors within and between UGA open spaces?

2.3: Agricultural lands - does the property or program protect heritage, prime soils, and working farms in the Skagit River Valley, Nookachamps Creek, Skagit River Delta, and Fir and Fidalgo Islands by including them within UGA open spaces?

2.4: Woodlands - does the property or program protect old growth, working forests, and significant woodland stands on US Forest Service, DNR, and other public and private properties on Burlington Hill, Little Mountain, and the Community Forest on Mount Erie by including them within UGA open spaces?

3: Scenic resources

3.1: Landscapes - does the property or program protect existing scenic landscapes especially those that exemplify unique features that are visible from UGA open space viewpoints including Cap Sante Point, Mount Erie, and Little Mountain, are incorporated into major parks such as Northern State Recreation Area and Deception Pass State Park, and are prominent features of protected areas such as Padilla and Skagit Bays?

3.2: Scenic byways - does the property or program protect scenic roads, rivers, and shorelines by preserving rural and marine land uses and activities, natural environments and vegetation, and scenic or visual features along UGA open space road and shoreline edges especially including the established SR-11 and SR-20 scenic byway corridors?

3.3: Viewpoints - does the property or program rotect and enhance scenic viewpoints that look into and onto visual landscapes including prominent high points such as Cap Sante Point, Mount Erie, Little Mountain, and Burlington Hill, as well as strategic overlooks or look-into places alongside and within the UGA open space network at the Baker and Skagit Rivers, Gages Slough, Nookachamps Creek, and Swinomish Channel?

4: Cultural resources

4.1: Landmarks - does the property or program protect and interpret cultural, historical, and archaeological places, sites, and structures within the UGA open space system such as the cement and powerhouse structures in Concrete, Northern State Hospital in Sedro-Woolley, BNSF Railroad facilities in Burlington, river steamboat landings and waterfront improvements in Mount Vernon, historical business district in La Conner, railroad jetty and marine waterfront in Anacortes?

5: Interpretation

5.1: Interpretive exhibits, trails, and centers - does the property or program create and incorporate education and awareness programs and facilities within UGA open space systems such as the Padilla Bay and Tommy Thompson Trails, and Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NEER) interpretative center?

6: Recreation

6.1: Regional multiuse trails - does the property or program develop a network of regional or countywide multiuse (hike, bike, and horse) trails including the Cascade, Centennial, PNW, and Skagit-Snohomish Trails adjacent, through, and into

countywide and UGA open spaces to increase access, awareness, and interpretive opportunities provided that such access does not jeopardize critical wildlife habitat, working farmlands or forests, or other private resources and properties?

6.2: Community connections - does the property or program link the regional or countywide multiuse trails with city or local trails that increase urban and rural resident access to parks, recreational areas, schools, public facilities, commercial, and employment areas in Concrete, Hamilton, Lyman, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, Mount Vernon, Bayview Ridge, La Conner, and Anacortes UGAs?

6.3: On/off-road linkages - does the property or program where necessary and appropriate, extend regional and local multiuse trails within public road and utility rights-of-way that adjoin, cross, or access countywide and UGA open spaces to avoid off-road wildlife habitat intrusions, working farm or forest conflicts on a seasonal, interim, and sometimes permanent basis where it cannot be avoided?

6.4: Water trail linkages - does the property or program where possible, connect on/off-road trails with water trails on the Guemes and San Juan Island Ferries and private excursion boat routes on the Skagit River, Swinomish Channel, Padilla, Similk, and Skagit Bays to increase public access and interpretive opportunities?

6.5: Accessibility - does the property or program provide for disability access to encourage the use and enjoyment of all people with physical disabilities to the maximum extent possible similar to what has been provided on the Tommy Thompson, Padilla Bay, and Cascade Trails?

7: Transportation

7.1: Interconnections - does the property or program link non-motorized transportation routes on SR-9, SR-11, SR-20, SR-237, SR-530, and SR-534 with the off-road Cascade, Centennial, PNW, and Skagit-Snohomish Trails systems to provide an interconnected network that parallels and provides access to UGA open spaces?

7.2: Rural access - does the property or program extend non-motorized transportation routes outward from the UGAs to provide access to rural areas and landscapes as well as the UGA open space extensions on a countywide basis such as the biking designations on McLean Road, Whitney-LaConner Road, and Chuckanut Drive?
7.3: Entry points - does the property or program link non-motorized transportation routes with the surrounding counties and region specifically including on-road alignments on SR-9, SR-11, SR-20, SR-237, SR-530, and SR-534?
7.4: Water trails - does the property or program designate hand-carry and other non-motorized water craft routes that flow alongside and through countywide and UGA open spaces on the Baker River, Skagit River including the North and South Forks, Samish River, Swinomish Channel, and Samish, Padilla, Fidalgo, Burrows, Similk, and Skagit Bays?

