



## TRUST TALK

Volume 10, Issue 2

Summer 2003

*Conserving signature landscapes and vital habitat together with the communities of the Columbia River region*

### Columbia Land Trust secures 196 acres on Secret River

***With the purchase of this property on Grays Bay, Columbia Land Trust has secured one of the few remaining remnants of pristine spruce forested wetland in the lower Columbia River estuary for conservation.***

**By Ian Sinks and Matthew Jones**

Clyde Sprague, a citizen of Grays Bay, approached the Land Trust in 2000 to discuss family land that had been passed down through the family, culminating in the hands of his daughter, Deborah Hubbard. The family was interested in seeing the land conveyed into conservation and had heard of the Land Trust's efforts to restore habitat for wildlife in the lower Grays River area. The Land Trust was familiar with the property from a resource standpoint and, recognizing the importance of protecting the conservation values, began searching for ways to expand on this common ground.

"We have a variety of conservation tools available to work with landowners, ranging from gifts and bequests to bargain sales to finding funding for an outright purchase of land," said Cherie Kearney, the Land Trust's conservation director, "but all of our projects begin with a willing landowner." Land conservation negotiations can be lengthy, especially for forested land where timber cruises and other environmental assessments are necessary, and they take patience to complete. "We're grateful that Deborah and her family wanted to see the land in conservation," Kearney said.



*Aerial view of Secret River property*

The property consists of significant backwater and emergent wetland habitat that provides valuable rearing and foraging areas for a large number of fish, particularly salmon. In addition, the property's forested upland terraces provides habitat for a variety of birds and animals, including environmentally sensitive species such as the marbled murrelet and bald eagle. "Current regulations would probably preclude the cutting of many of the trees on the property that these species depend on for nesting and rearing their young," Ian Sinks, the Land Trust's stewardship director, said, "but this purchase has now secured the land for conservation in perpetuity." The forests will be managed to an old growth condition to benefit the variety of wildlife species that depend on these mature habitat communities. The wetland portions of the site will be managed to provide the highest benefit to wetland and aquatic plants and animals, and in particular for salmonids. Not only are these spruce wetlands a habitat type that has experienced the greatest loss in the estuary since the time of European settlement but they also represent one of the most valuable habitat types for fish rearing and for watershed function in the estuary.

This project is highly ranked by the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board for funding through the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board and is part of a larger effort in the lower Grays River area that has attracted significant state and federal funding. Many natural resource agencies and

conservation groups have identified the Grays River as among some of the most important habitat conservation efforts for recovery of Columbia Basin fisheries. The project also received U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funding through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. In addition to public funds, the Charlotte Y. Martin Foundation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation made generous gifts for acquisition and restoration of this project.

## Long Beach lakes conserved for wildlife

### ***Columbia Land Trust conserves important lake front habitat on the Long Beach Peninsula.***

**By Lindsay Cornelius**

A roaring Pacific Ocean and charming beachside communities – these are the obvious attractions of Washington’s Long Beach Peninsula. The eyes of most motorists and bicyclists traveling State Route 103 fall just short of the dense coastal vegetation on the inland side of the road that hides from view a unique freshwater wetland that is home to myriad migratory birds and waterfowl, vibrant plants and tireless bugs.

Two lakes, Breaker Lake (also known as Clear Lake) and Briscoe Lake, are part of this freshwater system, and are now under the care and ownership of Columbia Land Trust thanks to the generosity of two landowners on the Long Beach Peninsula.



***Breaker Lake  
Long Beach Peninsula, Washington***

DeWayne and Daphne Wafford through a generous “bargain sale”, allowed the Land Trust to bring these lakes into conservation for half of the appraised value. “Grant sources for purchasing land for conservation are limited and often require a matching cash donation,” said Cherie Kearney, the Land Trust’s conservation director. “We rely on the generosity of landowners like the Waffords to help us bridge that funding gap.” The Land Trust purchased the lakes with funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. “The real joy of our work,” says Kearney, “comes in working with landowners who want to use the tools of private voluntary land conservation to protect critical lands.”

