

# The Island Guardian

10/07/2008: "Land Bank Buys Sundstrom Farm"



The San Juan County Land Bank, with support from the San Juan Preservation Trust, purchased 120 acres of the Wade Sundstrom farm on September 19th. The acquisition includes 80 acres along San Juan Valley Road and a separate 40-acre tract along Douglas Road. The purchase price was \$2.1 million.

The Land Bank will work with the Preservation Trust to craft a conservation easement on the property eliminating all potential residential development. "The goal of the acquisition is to see that this land stays a working farm into the future. Having the Preservation Trust partner with us was a key to making the purchase a success," said Lincoln Bormann, Land Bank Director.

Tim Seifert, Executive Director of the San Juan Preservation Trust stated, "We're extremely pleased to be part of this project. The farm in many ways is the gateway to the valley. Keeping it

in agriculture is a huge step in preserving the character of the Island.” The Preservation Trust will contribute \$500,000 to the project.

“The Sundstrom family played an important part in saving the farm as well,” Bormann added. “They had higher offers from people who wanted to develop the property. Instead they chose to honor their heritage.”

“I know my family, extended family, and the community, appreciate the value of preserving this property,” said Betsy Dues, Wade Sundstrom’s daughter. “In the years to come when our family visits the farm and looks out over cattle grazing in the fields and takes in the amazing sunsets, we will all be forever grateful.”

#### **About the Land Bank**

The Land Bank Program was approved by San Juan County voters in 1990. In 1999, the program was renewed for 12 more years by a nearly 3 to 1 margin. The program is funded by a one percent real estate transfer tax paid by those who purchase property in the County. This tax expressly funds preservation of the natural heritage of the San Juan Islands. Through conservation easements or outright purchases, the Land Bank has protected over 4,800 acres of important conservation lands throughout the Islands. These include marine shoreline, woodlands, farmland, wetlands, and historic homesteads. The Land Bank may be contacted by email at ([sjclandbank@rockisland.com](mailto:sjclandbank@rockisland.com)).

#### **About the San Juan Preservation Trust**

The San Juan Preservation Trust ([www.sjpt.org](http://www.sjpt.org)), known for its role in acquiring and protecting Turtleback Mountain on Orcas Island and Watmough Bay on Lopez, is a private, non-profit land conservation organization that has permanently protected more than 240 properties, 28 miles of shoreline and 13,000 acres on 18 islands, including land now managed as public parks, private nature preserves, working farms and forests. The Preservation Trust was founded in 1979 by a group of island citizens concerned about the future of cherished island places.