



TRUST TALK

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

Salmon spawning site conserved

Between I-205 and the steamboat landing housing development on the north shore of the Columbia River is a pristine stretch of shoreline known as Wood's Landing. Not only is this the homesite of the Erskine B. Wood family, it is also home to hundreds of Chum salmon, who return to the site to spawn as they have for thousands of years. The site is one of the last large blocks of privately owned land without subdivision development along the north shore of the Columbia River. "It is exceptional to have this area right in the middle of the city that has remained a natural spawning ground for these salmon," says Glenn Lamb, the Land Trust's executive director. "You can stand here in the shadow of the Glen Jackson Bridge in full view of thousands of people and see the water come alive each year with salmon."

In August of this year several members of the Wood family came together to generously donate a conservation easement to Columbia Land Trust on a 2.1 acre portion of the project. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, City of Vancouver and Columbia Land Trust have joined in partnership with the Wood's Family to conserve and provide long-term stewardship for this critical habitat. In the end it will employ a mix of conservation tools including conservation easements and a title transfer of land. A grant from the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board and contributions from individuals will provide the funds for the Land Trust to secure an additional easement and fee title to the remaining parcels of the conservation site. "This is a project born of inspiration and nurtured through cooperation, partnership and the commitment of dozens of individuals representing multiple agencies, groups, and interests," said family member Mary Wood.

"You can stand here in the shadow of the Glen Jackson Bridge in full view of thousands of people and see the water come alive each year with salmon."

*~ Glenn Lamb, Executive Director
Columbia Land Trust*

While the project site is not large, about 7 acres in all when this first phase of the project is complete; the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board has ranked this project as one of the highest conservation priorities for salmon in the Lower Columbia. Several elements come together at this site to make it an ideal place for Chum salmon to spawn, and the fact that it has been left substantially undisturbed given its desirability and proximity to an urban area is truly fortunate.

The gravel bed at the river's edge is bathed by springs from the adjacent hillside, keeping the area moist and cool for the developing eggs even when river levels fluctuate. The site also encompasses Joseph's Creek, which is fed by two streams that provide drainage for upland marshes, providing an inlet to the Columbia River. Although the specific hydrology of the area has not been completely mapped, the undeveloped woodlands, meadows and wetlands surrounding the property play an integral part in recharging the springs. In addition to



**Wood's Landing chum spawning site.
I-205 bridge in the background.**

aiding aquifer recharge, the trees and native plants also provide cover and shade for the spawning salmon.

Besides providing critical habitat for the salmon, Wood's Landing will also provide opportunities for fish research and environmental education.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will manage the habitat features of the land with the Land Trust, and the city and other private non-profit groups will participate in providing environmental education. Members of the Wood's family will also continue to live on portions of the land as allowed for in the conservation plan for the property.

The site also has significant historical and cultural value. The inlet at Wood's Landing served as a fishing site for Native Americans and many artifacts

including the stone "sinkers" that they used to weight their nets have been found at the site. It is one of the few remaining remnants of aboriginal shoreline in the Lower Columbia that looks today as it would have when visited by Lewis and Clark's Corp of Discovery in 1805.

Grays River farm newest conservation site

Land Trust acquires 163 acres in Grays River basin for salmon habitat restoration

In July of this year, Columbia Land Trust acquired 163 acres of land along the lower Grays River from the Kandoll family. In the inter-tidal portion of the Grays River, the property's extensive on-site wetlands provide an opportunity to restore significant backwater native spruce habitat and natural wetlands to the river and Columbia River estuary. The backwater Spruce wetlands native to the Grays River have been identified by several natural resource agencies and biologists as one of the most important habitats for salmon recovery in the Columbia Basin. It is integral to restoring estuary function. Of all habitat types in the lower Columbia River, the spruce wetland community is the habitat type that has experienced the greatest decline since European settlement. This project received one of the highest rankings by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board which has provided a grant for the purchase and restoration of this property. Funding for habitat restoration has also been provided through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

Ted Kandoll and his wife Mary lived on the property, which they owned along with Ted's brother John. Ted and Mary, both in their seventies, had been leasing the land to a neighbor for pasturing and hay, but finally decided that it was time to sell. In the family since the turn of the last century, the property served as the primary source of the couple's wealth. The couple was able to take a long awaited trip to Northern California after closing the sale; it has long been a wish of Ted's to see the Redwoods. "But it's hard to let go of the land," said Mary, "we raised our family (16 children) here. There is definitely a bittersweet quality to moving on." Les Zimmer, the Land Trust's conservation project manager, said, "The couple's patience while the Land Trust went through the process of securing the funding for the purchase was instrumental to the acquisition and very much appreciated. I really enjoyed getting to know Ted and Mary in my visits to the farm. Working with landowners and other professionals in the community in a cooperative way like this is what makes land trust work so unique."

