



# Great Peninsula Conservancy

Spring 2019

Protecting our lands and waters for generations to come.



Keeping Camp  
Hahobas Wild!  
Learn more at  
[GreatPeninsula.org](http://GreatPeninsula.org)



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

Great Peninsula Conservancy  
423 Pacific Ave, Suite 401  
Bremerton, WA 98337  
360-373-3500

info@greatpeninsula.org  
www.greatpeninsula.org

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Photos: Katherine Tacke, Claire  
Voris, Kenna Cox, Anthony Gibbons;  
Contributed by: Rebecca Slattery and  
Erin Reetz

## Saying Farewell

On my first day as executive director of Great Peninsula Conservancy in February 2008, I knew I had found my dream job. Now I could direct my lifelong passion for nature, expertise in wildlife ecology and nonprofit management, and hard-earned skills in fundraising, program development, and team building toward saving lands close to home. What could be better than that! I also knew it would be hard work to rebuild a small, struggling nonprofit. There were days when it seemed too much. But I had confidence in myself, a drive to succeed, and you on my team!

You, the GPC community, continually came to the rescue. You, GPC's board, shared the vision for GPC's future. You, GPC's staff, lent dedication and excellence to our work. You, GPC's partners, brought unique perspectives and skills to achieve successes. You, GPC's members, directed your own passion for the outdoors, energy, talents, and dollars to lift up our vision of saving the places we all love for wildlife and people. You are my heroes!

Together we have grown Great Peninsula Conservancy into a regional powerhouse with deep connections to local communities, annual financial growth, healthy cash reserves, and a portfolio of conservation lands over 10,000 acres! We have rallied public support for protection of our region's iconic fish, wildlife, lands, and waters, including Petersen Farm, Grovers Creek Preserve, Filucy Bay Preserve, Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park, and our new Hahobas Shoreline Preserve.

After eleven years as executive director of this incredible organization, I am retiring at the end of May. I am ready to turn leadership of our vibrant land trust over to someone new — someone with his/her own passion, expertise, and skills to lead GPC on the next leg of its journey. I am confident that with each of you on the team, Great Peninsula Conservancy will continue its awesome work protecting our lands and waters for generations to come.

I never dreamed we would accomplish so much together!

With much appreciation  
and a fond farewell,

*Sandra*

Sandra Staples-Bortner  
Executive Director



Cover photo: Two GPC members enjoy a stroll on the new Hahobas Shoreline Preserve. Your gift today will help us reach our \$150,000 match goal to save an additional 60 acres! Learn more at [GreatPeninsula.org](http://GreatPeninsula.org).



# Join us at Spring Dinner

## A celebration of our conservation community!

### Conservation Hero: Ken Shawcroft

19 years ago Ken Shawcroft happened to spot a nautical chart of Puget Sound on a ferry. A member of Kitsap Land Trust, Ken was attending merger meetings to unite four local land trusts, and they needed a name for the new organization. On

the map, the peninsula was labeled in all caps. Ken read the words out loud: Great Peninsula.

The name stuck, and so did the organization! As Great Peninsula Conservancy inches toward its 20th birthday, we give thanks to members like Ken Shawcroft. Ken has volunteered thousands of hours to GPC and Kitsap County Parks, especially at Hansville Greenway, where for over 20 years Ken hosted an outdoor education program for North Kitsap elementary students.

Ken is often found bushwhacking through GPC properties alongside Stewardship Manager Erik Pedersen. “I like the stewardship aspect of land conservation because you need to get out on the properties and walk them thoroughly, rarely on trails. I’ve seen some amazing areas that I didn’t know existed even though I’ve lived in Kitsap for over 40 years,” said Ken.

Now in retirement, Ken enjoys traveling with his wife Tanya. They

take long camping and birding road trips around the country. But he always loves walking the parks near his Hansville home, the ones he’s helped protect for decades.

### Dinner Celebrations

GPC is recognizing Ken’s years of dedication with our Conservation Award at Spring Dinner.

This year’s dinner, held on May 2nd at the spectacular Kiana Lodge, will be a night to remember. For the first time, we’ll have live music — from member John Willett’s band Molo — plus the return of the oyster shucking table, and a keynote speech by Guido Rahr, President of Wild Salmon Center. The night will be extra special as we celebrate the retirement of GPC’s Executive Director, Sandra Staples-Bortner.

Tickets are going fast! Join us to celebrate, be inspired, and say a farewell. Tickets available by calling 360-373-3500 or online at [GreatPeninsula.org](http://GreatPeninsula.org).



