



Chimacum Ridge and Center Valley. Photo by John Gussman.

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest

Strategic Vision Framework

Created September 2020





View from top of Chimacum Ridge looking over Beaver Valley toward Tamanowas Rock Sanctuary, which was protected by Jefferson Land Trust in partnership with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Washington State Parks in 2009.

The Land We're On...

We acknowledge that Chimacum Ridge is within the traditional indigenous tribal lands of the Nəxʷsłáyəm' (S'Klallam), Aqokúlo or Čéməqəm (Chemakum) and other indigenous peoples. We acknowledge that these original stewards have been here since time immemorial, and that European colonization irrevocably changed their homeland and ecosystem, effectively destroying their access to traditional lands for hunting, fishing, harvesting, and living.

Jefferson Land Trust strives to steward in partnership with the descendants of these peoples and to deepen our relationships with them.



View of Chimacum Ridge from a Beaver Valley farm. Photo by Robert Tognoli.

Introduction

Rising between Center and Beaver Valleys in Chimacum, Washington is a forested landform locally referred to as Chimacum Ridge. Located near the main population centers of the county, home to headwater tributaries of Chimacum Creek, prominently seen from regional vantage points, and surrounded by productive farmland and other forestland, the future of Chimacum Ridge is consequential to the people and wildlife of east Jefferson County.

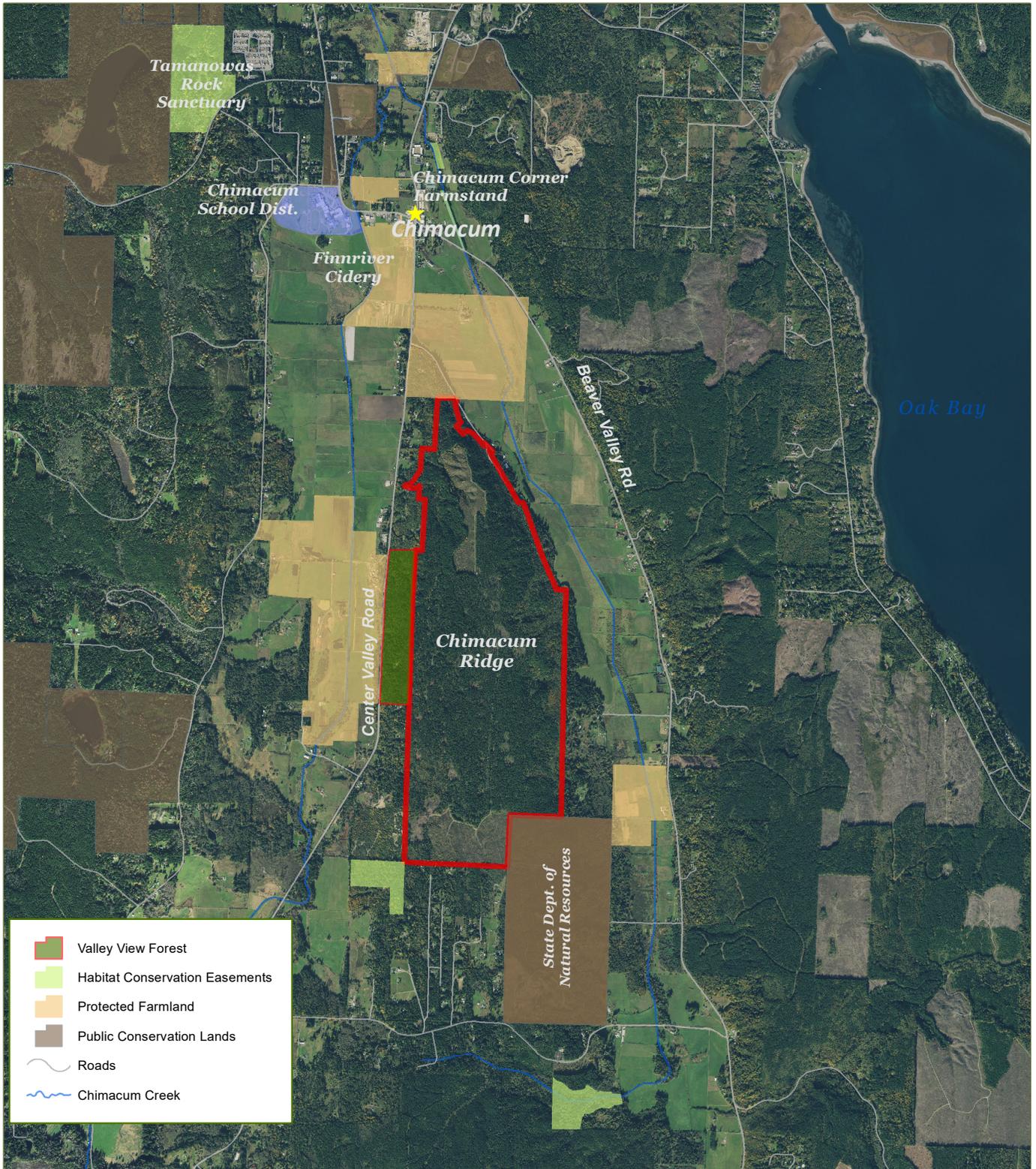
Jefferson Land Trust has been working to help protect this iconic property since 2010, and through many partnerships has ensured it will always remain undeveloped and managed as healthy timberland. Now, the Land Trust is working with the community to help transform the property into a community forest designed to provide public access to the ridge as well as certain ecological, social, and economic benefits to the region forever.