The area where the Grays River joins the Columbia forms an important staging area for all of the Columbia Basin's anadromous fish species. Here they rear and make the transition from freshwater to saltwater in their journey to the ocean. Some species will spend several months to more than a year feeding and growing in the backwater channels. The property also contains a grove of old-growth Sitka Spruce and grasslands that are periodically wet. In addition to providing critical habitat for several threatened species of salmon, the property will also provide important habitat for bald eagles, osprey, hawks, owls and other bird species, Roosevelt elk, deer, black bear and many other mammals and many other species including the red-legged frogs (listed as an environmentally sensitive species by the State). Though not confirmed, the site may also provide marbled murrelet nesting habitat.

The Kandoll site also contains the headwaters of Seal Slough, where the Land Trust has a related conservation project that is already underway. "We have found thousands of fry (juvenile salmon) in the natural backwater channels that already exist in this area," says Ian Sinks, the Land Trust's stewardship director. "The recently restored channels have not had sufficient time to develop the cover and wood debris seen in the natural habitat, but individual fish are turning up in the new channels. This limited sampling

indicates the importance of these channels for fish – and over time we will expect to see more use of the restored channels.”

This project is part of a much larger conservation effort in the region which includes several different agencies, including Ducks Unlimited and the Nature Conservancy. Land Trust staff and Board members have also been meeting with local community groups, including the Grays River Grange and the Upper Grays River Flood Control District. “The conservation plan for the Kandoll property will focus on returning natural watershed function and restoring native wetland vegetation to the property,” explains Ian, “but we will definitely take into account the needs of the community and are looking forward to working with our neighbors as we draft the plan.”

Sanctuary

Glenn Lamb's Musings

The phone rings and rings. Emails pile up. Meeting schedules are full. I dash out to the car, late for the next meeting. After work, I hurry to pick up my “little brother”, go swimming, then grocery shopping, and it's already late to fix dinner. The television spills 30-second bytes. Images flash in front of me, then they're gone as quickly.

The moment I pull in to Allen and Bernice Johnson's house, everything is different. I've never heard the sound of the television at the Johnson's. Allen and Bernice meet you at the door with a firm handshake, steady eyes, the time to listen, and with carefully chosen words spoken slowly.

It's not that the Johnson's aren't busy. “Heavens,” as Bernice might say with a laugh, “we're busy from before dawn to after dark!” The cats have to be fed and cared for, and the raccoons, the skunks, the llamas, the chickens, the deer, the crows and all the other wildlife that inhabit the Johnson's Enchanted Acres. And after the vocal creatures have been tended to, there are blackberry vines to remove and trees to plant.

In 1992, the Johnson's donated a conservation easement on their 43 Enchanted Acres to the Columbia Land Trust, the first CLT conservation easement ever. Since then, the property has seen a perennial stream returned to its natural course, wildlife ponds created, hundreds of trees planted, and thousands of blackberry vines removed. In 1998, the Johnson's were aptly named Wildlife Farmers of the Year.



Allen and Bernice Johnson

But in spite of their industriousness, the Johnson's go about life with a deliberate and respectful pace—respectful of time, of their visitors, of each other, and of every living thing that passes across their land.

Now in their 80's, Allen and Bernice still have amazing spunk. “Hey babe,” Bernice will ask Allen, “Want to show ‘em the work you did at the lower pond?” And their efforts show.

But this 43-acre wildlife preserve north of Camas, Washington demands more and more attention. Columbia Land Trust is currently seeking volunteers willing to invest time on a regular basis to help steward the Johnson's Enchanted Acres. The job calls for working outside, observing wildlife, spending time with terrific people, watching the seasons change, seeing the migrations come and go, and—just maybe—having the frenetic pace of life invaded by calm.

