



TODAY THE AGENDA'S MANY PARTNERS IN KING, KITTITAS, PIERCE AND SNOHOMISH COUNTIES ARE PROPOSING AN ACTION PLAN TO IDENTIFY, PRESERVE AND PROTECT THOSE THINGS IN THE NORTHWEST WE TREASURE AND WANT TO PASS ON TO OUR GRANDCHILDREN AND OUR GREATGRANDCHILDREN – THE VISTAS, THE FORESTS, THE WATERS AND THE CHARACTER, CULTURES AND ECONOMIES OF THE COMMUNITIES IN WHICH WE WORK AND LIVE.

WE LOVE THIS LAND AND HERE IS HOW WE PROPOSE TO SAVE OUR REGION FOR THE NEXT CENTURY.

First, we have identified 1.26 million acres that we must conserve in this region for working forests and farms, for the streams, rivers and estuaries that reach the cobbled shore of Puget Sound, for the parks, trails and recreation areas where we strengthen our bodies and renew our souls. If we do this we make certain a better future. And we as conservationists know how to do this – over the past few years we have developed sophisticated tools on a local scale that we believe can have a transforming region-wide application.

Second, we must make our cities vibrant and vital, providing a magnet for many of the people coming this way. It is happening already with developers and public officials in many of our urban centers who have the foresight to build bold, exciting communities. As conservationists we will do our part to help them succeed by providing the natural and working lands beyond our cities and the park lands inside our cities that make our urban neighborhoods great places to live.

Third, with the certainty of dramatic growth in the coming century, we must rethink how we use our rural lands. We must ask ourselves how our rural lands can be used to reach essential economic as well as conservation goals. We have some ideas — that creating rural villages and other new ways of developing the rural landscape may be preferable to letting our region's quality of life slip away into a matrix of five- and ten-acre lots — but they involve a larger conversation. We can move that conversation forward.

And we know it will be expensive. Rough estimates put the total value of these conservation goals at about \$7 billion over the next 100 years, an achievable challenge with the creative private and public resources we can design. Less than \$2 billion is required for outright purchase of land stretched over several decades. The remainder comes from our tested market-based conservation techniques.

THOSE ARE THE BIG JOBS THAT LIE AHEAD.

WE BEGAN THIS CASCADE JOURNEY BY LOOKING BACK.





#### A CENTURY THAT TRANSFORMED OUR REGION

A little more than 100 years ago, Congress, looking out on a rapidly urbanizing nation, took action to set aside massive landscapes in Wyoming and California, creating the national parks of Yosemite, Sequoia and Yellowstone. In the same decade, President Grover Cleveland established the Mt. Rainier Forest Reserve, along with 11 others around the country, which were to become a system of National Forests to preserve the forests and the water supply and provide a reliable source of timber.



The population of the entire state was a little more than 500,000 then with about 120,000 in the two big cities of Seattle and Tacoma. The very first automobile in the Pacific Northwest had just arrived in Seattle from Kittitas County. Farsighted civic leaders in Seattle had hired the prestigious Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Mass., to look 100 years into the future and design a parks system for future generations, "to make a beautiful place."

Today, 100 years later, just under 3.5 million people live, work and play in the Central Cascades region, and it is, indeed, a beautiful place.

We also use this land that we love. It goes to work for us every day. We live on it, we farm it, we harvest its timber and we build commercial centers and neighborhoods, towns and city centers with soaring architecture. Our homes, families, jobs and futures depend in large part on our abundant natural resources and public assets. One cannot imagine life without them. One cannot imagine losing them.

# TODAY, STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF THOSE FARSIGHTED CONSERVATIONISTS AND CIVIC LEADERS OF MORE THAN 100 YEARS AGO, WE ARE LOOKING LONG AS WELL.

# POPULATION PROJECTION: THEY WILL COME 8M 7M 6M 5M 3M 2M 1990 2020 2040 2060 2080 2100 DATE

The population of the region will increase dramatically over the next 100 years, whether low or high rates of growth are used.

In many conversations over the past year, people told us that while they love their Northwest, they are worried about its future, and cite some disquieting trends: continued urbanization, unplanned growth, sprawling development from shoreline to ridgeline. The continued loss of open space, natural systems and wildlife. The loss of natural resource-based jobs in farming, fishing and forestry. And overcrowding, even in parks, on trails and on roads.



How long is 100 years? Take a look at the automobile in the Northwest. The very first automobile in the region came from Kittitas across Snoqualmie Pass in the summer of 1905. It was an 1898 Fryer-Miller driven by Bert Harrison. It took two days to get from Kittitas Valley to Snoqualmie Pass. A hundred years later, at the beginning of 2005, there were 3,148,019 registered motor vehicles in the counties of King, Kittitas, Pierce and Snohomish, and some of Harrison's descendants are probably stuck in the Renton S-curves.

