This Strategic Vision Framework was developed in partnership with the community over the course of 2020 to define the purpose of this community forest, and to help guide future decisions concerning it. The framework

includes a definition of what community forests mean to east Jefferson County, a mission for the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest, a long-term vision for what this community forest should be, and a series of values that are the bedrock of this permanent conservation and stewardship project. This framework also outlines the planned governance structure for the community forest, and contemplates several of the different benefits that can be produced through community forestry on this property.

This framework does not attempt to answer more specific and nuanced questions that will arise as the community forest comes to fruition. As the property is secured, as the future Community Forest Management Plan is implemented, and as the trails are built, the ongoing conversations and decision-making processes will continue to shape the relationship between the forest and the community.

This Strategic Vision Framework is designed to provide a foundation for those future conversations, and support the imagination of the community in its exploration of all the benefits this community forest can provide.



Chimacum Ridge Community Forest



2019 Aerial (NAIP)
 For informational purposes only. All data represented are from varying sources and approximate.
 Map created in November, 2020





View of ridge from Finnriver Home farm in Chimacum.



View of ridge from Beaver Valley. Photo by Kerry Tremain.

Project Background

In December 2010, recognizing the high-priority conservation significance of Chimacum Ridge to the Chimacum watershed, Jefferson Land Trust engaged in discussion with the commercial timber landowner, Rayonier, for protection of the property. The Land Trust and Rayonier spent four years exploring every available avenue of permanent conservation funding for working forestland, including long-term financing, public grant funding programs, and private philanthropy, without success.

The conservation significance of this and other area forests were also highlighted in the work of other partners working in the area, including the Trust for Public Land. The Trust for Public Land recognized the opportunity to utilize private investment capital to facilitate the purchase and temporary ownership of the Chimacum Ridge property, and invited the Land Trust to explore that option.

A private equity fund called EFM was already a forestland owner in the county and was working with the Trust for Public Land on other forestland conservation projects; this project fit very well with EFM's goals and intentions.

In March 2015, this conservation partnership succeeded in acquiring the Chimacum Ridge property. EFM now holds title to the entire 853-acre Chimacum Ridge property as a bridge owner, and intends to hold and manage the property in anticipation of local purchase by the Land Trust for the community in 2023.

EFM is a supportive partner that has an obligation to exit the property in 2023. They will need to sell when the term of the private equity fund is up, providing the Land Trust with a viable time horizon to raise adequate acquisition funding from public and private sources.

In 2016, working with the Land Trust and the Trust for Public Land, EFM sold a Restrictive Easement on the entire property to the US Navy, through their Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program, permanently removing the development rights on the property, and preserving it for its forestry values. The value of the easement acquisition was \$1.2 million.

In 2018 the Washington State Legislature allocated \$3.4 million to this conservation project for the purpose of Jefferson Land

Trust acquiring a conservation easement to affect the forest management on the property. The resulting forestland conservation easement is designed to protect certain ecological conditions of the property, and to promote sustainable forest harvest practices.

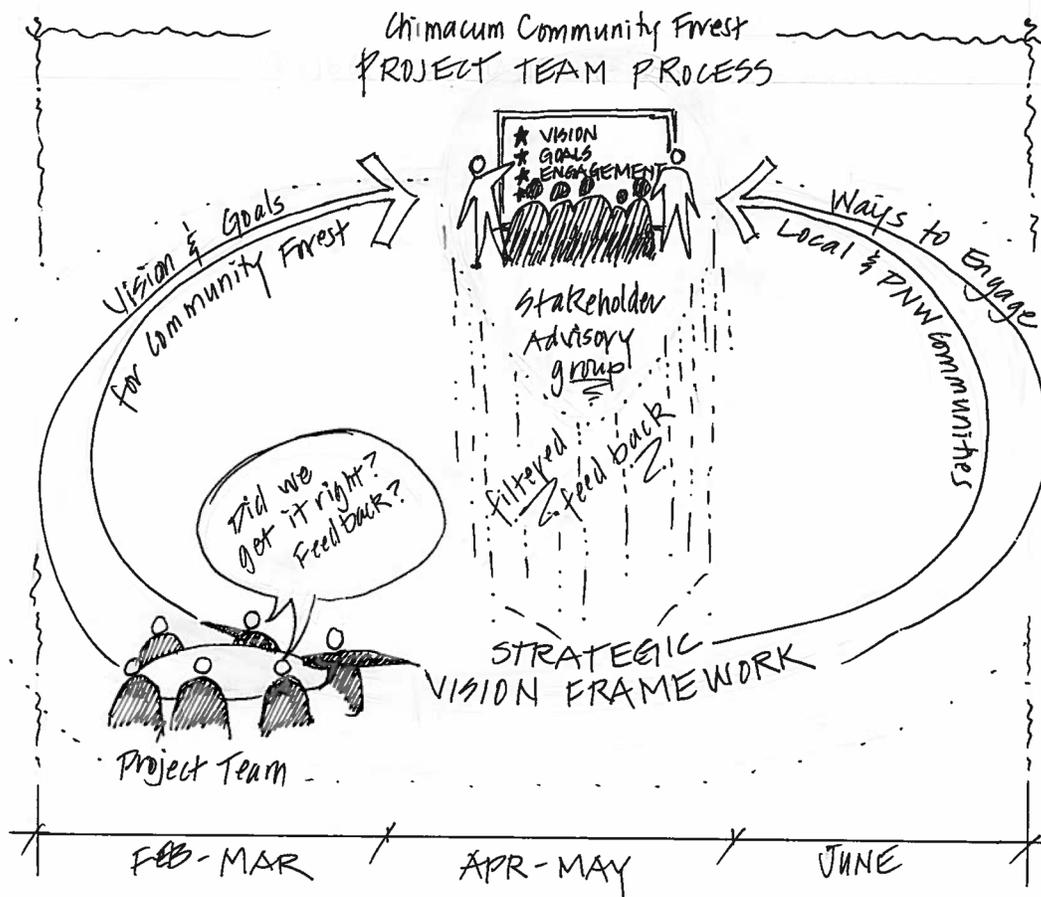
Now that the productive forestland and ecological values of Chimacum Ridge are protected forever, Jefferson Land Trust has an opportunity to establish a community forest that yields significant cultural and economic benefits to our community. With this Strategic Vision Framework, the Land Trust and the community are poised to begin the necessary fundraising to complete the acquisition of the property in 2023, and transform Chimacum Ridge into an active community resource.

