

**Notes of the 2010 Annual Retreat  
San Juan County Land Bank  
November 19, 2010  
San Juan Room, Friday Harbor House  
123 West Street, Friday Harbor, San Juan Island**

The Land Bank Commission and staff hold an annual retreat to allow in depth exploration of issues and challenges facing the organization. These topics often arise during the regular monthly meetings of the Commission, but there is usually no time for a broader exchange of ideas. The retreat is not intended as a decision-making forum.

**Commission Members Present:** Amanda Azous, Nancy Greene, Tom Cowan, Lisa Wolford, Jim Skoog, Doug Strandberg, and Lance Evans

**Members Absent:** None.

**Staff Present:** Lincoln Bormann, Judy Cumming, Doug McCutchen, Eliza Habegger, Tim Clark, Diane Kinnaman, and Karen Vedder (Legal counsel).

**Staff Absent:** Ruthie Dougherty.

**Public Present:** Michael Sullivan, Louise Dustrude, Tom Reeve, Dave Zeretzke, Lovel Pratt, Frank Greer, Lisa Nash Lawrence, and Peter Fisher.

**Facilitator:** John Howell

**Recorder:** Diane Kinnaman

9:40 a.m. Convene Meeting

Introductions.

## **Agenda Review**

John Howell gave an overview of the agenda:

1. Review 2009-2010 Accomplishments (summary memo)
2. District Financial Analysis
3. 2010 – 2011 Objectives
4. The Land Bank Over the Long Term
5. Reauthorization Discussion
6. Land Bank Outreach

# 1. Review 2009-2010 Accomplishments

Lincoln Bormann noted the summary provided ahead of the meeting outlining the status of action items identified at the annual retreat in November 2009:

## Stewardship Progress Report

### **Volunteer Acknowledgment**

Volunteer recognition a priority throughout the year in a variety of ways: a page in the annual report; at the Frazer and King Sister's Preserve openings and press releases; at Land Bank and County Council public meetings, and; through personal communication.

### Community Support / Outreach

1. Continue using contractors, local businesses  
**The Land Bank continued this in 2010, though some contract services were reduced by hiring seasonal field assistants on Orcas and San Juan. Having these positions created an increase in productivity while spending less overall. To date, the Land Bank paid local contractors over \$135,000 in 2010.**
2. Op Ed: full picture of finances including volunteers, contractors. Suggestion to hold off to use during reauthorization  
**Not yet done. Will be accomplished in 2011.**
3. Each commissioner will host one public event – put on monthly agenda, give it structure  
**Commissioners attended preserve openings on San Juan and staffed the County Fair booth. In addition, Amanda and Tom Cowan participated in the Turtleback Oral History Project.**
4. List of 7 priorities in 7 presentations throughout the year – channel through Diane  
Continue regular articles  
**Articles/opinion pieces were published on a number of projects/events including the Erickson HP&CE purchase, Buck property purchase, Preserve Openings, Beaverton Marsh Restoration Project.**
5. Increase public participation at commission meetings  
**Participation was sporadic and related to specific projects, especially Erickson.**
6. Continue growth toward creative partnerships & partnerships with like-minded organizations such as Judy working with Nature Institute  
**Land Bank partnered with a number of organizations this year including sponsorship of presentations on Garry Oak ecology (Soroptomists) historic barns (100 Friends of Old Island Barns), the history of Judd Cove and the lime industry, and on the history of concrete block in Friday Harbor (town of**

**Friday Harbor. Additionally had a number of events such as preserve walks and work parties with other organizations (American Hiking Society, Beachwatchers, Lopez Island Conservation Corps, National Park Service, SJI Trails Committee, SJ Preservation Trust, Nature Institute, Trust for Public Land, Sierra Club, Bureau of Land Management. Land Bank is also working with the SJI Historical Society on historic landscaping at their Friday Harbor campus.**