**“The real joy of our work comes in working with landowners who want to use the tools of private voluntary conservation to protect these critical lands.”**

**~ Cherie Kearney**

**Conservation Director, Columbia Land Trust**

On the approximately 100 acre parcel grows a regenerating forest – a critical element of the open water habitat and wetland system that is bound east and west by two large sand dunes “This area provides important habitat for a variety of waterfowl species including wood duck, northern pintail, scaup and trumpeter swan,” said Ian Sinks, the Land Trust’s stewardship director and staff biologist. “This acquisition is part of a long term strategy to protect the most critical inland open water and wetland habitat of

the Long Beach Peninsula.” In addition to critical habitat for ducks and birds, these conservation lands are important as the drinking water source for the Peninsula residents and as good habitat for a host of other animals including songbirds, black bear, deer, a variety of smaller mammals and several species of amphibians.

Historically, Native Americans used these sheltered lakes and short portages as water trails.

Today, they provide important services and sanctuary for the plants and animals of the Peninsula. They provide clean water for the cranberry and oyster industries, they filter fresh drinking water for the people of the Peninsula, and they provide habitat for plants and animals, ensuring that regardless who turns their eyes to the inland of the Peninsula, a protected wetland will be theirs to behold.

## My view from here

**From the executive director’s chair**

By Cherie Kearney

***Cherie, the Land Trust's conservation director, has been serving as acting executive director during Glenn Lamb's four month sabbatical which ends next month.***

It is tempting to write to you about land, because land, and all that it gives for wildlife, agricultural production, natural resources and mere beauty, is our muse at Columbia Land Trust.

These past months while serving as acting executive director, something has interrupted the allure of the land, the charm and color of landowners, and the experience of seeing wildlife. I suspect this has something to do with the fact that rather than visiting land, my work comes in paper form at my desk, my views are through a window and my jaunts are down the stairs to the finance department. But I am finding the daily reward of this work is the people who make it happen.

One of these people is Les Zimmer, the Land Trust's negotiator at our Astoria office. Somewhere around my hundredth phone call with Les working out the seemingly interminable final details of a land transaction I was struck with appreciation for his hard work, sure, but mostly with his open heart and genuine love of conserving land. "What does the land want?" Les always demands of us. I could effortlessly extol each person who works here with a personal story about the special qualities they bring to our work.

Some of these people make up what seems like our own law firm of Cook, Ward, Gathe, McMahan, Potter and Felling; six attorneys who donate their service to Columbia Land Trust. Every single land transaction, in fact every arcane document and contract, is created or reviewed by one of our pro bono attorneys. They are a marvel. We call them with what we think are impossible, woefully complicated requests and they consistently respond "Sure I can do that."

It is the people of Columbia Land Trust who make even our meetings enjoyable. I might sometime calculate just how many meetings on average it takes to conserve an important piece of land. It takes plenty, but meetings are different at Columbia Land Trust. They are energetic and fun. Board member Terry Cornelius shows up at staff meetings and admonishes us if our esprit lags, "You guys are too serious and you're not having enough fun!"

While I do look forward to walking land more often and deciphering financial statements less often, I will keep the perspective this interim post has given me. Great people, who propel Columbia Land Trust with integrity and passion to conserve and steward land, surround us.

## Coastal wetland habitat conserved

***Columbia Land Trust partners with Washington State Parks and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to bring 92 acres of critical habitat, including 1,000 feet of Pacific Ocean beachfront, into conservation.***

By Lindsay Cornelius and Matthew Jones

The beach is an incredible place to be year-round. So it is on the Becker Property, recently conserved by the Land Trust, which has 1,000 feet of Pacific Ocean on its westernmost boundary. From the beach, where seemingly ravenous snowy plovers stab at insects in the wet sand, the property rolls east over grass covered dunes, through a scrubby pine forest and into Hines Marsh, a freshwater system that stretches beyond property boundaries north and south along the top half of the Long Beach Peninsula.