Assistance (RTCA) program to support the community forest planning process. The award of technical assistance was confirmed in November, and planning calls with Land Trust and RTCA staff took place between December 2019 and January 2020, which included the recruitment of a Project Team as advisors. The Project Team was made up of community leaders who had a strong sense of place and skills relevant to the community forest vision (see the Participant Appreciation and Acknowledgment section for list of individuals). Planning calls between the Land Trust and the RTCA continued weekly throughout the duration of the project.

The kick-off meeting with the Project Team occurred in February 2020. Initially, the 12-person Project Team was scheduled to meet twice monthly in person at locations throughout the Port Townsend/Chimacum area. The COVID-19 pandemic and the state's responsive stay-at-home orders changed these meetings into online conversations. The Project Team continued

The Planning Process

In June 2019, Jefferson Land Trust applied for technical assistance with the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation

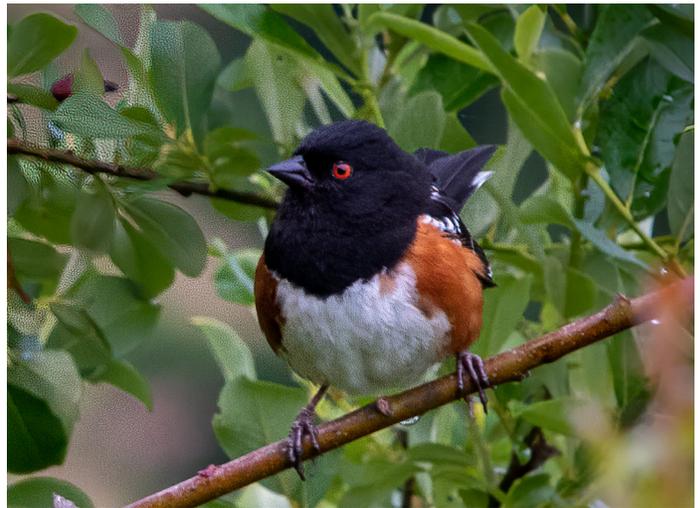


to meet on digital platforms every other week from late February through early May. Afterward, the Project Team met monthly and completed work in this framework in September 2020.

The Project Team was instrumental in defining what this community forest could be in a world of possibilities. This group was dedicated to ensuring the diverse needs and interests of local communities were represented as they worked to define the vision for the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest. They also devised a process for soliciting input on the strategic vision from the wider community, including helping identify and engage with a broader group of stakeholders they described as the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG).

The members of the SAG were nominated by the Project Team, and this 20+ member group provided representative community input on the draft strategic vision through individual communications and surveys, and through group video conference meetings in the summer of 2020.

The SAG focused on answering the question: How best could the Land Trust engage the public with the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest? As part of the answer, the SAG helped develop an Outreach and Engagement Plan along with the Project Team (see Participant Appreciation and Acknowledgment section on page 18).



A Spotted Towhee in Chimacum Ridge forest. Photo by Kerry Tremain.



Chimacum Creek is fed by 19 tributaries from the forested ridge above. Photo by Robert Tognoli.



Salmonberry in Chimacum Ridge forest.



A rare cranberry bog on Chimacum Ridge.



Drone image of Chimacum Ridge from EFM, the current owner.

Community Forests

Prior to the arrival of non-native immigrants to the Olympic Peninsula in the 18th century, the native S'Klallam and Chemakum tribes inhabiting this area had successfully managed the bountiful forests of Jefferson County since time immemorial through a spirit of reciprocity and active management techniques, including fire and other methods.

The forests did not belong to any one individual and were traditionally managed by specialists who excelled at wood carving, bark weaving, hunting or other activities. This forest management not only promoted the development of the widespread old growth forests that once covered the Pacific Northwest, but also encouraged an “edible understory” rich in berries, currants, roots and other edible and medicinal plant materials. When forest productivity slowed, Tribes used burning to return plant nutrients to the soil and encourage the regrowth of these important species.

Going back to the 17th century, in some of the earliest towns developed in the northeastern U.S., woodlots or ‘Town Forests’ were set aside to provide reliable firewood and other forest resources to the community. These collectively owned and managed lands were (and many continue to be) a secure and important feature of the communities in which they are located. These communal forests have a growing significance in the 21st century for their contributions to community well-being and are gaining a modern relevance throughout the country.

Jefferson Land Trust is a partner in the Northwest Community Forest Coalition, which has been formed to help advance community forestry throughout the Pacific Northwest. This coalition developed a set of Community Forest Principles to help guide collective efforts.

