

WHIDBEY CAMANO

— Land Trust —

2025 IMPACT REPORT



Gratitude for a Remarkable Year

Black turnstone pair by Dave Wechner.

Highlights from a Thriving 2025!

It was a year filled with exciting accomplishments, memorable events and impressive restoration work—**all thanks to you!** The Land Trust's committed members, passionate volunteers, generous sponsors and enthusiastic landowners—inspired us with a resounding dedication to protecting the vital lands and waters on Whidbey and Camano Islands. 2025 offered a powerful glimpse of what's possible with teamwork and the unwavering support of a passionate community. This report highlights just a few of the standout moments that made for a special year.

Conservation Success

It was a rewarding year for island conservation, with 375 acres protected through Land Trust efforts. The completion of many projects—some of them years in the making—required thoughtful planning, patience and persistence, and committed landowners. Below are some top achievements from the past year:

- Completed the original vision for Lagoon Point Forest with the purchase of two properties and a donation of another, formally creating a 264-acre forest preserve that will be opened to the public in 2028.
- Protected 70 acres at Holmes Harbor Community Forest, bringing the total Land Trust ownership to 150 acres, and over 500 total acres protected in the project area.

continued on page 2



Standout moments from an incredible year. **2-3**

Acknowledgements of our generous donors. **5**

Land protection map with featured projects. **6-7**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Will Stelle
President
- Christian Fulghum
Vice President
- Kim Andrews
Treasurer
- Donna Keeler
Secretary
- Emi Gunn
Sally King
- Dan Matlock
- Jim Somers
- Jenny Son
- Pam Stein

STAFF

- Mallory Bello
Land Transactions Specialist
- Mekare Bowen
Operations & Membership Specialist
- Ryan Elting
Executive Director
- Tom Haensly
General Counsel
- Jennifer Hajny
Community Engagement Director
- Ashley Hironimus
Outreach & Education Specialist
- Melissa Holme
Land Protection Specialist
- Andi Kopit
Education Coordinator
- Jessica Larson
Stewardship Director
- Taylor McClain
Stewardship Assistant
- Mosa Neis
Resident Caretaker
- Kyle Ostermick-Durkee
Stewardship Specialist
- Kurt Schlimme
Conservation Director
- Taylor Schmuki
Stewardship Assistant
- Neena Viel
Development Specialist
- Carrie Viers
Associate & Finance Director
- Haley Viers
Communications Specialist
- Lily Wirth
Stewardship Assistant



Deer browse the prairie at Admiralty Inlet Preserve.

continued from page 1

- Expanded Keystone Preserve, protecting a vital conservation corridor to support wildlife movement between Keystone and forested lands to the north.
- Conserved 65 acres of forest between Lagoon Point Forest and South Whidbey State Park, protecting high quality wildlife habitat within an identified conservation corridor.
- Acquired 30 acres adjacent to the Holmes Harbor Community Forest, which we will resell subject to a conservation easement that will protect the high quality forest, wetlands and stream located within the property.



Volunteers remove thistle at Dugualla Heights.



Volunteer helps at a work party at Walking Ebey's.



Golden paintbrush

Nurturing the Land

2025 was a fulfilling year spent caring for the land on these islands—from forest restoration thinning and removing noxious weeds, to building new trails and planting native species! Here's our highlight reel:

- Keystone Preserve kept the stewardship team busy with restoration and public access projects throughout the year.
- Extensive blackberry and thistle removal at Dugualla Heights Conservation Easement to improve wildlife habitat. Future native plantings at this site are on the horizon.
- Landowner approvals for the next phase of Walking Ebey's Trail System are complete! With this important step, staff and volunteers can start building the next two miles of trail into the Town of Coupeville.
- Over 60 volunteer work parties in 2025, the most ever! Many thanks to the volunteers that came out to steward the land.
- Successful restoration thinning at Trillium Community Forest to advance another 170 acres towards old growth. The last round of thinning for Trillium will take place in 2026.