#### **OUR CHALLENGE**

No challenge we face is greater than the challenge of growth. Our four Cascade counties are expected to double in population over the next 100 years, and even that may be a conservative estimate.

# HOW WILL WE ACCOMMODATE MORE THAN 3.5 MILLION ADDITIONAL PEOPLE AND STILL MAINTAIN THE STRONG ECONOMY, LIVABLE COMMUNITIES AND THE NATURAL AND WORKING LANDSCAPES WE WANT AS A REGION?

Two futures seem to be laid out in front of us. In one – a future taken by some other regions of the country – unmanaged growth, sprawl, dependence on the car and the highway have defined a reality in which daily congestion, frustration and the loss of green and open space leave people looking for a better place to live.

In the other future – one clearly still available to the Northwest – our streams, beaches and estuaries are restored, functional and accessible to all. Our farms, ranchlands, forests and orchards are conserved and working, with their owners fairly compensated for taking care of them. Our urban neighborhoods and communities are lively, full of people, diverse and within walking distance of jobs, stores, spectacular parks and trails.

It is a future well within our grasp. It is a vision for the future we verified with the many people who took part in the Town Halls, Insight Panels and Forums of the Cascade Dialogues. They told us to think in the very long term. They told us we are on the right track.

It is a tall order to create a plan and strategies for the long term that are flexible enough to adapt to the rapid pace of change, yet focused enough to not lose sight of the vision. We believe we have done that. We know that without a plan to systematically and strategically save what we value, it will surely diminish or even disappear.

#### THE CASCADE DIALOGUES

More than a year ago, about 100 Pierce County residents pulled up folding chairs around some tables at the Mountaineers Club in Tacoma to begin what we called the Cascade Dialogues, a regional conversation to inform a 100-year conservation agenda for the Cascades, the waters and the communities of King, Kittitas, Pierce and Snohomish Counties.

As many as 3,500 people have been involved in the Cascade Dialogues. We have engaged elected and business leaders, civic leaders and stakeholders from tribes, farmers and foresters, and heard not only what they value in the region but what concerns them about the future. We held a series of teen dialogues to listen to tomorrow's potential leaders. We have consulted planners, economists and scientists on the critical features of the forests, waters, farms and urban areas of the region.

WE HEARD ABOUT OUR DIFFERENCES AND ABOUT WHAT TIES US TOGETHER, GOOD IDEAS ABOUT HOW THE CONSERVATION OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT COULD SERVE OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE AND HOW OUR ECONOMY MIGHT HELP CONSERVE THE LANDSCAPES.

#### CASCADE DIALOGUES APPROACH

#### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

- Conversations with 3,500 stakeholders
- Involvement of 460 classrooms

#### SCIENCE AND ECONOMICS

Assistance of over 50 experts

#### **ELECTED LEADERSHIP**

 Engagement of over 100 municipalities and governmental entities

#### **PRACTITIONERS**

Involvement of 100 stakeholders

#### STEERING COMMITTEE

 50 civic, business, tribal and environmental leaders CASCADE AGENDA The Cascade Dialogues Steering Committee – a diverse, broadly based group representative of the four counties and of key local and regional organizations – spent the year sorting out what we heard from the people, the scientists and the experts. In regular monthly, then twice-monthly meetings, members wrestled with the numbers, maps and environmental science developed by small working groups made up of the best experts we could find, the leadership team at the Cascade Land Conservancy, other conservation organizations and our mapping partner, CommEn Space.

A team of writers took on the tough task of putting down on paper not only what the science told us, but also what other organizations working on similar issues have produced, organizations like Shared Strategy for Puget Sound, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land and others. At Steering Committee meetings and in small working groups, draft after draft was discussed, always improved, never shortened.

The complete Cascade Agenda Report is a 40,000-word working document (available at www.cascadeagenda.org) that offers a comprehensive analysis of what we need to do as a region to preserve the Cascades, the waters and the communities we care so much about. It will change and grow as we carry the Agenda forward.

What follows is a summary of our most important findings and recommendations.







