



Great Peninsula Conservancy

Spring 2016

Protecting our lands and waters for generations to come



Photo Credit: Nancy Sefton

Saving a Special Place on Filucy Bay – Page 5

A Shared Vision for Land Conservation

Every few years, Great Peninsula Conservancy takes a hard look at what we are doing and where we want to go from here. One of the most important outcomes of the process is confirming our vision is viable and shared by the community. Our new Strategic Plan identifies our highest priorities and reflects our growing desire to engage both traditional and non-traditional communities in land protection and stewardship.

In January, GPC released a Conservation Priorities Survey to gather public feedback on aspects of the plan. Happily, a large majority (85%) of our

151 respondents were 'very satisfied' with GPC's four areas of focus: Shorelines, Streams, Forests, and Community Greenspaces.

Survey results confirm that GPC and our community share a vision for land conservation.

To better understand why these lands and waters ranked so high with GPC members and friends, we asked those surveyed to select from a list of nine 'quality of life' issues those that need GPC's attention now. The highest number of respondents picked 'habitat for birds, fish, plants and animals' as an urgent concern (88%), followed by 'healthy shorelines and bays to provide shellfish and fish for harvest' (82%), 'clean water' (76%) and 'healthy forests to provide timber and watershed protection' (74%).

Survey results confirm that GPC and our community share a vision for land conservation and the important role it plays in maintaining our quality of life on the Kitsap, Gig Harbor and Key peninsulas—the Great Peninsula of Puget Sound. We look forward to working alongside of you to achieve our shared vision.

Sandra Staples-Bortner
Executive Director

Photo Credit: Mary Zabinski



Great Peninsula Conservancy

Protecting forever the natural habitats, rural landscapes, and open spaces of the Great Peninsula.

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Join us! GPC Spring Dinner April 28

Photo Credit: Ikil Gregg



Join your GPC friends Thursday, April 28 for a wonderful evening at beautiful Kiana Lodge. The evening will kick off at 6 pm with shellfish hors d'oeuvres provided by Taylor Shellfish Farms and prepared by Xinh's Clam and Oyster House with dinner following at 7 pm. We will present the Great Peninsula Conservation Award to Paul Dorn for his outstanding salmon restoration work, and enjoy a fascinating presentation by our keynote speaker, Lynda Mapes, author of *Elwha: A River Reborn*. It will be an event you do not want to miss!

RSVP by April 14

Mary Zabinski

mary@greatpeninsula.org

(360) 373-3500

Why not bring your friends and enjoy this delightful evening as a Table Sponsor! Table Sponsors receive complimentary dinner and drink tickets for a table of eight. All proceeds from our fundraising dinner directly benefit Great Peninsula Conservancy's work to protect natural habitats, rural landscapes, and open spaces.

Seating is limited. Get your tickets early! Tickets (\$100) and Tables (\$800) both include a one-year GPC membership. Ticket deadline is April 14. See you there!

Thank You Dinner Sponsors



Memorial Gifts

(October 16, 2015 –
February 29, 2016)

- ♦ **In memory of Linda Benedict**
Anonymous
- ♦ **In memory of Virginia Cowling**
Janeen Dorsch
- ♦ **In memory of Ralph & Frances DeBruler**
Mary Ellen de la Pena & Nancy Beck
- ♦ **In memory of Boyd E. Gravunder**
Jill Gravunder
- ♦ **In memory of Marjorie & Steve Hong**
Rich & Taffy Satter
- ♦ **In memory of Dan & Shirley Inveen**
Cameron Haslam
- ♦ **In memory of Lucy Johnson**
Natalie Bryson
- ♦ **In memory of Jeanne Knutson**
Gary & Marilyn Cunningham
Ken & Tanya Shawcroft
- ♦ **In memory of Mary Ellen McCaffree**
Ken McCaffree
Joan Phillips & Ric Jones
- ♦ **In memory of Donna Pepos**
Janice Pittman
- ♦ **In memory of Randy Peterson**
Steve & Betty Fabry
- ♦ **In memory of Kay Reed**
Kit Ellis
- ♦ **In memory of Peg Richards**
Melinda & Paul West
- ♦ **In memory of Rob Rose**
Robert & Ethel Story



Gifts to Honor

- ♦ **In honor of Alison & Heather Barner**
Bruce & Tina Barner
- ♦ **In honor of Bill & Bobbi Bryan**
Todd & Dianne Garvin
- ♦ **In honor of Natalie Bryson**
Joyce Merkel
- ♦ **In honor of Gretchen Dietz**
Paul Dietz
- ♦ **In honor of Mark Duncan**
Julie Duncan
- ♦ **In honor of Michael & Kim Gorga's wedding**
Noel & James Leary
- ♦ **In honor of Scott Pascoe**
Kit Ellis



Remembering Linda Benedict

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Great Peninsula Conservancy recently received a generous bequest of over \$230,000 from Linda Benedict (Jan. 25, 1945 - April 28, 2015). Here is her story.