Ken Shawcroft walking a GPC property.



# Restoring Grovers Creek Preserve



## Growing a Forest

You might think that cutting down trees is counterintuitive to a forest restoration plan, but to foster a mature, native forest you need diversity. So the first step to restore GPC's Grovers Creek Preserve was for a handful of skilled chainsaw volunteers to cut small patches of maple and alder. Days later, GPC members showed up on a sunny March morning to plant seedlings of Sitka spruce, grand fir, Western redcedar, and Western hemlock amongst the fallen trees.

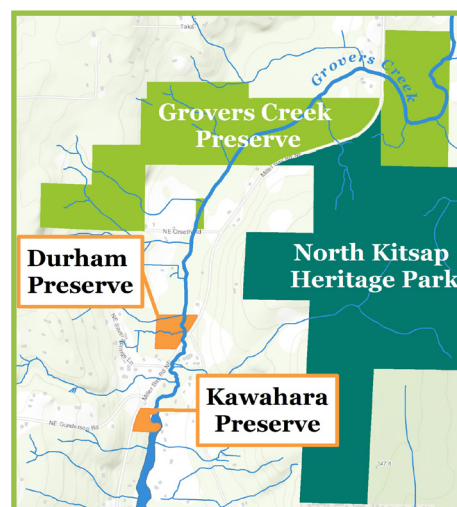
Just as an old-growth forest is full of dead wood, both standing and fallen, the cut trees were left to return nutrients to the soil and used to create a habitat pile to support wildlife like voles, foxes,

and owls. GPC staff and volunteers will regularly return to ensure the young trees have the best chance of survival by cutting back competing vegetation and inserting tree tubes to fend off snacking deer. Later this year, Pacific yew will be planted for additional diversity. As the trees grow, a new forest will emerge that someday will boast huge trunks and towering canopies of green.

Great Peninsula Conservancy partnered with Northwest Natural Resource Group to prepare our restoration plan for Grovers Creek Preserve. GPC's long-term objective is to create an old-growth forest and manage it for conservation outcomes: wildlife habitat, biodiversity, clean water, and carbon sequestration.

To do this, GPC will control invasive species, replant underrepresented

trees, and assess the need for thinning. Overstocked stands let little light in to the forest floor, decrease underbrush diversity, increase wildfire hazards, and suppress natural conifer regeneration. Strategically cutting trees will ensure the long-term health of this forest, which has a recent history of logging.





Creation of the Grovers Creek Preserve was fueled by GPC members like you. Donations supported the acquisition of over 290 acres between 2014 and 2018 from Pope Resources and the Helton family, plus 4 acres on Miller Bay donated by the Kawahara family and the most recent addition of 9 acres purchased from the Durham family in 2018.

GPC and our dedicated stewardship volunteers, like those at the recent tree planting, will protect the properties in this watershed for years to come. The forest and wetlands ensure clean water runs through Grovers Creek, which is used by threatened steelhead and salmon.

This year, GPC is pursuing the purchase of more land in the Grovers Creek watershed. Ultimately, the goal is to create a wildlife corridor that will allow animals to easily navigate between conserved lands owned by the Suquamish Tribe, Kitsap County, and Great Peninsula Conservancy.

Working together to restore a native forest is one more step toward this goal!

Photo left page:  
Local high school students Whitney Symens and Melanie Borson planted trees at Grovers Creek Preserve as part of their environmental science class.

Photo right:  
A Doug-fir trunk is tagged where invasive English Ivy was cut.

Photo below:  
We are so thankful to our volunteer stewards who helped plant over 300 seedlings at Grovers Creek Preserve.



Photo right:  
Isa Best planted a Sitka spruce seedling. She attended the event with her brother David and dad, Peter. The Best family helped found GPC in 2000 — it's awesome to see the next generation at work on the land!

Photo far right:  
Steve Weagant with his chainsaw. Cutting and leaving the maple and alders will help create a healthier, more diverse forest!

Photos by Claire Voris  
Map by Brenna Thompson







# Sustaining the Sound: Pollinators

## Adapting to Nature's Changing Calendar

After another bout of snow in early March, we got to thinking about this year's upcoming blooms, leaf out, and when the last frost will be. Despite our recent cold weather, the general trend in the Pacific Northwest has been warmer, earlier springs followed by drought and hot summers.

Phenology, often referred to as "nature's calendar," is the study of the timing of biological events in plants and animals in relation to changes in season and climate. The planet's temperature has increased by about .7 degrees Celsius over the last hundred years and at the current trend is expected to rise by 1.5 degrees in as little as 15 years. As temperatures escalate, phenological mismatches occur.