Orlien and Margot Becker purchased this property with the intent of eventually developing it for vacation homesites. After purchasing the land, they discovered a small .2-acre in-holding that belonged to The Trumpeter Swan Society. The Swan Society held the small acreage for restoration purposes and to protect a dune that is important for healthy hydrology in Hines

Marsh. Martha Jordan of the Trumpeter Swan Society developed a relationship with the Beckers, who began to see a different future for their land - one that supported the trumpeter swans and other freshwater wetland birds, the beach dwelling snowy plovers, and all the plants and animals that lived in between.

Roger Salquist, a Trumpeter Swan Society supporter, donated money to Columbia Land Trust specifically to hold the property off the market while the Land Trust worked with conservation partners to find funding to purchase the site.

**"Swans need large open water areas for take-off and landing as well as having an abundant supply of aquatic vegetation for feeding."**

~ Martha Jordan

The Trumpeter Swan Society on return of swans after 40 years

The project was ranked second out of



*Pacific Ocean view from newly acquired property*

over forty applicants nationwide for projects to protect habitat through the North American Coastal Wetlands program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which provided most of the project's funding. The site's importance is also championed by natural resource agencies and conservation partners including Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Audubon Society, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Ducks Unlimited, and Oyster and Cranberry growers on the Peninsula.

Efforts to ditch and drain major portions of Hines Marsh for development or farming have led over time to widely fluctuating water levels and the encroachment of trees and shrubs where there was once open water for waterfowl. Through dune restoration, the installation of a water

control structure, a fish ladder, and other conservation efforts, a more natural hydraulic system is being re-established and work to remove the woody debris to clear open water has allowed for the return of trumpeter swans to the Marsh after an absence of over forty years. "Swans need large open water areas for take off and landing as well as having an abundant supply of aquatic vegetation for feeding," Martha said. She has been working for years in the Hines Marsh area on behalf of the Trumpeter Swan Society and is thrilled that the Land Trust has completed this project.

With beach, dunes, wetlands, and forest this property provides habitat for a large number of species on the Peninsula. The Land Trust has transferred the land to State Parks to be managed as part of a larger group of landholdings around Hines Marsh and Leadbetter State Park. While public access to the beach and other issues still need to be planned for the future of this property, Parks will manage it with the highest priority on habitat conservation as called for under the Coastal Wetland Program.

## Volunteer Days

***You can be a powerful part of Columbia Land Trust! Our volunteers are credited with contributing hours of effort on restoration, maintenance and research projects in and out of the office, taking our organization (and land) to its fullest potential.***

If you have not previously volunteered for Columbia Land Trust, please take a minute to call, [email](mailto:), or register online at [www.columbialandtrust.org/volunteer.htm](http://www.columbialandtrust.org/volunteer.htm).

## VOLUNTEER DAYS CALENDAR

**August 2003 - September 2003**

**Saturday, August 9:** Volunteer Day at Chapman Greenspace. Stop in between the hours of 10 am and 3 pm to water seedlings, repair fencing, and finish the clean-up effort on this Clark County urban greenspace in Brush Prairie. Child-friendly event.

**Saturday, September 20:** Trumpeter Swan Habitat Rescue! Come remove woody debris from a recently restored freshwater marsh on the Long Beach Peninsula. The Trumpeter Swan Society, Grays Harbor Audubon Society, Washington State Parks and Recreation and Columbia Land Trust are all partners in Hines Marsh conservation projects that brought trumpeter swans back to the marsh last year for the first time in 4 decades!

**Any month!**  
**(When and how much time depends on you!)**

**Become a Columbia Land Steward!** Are you interested in natural

### Back by Popular Demand

**Columbia Land Trust  
Spring Dinner and Auction**  
will return in April 2004.

It will be bigger and better than ever and we are already looking for great items to auction off and folks to help organize the event.