They are as follows:

1. Forests are critical natural-resource assets in the Pacific Northwest that provide diverse social, economic, and ecological benefits that are particularly important to surrounding communities and tribes.
2. Maintaining working forest landscapes is fundamental to sustaining resilient communities in the Pacific Northwest over time.
3. Long-term secure forest tenure, which can take many forms, combined with meaningful local community participation that involves multiple stakeholders leads to enhanced forest stewardship which balances local interests with wider public interests.
4. Community Forests deliver meaningful benefits and rights to communities who have geographic, economic, and cultural connection with the local forest resources.

While there isn't a single definition of community forests, all community forests

have a common focus on ensuring community involvement in management decisions. For the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest, the following definition has been adopted:

“Community Forests are forestlands that are owned and managed on behalf of local people to provide them secure and reliable access to the ecological, social, and economic benefits produced by forests.”



Chimacum Ridge forest. Photo by Tim Lawson.



Recent Woodpecker activity in Chimacum Ridge forest. Photo by Tim Lawson.



Chimacum Ridge forest.



Big leaf maple in Chimacum Ridge forest. Photo by Robert Tognoli.

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest

Through collaborative effort since 2010, conservation partnerships and community support have helped legally ensure the Chimacum Ridge property will forever remain an undeveloped and unfragmented healthy forestland. Now, we as a community have an historic opportunity to own and manage the property on behalf of us all, for generations, as the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.

The Forest

With terrain, soils, and climate conditions suitable for growing timber, the land is densely forested and is very productive. Across most of the property, trees can be expected to reach 100-130 feet by the time they are 50 years old. Among the dominant Douglas-fir trees, other conifers include western redcedar, western hemlock, and the occasional Sitka spruce. Broadleaf trees such as big-leaf maple, red alder, bitter cherry, and willow species are also well distributed among the conifers and make up their own sub-stands near wetter depressions and drainages.

All forest management activities on the property must be consistent with the

purpose and terms of the permanent forestland conservation easement on the property (affecting 853-acres).

The easement is designed to help protect the “Forestland Conservation Values” of the property permanently, which are identified as:

- Commercial timber and non-timber forest resource production
- Carbon sequestration
- Climate change resiliency
- Open space
- Wildlife habitat
- Water quality and retention, and aquifer recharge
- Educational opportunities
- Recreational opportunities
- Scenic values

To help sustain these values, the easement outlines a “Desired Future Condition” of the property, which is characterized generally by the following attributes:

1. A structurally diverse forest stand, with variable species and age classes,

2. Well-distributed large-diameter trees,
3. Well-distributed standing dead trees throughout the property, and
4. Down tree logs and other woody debris well-distributed on the forest floor.

The forestland conservation easement further defines certain specific permitted and prohibited uses of the property, and includes a Forestry Activities Appendix which outlines parameters for future harvests.

The forestland conservation easement limits timber harvest activities on the property, and is designed to be compatible with regular active timber management. Stewardship that perpetuates the forestland conservation values will allow for the cultivation of both timber and other non-timber forest products. Specific forest management activities on the property will be outlined in a regularly updated management plan.

The Community

When considering the question of who is it that makes up our community — who is it that this community forest is for — the Project Team settled on a community of place that includes the residents of east Jefferson County, with a particular emphasis on those in and around the town of Chimacum and the Chimacum Creek watershed. While not meant to be an exclusive definition, where benefits are not realized elsewhere, it is this community of place that was primarily the focus of their deliberations.

Members of the Project Team and SAG carefully considered how this community forest could support and influence the well-being of our community, and how the community could support and influence the well-being of the forest. Through this process, they developed bedrock Mission, Vision, and Values statements that can be used by current and future generations as a durable foundation for management decisions. Knowing that the forest, and how it is managed over time, will grow, change, and adapt, these statements are meant

to provide guidance and help ensure the principles embraced by the community during the formation of the community forest are embodied in its future operations.

Importantly, these statements express a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the formation and the long-term operations of the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest. A recognition of the historic and current systemic discrimination and exclusion of members of our community — especially our BIPOC (Black, indigenous, and people of color) community — was front-of-mind for the Project Team and SAG when contemplating how their work will influence the future.

From its beginning, the American conservation movement has been shaped by racism and white supremacy, subtly perpetuating powerful forces that can prevent true equity and inclusion from occurring in projects like this one. Intentionally creating a community forest that helps to bring about lasting change — a forest that is inclusive and serves those marginalized in our community in a meaningful way — became paramount.

By stating this forest is a place for all, and that the benefits from its protection and community-based management should be accessible to all, there is an intention to include equity and inclusion as part of the foundation and identity of this community forest. There is also an awareness that this will not be passively achieved — that embracing diversity, practicing inclusivity, and working toward equity will take ongoing assertive action. Some of the initial work in this sphere is outlined in the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest Outreach and Engagement Plan, which will continue to influence how progress can be made in the future.

In particular, the S'Klallam Tribes have expressed an interest in the ability to harvest traditional foods and fibers on this land, and the Project Team and SAG recognize the importance of ensuring tribal access to this property, in an area where indigenous access to land has been severely limited.

Recognizing the perpetual design of this community forest project, the long-term past is brought into focus, which highlights the ancient indigenous relationship with this land and the opportunity to renew that relationship going forward. The Tribes' ancient knowledge of our local ecosystems and their relationship with the various plants and animals on the Chimacum Ridge landscape make them uniquely suited to assist with management recommendations, community education, and interpretation.

Since the project's inception in 2010, the Land Trust has sought community involvement in all phases of the community forest project. Engagement activities have included tours, public meetings, elected official visits, and partner outreach. Now, as we prepare for the land acquisition phase, these activities are increasing and becoming even more focused.



In 2020, Sarah Spaeth lead multiple small tours for SAG members on Chimacum Ridge. Photo By Kerry Tremain.