Allen and Bernice have left a legacy of conserved lands that will live on forever. If you'd like to thank the Johnson's, please send them a thank you note at 3516 NE 261st Avenue, Camas, WA 98607. This would be a great time for them to hear from you.

If you'd like to experience their land as a volunteer steward, please call Ian Sinks or Lindsay Cornelius at 360-696-0131.

Wiancko family host annual membership picnic

We would like to thank the Wiancko family for generously hosting the Land Trust's annual member's picnic on their property this year.

Known as the "Home Place," the 317 acre parcel of land sits atop Ross Mountain on the Oregon side of the Columbia River just east of Corbett. The Wianckos are working with Columbia Land Trust to place this land into conservation. Dennis Wiancko said that the family was happy to host the picnic, "My hope is that when people see this land they will want to help conserve it."

In addition to the stunning views from the property, members were treated to lunch, nature tours and a hike through some very mature forest.



Hound's-tongue seeds, cynoglossum officinale

Hot Topics in Land Stewardship

By Ian Sinks

We're all familiar with this type of headline: "An Inferno in the Mountains," "Wildfires Prompt Evacuations," "Bush Plan to Target 'Fire Crisis'". The headlines indicated that catastrophic fires were raging through the northwest. Millions of acres had been 'scorched'. TV news crews in helicopters shot nighttime photos showing eerie columns of fire reaching towards the heavens.

Fire makes exciting news, but there is an important story behind these bold headlines. Fire is productive. Fire can be productive for plant communities, for fish and for wildlife. In fact, without fire, many of these conservation values can be seriously degraded or lost altogether.

Fire has been an influential part of Northwest ecosystems for thousands of years. Lightning, Native Americans and even volcanism have contributed to a landscape shaped in part by fire. The frequency that a particular area experiences fire, or fire return interval, varies greatly within the Columbia Land Trust region. Return intervals on the coast can be greater than one hundred years, while in Wasco and Klickitat Counties it can be as low as every five to ten years. Areas like the Klickitat River watershed have vegetation communities that develop and thrive with the aide of frequent fires.

Studies indicate that regular lower intensity fires restore native vegetation and in some cases prevent invasion by weeds. Fire can increase acorn production in oak woodlands where a great number and diversity of wildlife rely on this high protein food source. And even fish can benefit from fire – a study in Idaho has shown that fire increases stream productivity through an infusion of nutrients and organic matter that in turn fuels significant increases in fish production.

Fire in wild lands is not just a discussion of frequency and not all fires are created equal. Weather, slope, geology, and availability of fuels all play significant roles in differentiating a low intensity fire from a catastrophic fire. During the 500,000-acre Biscuit Fire in southern Oregon much was made of the total acreage 'burning.' But the Biscuit Fire, broadly deemed a catastrophic fire, turned out to be less severe in parts. In fact, approximately 61% of the land was unburned, or experienced a very-low or low intensity fire. Unfortunately, approximately 16%, or 18,000 acres, did experience high burn severity where tree mortality reached 100% and soil structure was significantly altered. Because of the understandable emotions and threats involved, fires that threaten homes and other structures are often reported as catastrophic, even if the overall extent of the damage is limited.

The stories of fires throughout the West have re-invigorated the debate of public land management, and renewed the potential for a forestlands policy that reduces the risk of fire. This debate should focus on restoring the natural processes within an ecosystem so that fire is less threatening. Fire is a useful management tool. A policy that simply addresses reducing fuel loads misses the opportunity to restore the processes that maintain healthy forests and reduce the threat of catastrophic fire.

We all bear the burdens and responsibilities of being good stewards of our natural resources. Columbia Land Trust is committed to being good stewards of our lands. Stewardship is critical to fulfilling our responsibility to

protect conservation values and to this end, we commit time, resources and dollars. Land stewardship is often a calculated risk – evaluating what happens if we do something, and what happens if we do not. Every piece of land is unique and planning needs to address each site individually.

In the coming years, I hope to report that the Land Trust has reduced fire threat on its lands, both forested and grasslands, and that we are carefully preparing a way to restore fire to the land. It is a challenge that will be difficult to implement, but the rewards of restoring healthy habitat communities and securing safe places for people to live will make the effort worthwhile.

