

Jefferson Land Trust

2024-25 REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY



In Jefferson County...

our livelihoods, cultures, and ways of life depend on the preservation of clean water, healthy forests, thriving farmland, wild open spaces, and sacred places. We all have a stake in this land, which is why Jefferson Land Trust works to bring people with different perspectives and lived experiences together to collaborate in protecting this special place for the benefit of all, forever.

We're glad you're here, and we're grateful for your support as a partner, volunteer, donor, or advocate.

Your passion powers our work, and we hope you're proud to see your commitment reflected in the outstanding progress of the year.

And if you're not familiar with our work and want to learn more, we'd love to connect with you.

Thank you!



About the cover photo: Sarah Spaeth, the Land Trust's Director of Conservation and Strategic Partnerships, leading a family-friendly wildlife tracking tour at our Duckabush Oxbow and Wetlands Preserve.

South of Brannon, this preserve was officially established in 2015, protecting a gorgeous stretch of the Duckabush River and important wildlife habitat forever. Duckabush Oxbow and Wetlands Preserve is open seasonally from May 1 to November 30 for the public to explore its riverside trails and meadow areas. It's closed the rest of the year to permit wildlife to forage undisturbed. Learn more about visiting Duckabush Oxbow and Wetlands Preserve on page 29.

Photo by Gabe Van Lelyveld.



We're on a mission to protect
Jefferson County's wild green
spaces, working farms, and
forests for the benefit
of all — forever.

WITH GRATITUDE

Dear Friends,

I often say that being the Executive Director of Jefferson Land Trust is the best job I've ever had. The opportunity to work alongside our incredible staff, board members, and volunteers is a real joy for me.

And in the decade I've been with this organization and part of this community, I've been consistently inspired to see how our supporters stand up to join us again and again to help us accomplish ambitious and amazing things.

For nearly four decades, Jefferson Land Trust has been trusted by this community as a steady, mission-driven organization with a focus on protecting the special places that matter most to the people and other creatures who live here: our iconic farms, forests, shorelines, waterways, wetlands, and scenic open spaces.

Because of this mission and dedication, wherever you turn, you can experience the living legacy of the Land Trust's work.

As you read this, apples and squash are ripening on Land Trust-protected farms. Salmon are returning home to the creeks and rivers we protect and restore, their roe (eggs) hidden under gravel, containing next spring's fry (young fish). Laughter echoes through our forests as

local students learn and explore during Land Trust outdoor field experiences. Nature trails at our public preserves quietly await your footsteps. Elk and other wildlife travel across our protected lands. The rich smells of the season waft from stream to meadow to farm to forest.

We're all aware of the many challenges now facing nonprofits and conservation entities across the nation. External conditions and policies are always subject to change, but our mission remains the same — and our efforts remain focused on what matters most to the people who live here, both today and into the future. Our work continues, undaunted, with determination and purpose, and with the same commitment to local people and places we've maintained since our founding in 1989.

With your help over the last year, we've continued to mark exciting milestones. In September, we celebrated the official public opening of 918-acre Chimacum Ridge



A Message from Our Board President

It's been another wonderful year for Jefferson Land Trust! As President of the Board of Directors and a regular volunteer out on the land, I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve our community alongside my Board colleagues, field volunteers, and the Land Trust's staff members to preserve open space, working lands, and habitat forever.

All of this is only possible because of the support of volunteers and supporters like you. Many thanks to each of you for all you do to help us make a difference.

For a relatively small organization like the Land Trust to make such a big impact, it takes passionate people who enjoy working hard, having fun, thinking strategically, and functioning collaboratively. That's exactly what happens every day at the Land Trust, and it is a true joy to be a part of this great team.

Together with you, we're making positive impacts throughout Jefferson County and beyond for our communities, our lands, and our four-legged, finned, and winged cohabitants of this beautiful region. The actions we take today will reverberate far into the future and leave a legacy we can all be proud of.

Thanks for teaming up with us!

Jane Gultinan



Now in its fifteenth year, the Land Trust's youth education program has impacted thousands of local K-12 students by hosting and supporting outdoor field experiences at no cost to families or local schools.

Community Forest, our first community forest and biggest land protection effort to date.

We've continued to expand our youth education programming, which has now reached thousands of East Jefferson County public school students, at no cost to families or schools.

And as ever, we've continued to work with you — our community — to protect local lands.

We can all find reasons to rejoice every day here on the beautiful Olympic Peninsula — by visiting a farmers market, stepping outside, or even just looking out the window at this amazing place we call home.

And because the lands we conserve together are legally protected for all time, today's joys are also tomorrow's. The determination, vision, and deep care that community members like you demonstrate regularly help ensure a bright future for Jefferson County.

In the coming year, let's come together as a community to support one another: shop and eat locally, take time to connect with friends and neighbors over a cup of tea or coffee (or my favorite: hot chocolate!), and find time to appreciate and celebrate our community's accomplishments.

Together, we'll stay focused on protecting and caring for this place we love — forever. Thank you!

With gratitude,

Richard Tucker
Executive Director

The Importance of Volunteers

Every year, hundreds of volunteers donate thousands of hours to help us achieve our mission. Community volunteers help us care for and monitor our nature preserves; share stunning photography and artwork; pitch in at events and youth field trips; and assist with office projects, grant writing, maintaining equipment, and much, much more.

And some volunteers assume leadership roles by serving on important committees, task forces, advisory groups, and on our board, or the boards of our subsidiary organizations, like the one that oversees Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.

Jefferson Land Trust's strength lies in the wide variety of roles and projects our volunteers willingly take on. If you're interested in volunteering, please email us at info@saveland.org; we'll happily find something that fits your interest, expertise, and schedule. Thank you!

Make an Impact in a Leadership Volunteer Role

If you're interested in volunteering at a leadership level by serving on a committee, advisory group, task force, or even one of our boards, please contact Board President Jane Gultinan or Executive Director Richard Tucker by emailing info@saveland.org.

They'll be glad to meet with you and discuss the wide variety of options available for volunteer leaders. And if there are any barriers to your ability to participate as a volunteer, please reach out and talk with us.



CAMPAIGN IMPACT

Jefferson Land Trust's *Look to the Land* campaign for a resilient future ignited generosity, vision, and commitment — bringing together hundreds of people who share a deep love for Jefferson County's natural lands and communities. Its success prepares the Land Trust to face the future with strength, hope, and even greater resilience.



Look to the Land campaign co-chairs Phil Vogelzang and Ellen Ferguson.

“Whether you donated, volunteered, or simply believe in the importance of protecting the lands that sustain us, this success belongs to all of us. Thank you!”

– Campaign co-chairs Phil Vogelzang and Ellen Ferguson

Together, We're Celebrating Campaign Success!

In March 2025, Jefferson Land Trust celebrated the successful completion of the three-year *Look to the Land* campaign, a milestone that reflects the power of community. With broad support, the campaign raised \$8.58 million — 104% of its goal! — to strengthen conservation and resilience across Jefferson County.

This success made it possible to purchase Chimacum Ridge Community Forest, the largest project in our 36-year history. Now open to the public, this 918-acre forest is being managed as a true community resource — improving wildlife habitat and ecological health; contributing to our local wood economy; and supporting cultural, educational, and recreational use. It will safeguard air and water quality and provide miles of forest trails for everyone to enjoy.

The campaign also launched two critical funds that will shape the Land Trust's future. The Flexible Opportunity Fund gives us the ability to act quickly when farmland, forests, or wildlife habitat come on the market, ensuring

opportunities aren't lost to development. It also supports creative approaches to conservation, such as farmland affordability projects and conservation burial. With continued community investment, this fund will keep Jefferson Land Trust ready for the next challenge.

The Forever Fund Operating Endowment provides long-term stability. Growing this fund toward a 10-year goal of \$20 million will ensure that once land is protected, we'll always have the resources to care for it in perpetuity.

Thanks to the leadership of our *Look to the Land* campaign steering committee and the commitment and generosity of our campaign supporters, we're well-positioned to have an even greater impact on the health and resilience of our region's landscapes.

The momentum created by this campaign is only the beginning. Together, we can continue to protect the lands that nourish us — today, tomorrow, and forever. We invite you to be part of the next chapter.



Many volunteers pitched in to build the new multiuse trail at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.

Preparing Our New Community Forest for its Public Debut

This was the busiest and most exciting year yet for Chimacum Ridge Community Forest. Featuring 918 acres of working forest, wetlands, and wildlife habitat in the heart of Chimacum, the forest officially opened to the public in September 2025!

This milestone — the successful completion of the largest and most ambitious project in the Land Trust's history — was the culmination of years of work and bold visioning. For more than a decade, the Land Trust has been working to establish the community forest: a shared resource owned and managed locally by community members.