2015 tour of ridge with Congressman Derek Kilmer and County Commissioner Kate Dean.



One of the 2020 Zoom Chimacum Ridge meetings with SAG members.



Public tour of forest operations on Chimacum Ridge.



Public meeting about Chimacum Ridge.

Mission, Vision, and Values

In order to create a common understanding of this community forest project and provide current and future generations of stakeholders with a durable foundation for management decisions, the following mission statement, vision statement, and set of values were developed for the community forest.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest is to sustain and share the ecological, cultural and economic benefits of this community-driven, working forest for generations to come.

Vision Statement

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest is a resilient forest for all, connecting communities and modeling regenerative relationships with the land.

Values

The values of the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest are rooted in the community, and are directly tied to the social, ecological, and economic benefits the forest is designed to provide. Drafted through the initial Project Team planning process, and reviewed and refined through the Stakeholders Advisory Group engagement, these values will guide the direct management of this community forest. For clarity, further non-exclusive elaborations are below:

Sustain Usefulness: We intend that future generations who call east Jefferson County home will continue to benefit from the use of this community forest as ecological, economic, and social conditions change over time.

Demonstrate Inclusiveness: Daily operations as well as long-term management decision making will be equitable and focused on welcoming traditionally marginalized members of the community, with a



particular emphasis on partnerships with the S'Klallam tribes.

Cultivate Resiliency: The climate resiliency of the forest ecosystem, including its associated wildlife, can improve through appropriate management while also supporting our abilities to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world.

Model Leadership: We lead by example. From teaching the next generation of foresters and artisans to inspiring the establishment of other community forests throughout the world, this community forest is meant to exemplify how forestland conservation and sustainable forest management can support a thriving region.

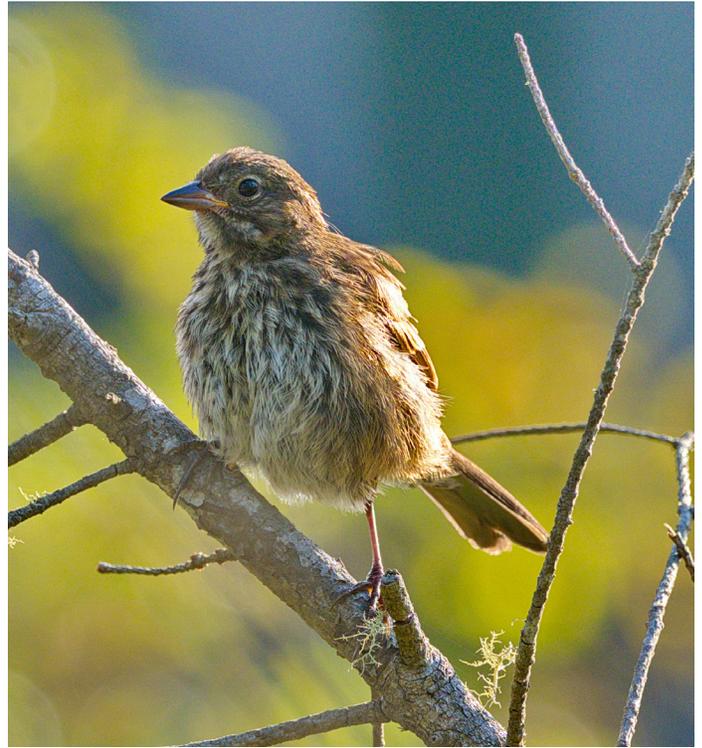
Reciprocate Generosity: This community forest is meant to cultivate a reciprocal relationship between the land and the community. Forests provide bountiful benefits, but need generous intentional stewardship by the community in order to deliver those benefits.

Strengthen Community: The community forest is meant to support the community in many ways, including strengthening the bonds between people, increasing