Call  
Terry Cornelius

resource monitoring and management training? Do you like working the land? Would you like to know our projects more intimately? Spend time on a property of your choice researching, working, photographing, and observing as a Columbia Land Steward!

at  
360-695-0707  
for more information.

**Watch your mail for details!**

**Make our office fire proof!** Columbia Land Trust is looking for a volunteer to help us protect our legal documents by scanning, copying and storing our files in a secure location. Work would be performed in the Columbia Land Trust office. Requires a total of approximately 40 hours and availability during business hours (flexible).

### To volunteer, contact:

Lindsay Cornelius, Stewardship Coordinator  
1351 Officers Row  
Vancouver, WA 98661  
(360) 696-0131  
or  
email: [lindsayc@columbialandtrust.org](mailto:lindsayc@columbialandtrust.org)

## Columbia Heritage Circle

## Leave a Legacy of Conservation



**Columbia Land Trust**  
*Conserving Land Forever*

“Columbia Land Trust does the kind of work we want to support. We don't need to hear anymore, we are going to put the Trust in our will.” - *A Clark County couple that recently made a generous bequest to the Land Trust after only recently learning of our work.*

Become part of Columbia Land Trust's ever-growing **Columbia Heritage Circle**.

Columbia Land Trust has pledged to care in perpetuity for the land that you, as a member are helping conserve today. By including the Land Trust in your estate planning you are establishing a legacy of conservation that will stand the test of time and continue to support the kind of work that matters to you long after your own lifetime.

For information on including Columbia Land Trust in your estate planning, check the box on the enclosed reply envelope, or call Matthew Jones or Glenn Lamb at (360) 696-0131.

## Opportunities to steward habitat and local communities

By Ian Sinks

The coming year will be a significant one for the Land Trust stewardship program. The success of the acquisition program has brought over 1,000 acres of new land into conservation over the past year, and it is now up to the stewardship program to ensure the protection of these conservation lands. We are working to prepare baseline and management plans that will lead to on the ground activities ranging from forest management to wildlife management to wetland habitat restoration. In the lower river estuary alone we are in the process of preparing restoration plans on over 350 acres of degraded intertidal floodplain habitat. This is significant work for fish, wildlife and watershed processes. It is also significant to local communities.

The Land Trust was recently invited by Wahkiakum County Commissioner Mark

Linguist to attend a local community meeting in Grays River. The Grays River is an area where Columbia Land Trust has been successfully acquiring land for protection and restoration to benefit salmonids and other wildlife species. It is also a watershed area that increasingly challenges the local community with flooding and sedimentation. It is a river out of balance, and the local community fears for its future. The river currently floods several times every winter and spring, blocking local roads, the state highway and more than a few homes and farms. As one community member put it at the meeting, "If you need a boat to get your kids to school in the morning...what future does this community have?"



*Flooded farm on the Grays River in 2001*

The two important factors that brought the Grays River to the attention of the Land Trust and made it a conservation priority are its importance to salmon recovery and estuary health, and the opportunity to accomplish work that benefits the community. We believe the habitat work we accomplish in the Grays River will help restore salmon populations and sustain the local fishing industry. We also believe that the restoration work will help create a healthier river system and help alleviate the flooding issues. There is certainly more that needs to be done, and for this we will continue to work with the local communities to build a grassroots effort.

It is our hope that the Land Trust will be as successful supporting the needs of local communities as we are with the habitat needs of fish and wildlife. Our mission is to conserve 'vital habitat and signature landscapes together with the communities of the Columbia River region.' This element may turn out to be the most important goal for successful conservation and land stewardship. It also has the potential to produce the best overall results. We can accomplish much more together than we can apart, particularly when we ultimately all want the same thing: Healthy environments and healthy communities.