Over the past year, trail work on Chimacum Ridge kicked into high gear. With several shorter forest trails already completed, we focused on completing the multiuse trail: a six-foot-wide, graveled path suitable for hikers, bikers, and horseback riders. The first 150 yards of the trail is accessible to assisted-wheelchair users, as is a lovely viewpoint showcasing the farmland of Center Valley.

Dedicated community volunteers joined Land Trust staff members, Community Forest Manager Ryen Helzer, AmeriCorps Forest Enhancement Steward Slater Sorensen, and crews from Washington Conservation Corps to create the trail. It leads from the parking lot up to the top of Chimacum Ridge, with its sweeping views of the Cascades, Chimacum, Tamanowas Rock, the foothills of the Olympics, and (on a clear day) all the way north to Port Townsend.

We also kept busy installing signs, culverts, and other infrastructure; completing a cultural assessment; conducting a small harvest; developing a number of essential policies; and much more.

Volunteers from the community have always been key to making the dream of the community forest a reality. They help build trails, support projects, and serve on the forest's Board of Managers and three advisory groups (ecological, social, and economic).

In late September, we officially opened the forest to the public with a grand opening and ribbon cutting! Hundreds of community members joined us to celebrate.

Find directions and information about visiting Chimacum Ridge on page 28. There's limited parking available (up to 12 vehicles, including one designated van-accessible space), so please be patient if you find the lot full.

What's Next?

Great news: thanks to our supporters, we'll be expanding the size of our parking lot in the year ahead. We'll also be adding an accessible trail at the top of the ridge out to the northern viewpoints. We'll keep you posted on our progress through our eNewsletter, website, and social media.



A Big Thank You to Chimacum High School Art Students!

In early 2024, we asked Chimacum High School art instructor Gary Coyan if some of his students would like to help inspire Chimacum Ridge Community Forest's first-ever logo. Following a special tour of the forest with Community Forest Board of Managers Chair Tim Lawson and Forest Manager Ryen Helzer, the art students created a variety of images. Three of the students drew woodpeckers that a local graphic designer then used as inspiration to create the forest's new logo (above). Big thanks to Gary and all the participating student artists!



Three woodpecker illustrations by Chimacum High art students.



Birds like this Song Sparrow rely on the Quimper Wildlife Corridor for shelter and nourishment. Photo by Wendy Feltham.



A 97-acre forested property near Dabob Bay we recently protected with a conservation easement that supports forest health.

Farms, Fish, and Forests: Conservation Update

Land conservation is at the heart of what we do. Working with our community, the Land Trust has helped protect nearly 19,000 acres of our region's iconic forests, waterways, farmland, coastlines, wildlife habitat, and open spaces — forever.

This year, we continued to add protected land to one of our oldest and most beloved project areas: the Quimper Wildlife Corridor. Here, students, families, and visitors from near and far can get outdoors and wander Cappy's Trails to explore this beautiful natural area, which spans the north Quimper Peninsula.

The corridor's forest, meadows, and wetlands are critical habitat for native flora and fauna, and the connected protected areas serve as an important migration corridor allowing wildlife to move safely from the forest to the coast.

Since 1992, the Land Trust has been working with willing landowners, the City of Port Townsend, Jefferson County, and others to address increasing development pressures and protect properties that border trails and/or contain critical wildlife habitat within the corridor — one property at a time.

This year, we protected five additional properties totaling 4.78 acres. We've now helped to permanently protect 331 acres of land in the corridor! With the support of our community, we'll continue to work with interested landowners to protect more land here in the years to come.

We also continued our longtime focus on protecting land in the Chimacum Creek watershed. (See the story on the right of the next page for more information.)

In October of 2024, we celebrated the protection of one of the largest remaining farms in Quilcene: a 67-acre farm at the head of Quilcene Bay that's been in

agricultural use since the early 1900s. The property's large size and central location make it a key piece in a growing patchwork of land already protected by Jefferson Land Trust and other organizations as part of a large-scale, multi-decade effort to protect and restore Donovan Creek and the Quilcene Bay delta and tidal marsh. Our conservation team is currently working hard to protect a neighboring farm as well.

Since 2002, we've joined 40+ local organizations in another large-scale effort to permanently protect land in the Tarboo Creek watershed, near Quilcene. The forests, streams, and wetlands here are critical habitat for salmon and other local wildlife, and Dabob Bay is one of the most pristine estuaries in all of Hood Canal.

Working with longtime partner Northwest Watershed Institute (NWI), willing landowners, and many others, the Land Trust has permanently protected more than 1,400 acres of land here with conservation easements. This year, we helped protect two more properties totaling 177 acres in the area.

Working with NWI and the U.S. Navy REPI (Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration) program, we helped facilitate the protection of 81 acres of forest and wetlands in the Tarboo Valley and Dabob Bay area. The property was permanently protected with a REPI restrictive easement in summer 2025 after being purchased by NWI, which will add the property to its Tarboo Wildlife Preserve.

This property is part of a wildlife corridor that reaches from the headwaters of Tarboo Creek to Dabob Bay. Streams on the property's steep forested slopes run downstream into Tarboo Creek, a significant habitat area for numerous federally listed fish species, including

coho and steelhead salmon and the largest freshwater source feeding into Dabob Bay — an important area for recreation as well as local shellfish production.

In the spring of 2025, we also celebrated the protection of a 97-acre forested property between Dabob and Quilcene bays, adjacent to the Dabob Bay Natural Area. The property's owners, Neal and Ann Koblitz, worked with us and with nonprofit Northwest Natural Resource Group to place a comprehensive conservation easement on the land.

This conservation easement was actually the second easement on the property. In 2022, to prevent any future conversion of the land to non-forest uses, the Koblitzes worked with us to place a REPI easement on the property that permanently restricts it from subdivision and development. The newest easement, donated by the landowners, levels up the protection by prescribing allowable land management practices that support forest health and sustainability, while still allowing the land to produce revenue through ecologically oriented timber harvesting.

It's inspiring to work with forward-thinking landowners like the Koblitzes. Our land protection projects wouldn't be possible without landowners who are willing and enthusiastic to work with us to protect their lands with conservation easements, ensuring that over time, even as their properties change hands, the land will remain forever protected for the benefit of our local wildlife, water, air, and community.

We're also grateful for the many community members who partner with us in acting as conservation buyers. Sometimes, when the Land Trust has identified a property as a priority for protection but lacks the time to raise the funds to buy and/or protect it, a conservation buyer will purchase the land and donate it to us, donate an easement, or hold the land until we can raise the necessary capital to protect it. Conservation buyers have played a key role in our success in the Quimper Wildlife Corridor and along Chimacum Creek, as well as in many other important wild places in our county.

If you're interested in learning more about the role of conservation buyer or in potentially becoming one, please contact Kate Godman, the Land Trust's Director of Philanthropy, at kgodman@saveland.org or 360.379.9501, ext. 102.



Aerial view Chimacum Creek. Photo by John Gussman courtesy of the Jefferson County Conservation Futures Fund Program.

Our Ongoing Efforts in the Chimacum Creek Watershed

With its forested creekside habitat, wetlands, open space, and prime agricultural land, the Chimacum Creek watershed is an area of major significance for wildlife as well as people — and has long been a focus of our conservation efforts. Here, the Land Trust has permanently protected more than 2,500 acres to support our local farms, fish and wildlife, and forests.

Chimacum Creek is an important waterway for our local fish. Hood Canal summer chum salmon spawn in the lower stretch, and other fish — including fall chum, coho, and pink salmon, as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout — spawn in the upper portion of the creek.

Forested areas along the creek provide cooling shade, erosion-preventing roots, and other conditions necessary for maintaining the creek's ability to support aquatic life. The estuary at the mouth of Chimacum Creek also provides important fish habitat. There, young fish are able to feed and grow, gaining the strength to survive for years in the open ocean before returning to the waters where they were spawned.

Chimacum Creek has long been the focus of a significant community effort to help salmon. In 1987, during summer chum spawning season (when egg-laying is in full swing), a large storm washed out a culvert under Irondale Road, filling the lower section of the creek with so much sediment that it was ruined as a spawning ground for summer chum.

In the mid-1990s, wanting to restore the summer chum run in Chimacum Creek, volunteers from an organization called Wild Olympic Salmon, the predecessor of North Olympic Salmon Coalition (NOSC), collected summer chum eggs from nearby Salmon Creek. They reared the eggs at a small homemade hatchery before releasing them near the creek's mouth. This effort was successful, and in 1999, after spending several years in the ocean, 38 summer chum salmon returned to



Aerial view of lower Chimacum Creek by John Gussman courtesy of the Jefferson County Conservation Futures Fund Program.

Chimacum Creek to spawn. Happily, this number has continued to grow over time.