Keystone Preserve Updates

Progress continues at Keystone Preserve as we make way for the grand opening. Learn more about the property at www.wclt.org/projects/keystone-farm-and-forest-preserve. Here are just a few of the successes as restoration and preparation efforts continue:

- Completed 15 acres of native plantings over the winter and succeeded in maintaining 90% survival rate across the summer thanks to stewardship staff and volunteers watering plants through the hot months.
- Constructed 0.6 miles of a wheelchair-accessible trail through the forest to offer new areas of exploration in the Preserve.
- Thinned a three-acre portion of the forest. To improve habitat health, we partnered with the Washington Conservation Corps to open up this area, reduce fire risk and to create space for new understory growth.
- Significant progress was made in the turn lane project for the highway, getting the engineering and permits in line for construction in 2026.



Fabulous Fungi tour at Keystone Preserve.

Connecting Community to Nature

From unforgettable outings on the land to the joy of learning together, 2025 was a year defined by shared experiences and community spirit. Your enthusiasm helped bring preserve tours, hands-on school field trips, and lively events to life, creating moments that will stay with us for years to come. Because of your support, our outreach efforts reached new heights. Here are just a few notable moments from the year:

- Community-Based Programming:** We offered a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities for both Land Trust members and the community at large, including fungi walks on Whidbey and Camano Islands, a Night Sky program at Keystone Preserve, and a guided sunset walk through Walking Ebey's Trail System.
- Stewardship in Action:** From forest health to habitat renewal, our guided tours gave the community an inside look at stewardship in action. This included exploring forest thinning practices in Trillium Community Forest and the detailed restoration process underway at Keystone Preserve.



New ADA trail, and plants in protective tubes at Keystone Preserve.

- Expanded Public Outreach:** This year, more community members than ever stopped by our public events, sparking meaningful one-on-one conversations and exploring our educational displays to learn how the Land Trust is making a difference.
- Connecting Kids to Conservation:** Over 1,200 young people deepened their connection to conservation through hands-on field trips, outdoor learning activities, and opportunities to explore local habitats up close—sparking curiosity and a lifelong appreciation for the natural world.
- Evolving Signature Events:** We concluded our long-running Sea, Trees and Pie Bike Ride, thoughtfully making room for new outreach initiatives scheduled to launch in 2026.

Together, we made 2025 a remarkable year. And with your continued support, 2026 promises to bring even more connection, discovery and impact!



Students explore Strawberry Point Preserve on a field trip last spring.

2025 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



54 LOCAL LANDOWNERS
WORKED WITH FOR LAND PROTECTION PROJECTS

11 REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS
PROTECTING 7 PROPERTIES



84 CONSERVATION EASEMENTS MONITORED



1,200 STUDENTS
HOSTED AT 20 SCHOOL FIELD TIPS



8,740 HOURS WORKED BY 628 VOLUNTEERS

375 ACRES PROTECTED



1,892 ATTENDEES
AT 70 EVENTS CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE LAND



320 ACRES OF ACTIVE RESTORATION



SOWED 8 MILLION SEEDS | PLANTED 17,000 POTTED PLANTS
FOR A TOTAL OF 90 DIVERSE NATIVE SPECIES



In Memoriam



Larry Fox

In the fall of 2025, Larry Fox passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family. A dedicated supporter of the Land Trust for more than 20 years, Larry deeply valued the natural island landscapes and the importance of protecting their rural character. "I really appreciate the natural surroundings and the need to keep the rural setting that I love so much," Larry once shared. Inspired by these values, he began supporting the Land Trust in 2004 and committed to monthly contributions in 2015. With those contributions came memorable monthly visits, as Larry would stop by our office to drop off his check and share a smile. His generosity made a lasting impact on the protection of the Islands' treasured lands and waters—and on our team. A shining light to all who knew him, Larry is deeply missed by the Land Trust crew.