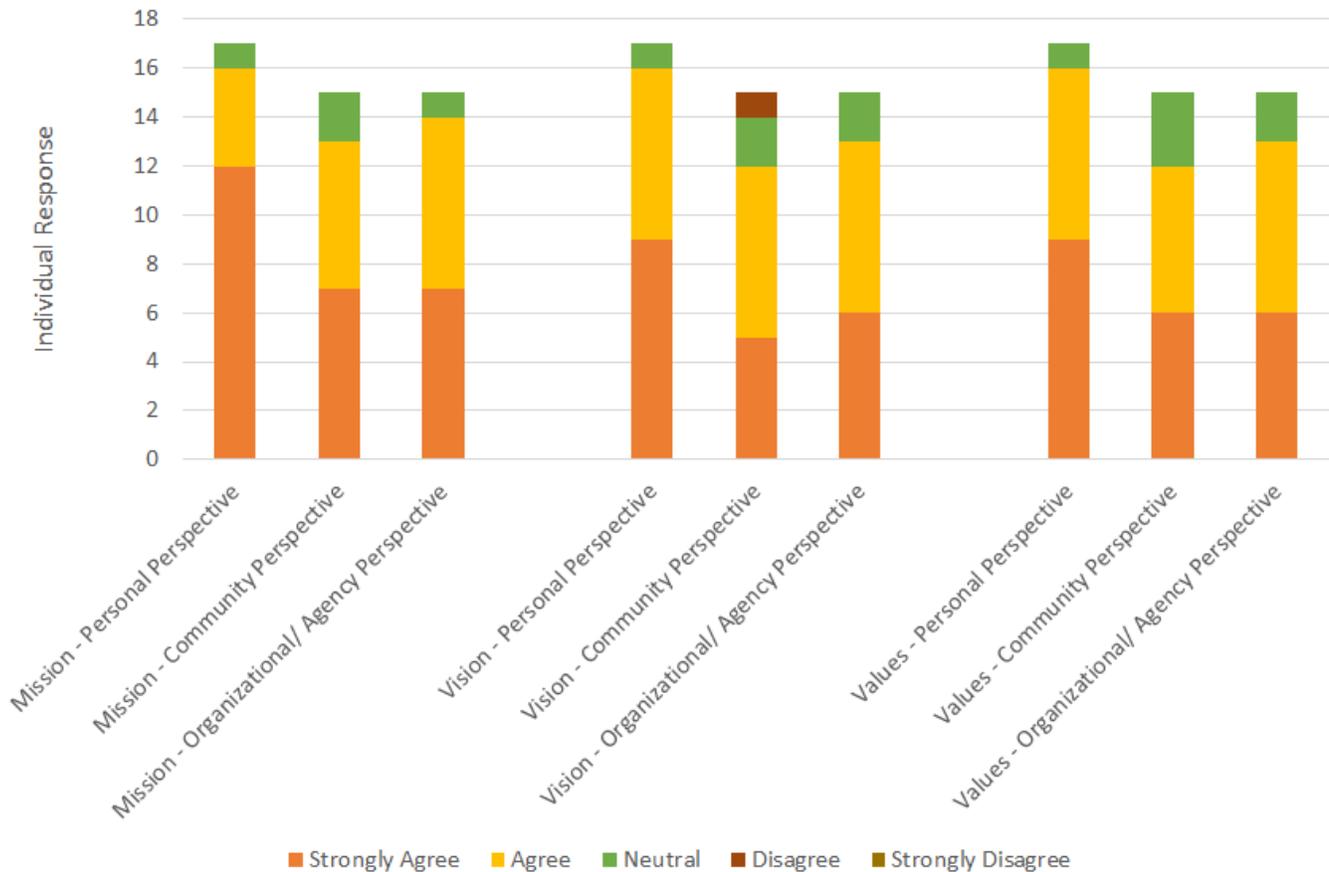
connections between people and the non-human community of the forest, and enhancing the community's overall health.

Foster Inspiration: Providing a source of wonder, discovery, and imagination, the community forest highlights the permanence of land and community connection.

SAG members were asked to evaluate the alignment of each Mission, Vision, and Values statement with the dreams and expectations of the community at large. As indicated by the chart below, there were strong indicators that these statements aligned closely with individuals' personal perspectives and that of their associated organizations and agencies. The outreach and engagement process, as well as the eventual operations of the community forest, will further incorporate the wider community's perspectives.



Song Sparrow in Chimacum Ridge forest. Photo by Tim Lawson.





Land Trust 2015 Board of Directors visit to Chimacum Ridge in May of 2015 in support of the project.

Ownership and Governance

In order to ensure secure and permanent benefits to the community, the appropriate legal ownership of the land, and the process through which management decisions are made, needs to be determined in any community forest effort. The Land Trust and Project Team considered a variety of different ownership and governance models for Chimacum Ridge Community Forest, and determined the following:

Ownership: Establish a new organization, as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Land Trust, to own the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest property.

Governance: The purpose of the subsidiary organization, defined in its incorporating documents, will be to own and operate the community forest in a way that meets the terms of the conservation easement, the mission, vision, and values of the strategic vision framework, and the forest's management plan.

The subsidiary organization will have a board of directors (Community Forest Board) that is appointed by, and reports to, the Jefferson Land Trust board of directors. The members of the Community Forest Board will have the skills and expertise

necessary to operate the community forest, and to balance the different economic, ecologic, and social benefit interests of the community. In order to achieve this balance, diverse representation and inclusion of diverse perspectives will be necessary.

The graphic below illustrates this governance structure.



Public Access, Recreation, and Education

There is currently no legal unguided public access on the Chimacum Ridge property. Once purchased by the Land Trust, the community will, for the first time, have legal unguided access to the entire proposed Chimacum Ridge Community Forest property.