Much of the Land Trust's early work focused on the lower reaches of Chimacum Creek. In 1991, our organization's first conservation easement was donated on land lying along the creek, and in 2000, with funding from the state's Salmon Recovery Funding Board, our first land purchase was on a nearby creekside property.

Over time, additional parcels along lower Chimacum Creek have been donated from generous landowners or purchased using a combination of local donor support, salmon recovery grants, and funding from the Jefferson County Conservation Futures Fund Program.

Further up the watershed, the east and west forks of Chimacum Creek flow through Beaver Valley and Center Valley — the vibrant agricultural core of Jefferson County. In partnership with local farmers, the Land Trust has placed easements on many beloved local farms to ensure the rich land remains available for agriculture forever.

Many of the protected farms — including Red Dog Farm, Finnriver Farm & Cidery, Kodama Farm & Food Forest, SpringRain Farm & Orchard, and Ruby Ranch, among others — contain portions of Chimacum Creek. Several of the farmers have also partnered with local and state organizations to restore the creek and its important fish habitat.

Recent Efforts: Several of our recent projects lie within the Chimacum Creek watershed and contribute to our efforts to protect its water quality and salmon habitat.

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest, which the Land Trust purchased in late 2023 and recently opened to the public (see page 7), has a number of tributaries, some seasonal and some year-round, that feed into Chimacum Creek.

In the past few years, we've protected two additional Chimacum farms (totaling 162 acres) by working



SpringRain Farm & Orchard owners John and Roxanne have partnered with Jefferson County Conservation District and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program on major stream habitat restoration efforts on the portion of Chimacum Creek running through their farmland, which was permanently protected with a Land Trust easement in 2008.

with landowners to place agricultural conservation easements on the land, protecting it for future farm activities and ensuring that the essential salmon habitat along Chimacum Creek on the largest of the two farms is protected forever.

During this time, we've also protected 4.5 acres along lower Chimacum Creek by purchasing four small creekside parcels. We're currently applying for additional salmon recovery grant funding that will allow us to purchase and protect more of these important parcels.

Our recent progress shows that we still have an opportunity to make a difference to Chimacum Creek's salmon habitat and to the health of the whole watershed by working with willing landowners toward permanent protection of the creekside bluffs, forests, and farms that surround it.

Working in Partnership: In 2001, the plight of the threatened summer chum salmon run inspired Jefferson Land Trust, Hood Canal Coordinating Council, NOSC, and more than a dozen other nonprofit and governmental agencies to unite as the Chumsortium, with the goal of coordinating protection and restoration of local salmon habitat.

We're grateful to work with our Chumsortium partners on salmon projects throughout East Jefferson County with a focus on Chimacum Creek, Salmon Creek, Snow Creek, and Discovery Bay. In fact, our collective work on Chimacum Creek is considered one of our region's most successful salmon recovery efforts.

Protecting this important creek and watershed is and will remain an ongoing effort. A long-term restoration and preservation endeavor like this one is possible only with the support, partnership, and involvement of the whole community.



Students during an educational field experience at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.

Connecting Young People to the Land

*A Growing Legacy of Learning
and Belonging*



Students are all smiles during an outdoor field experience at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.

For 14 years, Jefferson Land Trust's youth education program has been opening doors to discovery — helping local children connect with the land, develop a sense of belonging, and imagine their future role as caretakers of our shared home. What began as a handful of field trips has now grown into a robust, multi-layered program serving students from kindergarten through their senior year, and increasingly beyond.

At its heart, this program is about much more than outdoor lessons. It's about building resilience in our community — by investing in the next generation's knowledge, curiosity, and love for the natural world. Each year, hundreds of young people step onto Land Trust preserves with their classmates and teachers. They test water quality in salmon streams, measure trees in working forests, and follow animal tracks across open meadows. They don't just learn about nature — they learn within it, supported by skilled educators and dedicated volunteers.

And they carry those experiences home. Parents tell us about children who insist on taking the whole family back to the places they visited on field trips — sharing what they learned and leading siblings down the same trails. These are seeds of stewardship taking root in our community.

Removing Barriers and Expanding Access

One reason this program thrives is our commitment to accessibility. Every class, every bus ride, and every volunteer hour is offered at no cost to schools or families. In August 2024, we took another major step by hiring local teacher Devon Buckham as our first full-time Education Coordinator — a milestone that brings new energy, expertise, and capacity. With Devon, we're expanding our reach and deepening the ways we serve students and teachers alike.



Students on a field experience to see salmon spawning in the Duckabush River at Duckabush Oxbow and Wetlands Preserve.

We're also working hard to ensure all students can participate. Wheelchair-accessible trails at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest and Illahee Preserve are making outdoor experiences possible for more students with mobility challenges. Special education teachers are partnering with us to adapt activities for diverse learning styles and behavioral needs. And we're expanding beyond the sciences, designing new ways for math and language arts classes to learn and thrive outdoors too.

The Year in Numbers

In the 2024-25 school year alone, the impact was remarkable:

- **850+** students from Port Townsend, Chimacum, and Quilcene
- **13** grades served, kindergarten through 12th grade
- **25 field experiences** hosted on Land Trust preserves
- **52** hours in classrooms and **85** hours outdoors
- **70** hours of direct collaboration with teachers
- **15** dedicated volunteers bringing energy and expertise

These numbers tell only part of the story. Behind them are moments of awe and discovery: a first grader spotting a salmon fry, a high school senior leading a restoration project, and a volunteer watching a shy student light up when identifying a bird call for the first time.

Creating Future Stewards

Our investment doesn't end with field experiences. Paid internships like the Youth Corps Spring Break program give high schoolers hands-on restoration experience and leadership skills. College internships bring new energy to our preserves and inspire career paths in conservation. And with the annual Fairbank Award for Youth



High school student from an AP Environmental Science class on a field experience in the Quimper Wildlife Corridor.



Local students having fun during a fall field experience at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.



Winner of the 2025 Fairbank Award for Youth Environmental Action, Lorenzo Roel Flores McCleese.

Environmental Action, we recognize outstanding young leaders like 19-year-old Lorenzo Roel Flores McCleese, honored this year for his vision and dedication.

Each of these pathways reinforces the idea that young people are not just learners in this work — they're leaders and teachers as well, shaping the future of conservation in Jefferson County.

Inspiring Leadership

This year's program was amplified by inspiration from beyond our community. At our annual Conservation Breakfast this spring, we welcomed author Richard Louv, whose groundbreaking book *Last Child in the Woods* put "Nature-Deficit Disorder" on the map. Louv reminded us that reconnecting children to nature is one of the most important movements of our time — and he recognized the value of Jefferson Land Trust's work.

"Jefferson Land Trust's education programs deserve great praise," Louv told our audience. "The more high-tech our lives become, the more nature we need. The future of this movement is very much in your hands."

Hearing this affirmation from a national leader underscored what our community has long known: by investing in youth education, we're shaping not only healthier, happier children, but a more resilient and caring future for our region.

Supporting Teachers

Behind every successful field experience is a dedicated teacher. That's why we're steadily expanding our

support for educators — helping them meet curriculum standards, access additional resources, and find professional development opportunities.

This year, we helped launch the East Jefferson Education Network, a collaborative effort with partner organizations and the National Park Service. The network will provide a centralized online resource where teachers can explore environmental education programs, align them with curricula, and easily connect with providers.

We're also developing free, regionally focused training opportunities for teachers to earn "clock hours" — professional development credits essential to their careers. By strengthening teacher capacity, we extend the reach and sustainability of outdoor education across the county.

Looking Ahead

As public funding for outdoor education programs has been cut across the state, Jefferson Land Trust is stepping in to fill the gap. We're exploring enrichment programming to ensure that all students continue to have opportunities to experience the outdoors, regardless of shifts in school budgets.

With exciting plans ahead, willing partners at the table, and the strong support of this community, we're poised to grow this work even further.

Fourteen years in, our youth education program is no longer just a beloved tradition — it's a powerful, evolving force that connects young people to place, inspires leadership, and ensures that the land we love will be cared for by generations to come.

When You Love the Land, You Fight for It

*Reflections from Hazel Windstorm, Land Trust
winter 2025 intern and LandFest 2025 speaker*

I don't remember learning the names for the plants. They've just been there, embedded in my mind, like a second language I can't remember being taught — salal, saskatoon, osoberry. Red-flowering currant, madrona, Doug fir.

I know them in the same way I know my way around Cappy's Trails, or the route to the Co-op. I've never really made a conscious effort to learn; the knowledge is just — there. It's one of the many layers that makes this place my home.

And then, one year ago, I uprooted myself, left Port Townsend for Vermont, and found that the land there spoke a different tongue, one I didn't know. I couldn't place myself in the world around me: all the trees blurred together, bare gray in winter and a smudge of green in spring. I couldn't tell them apart, much less discern meaning from their branches.