New additions

Lindsay Cornelius

Lindsay is the new Americorps volunteer serving as stewardship coordinator. She is Vancouver-raised by a family of conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts. Lindsay recently graduated with a degree in environmental science which she has dreams of parlaying into a writing career. She is fresh back from a three-month venture in Thailand and Laos. She loves travel, the outdoors and playing soccer.

Amanda Reynolds

Amanda book keeps for the Land Trust. She moved to the Northwest for the beauty, which she loves to take in on her hikes. Amanda is involved with her church where she fostered her desire to serve others through counseling. Now, she attends school changing her career from accounting to counselor.

Susan Kerosky

Susan contracts with the Land Trust as the finance director. She keeps busier than the rest of the world raising her two boys, managing a successful business and enjoying precious time with her husband. In rare moments of free time, she loves to hike and kayak with her family.

Columbia Heritage Circle

Leave a Legacy of Conservation



Columbia Land Trust
Conserving Land Forever

A planned gift to Columbia Land Trust will create a legacy of conservation that will last for generations to come. Your *planned gift* can be your biggest, most lasting donation for land conservation.

The easiest and most common form of planned gift is a bequest in your will, but a *planned gift* can take many forms and can play an essential role in your financial planning for the future.

Your gift or bequest ensures Columbia Land Trust conserves and stewards conservation lands forever.

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

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.

The Ray Hickey Membership Challenge for 2002

Ray Hickey Foundation matches membership donations up to \$50,000.

Following are gifts and memberships from to July through September 2002.

Members (\$25+)

Maxine Ambrose
Anonymous
Alan & Joyce Berner
Sharon Bucher & Jonathan Stein
Ruth Craford
Gordon Davis
Reva Dilley
Edd Evans
John & Catherine Gosling
Marilyn Hall
Sarah Hartung
De Henderson
Nan Henriksen
Robert & Alma Howe
Julie Hukee
Howard & Jeanette Hymas
Joseph Kelsey
Dr. Kenneth Mantel
James & Viola Martin
Vince Morrison
Liz Palles
Mark & Trudy Rees
Margaret Ryan
Richard Schramm & Patricia Bugas-Schramm
Whitney Smith
Owen Steere & Marilyn Cony
John Tyler
Matthew Watson

Stewards (\$50+)

Elizabeth Adcock
Anonymous
Ron Barca & Nettie Pulella Barca
Dr. George & Elizabeth Barton
Jesse Block
- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*
Brenda Buratti
Elizabeth Burns & Associates
Mark Cullington
- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*
Marjory Devers
Deborah Edelman
- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*
John & Sharon English
Lori Fanoni
Linda Floyd
Charles & Diane Forslund
- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*
Eric Greene
Keith Hadley & Jenifer Woodward
Philip & Rose Marie Hamilton
James Hogg & Vahn Anh Corbett
Greg & Gayle Kimsey
Thomas Kovaric & Judith Clayton Kovaric
Paul Lewis & Linda Getchell Lewis
Frederick Lunke
Mac Lyle & Family
- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*
Sandra Polishuk
Ernestine Quasebarth
Lynn Resnick-Zacks & Adam Zachs
- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*
Judy Sanford & Deborah Sherck
Donald Schuman
Robert & Jeanne Wilhelm

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Lawrence & Lynn Krupa
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Louise Lothspeich
David McDonald & Karin Dedona
Gary Mozel & Carol Raitt
- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*
Edward Pavone & Charlene Hiss
Kent Snyder
Lester Zimmer

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- *In honor of Lyssa Tall & Dan Anolik*

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\$5,000+

Erskine B. Woods Living Trust

Brad Paymer
Office Manager

Tammy Bjorkman
Membership Coordinator

Lindsay Cornelius
Stewardship Coordinator

For information
360-696-0131

Columbia Land Trust Wish List

Astoria Office

Drafting table and chair
Bar stools
Kayak
Hip-waders
Knee boots
Small microwave
Dorm size refridgerator
Small coffeemaker
Laptop computer

Vancouver Office

Newer or new laser
fax machine

**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**

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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

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