Nancy Nordhoff

In January of this year, Nancy Nordhoff passed away peacefully in her home, surrounded by friends and family. She had a profound and lasting impact on the Whidbey Island community. When the Land Trust was just finding its footing, Nancy made a generous gift that quite literally got us started—and then wisely encouraged us not to rely on her support, sharing fundraising lessons that helped ensure the Land Trust's long-term strength. It was one of the greatest gifts she could have given a community-supported nonprofit. As Nancy once said, "It's important to me to feel that an organization knows what they're doing professionally. Trust for me is very important, and I trust these folks a lot—and I've made my investments for that reason." Her legacy will live on across the island for generations.

Thank You 2025 Donors! You Make it All Possible

The many accomplishments of 2025 were made possible because of you—*thank you!* Your support helps protect the places that keep Whidbey and Camano Islands healthy, resilient and vibrant with life. We are deeply grateful for your role in making this important work possible and ensuring these islands remain thriving havens for generations to come!

Honoring the extraordinary donors who support the Land Trust is a priority for us. We invite you to visit our website and view the 2025 member acknowledgements at www.wclt.org/donors or scan the QR code →



SCAN HERE TO FIND YOUR NAME!

MAXIMIZING YOUR IMPACT

Every \$1 of unrestricted funds you donate is leveraged 11-fold through our work to secure project funds, grants, legacy gifts, and donations of land and conservation easements.