It was lonely. I was disconnected from the ecosystem around me in a way I wasn't used to. And I began to realize that many of the people around me were the same way, except it wasn't because they'd traveled from coast to coast — it was because they'd never learned to begin with. The forest was not a language they'd been taught.

Edward Abbey said, "It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it."

But I think it goes deeper than that: it's impossible to fight for the land if you do not also enjoy it, if you do not know it.

During that time in Vermont, I began to know the forest around me. I learned to identify the leafless trees by their buds and the patterns in their bark. I learned to recognize the wildflowers that blanket the understory each April. I learned the names of things — ash, maple, beech. Buckthorn, garlic mustard, bittersweet — and I began to care.

I began to feel something for those forests, as I watched every ash tree on campus turn gray and die in the span of a single semester, decimated by an invasive beetle. As I watched the forest sicken and change and adapt around me.

I grew up in Port Townsend, and so I never really understood what it meant to discover a place.

The Pacific Northwest is, and I think always will be, my chosen habitat, but my time in Vermont provided me a window into the way that education and preservation complement each other.



Hazel Windstorm.

When you love the land, you fight for it. When you fight for it, you do so so that others may enjoy it too.

In this moment, we're so close to losing so much. The protections on our public lands are being eroded — 86,000 acres of the Olympic National forest are now open to roads, logging, and mining.

Our ecosystems are changing rapidly, perhaps too rapidly for many organisms to adapt.

To do as Abbey says, and enjoy the world around us, it can feel inconsiderate, almost as if it minimizes the ongoing tragedy of this destruction. But I believe that fighting for the land, as we must do, begins with this exact type of simple enjoyment — enjoyment that's rooted in curiosity, and knowledge, and care.

It begins with children who grow up listing the names of the plants that surround them. It begins with protecting the forests and the rivers and the farms so that we grow up knowing the land that sustains us. And it begins here, with organizations that allow childhoods like the one I had, organizations like Jefferson Land Trust. Because it isn't just about the physical protection of the natural world — it's about creating a culture that values ecological complexity and beauty and diversity. It's about raising generations of people that love this land, this habitat that is rooted — so very deeply — in all our hearts.

Together

we've helped protect
almost 19,000 acres!



Farmland

1,585 acres | 21 properties



Fish & Wildlife Habitat

11,344 acres | 94 properties



Working Forest

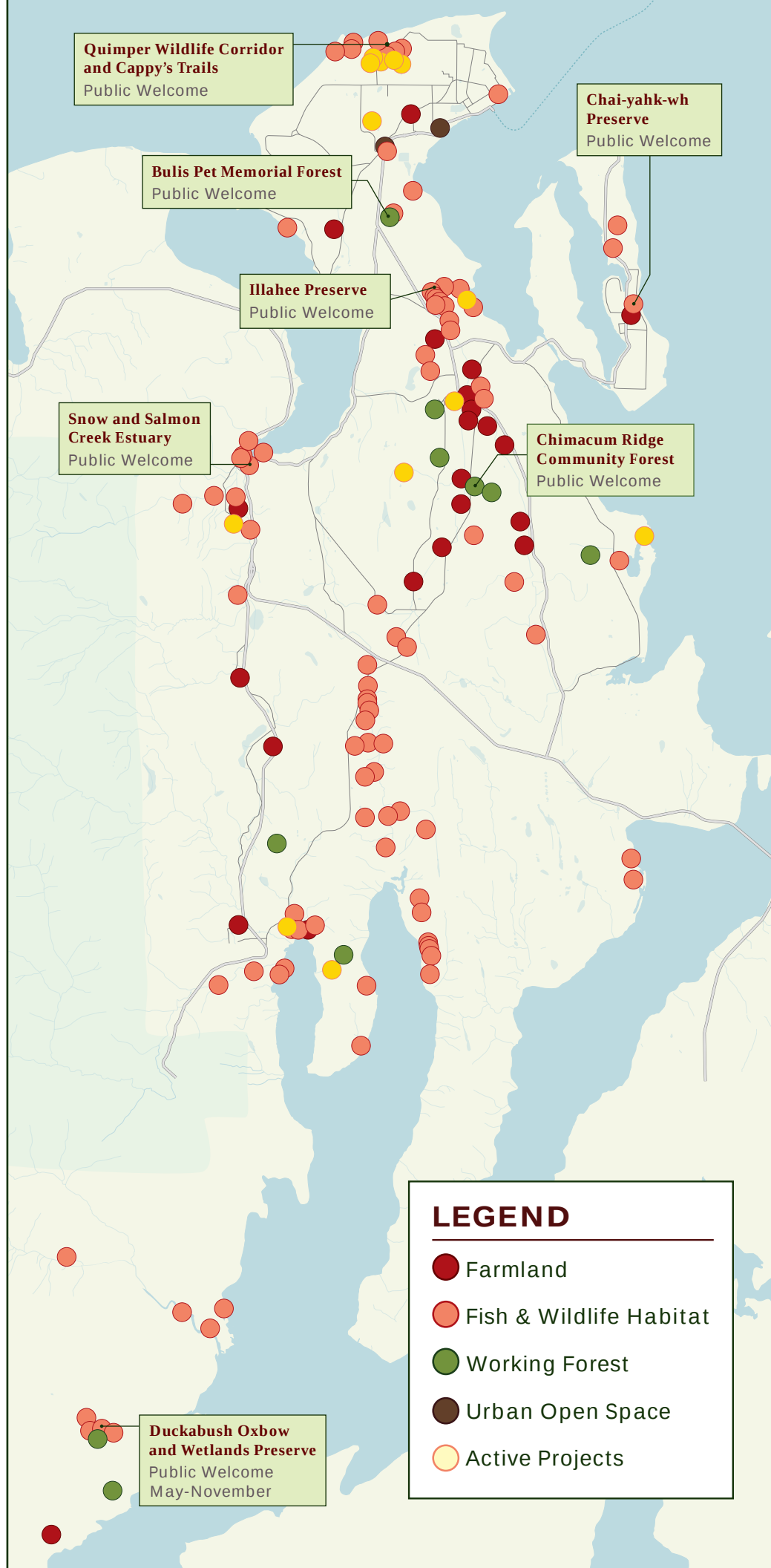
5,968 acres | 12 properties



Urban Open Space

4 acres | 3 properties

All information calculated through September 30, 2025. Only East Jefferson County properties shown. The Land Trust has also helped protect 7,154 acres of habitat with partners in West Jefferson County and 578 acres of working forest with partners in Mason County.



LEGEND

- Farmland
- Fish & Wildlife Habitat
- Working Forest
- Urban Open Space
- Active Projects



A team of volunteers creating downed logs for wildlife during a work party at Duckabush Riparian Forest Preserve.



Board President Jane and her wife Cindy laying gravel on the multiuse trail at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.



AmeriCorps Habitat Enhancement crew member Kelly and Land Trust summer intern Brynn removing yellow flag iris at Lower Donovan Creek Preserve.

Field Notes: Caring for the Land Together

Each acre of land the Land Trust permanently protects is a win for our community, for our ecosystem and climate, and for future generations. The Land Trust helps permanently protect land in two main ways: by holding conservation easements on land and by owning and managing the land ourselves. The milestone of permanent protection is often the culmination of years of effort — but it also marks the beginning of another journey.

Regardless of how we protect a property, the Land Trust makes a legal and ethical commitment to ensure that land is cared for — forever.

For lands we help protect with conservation easements, which remain the property of the landowners, we ensure the terms of the easement are being upheld over time, and the land retains the conservation values for which it was protected. This responsibility includes annual visits, record keeping, resolving issues as they arise, and working with landowners to help inform and guide their land management.

For the nature preserves we own, we're dedicated to thoughtfully and intentionally caring for the land using the best available science, regular assessments, and hands-on management techniques to meet our stewardship goal of increasing our forests' ability to resist and recover from rapid change.

The ongoing work of caring for more than 30 preserves across East Jefferson County is a year-round commitment. Throughout the past year, amazing community volunteers, interns, students, and crews pulled on their work gloves, put on their hard hats, and joined Land Trust staff members to care for these special places.

The presence of large woody debris — nurse logs and standing dead trees — is good for forests. Birds and other wildlife rely on downed logs and standing dead trees known as “snags” for foraging and shelter, and living trees and shrubs rely on their water retention capacity. Creating downed logs and snags to benefit wildlife and increase climate resilience at our preserves has been a major focus of our on-the-ground work over the past few years.