These mismatches, caused in part by our burning of fossil fuels, will directly impact the survival of beneficials — insects that support healthy gardens — and pollinators.

If pollinators like hummingbirds and bees migrate or emerge too late for

early first blooms, plant reproduction and seed set will diminish.

Up to 90% of flowering plants rely on pollinators like hummingbirds, bees, butterflies, beetles, and bats to reproduce. And according to the USDA, 35% of the world's food crops, from alfalfa to coffee and apples to sugarcane depend on pollinators—that's 1 out of every 3 bites of food we eat and valued at \$168 billion.

Even more than phenological mismatches, monocultures and the use of toxic pesticides have been responsible for widespread pollinator decline.

Rebecca Slattery (pictured top right) of Persephone Farm in Indianola knows all about adapting to nature's changing calendar. Her advice? Find strength in diversity.

"Persephone Farm is all about mixing it up. We have flowers everywhere, and we also leave crops in the field past their harvestable stage in order to provide food for

pollinators and beneficials. Chard and kale in the springtime are two examples. Arugula's another.

Our favorite beneficial insect attractors include fennel and cilantro, and we plan to add phacelia this year specifically for pollinators. We also have native tree and shrub borders for insects and for birds."

You can restore biodiversity and enhance pollinator populations in your own backyards by planting native perennials, removing invasive plants, and steering clear of pesticides.

Great Peninsula Conservancy is proud to partner with local farmers to preserve working farms and holds conservation easements on 267 acres of farmland on the peninsula. Seek out your local veggie farmer to inquire about CSAs and the markets where you can find their products.

The one advantage to all this change? "I guess I am having better luck with growing tomatoes outdoors," laughs Rebecca.



# Upcoming Events: Exploring the Peninsula with GPC



## Earth Day Tide Walk APRIL 20, 10AM - 2PM

Join us the Saturday before Earth Day for a 3.4-mile roundtrip walk south from Point No Point Lighthouse to GPC's brand new Coho Beach Preserve! Start out with us at 10am but feel free to walk at your own pace. The tide will be low between 10am and 2pm!



## Junior Naturalists' Photography Event JUNE 16, NOON - 3PM

Bring the kids to Sehmel Homestead Park for an afternoon of discovery! We'll provide a camera kit and map for a nature scavenger hunt that will entertain the whole family. More details will be available online soon.



We need YOUR help! Be a GPC ambassador and let your circles know about Kitsap Great Give: 24 hours of online giving hosted by Kitsap Community Foundation to support local nonprofits.

All gifts to Great Peninsula Conservancy donated on April 23rd will be matched! Check out our video and donate at [www.kitsapgreatgive.org](http://www.kitsapgreatgive.org)

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR EVENTS AND RSVP ONLINE AT [GREATPENINSULA.ORG](http://GREATPENINSULA.ORG)

## Gifts to Remember

GPC is humbled and thankful at the recent outpouring of gifts made in memory of Bill Reetz, a member and long-time Camp Hahobas enthusiast. (His kids, pictured here, attended camp there each summer.) Over \$6000 from 54 donors will help save Camp Hahobas and create a lovely legacy.



**Gifts made in memory of:** Art & Hazel Bourne, Larry Brown, Natalie Bryson, Rosa Garrido Roberto Carter, Virginia Cowling, Ralph & Frances DeBruler, Jefferson Ball Feagin, Alan Fruetal, Boyd E. Gravunder, Joanne Hansen, Peter Hasson, Capt. Robert Hoag, George Koehler, George LeCompte, Nancy & Bob Lind, Verna Miller, Winnie Pedersen, Thorn Percival, Bill Reetz, Shauna Shipley, Rob Woutat & Marilee Hansen, Norman Wylde Sr.

**Gifts made in honor of:** Nancy Gleason & Brian Trinen, Hildur Gleason, Lynn Gleason, David & Linda Grant, Kate Kuhlman, Jayne & Paul Larson, Ben McDaniel, Carol Niccholls & Mark Green, Cory Pollard, Niki Quester, William Barnes Reed & Li Yang, Betty Wikstrom





**Great Peninsula  
Conservancy**

423 Pacific Ave., Suite 401  
Bremerton, WA 98337  
(360) 373-3500

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# Spring Dinner is around the bend

Reserve your tickets  
by April 22nd at  
[GreatPeninsula.org](http://GreatPeninsula.org)  
or 360-373-3500.



WM. MARK DALTON