

Thursday



Oct 3rd

A MESSAGE FROM

San Juan County Land Bank

Fall Update from Your Conservation Land Bank



Stewardship

We continue to focus a lot of our efforts on managing the Preserves well, and from a variety of perspectives: ecological, recreational, agricultural, and aesthetic among others. As you will see below, this emphasis is prominent in our fall happenings.

We welcome folks sharing their experiences at the Preserves with us. Your Conservation Land Bank prides itself on our stewardship, and loves hearing the good things, but we also want to know how we can do better. Feedback is important – these lands belong to all of us! Please give us a call at **360-378-4402** or email: sjclandbank@sjclandbank.org. Click [here](#) for individual contact info for our staff.

Zylstra Lake Preserve, San Juan

We had an amazing open house on September 7 with roughly 80 people turning out to walk the property and ask questions. We're winding down our assessment phase and ramping up management planning. Next up is our [public scoping meeting](#) on Thursday,

November 7 from 5:30pm -7:00pm at Brickworks, where we'll share the results of completed resource assessments and then open the floor for public comments and discussion. Please join us!

Channel Preserve, Lopez

Resource assessments are complete and staff has had the opportunity to observe the property through each season of the year. We prepared a DRAFT site plan for the property (off Shark Reef Road), and will host a [public scoping meeting](#) on Wednesday, October 9, 4:30pm-6:00pm, at Woodmen Hall. This meeting is an opportunity for the community to hear our vision for the Preserve and to contribute your ideas. After the meeting, staff will create a DRAFT management plan, with several more opportunities for public comment in the next few months. Our goal remains to open the Preserve to the public by next summer.

Beaverton Marsh, San Juan

The Land Bank and [San Juan Preservation Trust](#) have spent much of the year on this new project, with the Trust's [campaign](#) still on-going to raise funds for the acquisition and stewardship. This is one of the most visible properties on the island, seen by everyone leaving town on Beaverton Valley or Roche Harbor Roads, and is defined by the marsh itself and the ridge behind. Next year we'll start the assessment and management planning process to get a handle on how this property should be managed for wildlife, especially winter waterfowl, and to provide public access. There are two existing access possibilities, but the ambition is to create access from John O. Linde Community Park, across the neck of the marsh, to the forested ridge on the far side. It's a tall order and won't be cheap (there is still an opportunity for a donor to fund a boardwalk!), but we'll be working on it over the next few years. It is a unique opportunity to create a year-round walkable nature destination from Friday Harbor. Stay tuned.

Coffelt Farm Preserve, Orcas

We have a short-term lease in place. Eric and Amy Lum's operation is flourishing. The [farmstand](#) is open Thursday - Saturday. Please stop by! Through this fall and winter we will assess infrastructure needs and carry out a number of projects, including upgrades to the water and electrical systems, a heavy use area and a lot of fencing. We are also working on our Preserve Management plan and expect to have a public meeting later in the fall. Additionally, we have a committee researching long-term options for managing the property. Their work will likely continue well into 2020.

Mount Grant Preserve, San Juan

There has been quite a bit of commentary on the internet about the Preserve and the unfortunate dispute with one neighbor. Though we continue to be unable to comment in detail because of their lawsuit, we do hope this will be resolved in the near future.

In the meantime, we want people to be aware that the entrance to the Preserve is on private property via an access easement. The first parking area (before you get to the gate) is on a service area easement on the same property. We continue in asking that visitors be respectful of this fact and stay on the road until getting to the Preserve entrance and the trailhead near where the road reaches the "Y" (even then, please stay on the road or marked trails). Please remember the ["San Juans 7."](#) and leave no trace!

We also want to make people aware that fall is one of the key times visitors see rough-skinned newts on the entrance road and off Geraldine Lane. These little critters are slow moving and hard to see so drivers should be especially watchful during these times. Please watch where you step too! We've posted "Newt crossing" signs along the Preserve road where they are seen most.



The western 100-acre part of the Preserve will be open for deer hunting October 12-31. As we all know, our deer population is booming and hunting, in addition to being an island tradition, is one way to help keep the numbers down. Most of the Preserve will be completely unaffected as this is a low-lying area and there will be a separate hunting access point off Lawson Road (please contact us for more details if you would like to hunt). The trail to the Newt Pond is on the very eastern edge of this area so we will be leaving orange vests at that trailhead for anyone wanting to take that route during this short period.

Fall is a beautiful time of year for the islands. We encourage everyone to discover a new trail, take in a sunset, or take note of protected properties you might pass on your daily drive. We hope to see you out there!



ALSO OF NOTE

Upcoming Events

[Mount Grant Preserve Gate Open for Driving Access](#)

Mount Grant Preserve, San Juan Island

Sundays

10am to 4pm

[Public Scoping Meeting on the Stewardship and Management Plan for Channel Preserve](#)

Woodmen Hall, Lopez Island

Wednesday, October 9

4:30pm to 6pm

[Volunteer Event - Seedlings and Forbs Planting for Orca Recovery Day](#)

Turtleback Mountain Preserve, Orcas Island

Saturday, October 19

10am to 2pm

[Monthly Land Bank Commission Meeting](#)

Eastsound Fire Station, Orcas Island

Friday, October 25

8am to 10:45am

[Public Scoping Meeting on the Stewardship and Management Plan for Zylstra Lake Preserve](#)

Brickworks, San Juan Island

Thursday, November 7

5:30pm to 7pm