We also worked with contractors to do small-diameter thinning (an ecological forestry technique used to promote strong tree growth in the healthiest trees and increase species and size diversity) at our 75-acre Thorndyke Forest Preserve south of Port Ludlow. Crowded trees are susceptible to drought and disease, which threatens forest wildlife and the ability of the forest to resist and recover from future climate impacts.

This work ideally occurs on smaller trees — those under nine inches in diameter where the remaining trees have lots of energy to grow if given the opportunity.

Thinning the forest allows more sunlight to reach the surrounding trees and understory (the layer of vegetation beneath the main canopy of a forest). The remaining trees and plants have more resources, which can help the forest reach a healthier, more diverse, and complex condition faster. We're planning a similar project at our 155-acre Salmon Creek Forest Preserve in the near future.

In the Quimper Wildlife Corridor in Port Townsend, we marked boundaries with signs and flagging tape. Additionally, two local high school students partnered with us by focusing their senior projects on the corridor. After they identified over-crowded, stressed trees to be



Clockwise L to R: Volunteers helped remove Scotch broom and put tree saplings in pots for future replanting during a work party at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest; 2025 Spring Break Youth Corps interns strategically piling logs to make habitat piles at Chimacum Ridge; Land Trust field crew members thinning trees to support forest health and create downed logs in the Quimper Wildlife Corridor; volunteers attending a forest assessment training at Chimacum Ridge.

thinned, our field crew helped take them down, leaving them on the forest floor as downed logs to benefit the forest and local wildlife.

As ever, our staff and volunteers had their hands full with the ongoing work of weed (and unfortunately lots of trash) removal at many of our nature preserves. They tackled holly, blackberry, ivy, thistle, and more to give the native plants a better opportunity to thrive.

We also benefited from some youthful energy and enthusiasm in April when our annual Spring Break Youth Corps program welcomed six local high school students onto the land. The students learned about land stewardship practices, ecology, land use history, and more as they helped out with many important projects: removing noxious weeds like blackberry, tansy ragwort, and bittersweet nightshade; improving trails for community use; and creating habitat piles, nurse logs, and standing snags for wildlife.

Many of our nature preserves feature popular trails for recreation. Ongoing trail maintenance — like cutting back brush or removing fallen trees blocking the trail — ensures that community members can continue to enjoy these beautiful places.

In fall 2024, we increased the capacity of our preserve field crew with Greg Sachs' transition from AmeriCorps service member to full-time Land Trust Field Assistant! Kelly Stocker, who joined us in September 2024 as our newest AmeriCorps member, has been a fantastic asset to the team, and will continue to work with us through most of 2026.

Our preserves also benefited from the care of winter intern Hazel Windstorm, who joined our field crew for six weeks in early 2025 (and returned as a special speaker at our Conservation Breakfast and LandFest annual events!) and summer intern Brynn Ballard, who spent 10 weeks helping out on our field crew. Big thanks to our interns, local students, and volunteers for all their hard work!

Partnering for Greater Impact with the Listen Up Collaborative

The Listen Up Collaborative is an exciting growing partnership between Jefferson Land Trust and several other regional organizations: Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC), Northwest Natural Resource Group, Bainbridge Island Land Trust (BILT), the Point No Point Treaty Council, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, and Kitsap County Parks.

The partnership's goals are to improve the long-term survival of local bird species and strengthen the climate resilience of our forests. We're working together to implement targeted habitat improvements across more than 4,500 collective acres on 78 permanently protected forestlands managed by Jefferson Land Trust, BILT, GPC, and Kitsap County Parks.

Our forest management activities are designed to make our forests healthier over time. Over the past few years, with the help of volunteers, we've been using recording devices to track certain indicator bird species on our nature preserves, giving us valuable data that will help us understand if our activities are succeeding in creating the diverse conditions that birds and other local wildlife need to thrive. Now, in the collaborative, we can share data from across the region, along with information about management techniques and more.

The collaborative is the expansion of an earlier successful partnership between GPC and Jefferson Land Trust in 2023, which was made possible by a grant from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative, with continued support from Cornell in 2024.

In early 2025, Cornell invited the collaborative to become one of its Land Trust Bird Conservation Collaboratives and awarded the Listen Up Collaborative a grant of \$50,000! With this generous support and support from other foundations, this expanded partnership will continue to work together to create, improve, and monitor habitat for bird and wildlife conservation and climate resilience in Western Washington.



Conceptual draft rendering of Chimacum Commons (design draft is not to scale and is for illustration purposes only). Illustration by Kristina Hestenes-Stimson.

Partnering on Permanently Affordable Housing for Farm and Food-System Workers

With land and housing prices soaring in East Jefferson County, local farm and food-system workers face mounting challenges to housing security and affordability. This issue not only affects the individuals and families who work hard to care for our local lands and nourish our community, but also threatens the sustainability of local farms and our agricultural economy.

More than a decade ago, the Land Trust developed an innovative vision for a project in the heart of Chimacum at the nexus of farmland protection and food-system security that tackles these challenges head-on.

In 2014, thanks to a generous community donation, we purchased a threatened 16-acre property containing farmland soils of statewide importance and a stretch of salmon-bearing Chimacum Creek.

We had a threefold vision for this project, which we eventually named Chimacum Commons: 1) protect valuable farmland in the heart of Chimacum, 2) conserve and restore the 625 feet of Chimacum Creek salmon habitat running along the property's western border, and 3) find a qualified partner able to build and manage permanently affordable housing for local farm and food-system workers on a portion of the land.

Since acquiring the land, protecting its agricultural values, and improving salmon habitat along Chimacum Creek with partners like Jefferson County Conservation District, we've remained in conversation with farmers, community leaders, neighbors, the county, affordable

housing stakeholders, and many others to determine the best way Chimacum Commons can support our local agricultural community.

In 2021, the Land Trust re-started its effort to find a viable affordable housing partner, and local nonprofit Olympic Housing Trust (OHT) was selected. The two organizations entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in 2023, and OHT got to work studying the project and providing recommendations.



The portion of the Chimacum Commons property most suited to farming is currently being leased by Creaky Knees Farm, where farmers Lane and Julia grow fresh produce and flowers.

This past winter, we were thrilled to be awarded \$197,500 in grant funding from the Washington State Department of Commerce for our partnership with OHT to support predevelopment planning, predesign, and predevelopment work at Chimacum Commons.

So far, using funds from the grant, OHT has made significant progress on design decisions for the housing project: working with subcontractors based in Jefferson County to create construction drawings, and leading meetings for local farm workers and community members to provide feedback on the designs. They have also begun the permitting process.

We look forward to sharing more updates as this long-held community vision for affordable farm and food-system worker housing and protected, sustainable farmland at Chimacum Commons takes shape!

Learning Opportunities Coming in 2026

We're excited to be introducing a variety of family education opportunities in 2026! These programs aim to help families connect with outdoor learning experiences that support healthy community development and socialization.

A monthly "Walk in the Wild" program will invite families to come out and explore nature and learn from local naturalists on local lands.

Building on the success of the plein air family art class we ran this spring, we're planning to introduce some creative art-, music-, and play-based learning experiences inspired by guided nature walks. We're also planning to continue the popular "Birding by Ear" series led by ornithologist Jackie Canterbury and to add an adults-only wine and land pairing experience.

We're in the process of developing summer day camp opportunities as well. Our camps will help kids build important social-emotional skills through exploration and play in the natural world — and hopefully they'll have lots of fun doing it!



Plein air family art class participants proudly displaying their nature inspired artwork at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.

Supporting Local Farms and Farmers

Since 1992, the Land Trust has permanently protected more than 1,500 acres of local farmland. We also work to support farms and farmers in other important ways.

We've been recognized as an innovator in using the buy-protect-sell model of farmland protection: where a land trust buys farmland, protects it with an agricultural conservation easement, and sells the land to the next owner at a price that's reduced because of the easement.

In 2023 and 2024, we bought two adjacent agricultural parcels, totaling 47 acres, in Chimacum. The new prospective farmer-owner was selected earlier this year by a committee of community volunteers guided by a carefully designed process focused on equitable access. In April, we placed an easement on the farmland, permanently protecting it. We're now preparing to sell it to the selected farmer.

The selection process was spearheaded by Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative, a network of local nonprofit partners, including Jefferson Land Trust, that works together with the goal of making working lands in Jefferson County productive and profitable.

Each of the LandWorks partners provide expertise in different areas to help farmers and foresters succeed. As a group, LandWorks partners work closely with farmers, foresters, and other landowners to provide assistance in many areas. This year, the Land Trust collaborated with them to produce a guidebook focused on the "sell" stage of buy-protect-sell agricultural projects. Released this summer, the guide supports other conservation organizations interested in increasing farmland access and resilience.

One of the biggest threats to farmland today is conversion and fragmentation due to farmers retiring. This spring, we joined American Farmland Trust and other partners to lead a succession-planning workshop, helping owners plan for the transition of their farmland to ensure it remains in agricultural production.