7. Continue working well with the public i.e. public meetings, staff & volunteer efforts, continue high quality of representation of the Land Bank  
**Public meetings functioned smoothly, other elements addressed above.**

#### Projects / Acquisition Challenges

1. Continue looking for Ag opportunities (particularly Lopez's Central Valley)  
**Though an offer was made for the Guard property, the Land Bank could not agree on terms with the family. The Land Bank applied for funding from the state for Conservation Easement on Lopez Island Vineyards and Mitchell Bay Farm. The Land Bank successfully acquired the Buck property on Beaverton Valley Road (limited agricultural potential). The Land Bank continues to work with the Buffum Brothers on a Conservation Easement in Center Valley on Lopez.**
2. Wish List Acquisitions: Lopez Village, Henry Island Bluff, Trail easements  
**One trail easement completed on San Juan. Working on Lopez Trail license agreements.**
3. Conservation Easements (CE) – be aggressive with targeted opportunities  
**See above.**
4. Drafting strong CEs: perpetual relationship so Land Bank is fiscally able to continue stewardship  
**Land Bank continues to refine the language in Conservation Easements.**
5. Increasing public access, low impact recreation (Beaverton Marsh mentioned)  
**Trails opened at Frazer and King Sisters on San Juan. New trail roughed in on the south side of Turtleback.**
6. Land Bank boilerplate CE agreement to be updated by Karen Vedder  
**Completed in the course of negotiating easements for Erickson, Buck and Taylor.**

#### Administration

- Mandate & policy are different – identify what is current  
**Policy manual section on volunteers updated.**

#### Reauthorization

- Consensus of commission: Leaning towards 2012 Reauthorization. Tom Cowan is for 2011

- New group created including commissioners, county council members, and individuals from the outside to help quantify 2011 or 2012
- After November meet with realtors
- Most effective way to convey Land Bank Value: Op Ed pieces weaving together thoughts around stewardship, volunteers, contractors, Pete Rose. History & accomplishments of Land Bank, nature pieces, land conservation articles – working with SJPT

**A strategy group was convened in May and concluded its work in October.**

### **Conservation**

Acquisition Goal: Three Closings. Status: **Four closings completed.** Mitchell Hill, Buck fee and CE, Smith/Weil trail easement – over 350 acres; 1 more anticipated, Taylor CE – another 150 acres

### Leverage Goals:

1. Identify Grant Opportunities. Status: **On-going.** Congressional funding obtained for NPS acquisition of Mitchell Hill. RCO farmland protection grant awarded for Buffum (Kjargaard). NAWCA funding for Taylor CE purchase. RCO applications made for Lopez Island Vineyards, Mitchell Bay Farm
2. Work with DNR on Trust Land Transfer of Odlin South. Status: **Proceeding**
3. Identify Acquisition Partners. Status: **On-going.** SJPT partnering on Buck acquisition.

Overall result: **More than \$10 in external funding for every \$1 LB spent**

### Outreach Goals:

1. Annual Report by May 1. Status: **Completed**
2. Create LB brochure for realty/escrow offices. Status: **Incomplete**
3. Two op-ed pieces. Status: **Completed**
4. Six presentations to organizations. Status: **Completed**

### **Stewardship**

#### Site Enhancement Goals:

1. Two Preserve openings. Status: **Completed** – Frazer Homestead, King Sisters with new trails designed and built.
2. Complete Upright Head Enhancements. Status: **Completed**
3. Open Turtleback multi-use Trails. Status: **Completed**
4. Improve Westside Preserve Parking Areas. Status: **Completed**
5. Design and complete Additional Pedestrian Trail on Turtleback. Status: **Trail roughed-in**
6. Continue Turtleback Garry Oak Restoration Project. Status: **On-going**

#### Preserve Management Goals:

1. Execute Frazer Homestead Preserve Lease. Status: **Completed.**
2. Conduct 12 work parties. Status: **Surpassed. 48 work parties held**
3. Complete Management Plans for Two Preserves. Status: **Completed**

