



## CONSERVATION INITIATIVE COMMUNITY GREENSPACES

*Parks, trails, and family farms – more than an amenity, a necessity for a growing region.*

Greenspaces are a community necessity that have value beyond preservation of wildlife habitat and neighborhood aesthetics. Small forest enclaves, native wetlands, stream corridors, and farm fields help to define our communities. They provide many children with their first opportunity to explore the great outdoors. Farms feed our community's growing interest in buying locally-grown products. Trails and greenways attract neighbors and visitors alike and sustain our quality of life. Conservation of community greenspaces like these can help revitalize a neighborhood and provide a boost to the local economy.



Great Peninsula Conservancy's **Community Greenspaces Initiative** protects the parks, trails, open spaces, and family farms that sustain our quality of life.

### **Why protect community greenspaces?**

Conservation of greenspaces not only benefits native plants and animals, but also can help to create a more healthy, livable and economically viable community. Neighborhood open space provides wildlife habitat, enhances water quality, cleans the air, and adds diversity to urban life. Community Greenspaces:

- Define our communities.
- Sustain our quality of life.
- Shape community identity and pride of place.
- Link city to country and people to nature.

Great Peninsula Conservancy has a long history of conserving the special greenspaces in our communities from the Indianola Greenway, Hansville Greenway, and Silverdale's Clear Creek Trail to the many family-owned natural lands we protect through conservation easements.

**GPC's Community Greenspaces Initiative** protects community greenspaces by:

- Partnering with community groups such as the Clear Creek Task Force, Friends of Miller Bay and the Hansville Greenway Association that act as long-term stewards for specific tracts of land.
- Collaborating with public agencies to protect special lands such as Sehmel Homestead Park in Gig Harbor, Wollochet Bay Estuary Park, and Banner Forest in South Kitsap County.
- Working with willing landowners throughout the Great Peninsula to protect natural areas and family farms in an increasingly urban environment.
- Exploring new sources of funding for greenspace projects.
- Leveraging financial contributions from local communities that benefit directly from protection of local greenspaces.



**Great Peninsula Conservancy pursues projects that are good for the environment and benefit the public in myriad ways.**

◆ **Open space in the community can be good for the bottom line**

Many businesses seek to locate in communities with accessible parks and trails. Protecting land as open space also reduces the demand on services and the need for governments to provide infrastructure to rural areas.

◆ **Greenspace attracts home buyers and visitors**

Parks and trails contribute to the comfort and livability of a place. They come in all shapes and sizes, devoted to wildlife or people or both. Greenspaces can help shape community identity and pride of place.

◆ **Parks promote public health**

A generation of children is growing up indoors, separate from the natural world. Parks can help reverse a growing obesity epidemic and other health problems.

◆ **Greenspaces enhance our quality of life**

Greenspace provides many environmental benefits: trees and vegetation help clean our air and water, keep cities cooler, and help manage stormwater runoff – for free. They also provide a respite from our increasingly busy lifestyles.

◆ **Working family farms provide open space and farm products**

Protecting family farms from development through conservation easements conserves quality pastureland and cropland, promotes good farming practices, and helps ensure that our community has a source of local agricultural products now and in the future.

Through the Community Greenspaces Initiative, Great Peninsula Conservancy is working to address the pressures population growth places on our communities by protecting open space, habitat and watersheds that enrich our lives and benefit our communities.