2024 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



7057

hours worked
by 320
volunteers



15 real
estate

transactions
completed, valued at more
than \$1.9 million



Volunteers attending a forest assessment training with Preserve Assistant Cristina Villalobos (third from left) at Chimacum Ridge Community Forest.

26



landowners
actively engaged
on potential
land protection
projects

117



Evergreen Stewards
who support
the permanent
protection and
care of conserved
lands with regularly
scheduled
donations



A young volunteer lending a hand during a holly removal work party in the Quimper Wildlife Corridor. Photo by Michelle Asire.



50 volunteer
days

spent caring
for the land at
our preserves
(including 18
Tuesday work
parties)



2000+

native trees and
shrubs planted
at our nature
preserves



Community volunteers showed up in force to help remove holly from Quimper West Preserve. Photo by Wendy Feltham.

1200

 1st-12th graders hosted for outdoor learning on our nature preserves

Every month, local volunteers pitch in to help us care for our nature preserves across the county.



Each year, a host of generous volunteers help make our annual LandFest gala a success! Photo by Sara Kozak.

244

site visits



by staff and
volunteers to
monitor and
care for nature
preserves

1036

acres
actively
managed
at our nature
preserves and
the conservation
areas under
our care



68

conservation easements
visited for required
annual monitoring



We Appreciate You!

We're deeply grateful to the hundreds of community supporters, foundation partners, public grant agencies, corporate sponsors, and volunteers whose generosity and vision make all of our work possible. Your support is helping to build a healthy, strong, and resilient community today and for the future. Thank you!

A Festival of Giving: LandFest 2025

LandFest 2025 was truly a night to remember! On July 24, more than 300 friends and supporters gathered at the historic Quilcene Lantern, a Land Trust-protected property, to celebrate community-powered conservation at our annual gala. With the theme *Habitats of the Heart*, the evening overflowed with inspiration, joy, and generosity.

Guests enjoyed delicious local food and drink, lively music, and heartfelt reflections from speakers including Loni Greninger, Vice Chair of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Council, author and conservationist Scott Freeman, and college student (and Land Trust winter intern) Hazel Windstorm. (See her essay on page 14.)

Together, we raised more than \$400,000, a LandFest record, to protect the farms, fish and wildlife, forests, and wild places that sustain us.

From the inspirational speakers to the spirited barn dance that closed the night, LandFest 2025 was a celebration of community, generosity, and shared vision. Thank you to everyone who made this unforgettable evening possible!



Photo top: The "paddle raise" was a huge success. Bottom left: Guests donned their finest nature-sourced headwear and accessories in the "Best Dressed for Fest" tradition. Bottom right: After dinner, we kicked up our heels at an old-fashioned barn dance. Photos by Sara Kozak.

A Lasting Legacy for the Land We Love

Many of our most significant conservation successes have been made possible by donors who chose to look beyond their own lifetimes. Their vision reminds us that conservation is, at its heart, an act of hope and a gift to the future.

We've made it even easier to begin your legacy by adding FreeWill, a simple, free online tool that helps you create or update your will in about 20 minutes. (Check it out at saveland.org/freewill.)

If you've already included the Land Trust in your estate plans — or if you'd like to learn how simple it

can be to begin — please reach out. Together, we can safeguard the beauty and vitality of Jefferson County for generations to come. We'd also love to welcome you into our Land and Legacy Circle, a community of supporters who've made this enduring commitment.

Thank you,

Kate Godman
Director of Philanthropy
360.379.9501, ext. 102
kgodman@saveland.org

Sarah Zablocki-Axling
Development Manager
360.379.9501, ext. 108
szaxling@saveland.org



When I look at the bigger picture, our little piece of forest is just one dot on the map. But in joining the Land Trust and its supporters, we are one of many dots — thousands of acres, dozens of projects, hundreds of volunteers. Collectively, we are creating a much bigger story. We are making a difference.



Supporter Reflections: Scott and Susan Freeman

Most of us know the story of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, with its ghosts of past, present, and future. In Dickens' story, the Ghost of Christmas Future was tall, shrouded, silent, and... SCARY!

But in my imagining, the Ghost of Land Trust Future is different. It's a great-great-great-grandchild living here a hundred years from now, working in healthy forests, wading in clean streams, and enjoying food from farmland that this community came together to protect.

For my wife, Susan, and me, this work is deeply personal. Susan is the granddaughter of Aldo Leopold, who pioneered ecological restoration in Wisconsin in the 1930s. Inspired by that legacy, we spent years dreaming of doing similar work, then were finally able to do so when I began writing biology textbooks.

I will never forget walking into Sarah Spaeth's office at Jefferson Land Trust, placing two books on her desk, and telling her: "My publisher says these are going to do well, and Susan and I want to use that success to save land." Sarah smiled and said, "We can help you with that."

Today, our family stewards an 18-acre salmon stream preserve along Tarboo Creek and 215 acres of forestland



Scott and Susan Freeman in a forest they've named for Susan's father, Carl Leopold.

in the Tarboo watershed — lands now protected by conservation easements held by Jefferson Land Trust.

We also helped form the Jefferson Timber Cooperative, working with neighbors to produce high-quality wood from sustainably managed local forests, strengthening our communities while encouraging ecological forestry.

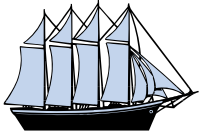
Those easements are not about us, though — we would always care for this land. They are about the future: about ensuring that no matter who owns this place generations from now, the forests, salmon streams, and wildlife will remain intact, thanks to the Land Trust.

But that's just part of our story. Because when I look at the bigger picture, our little piece of forest is just one dot on the map. But in joining

the Land Trust and its supporters, we are one of many dots — thousands of acres, dozens of projects, hundreds of volunteers. Collectively, we are creating a much bigger story. We are making a difference.

And so when I imagine that Ghost of Land Trust Future, I see a great-great-great-grandchild who has just two words to say: "Thank you!"

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS!



PORT LUDLOW
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The Leader



1ST SECURITY BANK



Join Us as a Land Trust Sponsor!

If you're interested in supporting local community-centered conservation by becoming a Land Trust sponsor, please contact Ric Brewer via email at rbrewer@saveland.org or by phone at 360.379.9501, ext. 112.



Reaccreditation: A National Conservation Seal of Approval

As an organization, we're committed to professional excellence and maintaining community trust in our conservation work. That's one reason we regularly undertake a rigorous, months-long endeavor to apply for reaccreditation — a process that we recently completed. The accreditation seal is a mark of distinction in the land conservation community. This endorsement is awarded to land trusts throughout the country that meet the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.

Accreditation is meant to foster continuous improvement, which is why land trusts must undergo the process on a regular basis. This will be our third reaccreditation after first becoming accredited in 2009, renewing in 2015 and 2020.

Accredited land trusts are united by strong ethical practices and a commitment to the long-term stewardship of land. They must demonstrate fiscal accountability, ethical fundraising, strong organizational leadership, sound transactions, and lasting stewardship of the lands they conserve.

We're so grateful for the robust support of our local supporters and the widespread respect we've earned from the land trust community. Reaccreditation is our way of demonstrating that we honor, value, and remain worthy of this trust. Our commitment to excellence in conservation standards ensures that the farms, fish and wildlife, and forests of Jefferson County will remain protected forever.

Review of our reaccreditation application will take several months, and we hope to be able to share the happy news of our successful reaccreditation with you in the spring of 2026.

2024 Financial Report

Sources of Revenue

Gifts and Contributions	\$1,543,924
Special Event Income	\$233,614
Public Grants and Contracts	\$894,264
Land and In-kind Contributions	\$167,495
Investment Income	\$210,025
Rent Revenue	\$72,430
TOTAL	\$3,121,752

Operating Expenses

Program Expenses	\$1,946,010
Management and Administration	\$342,796
Fundraising and Engagement	\$306,100
TOTAL	\$2,594,906

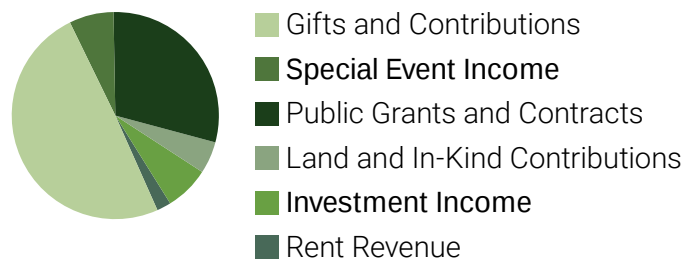
Assets

Cash and Investments	\$3,796,848
Property	\$15,149,953
Other Assets	\$2,552,937
TOTAL	\$21,499,738

Change in Net Assets

Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$2,427,128
Net Assets at End of Year	\$3,453,904
DIFFERENCE	\$1,026,776

2024 Sources of Revenue



2024 Operating Expenses



On September 26, 2025, the firm of Aiken & Sanders, Inc. PS presented its draft management letter and audited financials for 2024. The Land Trust's Board of Directors will review the information at its November meeting. Once accepted, the final audited financial statement will be available by request via email from Director of Philanthropy Kate Godman at kgodman@saveland.org.



