

# WHIDBEY CAMANO LAND TRUST

SPRING 2005

## PROTECTING HISTORIC FARMLAND Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve



"I want to retain the real value of the land I live on."

Row upon row of freshly turned earth. A soft breeze carrying the scent of distant rain. Eagles orbiting overhead and owls nesting in an old barn. "I just love this place," says Gene Kahn. "I think it's magical."

The "place" is the Old Anderson Farm on Fort Casey Road, 70 acres of rich earth recently acquired by Kahn and his partner, Dr. Lisa Meserole. They plan to both donate and sell (a "bargain sale") a conservation easement on the land to the Whidbey Camano Land Trust. The farm is a critical "patchwork piece" connected to other historic agricultural lands protected with conservation easements held by the National Parks Service (see sidebar).

Kahn, who built the Skagit County organic foods company Cascadian Farm into a showcase, now heads sustainable agricultural operations for General Mills. He gave important bald eagle habitat to The Nature Conservancy and recently donated development rights on Cascadian Farms to the Skagit Land Trust.

He and Lisa now make their home on the Old Anderson Farm "on the outskirts of agricultural heaven," as Kahn describes Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.

Restoration of an old barn on the property already has begun. Kahn ordered custom-milled wood to

match the barn's original siding and scouted the Internet to find and purchase antique hardware fittings.

The barn loft is being remodeled into an office for Lisa's naturopathic medical practice, currently based in Seattle. The work is being done carefully to avoid disturbing the barn's other tenants—a family of barn owls.

Restoration of the 1902 Anderson farmhouse also is planned, along with the addition of a new kitchen, bedroom and porch. Beyond that "our plans are very flexible," Kahn says. "We're just kind of feeling it out as we go."

Kahn hopes to get involved with the local farming community and look for ways to promote sustainable agriculture on Whidbey. But land conservation remains high on his list of priorities.

"I don't want to buy and sell land of great significance," he says. "I don't feel I own it anyway; I just use it...I want to retain the real value of the land I live on."

The Land Trust will be working this year to develop a conservation easement and acquire the development rights on the property. Thanks to the vision of Gene Kahn and Lisa Meserole, another vital part of Whidbey's farming past will be saved for the future.

*"Come look from this eminence of bluff, now in the soft hour before daybreak...the island's farm fields are leather and corduroy, rich even panels between black-furred stands of forest. Tan grass...whisks soundlessly against a four-wire fence line. Yes, rural America of the last century."*

Ivan Doig (overlooking Ebey's Landing),  
Winter Brothers, 1980.

### Ebey's Reserve is One of a Kind

The Old Anderson Farm is located in the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve (Reserve). The Farm's building complex is recognized as an important element of the Reserve's cultural landscape.

Unlike many National Parks, the 25 square mile Reserve encompasses a mixture of federal, state, county and private property. As a result of the purchase and donation of conservation easements on key properties, the historical landscape – the vistas, woodlands and fertile prairies – appears much as it did a century ago when sea captains and farmers were drawn to the area.

The Land Trust's acquisition of a conservation easement on the Old Anderson Farm will create a continuous swath of permanently protected farmland connecting Ebey's Prairie to Crockett Prairie. This is one of several strategic projects the Land Trust is working on in the Reserve to help further the protection of this unique and historic place.



## Board Spotlight

**Name:**

Bill Applegate

**Joined Board:**

2002

**Islander From:**

1987

**Profession:**

Retired Navy orthopaedic surgeon

**Background:**

As an Ohio native, Bill chose Portland, Oregon for his medical internship and was dazzled by the mountains, forests, fishing, and skiing. During his internship, Bill was drafted into the Navy and made his career as an orthopaedic surgeon, eventually working at the Whidbey Navy Hospital. Bill is an avid birdwatcher and has been active in the Whidbey Audubon Society and the Falcon Research Group. He also served as a member of the Island County Planning Commission. Bill and his wife, a retired Navy nurse, live near Oak Harbor. Bill takes daily walks with his dog on the beach or along the trails at Joseph Whidbey State Park.