Linda Benedict and her longtime partner John Nelson met on a blind date in Baltimore, Maryland. Their date at Bertha's, a popular nightclub, included dinner and a show.

When things seemed to be going well, they

decided to stay for the second show. They ended up staying until closing when the local cast of 'Cats' turned up and put on an impromptu show of their own. That was 1986 and the rest is history.

On a vacation to Puget Sound, Linda was wowed by the endless water, trees, and open spaces. The beauty of the Pacific Northwest resonated with her and when she retired in 1996, the couple moved here. They purchased a home on the Indianola Spit where Linda became involved with the community effort to create the Indianola Waterfront and Woodland Preserve.

Linda loved the beauty of nature

and developed a quiet passion for protecting it. She put her management skills to work as treasurer of The Indianola Land Trust, and later played a large role in the merger that created Great Peninsula Conservancy in 2000. John went on to become treasurer and then president of Great Peninsula Conservancy. Together, they manned GPC's

booth at the annual chili cook-off at Keyport Navy

Base for several years and always sponsored a table at GPC's Spring Dinner.

As GPC grew, Linda began to make major annual gifts. In 2009, she became a member of GPC's Legacy Society by pledging a significant gift to GPC in her will. Linda struggled with health issues in her final years, but stayed active until she unexpectedly passed away last April at age 70. She would be delighted

to know that her bequest of over \$230,000 will help GPC continue to grow to meet the challenge of protecting the natural beauty of the Kitsap, Key and Gig Harbor peninsulas – that place of endless water, trees and open spaces.



Linda Benedict

Saving a Special Place on Filucy Bay

GPC is thrilled to conserve more land at the head of beautiful Filucy Bay. In December, a nature preserve that began with a land donation in 2013, grew by 21 acres. It almost didn't happen. When a higher than expected appraisal left GPC short on money only two months before closing, several donors rushed in to fill the \$48,000 funding gap. The enlarged preserve now protects nearly 2,000 feet of

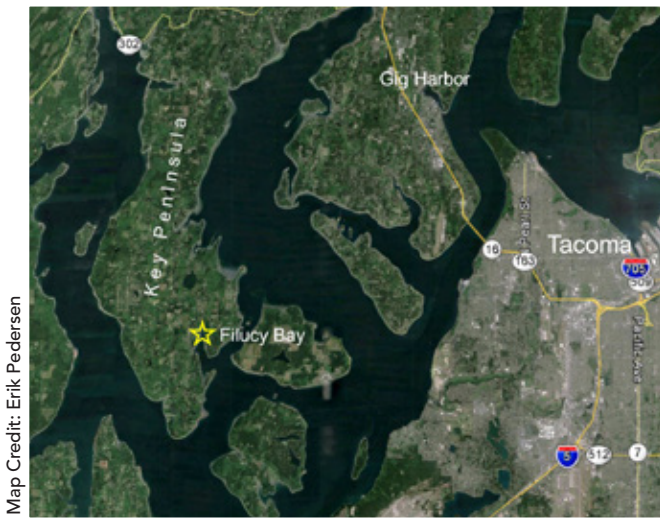
shoreline on this quiet Pierce County cove enjoyed by kayakers and nature lovers.

When a higher than expected appraisal left GPC short on money only two months before closing, several donors rushed in to fill the \$48,000 funding gap.

Filucy Bay is an off-the-beaten-path tidal estuary near the southeast tip of the Key Peninsula not far from the small community of Longbranch. This special place is home to an amazing variety of wildlife. Mother bears with cubs trailing are regulars in the preserve, foraging on

berries and salmon. When the tide is in, osprey hunt for fish from the air and great blue heron stalk small prey at water's edge. Owls, woodpeckers, and songbirds thrive in the preserve's mature forest of fir, cedar, maple, and alder.

Funds for the purchase were received from Washington Recreation and Conservation Office's Salmon Recovery Program, Pierce County Conservation Futures, and the GPC heroes who saved the day. Thanks to our generous donors and to all members whose contributions also helped to make the purchase possible!