The course reaches its literal and figurative peak each year at Hurricane Ridge in Olympic National Park, where the participants learn about the alpine and subalpine zones. Photo by Jon Buckland.

Tidelands to Timberline Natural History Course

The Land Trust's *Tidelands to Timberline* natural history course runs for about eight weeks every spring. It's an in-depth course offering 18 committed adult participants the chance to become intimately familiar with the natural history and ecosystems of the northeast Olympic Peninsula. Students learn with some of the area's greatest naturalists, and experience the interconnections between diverse local habitats from the sea up to the mountains.

Erik Kingfisher, who serves as the Land Trust's Director of Stewardship and Resilience, founded the course in 2012 with local biologist and nature guide Heather Harding, who remains one of the course's co-coordinators, along with longtime Land Trust volunteer and biologist Dave Rugh.

Since then, more than 200 community members have participated in the course, which has become so popular that students are enrolled through a lottery system each year.

Local naturalists — geologists, botanists, biologists, and others — share their knowledge and volunteer their time during the course, enabling us to keep it relatively affordable, and ensure that it's uniquely and deeply rooted in the intricacies and ecosystems of this particular region.

The course takes place almost entirely outside, on Land Trust preserves and other conservation lands throughout the northeast Olympic Peninsula.

No matter the level of knowledge or comfort in the natural world each participant brings to the course, those who graduate can attest to the transformative effect it has had on their perspectives and personal relationships to nature and place — in our special corner of the world.

The experience not only profoundly affects individuals, but also ripples out into the community. Past course



In June, course alumni gathered at the Land Trust's Illahee Preserve for the Tidelands to Timberline reunion, where they reconnected with former cohort members and course naturalist leads to celebrate this incredible program which forever changed their perspectives.

participants carry the knowledge and excitement about the places they've seen (and touched, smelled, heard, and maybe even tasted) to their friends and family, inspiring them to get out on the land to learn and enjoy our shared natural environment.

And they understand — and inspire others to understand — why it's important that we work together today to protect these special places forever.

In 2012, some of the first course participants joined together to form the Jefferson Land Trust Natural History Society. With many course alumni among its membership, the group aims to foster active exploration, appreciation, understanding, and conservation of the Olympic Peninsula and beyond.

Tidelands to Timberline was offered again this past spring, and as ever, enthusiastic participants had a



Clockwise L to R: Learning about montane forests on a trail in the Olympic Mountains by Dave Rugh; course participant holding a Pacific blood star (*Henricia leviuscula*) by Marie Bronoel; lessons in wildlife track and sign deepen the experience of learning about the land and its inhabitants by Marie Bronoel; learning about aquatic and riparian zones in Chimacum Creek by Rhianna Truex; detailed journaling is a core part of the course, and there are always some great artists in the group; taking time to quietly absorb nature in a "sit spot" is another component of the course by Rhianna Truex; participant with a skunk cabbage leaf by Rhianna Truex; each participant is responsible for teaching the group about their weekly "focal species" by Rhianna Truex.

blast out on the land. New connections and friendships were forged over the weeks students spent together, and the course helped promote greater community awareness of the importance of appreciating and protecting the shorelines, forests, waters, wetlands, and wild places of our shared home.

Note: The lottery to sign up for the course typically opens in December each year. Keep an eye on our website, social media, and monthly eNewsletter for details.



An unexpected benefit of our *Tidelands to Timberline* course was the opportunity it gave us to engage our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We couldn't offer the course in person, but knew that people were longing for a reason to get outside — as well as respite from the stress and boredom of that crazy time.

Working with our volunteer naturalists, who were just gearing up to host the course in March of 2020, we developed the *Nature in Your Neighborhood* learning program. These weekly virtual nature walks on Zoom each focused on a different topic (like birds, amphibians, mosses, etc). More than 700 curious learners participated in the program!

The *Nature in Your Neighborhood* program also included readings, exercises, and more to help our community get outside (or even stay inside) and learn more about the world around them.

Recordings of the virtual tours and all of the resources and materials remain available on our website. Find it all online at saveland.org/neighborhood.



Visiting Jefferson Land Trust Public-Access Lands

Jefferson Land Trust welcomes the public to visit our beautiful public-access nature preserves throughout East Jefferson County and new community forest in Chimacum. Each of these places is unique and all were protected with the critical support of our community and conservation partners.

Our nature preserves, community forest, and wildlife corridor can all be visited free of charge and do not require a parking or visitor pass.

These protected lands are all cared for by a combination of community volunteers, neighbors, and Land Trust staff members. We hope you enjoy the variety of trails and protected wildlife habitat as you explore these special places.

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest



Acres Protected: 918

Activities: hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, leashed-dog walking, and wildlife viewing. Foraging and gathering is allowed for personal use only.

Open: from dawn to dusk. (Certain areas or the entire forest may be closed temporarily for safety reasons.)

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest is managed as a community forest, to provide a balance of ecological, economic, and social benefits.

The community forest is a working forest with a mix of Douglas-fir, western redcedar, red alder and bigleaf maple. Multiple trails provide easy and moderate hiking opportunities through the forest. A short walk from the trailhead and parking lot leads to a covered community pavilion built by local volunteers using wood harvested from the forest for outdoor education and other activities.

A wheelchair-accessible SaniCan is available at the parking area. There are benches located at the end of Maple Grove Trail and Viewpoint Trail, as well as in various places along the multiuse trail.

Directions: From Chimacum Corner, travel 1.7 miles south on Center Road to the gravel driveway on the left. This leads to Chimacum Ridge Community Forest's public parking area and trailhead. Address: 1717 Center Road, Chimacum.

Photo by Tegra Stone Nuess

Bulis Forest Preserve



Acres Protected: 134

Activities: hiking, leashed-dog walking, and wildlife viewing

Open: from dawn to dusk

Located next to Fort Townsend Historical State Park, Bulis Forest Preserve is a large natural area with a large swath of protected wildlife habitat and several unique features, including a pet memorial trail.

Bulis Forest is home to Douglas-fir, Pacific madrone, and western redcedar trees with a mix of salal, sword fern, and Oregon grape understory.

The very short Pet Memorial Loop Trail offers easy to moderate hiking opportunities with views into the permanently protected forest areas. Bulis is managed both as a nature preserve and as a working forest for selective timber harvests.

Directions: From Port Townsend, proceed south on Highway 20 approximately 4.5 miles. Turn left onto Old Fort Townsend Road. The parking area for the Pet Memorial Loop Trail is located 400 feet beyond the intersection on the right-hand side.

Chai-yahk-wh Preserve



Acres Protected: 51

Activities: hiking, leashed-dog walking, and wildlife viewing

Open: from dawn to dusk

In the heart of Marrowstone Island lies Chai-yahk-wh Preserve. A vibrant protected forest and wetland property, this popular preserve features a winding trail through young red alder, mature western redcedar, Douglas-fir, sword ferns, salmonberry, and seasonal wildflowers.

Along the trail, you'll find a short path to a quiet sitting area to enjoy listening to various bird songs, such as the Swainson's Thrush and Pileated Woodpecker.

An off-trail nature studies area offers visitors (and larger groups with permission) the opportunity to explore and connect with nature.

Directions: Cross Indian Island onto Marrowstone Island. Continue on Flagler Road for approximately 4.6 miles. Pass Twin Vista Ranch and turn right into the parking area, across from Griffith Point Road. Address: 6590 Flagler Road, Marrowstone Island.

Duckabush Oxbow and Wetlands Preserve



Acres Protected: 39

Activities: fishing per WDFW regulations, hiking, leashed-dog walking, salmon and wildlife viewing

Open: from dawn to dusk from May 1 to November 30

Duckabush Oxbow and Wetlands Preserve runs about a third of a mile along the north side of the Duckabush River, providing salmon spawning and rearing habitat. It includes an oxbow pond that links up with the river when it floods, providing refuge to salmon during floods.

Mature, second-growth and low-elevation forests are present throughout the preserve. The main trail travels through an open elk meadow before entering a forested area that leads down to the river and along the river to the oxbow pond.

This preserve is open seasonally from May 1 to Nov. 30.

Directions: From Port Townsend, drive south on Highway 20. Follow Highway 101 south to Brinnon. Turn right onto Duckabush Road and continue for about 1 mile to the gravel parking area beneath the power lines on the left. Address: 995 Duckabush Road, Brinnon.