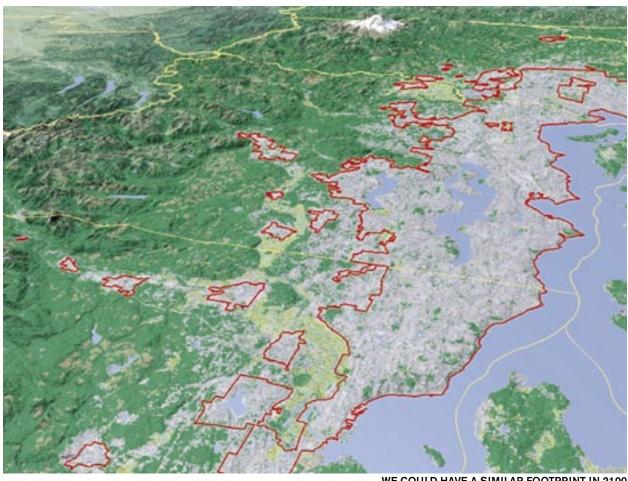








THE URBAN FOOTPRINT IN GREATER PUGET SOUND 1990



WE COULD HAVE A SIMILAR FOOTPRINT IN 2100

#### THE CASCADE AGENDA IS A CALL TO ACTION.

#### THE AGENDA STARTS WITH THE BELIEF THAT THE FOUNDATION OF AN OUTSTANDING QUALITY OF LIFE IS A GOOD JOB, AND WITH THE VIEW THAT CONSERVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEED EACH OTHER TO SUCCEED.

Unless we have homes and jobs, we will not have the financial means for conservation. And unless we conserve our natural resources, our high quality environment, people will not want to bring their creativity, talent and productivity to the region. If we are to be the kind of place people told us they want, we must get started today on two big jobs.

First, we have identified 1.26 million acres of working and natural land that we must conserve, and as conservationists we know how to do this. It is a realistic goal. During the last five years, local conservation groups conserved about 150,000 acres. Just last year, King County, the Cascade Land Conservancy and Hancock Timber Resources Group came to agreement on conserving 90,000 acres of working forest land, using the sophisticated conservation tools and strategies we have developed. The protection of the Snoqualmie Forest is the first step, already accomplished, toward our 100year goal. If we start now on these 1.26 million acres, and if we do this well, in relatively short order, we will be prepared for the future.

There is some good news here. While we have converted significant areas to other uses over the last 100 years, we have also done a pretty good job of protecting the natural landscapes we value. We start with a large base of more than 2 million acres of our four-county region already in public ownership as working forest or preserved natural areas. And we have some of the most stringent forest practices and regulations in the nation.

Our second big job is perhaps more difficult and complex. To achieve the kind of future we heard about in the Cascade Dialogues, we must make our cities attractive and affordable places, so that more of the 3.5 million people coming our way can freely choose to live in them. Vibrant, livable cities and new ways of looking at rural development can take pressure off forests, farms and the most sensitive rural lands. We can help these places succeed through our conservation of close-in forests and farmlands outside our cities and by helping secure more parks, trails, green spaces and access to the water inside our cities.

To help us think long term, out 100 years, we divided the region into different landscapes to address particular needs within each. Here are detailed looks at the individual landscapes.

Using satellite imagery to map urban areas, we created these unusual views of Greater Puget Sound from the north. The perspective focuses attention on the potential for future growth to consume the rural lands and the Cascade Foothills. The 2100 image draws on a computer-based land use model and state population projections to imagine one potential future where growth is managed and open space largely protected. Red lines indicate the current urban growth boundaries.

On an old-fashioned regional features map of the United States, the one where Ohio is overlaid with a picture of a tire and Florida has oranges, Washington has an evergreen tree. It was the way many viewed the state – and still do. We call ourselves the Evergreen State. Seattle is the Emerald City, in other words a green city, where folks can leave their urban neighborhoods and be hiking or skiing in the mountains in less than an hour. That privilege is a key to the quality of life we treasure.

The Cascades are more than the scenic backdrop for our daily lives. The mountains – and the verdant forests on their slopes – comprise the very heart of our region's ecosystem, cleansing our air and water, protecting our cities and towns against the floods of spring and providing the vistas that stir our spirits. The Cascades are the source of many livelihoods, and the habitat for the animals that give meaning to the legends we teach our children. If ever there was a treasure worth protecting, it would be these mountains. Our ancestors knew that, too, and so they began the task of preserving the Cascades, by creating national parks and wilderness areas and placing working forests in public stewardship. They gave us an incredible legacy – 2.3 million acres in the Cascades are already in public hands within our four counties!

Yet, in the past 30 years, Washington State has seen two million acres of Cascade timberland disappear, through low-density residential development or conversion to other use. The forest that vanished in those 30 years would be nearly as large as King and Pierce Counties combined. Most of that loss has occurred in the low-elevation forests, which are among the most productive forest lands on the face of the earth. Our region cannot allow this erosion of our foothills forests to continue or the health and biodiversity of the upland Cascade forests will gradually be compromised, for what happens in the Cascades has a direct influence on all the other landscapes in the region.

#### **LAND MANAGEMENT IN CASCADES**



The Cascades landscape can be broadly divided into public preserved lands, such as national forests and parks in purple, public working forests including state trust lands in teal, private timberlands in bright green, and those private lands that have conservation easements ensuring they will not be converted to urban development in dark green.