## LAND TRUST BOARD EXPANDS

The Board of Directors welcomed six new members in January, adding a wealth of skills and passion for land protection. Joani Boose brings a background in adult education and is active as a Beachwatcher. Retired commercial banker, David Brown, is Vice President and former Development Chair for People for Puget Sound. Camano Island resident John Edison is an arbitrator for the National Association of Securities Dealers and recently served on the Island County

Planning Commission. Steve Raymond worked for 30 years as a journalist at the Seattle Times, is the author of books on fly fishing, and lives on the Zimmerman easement donated to the Land Trust in 1999. Acting as a National Parks Service liaison, Leigh Smith is a resource management specialist with the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. Independent financial advisor and owner of Thomas Capital Management, Michael Thomas serves on the board of the Island

Economic Development Council.

The board also extended a warm thank you to Sheilagh Byler who completed her three-year term on the Land Trust's Board.

*Back Row, Left to Right: Michael Thomas, Bill Applegate, Marty Behr, Leigh Smith, Cary Peterson, Joani Boose, Steve Raymond, David Brown*

*Middle Row, Left to Right: Charles Arndt, Pat Powell, Dawn Rhodes*

*Front Row, Left to Right: Cyndi Fernandez, Kathleen Landel, Connie Wolfe*



## DONATING A HOME FOR WILDLIFE

Years ago, when Whidbey Island started getting more developed, I wanted to be a personal nature conservancy for the island – to preserve the forests and views I loved when they came up for sale. Of course, I didn't have any money then, so it was out of the question. But I kept hoping that something like that would happen. And it did!

The Whidbey Camano Land Trust helped me turn my small, individual donations into protection for the significant places on our two islands. Important land is being permanently protected through their efforts and the generosity of private individuals.

Thanks to the Land Trust's Legacy Circle, I have found a way to give more than I normally ever could. Since I'm single and my family doesn't need an inheritance from me, in my will, I'm bequeathing my house to the Land Trust. After I am gone, the Land Trust will sell my house and the sale proceeds will be used to protect important island

lands. This type of donation is known as a "trade land" – turning real estate into habitat.

I know the Land Trust will be around for a long time, and that their strategic process of how best to use donations to purchase land and conservation easements will help ensure the health and beauty of our islands. The donation of my home will allow me – at last – to leave a permanent legacy for Whidbey Island—a place that I truly love.

- *Nancy Waddell*



*Nancy Waddell's legacy gift will protect open space and wildlife habitat for future generations, including her grandniece (pictured above with Nancy).*

## Board of Directors

**President:** Kathleen Landel

**Vice President:** Cary Peterson

**Secretary:** Constance Wolfe

**Treasurer:** Martin Behr

**Directors:** William Applegate

Charles Arndt

Joani Boose

David Brown

John Edison

Ray Rasmussen

Steve Raymond

Michael Thomas

**NPS Liaison:** Leigh Smith

**Executive Director:** Patricia Powell

**Office Managers:** Cyndi Fernandez

Dawn Rhodes

# News Around the Islands

## SARATOGA WOODS WORK PARTY

Come by on **Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>** from **9:00 am – Noon** for the Friends of Saratoga Woods annual Spring Clean Up. Bring your gloves, clippers, hand-saws, and shovels to help with trail maintenance, removing invasive plants and cleaning up the entrance area. Refreshments will be served. Contact Mark Gappa, [gappa@whidbey.com](mailto:gappa@whidbey.com).

## DAVIS SLOUGH HERONS THRIVE!

A recent nest count at the Davis Slough heron colony showed a 50% increase in nests from two years ago. There are now 297 nests that indicate the herons are actively using the site for breeding. This is good news since two of Puget Sound's other large heronries, Point Roberts and Ault Field, did not fledge young this past season.

## KRUEGER FARM DEDICATION

On **March 9<sup>th</sup>** we will celebrate the success of the two-year effort to protect open space in the heart of Coupeville.

The Friends of Krueger Farm and the Whidbey Camano Land Trust worked together to acquire the site, raising the needed funds through the generosity of over 400 individuals. The 4.5 acre site, adjacent to 12 acres of town open space, was purchased in December and then donated to the Town of Coupeville with a conservation easement held by the Land Trust.