Photo by Robert Tognoli.

Illahee Preserve



Acres Protected: 5

Activities: hiking, leashed-dog walking, and salmon and wildlife viewing

Open: from dawn to dusk

Illahee Preserve is home to mature western redcedar, bigleaf maple, Douglas-fir, and western hemlock trees that flank a moderately steep, meandering trail down to Chimacum Creek, where visitors are welcome to view annual runs of chum salmon (along with the occasional coho and steelhead).

The preserve also features a 150-foot-long accessible gravel trail beginning from the parking area and leading to a wheelchair-accessible picnic shelter situated on the grassy, open area. There's a wheelchair-accessible SaniCan, and benches for resting and quiet contemplation located near the kiosk and underneath the picnic shelter.

Directions: From Port Townsend, travel south on Highway 20. Continue onto Highway 19. Travel 1.7 miles, then turn left on Prospect Avenue. Travel 0.4 miles and turn right onto Creekview Lane. Follow the gravel road to the parking area. Address: 315 Creekview Lane, Port Townsend.

Snow Creek Estuary Preserve



Acres Protected: 6.5

Activities: hiking, leashed-dog walking, wildlife viewing

Open: from dawn to dusk

At Snow Creek Estuary Preserve, you'll see an open meadow overlooking the estuary lagoon that provides important habitat for salmon, waterfowl, and shellfish.

A short side trail hugging the southwestern boundary leads visitors down to the flowing creek and past newly planted trees. A shelter is being built by the Peninsula Trails Coalition as part of the Olympic Discovery Trail.

Directions: From Port Townsend, travel south on Highway 20 and keep right at the junction with Highway 19. Travel 7.6 miles and take a right turn on Fairmount Road. Park at the intersection of Fairmount Road and Highway 20. Address: 17 Fairmount Road, Port Townsend (at the head of Discovery Bay).

Photo by Heather Johnson.

Quimper Wildlife Corridor



Acres Protected: 331

Activities: hiking, leashed-dog walking, bicycling, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.

Open: from dawn to dusk

The Quimper Wildlife Corridor's broad swath of connected forests, meadows, and wetlands are home to hundreds of species of shrubs, trees, animals, and birds — some seasonal and some that are year-round residents.

The miles of trails that weave through the corridor offer easy access to nature within Port Townsend's city limits and act as neighborhood connectors and important non-motorized transportation routes.

The trails are called "Cappy's Trails" after William Capriotti, who lived nearby from the 1950s through the 1980s and loved these woods.

Jefferson Land Trust works in partnership with the City of Port Townsend, Jefferson County, community groups, and local residents to protect this important area.

Entrances: You can explore the Quimper Wildlife Corridor and Cappy's Trails from a variety of public access points managed by the City of Port Townsend, including at the corner of Cook Avenue and Elmira Street, at the corner of 35th and Howard streets, and at the corner of 49th and Hendricks streets.

LOCAL FIELD GUIDE

The North Olympic Peninsula is home to more than 800 native plants and provides shelter and nourishment to over 300 kinds of birds, mammals, and reptiles. Our corner of this world includes a unique mix of tidelands, salmon streams, wetlands, dry forests, and more — a place where hundreds of species range from saltwater tidelands up to the alpine, often traveling along protected forested corridors.

Below is a selection of species of flora and fauna you might come across when exploring the outdoors at local or state parks, the Olympic National Forest, Olympic National Park, or in one of the Land Trust's public nature preserves. For a list and information about Land Trust public nature preserves, see pages 28 and 29.



Western Redcedar
Thuja plicata

Western redcedars are shade-tolerant conifers that can grow for more than 1,500 years. They can dip and bend, sending out roots when branches encounter nurse logs on the forest floor.



Barred Owl
Strix varia

Relatives of the spotted owl, these birds only recently entered the Pacific Northwest, where they outcompete and interbreed with their spotted cousins. Their calls sound like, "Who cooks for you?"

Salmonberry
Rubus spectabilis

Often found in cool, damp forests, these robust native shrubs blossom in spring and produce some of the earliest berries, providing excellent food and shelter for a wide variety of wildlife.



River Otter
Lontra canadensis

These mammals are found in both fresh and saltwater areas. Feeding on mussels, crabs, and slow-moving fish, they transfer nutrients from the fish they eat to onshore environments.



Pileated Woodpecker
Dryocopus pileatus

While foraging for insects, these large woodpeckers create rectangular cavities in standing snags (dead trees) that provide critical shelter and nesting areas for many other birds and wildlife.



Douglas Squirrel
Tamiasciurus douglasii

These native squirrels prefer old-growth or mature second-growth forests and eat the seeds of coniferous trees as well as acorns, berries, mushrooms, bird eggs, and some fruit.

Bigleaf Maple
Acer macrophyllum

Bigleaf maples have the largest leaves of any maple. Their leaves provide nutrients to the forest floor and the seeds feed wildlife. The branches provide space for moss and perching and nesting areas for birds.



Northern Red-legged Frog
Rana aurora

Native to the Pacific Northwest, these frogs require still waters for breeding. They're rarely found at any great distance from their breeding ponds or marshes, where adults feed on insects, small mice, and fish.



Western Sword Fern
Polystichum munitum

Western sword ferns adapt to a variety of sunlight and moisture conditions. They shelter insects and small wildlife and are a food source for mountain beaver, deer, elk, and other wildlife.



Varied Thrush
Ixoreus naevius

These colorful birds live in mature coniferous forests, where they feast on insects during the warm months followed by berries and seeds over the winter, contributing to native plant seed dispersal.



Rough-skinned Newt *Taricha granulosa*

These amphibians emit a toxin from their skin as a defense against predators. Annually, they migrate from forested areas where they live under leaf litter and downed logs to small wetlands in which to breed.

Bobcat *Lynx rufus*

Bobcats live in rocky areas and forests. They hunt squirrels, rabbits, mice, and other small mammals. Bobcats find shelter and nesting spots in wood piles, hollow trees, and downed logs in forests.



Licorice Fern *Polypodium glycyrrhiza*

These single-frond growing ferns are often found on moss-covered tree trunks, logs, rocks, and the ground in wet areas. Their dense fronds and leaf litter provide shelter for small animals and insects.

Western Tiger Swallowtail *Papilio rutulus*

With a "tail" on their hind-wings, these large brightly colored butterflies are frequently seen in urban parks and gardens, as well as in rural woodlands and near rivers and creeks.



Douglas-Fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

Douglas-fir trees are sun-loving conifers that can grow for 800 years and rise 300 feet above the forest floor. Their bark furrows as the trees age. Their cones feed native Douglas squirrels and other wildlife.

Oregon Grape *Berberis aquifolium*

Oregon grapes are evergreen shrubs found in coniferous forests and shrublands. They're shade and drought tolerant. Their purple berries, which look like grapes, are food for robins, sparrows, foxes, and raccoons.



Be on the Lookout for Wildlife Tracks

Many wild animals are experts at staying out of sight, but their tracks left in mud, sand, or even snow can reveal their presence to a keen observer.

Tracking animal footprints is an ancient practice that gives us a glimpse into the hidden lives of creatures that are often shy or stealthy. To a trained tracker, every footprint tells a story, offering insights into the behaviors and movements of our wild neighbors.

Whether you're wandering secluded forests, crossing open fields, or taking a stroll in your neighborhood, watch for tracks to learn about wildlife and how they are using the land around you. Below are photos of a few of the tracks you may encounter during your exploration of the North Olympic Peninsula.



Northern River Otter *Lontra canadensis*

River otter tracks have webbing on both the front and hind feet with oval or tear shaped toes.

Size Front: 2 1/16-3 9/16" L by 1 13/16-3" W Hind: 2 3/16-4 1/8" L by 2 1/4-3 7/8" W



American Black Bear *Ursus americanus*

Bear tracks are large with five arched toes on the front and hind feet. The palm pad on the hind foot is large and flat.

Size Front: 3 1/16-5 1/16" L by 3 7/8-5 3/16" W Hind: 3 3/4-4 3/8" L (no heel) by 3 5/8-4 15/16" W



Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Tracks display a large perching print with three forward toes and one that goes straight back.

Size: 6 5/16-7 3/16" L by 3 3/4-4 5/8" W



Columbian Black-tailed Deer (and domestic dog) *O. hemionus columbianus*

Tracks are heart shaped with the tip pointing in the direction of travel.

Size Front: 2 1/16-3 1/8" L by 1 9/16-2 5/16" W Hind: 1 13/16-2 7/8" L by 1 5/16-2 5/16" W

Information about wildlife track shapes and sizes is from *Wildlife of the Pacific Northwest* by David Moskowitz.



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