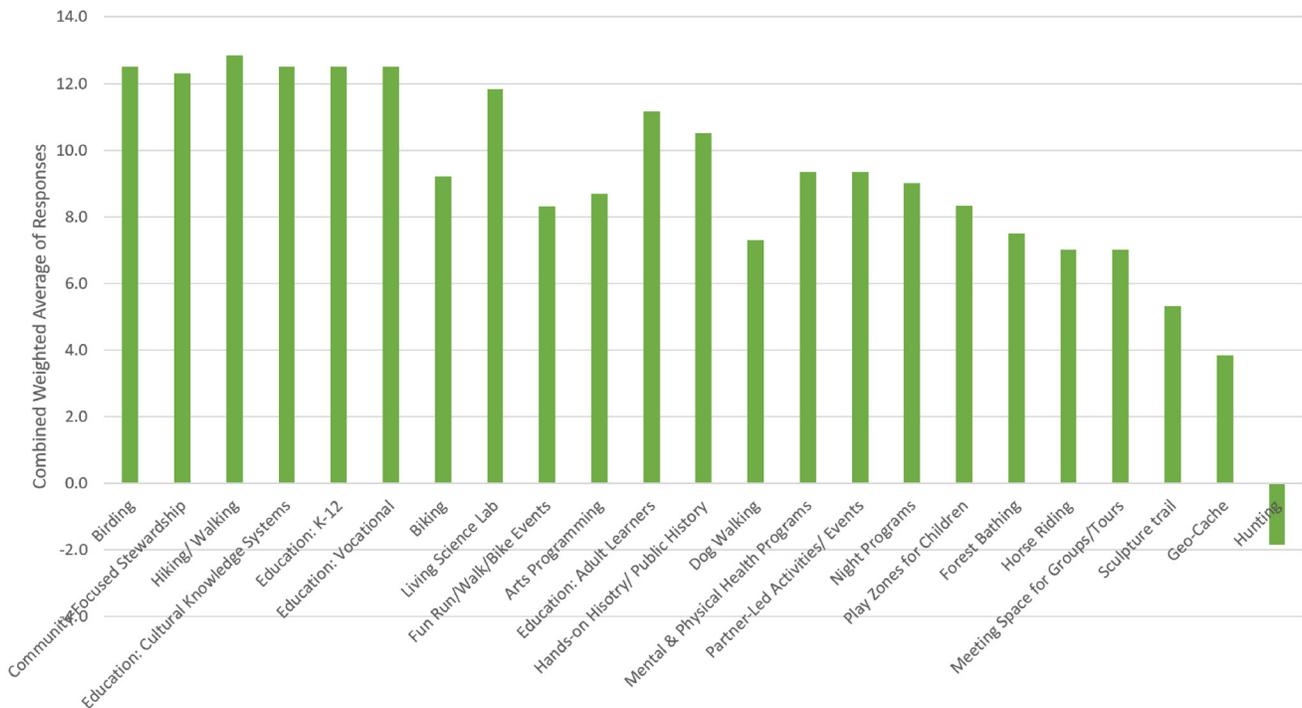
The easements on the property will limit this eventual access to non-motorized uses that are compatible with the conservation values and forestry operations of the forest. The encumbrances also will limit the kinds of infrastructure that can be developed on the property to accommodate public access and recreation. For example, no facilities can be developed that result in concentrations of 50+ people, and campgrounds are specifically not permitted.

To further help envision how the community forest could be used best by the local public, both the Project Team and SAG members responded to surveys asking them to prioritize potential educational and recreational activities on the land. There were consistent results for high and low

priority activities between both groups and a combined weighted average.

As shown in the chart below, educational programming in general rated highly along with birding and hiking, while hunting received the lowest priority rating. These survey results (which are available upon request) will help with initial planning for access to the forest. Further prioritization will occur as the Chimacum Ridge Community Forest Board considers additional uses with the input of the whole community.

A parking area is being developed at the Land Trust's Valley View Forest, a 65-acre property on Center Road that will eventually be the primary access point for all public access to Chimacum Ridge Community Forest. Land Trust staff and community volunteers have started building a trail system on the 65-acre property, which is scheduled to be open for public pedestrian access by the end of 2020. Public access to the Community Forest is envisioned to accommodate all ages and abilities, and provide easy access to the land during daylight hours.



Economic Opportunities

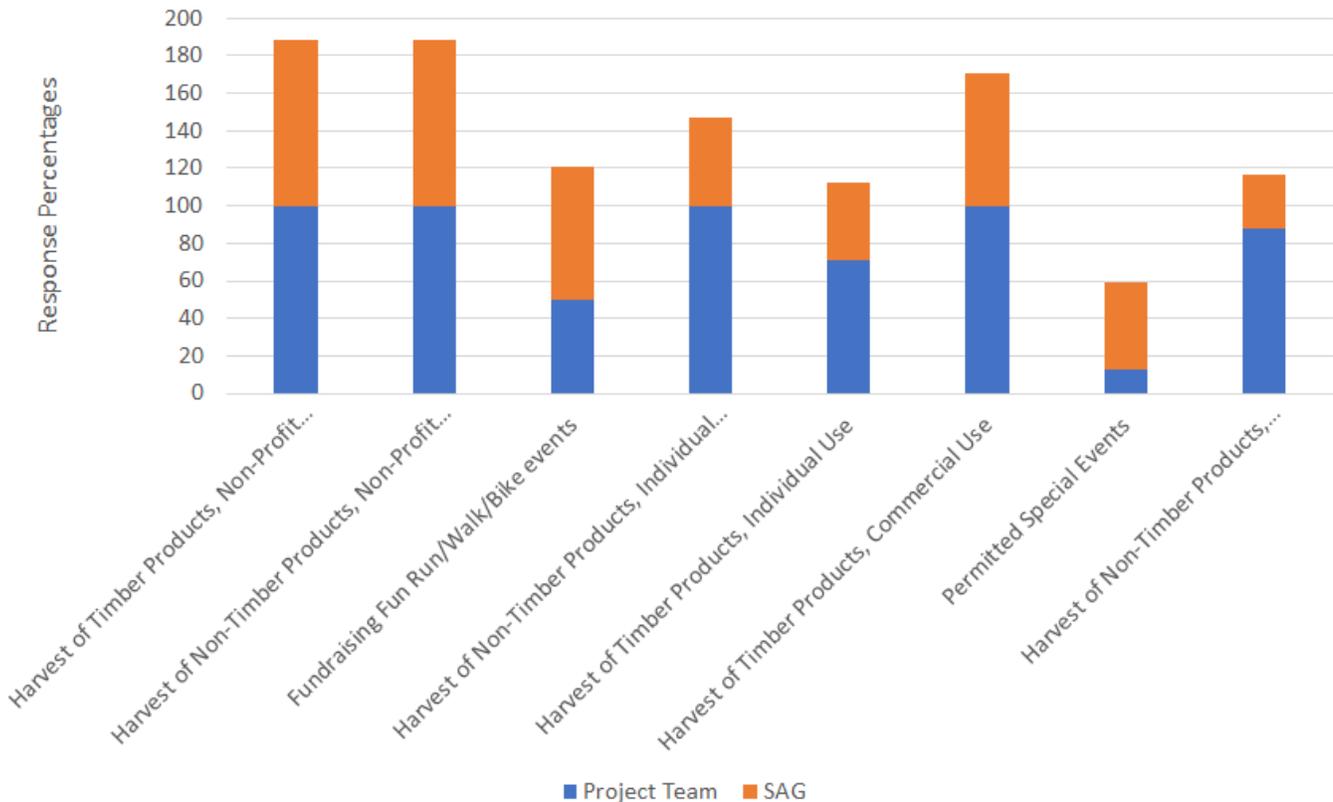
Our goal is for the community forest to be financially self-sufficient. Expenses incurred from owning and managing this property are expected to be met with revenue generated from forest operations, including regular timber harvests and annual lease payments from the mobile communications tower. Revenue exceeding expenses may support additional local conservation priorities, including other potential future community forests.