## GOLDEN PAINTBRUSH SITE NAMED

The 33-acre golden paintbrush site in Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve has been named the Naas Natural Area Preserve. The name honors Dorothy Naas and her late husband Ralph, who were instrumental in discovering the endangered golden paintbrush at the site, leading to the property's protection. See article below to help us protect this incredible property.

## LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIP DOUBLES

A big "THANK YOU" to those who contributed to our Annual Fund in 2004. The number of members doubled from the previous year to nearly 350. Annual memberships fund our ability to work full-time for the community to successfully complete land protection projects. To become a member, send your donation in the enclosed envelope.

## THANK YOU!

### Memorial and Honorary Gifts

#### *In Memory of Jim Davis*

Michael Seraphinoff & Susan Prescott

#### *In Memory of Bob & Eleanor Grant*

Karen Hallett

#### *In Memory of Sally Hayton Keeva*

Marilyn Clay  
Willeta Huffstetler Kerschner

#### *In Memory of George Morris*

Rob Harbour & Carol Orazem

#### *In Memory of John Sundberg*

Joyce Peterson & Fran Einterz

#### *In Memory of Phil Williamson*

Rowena Williamson

#### *In Memory of Jack Davies & in Honor of Mary Davies*

The Specker Family

#### *In Honor of Bill Applegate*

Richard & Karen Prince

#### *In Honor of H. K. and Lila Coats*

Linda Fauth

#### *In Honor of Pat Powell*

Len Barson & Margaret Wetherald

## HELP SAVE A NATIONAL TREASURE

We are just \$120,000 short of our \$2.4 million fundraising goal to save a rare part of our natural heritage—nearly a mile of spectacular shoreline, remnant prairie and a rare, native plant on the verge of extinction. This 33-acre property, recently named the Naas Natural Area Preserve (*see article above*), is located in the nationally recognized Ebey's Reserve and contains one of the last eleven populations in the world of golden paintbrush.



*Please help us succeed and send your generous donation to the Land Trust noting "Naas NAP" on the memo line of your check.*

For more information, visit our website at: [www.wclt.org](http://www.wclt.org), go to "News and Events".

## About WCLT

### Mission

The Whidbey Camano Land Trust protects our islands' natural habitats and rural lands in partnership with landowners and the broader community.

### Contact Information

#### Whidbey Camano Land Trust

5629 Bayview Road

P.O. Box 1453

Langlely, WA 98260

(360) 321-5141

Email: [wclt@whidbey.com](mailto:wclt@whidbey.com)

Web address: [www.wclt.org](http://www.wclt.org)

# URGENT CALL TO ACTION

## YOUR VOICE IS NEEDED FOR LAND PROTECTION

Letters to your state legislators are needed to permanently protect 385 acres of Department of Natural Resources (DNR) state lands on Whidbey Island and thousands of additional acres throughout Washington State. **These lands are eligible for transfer to a protected conservation status, but only if the state legislature approves full funding** of the Trust Land Transfer (TLT) program. The six Island County DNR properties are some of the best undeveloped forest land remaining on South Whidbey, including 200 acres at the headwaters of Maxwellton Creek. If not protected, the DNR lands will eventually be logged and sold for development. *For more information, visit our website at: [www.wclt.org](http://www.wclt.org), go to "News and Events".*

**WRITE A LETTER** (preferred action), email, phone or visit your Legislators:

- **Ask your legislators to fund the entire \$67 million 2005-2007 Trust Land Transfer Program package** in the capital budget. Island County properties will be protected only if the entire list is funded.
- **Remind them they'll be spending state money on school construction anyway** so why not take the opportunity to get the triple benefit of these dollars – including money for school construction, community conservation lands, and upgrading the school trust assets.
- **State why protecting these lands is important to you and your community.** Please copy us on your letters and emails (see Contact Information on Page 3)

Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504  
(360) 786-1999  
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Rep. Chris Strow  
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Rep. Barbara Bailey  
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## \$120,000 Needed to Save Golden Paintbrush Site

We are so close to our \$2.4 million fundraising goal. Please contribute to the protection of this extraordinary property.



Photo Credit: Mark Sheehan

### Inside:

- Connecting & protecting farmland in Ebey's Reserve
- Turning your house into a home for wildlife
- Davis Slough Heronry is flourishing
- New board members add depth & wealth of skills