4. Complete Turtleback Forest Inventory. Status: **Nearly complete**

Outreach Goal: 6 public tours/hikes. Status: **Surpassed. 13 conducted**

Volunteer Hours: **Almost 1,900 hours to date, set to surpass 2,100 last year**

### **2011 Land Bank Workplan Action Items**

- Draft 2011 work plan circulated for edits – staff / commission to get to Lincoln in December
- Continue ecological restoration – Garry Oak (Cady Mountain & Turtleback), Beaverton Marsh
- Op Ed articles for Orcas and Lopez papers
- Explore Ameri Corp volunteer partnering
- Improve communications with County Council, San Juan Preservation Trust, Bureau of Land Management and Department of Fish and Wildlife Resource Management Plan process
- Outline provided to commissioners on Expenditure and Acquisition Plan approval process
- Outline provided to commissioners on commissioner appointment process
- Final review of 2011 Work Plan by Land Bank Commission in January 2011
- Marketing for resale properties (esp. Argyle Lots)
- Conduct outreach to community groups – attend their meetings. Create a master schedule and plan for educational outreach. Recruit Land Bank staff and Commissioners to attend outreach events.
- Develop a specific outreach strategy to realtors. Create a piece that can be used to inform realtors and escrow agents about the REET, its purpose, and the work of the Land Bank.

10:45 a.m. Ten Minute Break

## **2. District Financial Analysis**

- Review of financial resources available to the Land Bank
- Review of chart breaking down percentage by district (not including grants)
- Discussion on resale properties (action items)

## **3. 2010 – 2011 Objectives**

Discussion on what the Land Bank hopes to accomplish. Discussion on lost acquisition opportunities due to funding changes (low Real Estate Excise Tax)

## 4. The Land Bank Over the Long Term

A summary was given of the strategy group findings. There was discussion.

## 5. Reauthorization Discussion

The most compelling arguments for reauthorization:

- In a healthy community, economic development is balanced with conservation. The Land Bank has a successful record of achieving that balance. The work of the Land Bank supports the vision and direction established by the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan.
- The Land Bank helps us preserve a sense of place. It's what keeps us here. The Land Bank has been successful at that.
- It's a logical tax. Conservation can't wait. Every new home creates loss of open space – tax connected to protecting open space.
- Saving land appeals to the aesthetic value many in the County share.
- The REET allows the Land Bank to follow through on a local mandate.
- Why is San Juan County so special? Beautiful land is its greatest asset. The Land Bank delivers on that promise.
- There is a very unique quality about San Juan County. The land and landscapes makes it unique. The Land Bank protects those landscapes.
- The work of the Land Bank supports tourism opportunities. There is a strong economic value.
- Visitors appreciate the Land Bank concept. It's what the community has achieved to protect its lands. The community should be proud of this local solution.
- The Land Bank is well connected to the community. "It's your Land Bank."
- There is strong generational value – legacy - all will benefit.
- The Land Bank is preserving options for the future.
- It's an investment in the quality of life. It's a proven, effective investment.
- Renewing the community's investment in the future.
- San Juans are a special place; the Land Bank is a unique solution.

12:04 p.m. Working Lunch – discussion continued

12:35 Break

1:00 Reconvene

### Next Steps

**Commission consensus:**

1. Target November 2011 as the election date for reauthorization and use the petition method for placing the measure on the ballot.
  
2. Commissioners on each island will serve as liaisons with the campaign:  
District 1 – Jim Skoog  
District 2 – Lisa Wolford  
District 3 – Tom Cowan

**6. Land Bank Outreach**

**Land Bank Outreach**

- Create a video that could be used in multiple ways; telling the story of the Land Bank, and informing the public about properties/easements owned by the Land Bank.
- Create a rack card that could be used by local Chambers and for ferry use.

Meeting was closed at 3:50 p.m.