This community forest will also provide opportunities for local economic development. Managed for the common good, this forest can provide certain renewable resources that are then equitably accessible to local entrepreneurial endeavors. Everything from custom timber products for carpentry, woodworking,

and wooden boat building, to harvest of annual botanical and berry growth for non-timber forest product development, to guided experiences on the land, are being imagined. Traditional food and fiber harvests by the S'Klallam tribes are also an important cultural and economic activities that this forest will support.

Similar to the recreation and education prioritization effort, the Project Team and SAG members ranked potential economic activities through a survey. Here again, those surveyed had strong alignment, indicating harvesting timber and non-timber products through nonprofit partnerships as the top two priority efforts to take place in this forest. Further work upon acquiring the forest and implementing the forest's management plan will help prioritize the different economic activities the functioning community forest will support.

High + Medium Priority Ranking – Economic Activities



Participant Appreciation and Acknowledgment

Jefferson Land Trust thanks the National Park Service team for their guidance and support during the development of this document and the community members whose participation and ideas shaped this vision for a new community forest. Community input, advice, ideas and feedback are reflected in every part of this document and we are grateful for the time and expertise volunteer community members gave in service of this project.

Core Team

Jefferson Land Trust

Erik Kingfisher – Stewardship Director
Kate Godman – Director of Philanthropy
Sarah Zablocki-Axling – Development Manager

National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program

Allen Cardenas – Hydropower and Outdoor Recreation Fellow, Hispanic Access Foundation
Julie Fonseca de Borges – Community Planner
Alexandra Stone – Community Planner

Project Team

Betsy Davis – Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding
Sarah Doyle – North Olympic Salmon Coalition
Scott Freeman – University of Washington Professor (retired)
Crystie Kisler – Finnriver Farm & Cidery
Rebekah Korenowsky – Engagement Coordinator, Jefferson Land Trust
Barry Mitzman – Jefferson Land Trust Board, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (retired)
Denise Pranger – Essential Blooms
Brian Rogers - Jefferson Land Trust Board, University of Alaska (retired)
Al Scalf – Jefferson County Director of Community Development (retired)
Sarah Spaeth – Director of Conservation and Strategic Partnerships, Jefferson Land Trust

Richard Tucker – Executive Director, Jefferson Land Trust
Phil Vogelzang – Chimacum Corner Farmstand
Rick York – Jefferson Land Trust Board, Biologist (retired)

Stakeholder Advisory Group

Karen Affeld – North Olympic Development Council
Azurite – Social Justice Community Organizer
Scott Brinton – CedarRoot Folk School
David Brownell – Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Cameron Jones – Social Justice Community Organizer
Heather Harding – Certified Interpretive Guide
Andre Harper – Social Justice Community Organizer
Tina Herschelman – Jefferson Healthcare, Chimacum Ridge Neighbor
Marion Huxtable – Disability Awareness Starts Here (DASH)
Tom James – Hama Hama Company, Forest Management
Kris Lenke – Backcountry Horsemen of Washington, Buckhorn Chapter
Michael Machette – Geologist (retired)
Kristina Mayer – Chimacum School Board, Neighbor
Cliff Moore – WSU Extension
Sarah Parry – Finnriver Farm & Cidery
Donna Purnell – Chimacum Ridge Lodge, Neighbor
Liz Revord – Port Townsend ReCyclery
Dave Rugh – JLT Natural History Society
Heron Scott – Port Townsend School of Woodworking
David Sullivan – County Commissioner
Kerry Tremain – Port Townsend School of the Arts, League of Extraordinary Observers
Simon Walter-Hansen – Neighbor/Farmer
Cody Wayland – Woodworker, Wayland Constructive
Sharon Yeh – Jefferson County Conservation District



View of Mount Baker from top of Chimacum Ridge.

Conclusion

This community forest project has inspired creative thinking and collaborations that have the potential to yield great benefits for generations to come. The people involved in this process of envisioning and defining this community forest are enthusiastic about bringing it to fruition, and through their hard work, the creation of this community forest is now more possible than ever.

With a sincere commitment to demonstrating the ways in which community forests can generate new relationships between communities and their surrounding forestlands, the opportunity to acquire this property now has a new relevance. This opportunity has a limited time horizon and — due to current economic conditions — a new sense of urgency. We must come together to

acquire this incredible property. Only then can we begin to experience the social, cultural, and economic benefits it has the potential to provide.

Like any effort that involves diverse stakeholders and interests, there is much work ahead to deliberate together, to consider together, and to reach decisions together. The process of stewarding this important land will itself provide opportunities — to learn from each other, to reach compromise, and to discover the best ways to express the values and vision of this community through forest stewardship. The forest has much to offer this community, and the community has much to offer the forest.

To learn more and take action as a Friend of the Forest, visit www.saveland.org/community-forest.