YOUR \$1 = \$11





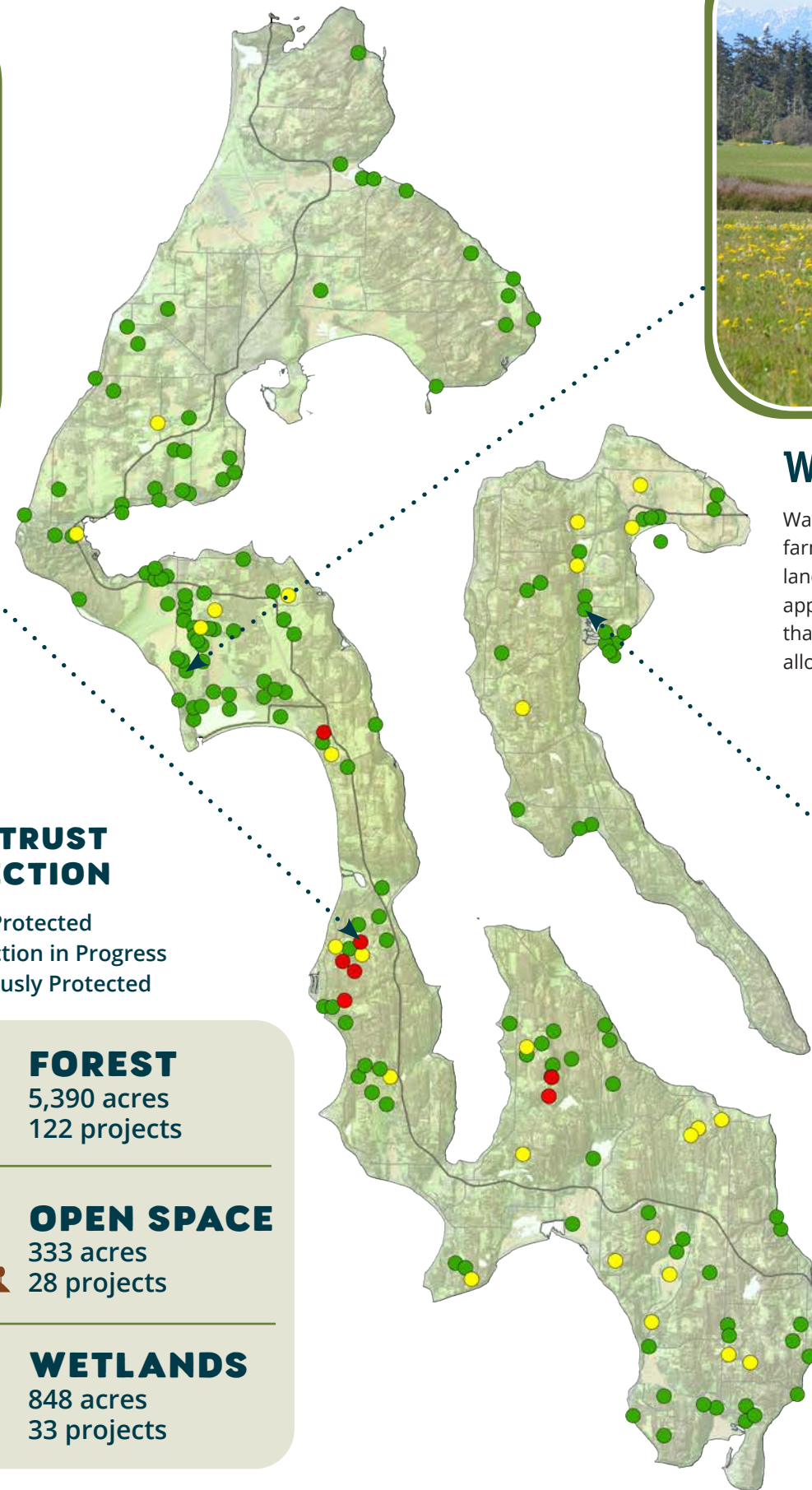
Lagoon Point Community Forest

In 2025, the Land Trust completed a four-year effort to protect the 264-acre Lagoon Point Community Forest, marking a major conservation milestone. With the Lagoon Point forest protected, we are initiating the next phase of the project, developing a management plan for future public access, forest health improvement activities and wildlife habitat enhancement. The official preserve opening is planned for Spring 2028.



Walking Ebey's Trail System

Walking Ebey's Trail System saw a busy year with hundreds of people journeying into the farmland of Ebey's Landing Historic Reserve. This year, staff completed conversations with landowners on the next trail phase leading into the Town of Coupeville. All landowners approved construction, allowing us to move forward with new trail creation in 2026! It's vital that we maintain good relationships with the conservation easement landowners that are allowing this trail, so please be respectful as you pass through these working farmlands.



LAND TRUST PROTECTION

- 2025 Protected
- Protection in Progress
- Previously Protected

FOREST
5,390 acres
122 projects

OPEN SPACE
333 acres
28 projects

WETLANDS
848 acres
33 projects

Together —
We've Protected
11,931 Island Acres

SHORELINE
16 miles
26 sites

TIDELANDS
3,480 acres
21 projects

TRAILS
64 miles
30 sites

FARMLAND
1,879 acres
55 projects



Kristoferson Creek Preserve

Kristoferson Creek got some extra attention in 2025 thanks to our friend, the North American beaver. As nature's engineers, they have been hard at work placing dams on Kristoferson Creek, creating obstacles for salmon. Now, how can we help both species coexist in a healthy habitat? Last year, Land Trust staff and volunteers spent time manually creating openings in the beaver dams for salmon to pass through... hard and muddy work! Longer term options are on the horizon to ensure both beavers and salmon can thrive at Kristoferson Creek.

All information calculated through year-end 2025.



765 Wonn Road, C-201
Greenbank, WA 98253
(360) 222.3310
www.wclt.org

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MAILED FROM 98253
PERMIT NO. 2



Sound Finances
Ethical Conduct
Responsible Governance
Lasting Stewardship



RECYCLED
Paper made from
recycled material

2026: A LOOK AT THE YEAR AHEAD!

Buckle up for a fast-paced year of conservation action with tons of opportunities to experience these islands firsthand! In 2026, the Land Trust will be protecting hundreds more acres of land, advancing important habitat restoration, and offering new ways to connect with nature. From expanding beloved protected places to welcoming the public to new preserves and getting more kids out on the land, here's a preview of what to look forward to this year:

- Dozens of tours and events to get people outside, inspired, and connected to this conservation community.
- The official public opening of Keystone Preserve!
- Expanding protected lands at Trillium Community Forest by 150 acres!
- Permanent protection of the Pacific Rim Institute, securing its future for education and conservation.
- More kids and families exploring the land on Whidbey and Camano Islands.
- Next steps on the Walking Ebey's Trail System, connecting the existing trails into the heart of Coupeville.