Map Credit: Erik Pedersen

Map: Filucy Bay Preserve



Photo Credit: Randena Walsh

Great Peninsula Conservancy's new purchase on Filucy Bay.

Use Your IRA to Support GPC

Did you know there are two ways you can use your IRA (Individual Retirement Account) to support GPC? First, is to make yearly charitable donations directly from your IRA. Second, is to name Great Peninsula Conservancy as a beneficiary of your IRA.

Kitsap! GREAT
GiVE
MAY 3, 2016

Give Where Your Heart Is Kitsap Great Give – May 3

You can support Great Peninsula Conservancy on May 3 through Kitsap Great Give—Kitsap Peninsula's Day of Giving! Donating through Kitsap Community Foundation's kitsapgreatgive.org website is fast and easy. Even better: your donation will be matched by Kitsap Great Give's sponsors and GPC's 2016 Great Peninsula Challenge! More than double your donation when you give online May 3.

KitsapGreatGive.org

Charitable Donation

If you own an IRA, you probably know that once you reach age 70½ you are required to withdraw funds from your account each year. In most cases, the funds you are required to withdraw are treated as taxable income. The good news: Donations distributed directly from your IRA to your favorite charities (up to \$100,000 a year) are exempt from income tax (and count toward your required minimum distribution for the year).

Did you know there are two ways you can use your IRA to support GPC?

To receive the tax exemption, it is essential the donation come directly from your IRA investment firm. Check with your IRA company for details on making a charitable donation.

Charitable Beneficiary

Just as you may name Great Peninsula Conservancy as a beneficiary of your will and life insurance policy, you also may name Great Peninsula Conservancy as a beneficiary of your IRA. The special advantage of doing so is that, as a tax-exempt charity, GPC will not have to pay income tax on your donation—unlike most individuals you may name as a beneficiary.

Please note: GPC cannot give tax or financial advice. Please contact your tax advisor and IRA administrator for assistance and clarification of these rules. Thank you for your support!



Sandpiper surveys the estuary.

Photo Credit: Don Willott

— Scott Pascoe Retires and Leaves a Legacy —

After five years of leading Great Peninsula Conservancy's conservation program and increasing its impact many fold, Scott Pascoe recently retired leaving an impressive legacy of nearly 900 acres conserved. As Conservation Director, Scott was the driving force behind many successful land protection efforts including: Grovers Creek with its big trees, Filucy Bay, Martha John Creek, Big Beef Creek, Chico Creek Estuary, Union River Estuary, Irene Creek Wetlands, and Gamble Creek Wetlands. He also played an important role in Kitsap County's purchase of over 500 acres on Port Gamble Bay. Scott was always eager to engage new partners

and launch new projects. In fact, he left several projects teed up for the next Conservation Director—a position we hope to fill soon. Many thanks to Scott for his vision and perseverance in helping to save some of the special places of the Great Peninsula!

Inspiring Visitors in Gig Harbor!

Telling the story of Sehmel Homestead Park's natural wonders will be a little easier thanks to a recent Lu Winsor Memorial Environmental Grant. GPC will use the funds to create interpretive trail signs in this Gig Harbor park—helping visitors appreciate the importance of its conserved areas to wildlife and a healthy earth. A second Lu Winsor grant will help GPC remove invasive knotweed from our new Filucy Bay Preserve. Tackling this weed problem early is critical. Thanks to Key Peninsula-Gig Harbor-Islands (KGI) Watershed Council for their support of these important projects!



Photo Credit: Sandra Staples-Borther

Scott Pascoe (second from left) discusses the merits of a project with GPC's Conservation Committee.

— Jessica Lessard Joins Our Team —

Jessica Lessard, our new Development Assistant, is an Arizona native who recently settled in Port Orchard from Reedley, California where she worked as a marketing and social media manager for one of California's largest organic farm share companies (with over 6,000 subscribers). Jessica is an avid photographer, traveler, history geek, and foodie. In her spare time she enjoys hikes with her husband and three dogs, and volunteering as a photographer for local animal rescue groups. She is excited to assist GPC in its membership and outreach programs, and getting back to nature—the real reason why she relocated to Washington!



Photo Credit: Jessica Lessard

Jessica Lessard with hiking partner Merle.



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**SPRING
DINNER**
THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 6 -9 PM

PHOTO: DON PAULSON

RSVP by April 14 • (360) 373-3500 or mary@greatpeninsula.org • Tickets \$100 & Tables \$800