Columbia Land Trust is committed to working with the communities of our region. In the Grays River area, stewardship staff and conservation partners will work with the community to gain input on restoration plans and to look for creative ways these restoration projects can provide benefits to the community. Restored fish populations, flood control, improved water quality, better access to the river, recreational opportunities, supporting watershed-wide efforts, maintaining property tax status, and use of local contractors are probably just a few of the positive benefits projects like these can have for the river and for the community.

*To find out how the Land Trust can work with your local community to achieve common goals please contact Columbia Land Trust staff or board members.*

## **Columbia Land Trust adds two new Board members.**

**Jennifer Vail** - Jennifer grew up in Eugene, Oregon with a whole troop of siblings (mostly brothers). She says every one of them is inclined to support the environment, which she jokingly attributes to "something in the water." Her dad taught her early "...how to fish, camp, repair a car, shoot guns and ride motorbikes with the best of 'em." She has a degree in Broadcast Journalism and Business and was recently awarded the "40 under 40" top business and community leaders award by the Vancouver Business Journal and also received the Chamber of Commerce "Volunteer of the Year" award in 2002. Jennifer fell in love with the history and beauty of the Columbia River and its past and present inhabitants (both human and animal). "I am proud to be part of an organization that is preserving the wildlife of such a stunning and magnificent example of what Mother Nature can do."

**Melanie Moon** - Melanie brings degrees in botany and over a decade of experience from her position as a staff member for Western Pennsylvania Conservancy to the Land Trust board, along with her passion for everything plants. "Everything," she says, "from starting plants from seed, to harvesting, eating and preserving them." She can be found ambling in nature, camping in wilderness areas landed by foot or kayak, painting her thoughts in watercolor, or with her nose in big, thick books, especially those that delve into American history. Melanie finds much to be inspired about in the Columbia River Gorge. She believes it is an example of how we can work together to maintain this landscape for the benefit of all.

## **Save The Date!**

**Membership Picnic: September 6, 2003**



## The Ray Hickey Membership Challenge for 2003

**Ray Hickey Foundation matches membership donations up to \$50,000.  
Following are gifts and memberships from to October 2002 to mid-March 2003.**

### Members (\$1-49)

Noel & Mary Magistrale-Allan  
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 Bonnie Bingle  
 Thomas Blanton  
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 Michael & Martha Cooper  
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**360-696-0131**

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## **Columbia Land Trust Wish List**

**Astoria office**  
Microwave

**Vancouver office**  
Fire-proof safe  
*(rated to protect  
electronic media)*  
Desktop computer  
*(833Mhz or faster)*

If you would like to donate  
any of these items,  
please give us a call  
at

**360-696-0131**

or

Astoria office

**503-338-5263**

## **Caretakers (\$100-249)**

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Senator Don & Mary Benton  
Tammy & Eric Bjorkman  
Allan & L. Arlene Blair  
Dr. Lenox & Helene Biddle Dick  
Evelyn Dusenbery  
Ecological Land Services, Inc.  
Richard Engeman & Terry Jess  
Michael Federovitch  
George & Catherine Greer  
Kevin Grosz - The Resource Company,  
Inc.  
James Hogg & Vahn Anh Corbett  
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Anonymous

## **Benefactors (\$1,000-1,999)**

Ralph & Adolph Jacobs Foundation  
Alan & Mary Parlee  
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Starbucks *Make Your Mark* Volunteer  
Program

## **\$2,000-2,999**

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William Harper  
Steve McGeady

## **\$3,000-4,999**

## **\$5,000-14,999**

Scott Campbell  
Ed & Dolly Lynch  
Peter McCoy  
Robert Thurston & Polly Friedlander -  
Thurston Charitable Foundation

## **\$15,000-19,999**

Scott Campbell  
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## **\$20,000+**

Wiancko Charitable Foundation

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**Columbia Land Trust**, a private, non-profit organization, was founded in 1990. We're dedicated to conserving signature landscapes and vital habitat together with the communities of the Columbia River region. Questions, comments, or concerns may be directed to [info@columbialandtrust.org](mailto:info@columbialandtrust.org)

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