8: Jurisdictional and leveraging

8.1: Land use policy - does the property or program conform to Skagit County and the affected city/UGA land use policies, zoning designations, and other goals and objectives?
8.2: Local leverage - does the property or program generate matching funds, donations, expertise, or labor from other local governments or non-profit organizations within the county?
8.3: State and federal leverage - does the property or program generate matching funds, donations, expertise, or labor from state and federal sources?
8.4: Public support - does the property or program have significant public support from the affected jurisdiction, participants or sponsors, local community, and affected adjacent property owners?

9: Feasibility and timing

9.1: Threatened status - is the property or program threatened with development or likely to be lost for open space if not acted upon?
9.2: Restoration - will the property or program restore or enhance open space, wildlife, woodland, farm, or other natural features that once characterized the site before urban development?
9.3: Stewardship - does the property or program have a sponsor who will assume responsibility for the operation, maintenance, and other stewardship requirements?
9.4: Distribution - will the property or program provide a geographic distribution of open space funds in order to maintain some equity between funds and population distribution within the county?
9.5: Feasibility - can the property or program be completed on time, within budget, within the scope as outlined in the submittal?
9.5: Hazard - does the property or program have any potential hazardous waste, environmental problem, special permit requirements, dilapidated structures, or other feature which could jeopardize its accomplishment with the funds or its long term open space potential?

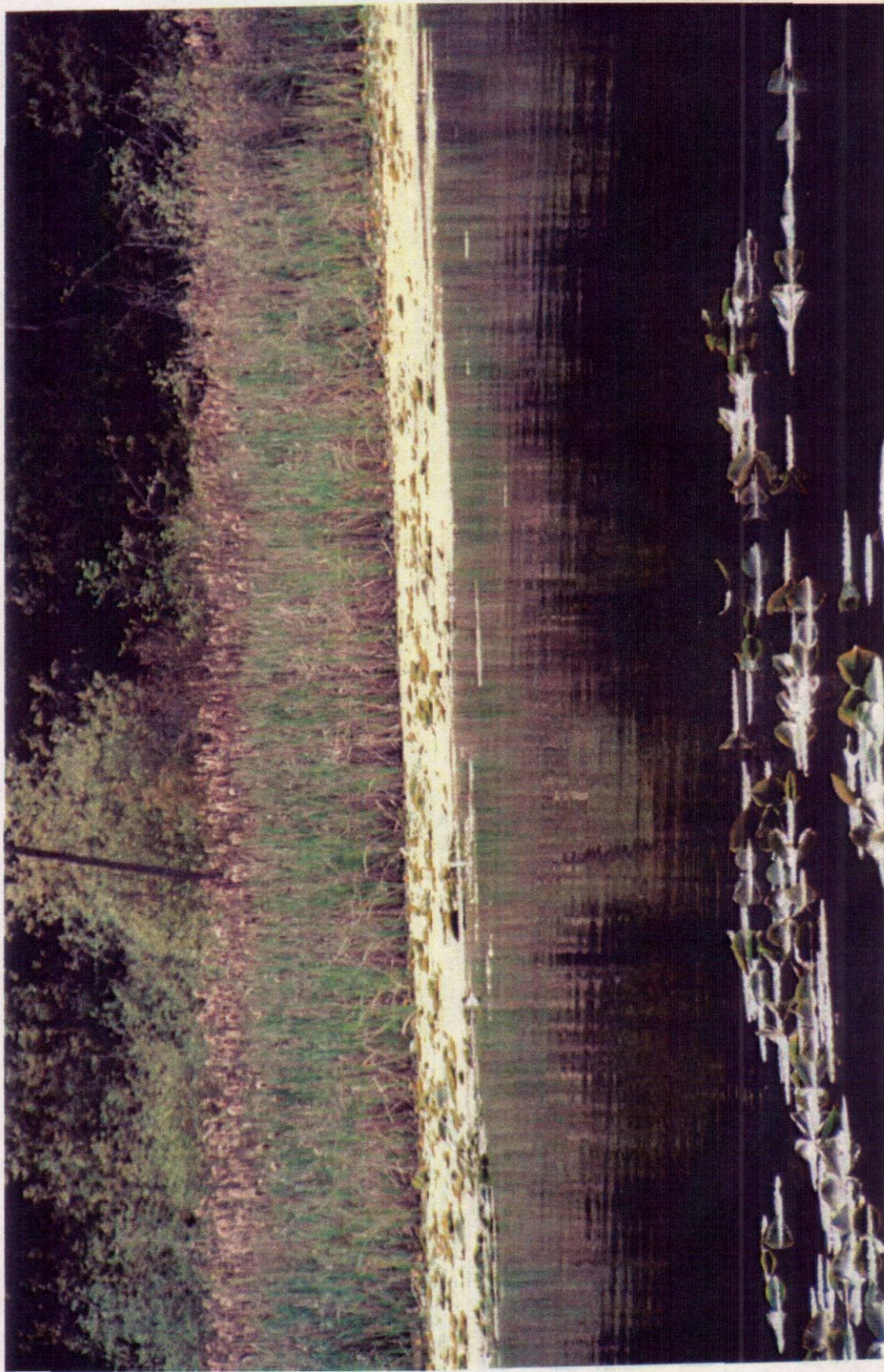


Photo - Heart Lake in Community Forest, Anacortes