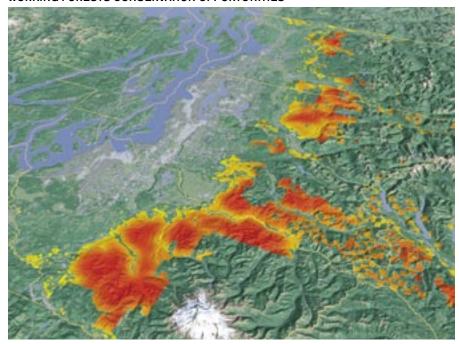
#### **OUR GOAL**

To maintain an unbroken ribbon of lowelevation forests, stretching from the northern Snohomish County line to the southern border of Pierce County on the west side of the Cascades and from the northern edge of Kittitas County to the Yakima County line in the east.

By achieving that goal, we will preserve a heartland of forests that will form the basis for protection of plant, animal and fish species, provide the basis for wildlife corridors throughout the region and ensure a supply of products from the land ranging from wood to clean air and cool summer water. To achieve this, we propose to:

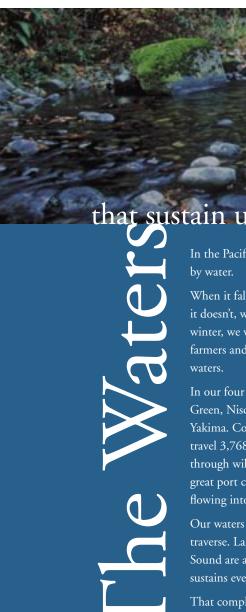
- Conserve 93 percent of private working forests, or about 777,000 acres. In addition, preserve another 5 percent, or 48,000 acres, placing those lands in permanent preserved status.
- Maintain the 2.3 million acres already in public hands in preserved or working forest status.
- Provide sufficient timber to support several mills in the region about 300 to 350 million board feet a year.
- Recognize that the Cascades are at the very heart of our region. What happens in the Cascades has a direct influence on all of our other landscapes. Our efforts should emphasize maintaining connectivity and diversity of recreation, ecosystem and ownership patterns.
- Focus on the low elevation foothills the closest, most productive, most at-risk part of the Cascades.

#### WORKING FORESTS CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES



Conserving private lands in the foothills of the Cascades is an important goal of the Agenda. The lands in deeper orange and red are good opportunities for conservation as they are in large continuous blocks, larger parcels and/or adjacent to public lands. The lands in yellow are important, low elevation timber lands at the greatest risk of conversion. They will be more difficult to acquire due to the higher costs associated with conserving lands on the edge of development.





In the Pacific Northwest, our lives and our land are shaped by water.

When it falls from the sky for too long we grow weary. When it doesn't, we rejoice. When too little of it falls as snow in the winter, we worry about our power bills, the prospects of our farmers and the fate of the salmon. We live to the rhythm of waters.

In our four counties are seven major rivers – the Cedar, Green, Nisqually, Puyallup, Snohomish, Stillaguamish and Yakima. Combined, these rivers form seven watersheds and travel 3,768 river miles from glaciers on the mountaintops through wilderness and working forests, farms and estuaries, great port cities and on into Puget Sound, with the Yakima flowing into the mighty Columbia River basin.

Our waters are as complex in their nature as the lands they traverse. Lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, estuaries and the Sound are all connected. They are one moving force that sustains every one of our region's landscapes.

That complex system of waters has been under stress for many years. Perhaps we first began to sense the danger 40 years ago when the water in our biggest lake became too polluted for our children to swim there. The people of the region took action then and cleaned Lake Washington, but today we are facing more insidious and difficult challenges, created by the changes in land use around our waters.

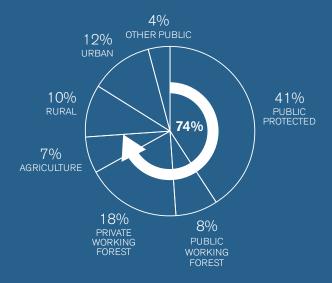
Past practices among our foresters and farmers, our miners and factory operators, homebuilders and homeowners, have all taken their toll, bit by bit, as silt clouded the rivers and asphalt covered farmland that once held and cleansed our region's rainwater. The results of those past practices are seen in yearly flooding in rural towns, in declining salmon runs and in news reports of threats to the health of Puget Sound itself.

Fortunately the spirit that saved Lake Washington still lives in our community. Efforts both large and small have been mounted in the past few years: public utilities have begun campaigns to conserve the supply of clean water, tribes have led regional efforts to restore salmon habitat, community groups and port authorities have worked together to revive wetlands and citizen groups have even managed to restore portions of our grittiest industrial shoreline to health.

There is more good news: 74 percent of the lands needed to restore the health of our watersheds are public lands, private working forest or farmlands that could be part of the solution with conservation and careful stewardship.

Saltwater shorelines will be more difficult because maritime and other industries have used the shorelines for industrial purposes for decades. Yet, all one needs to do is visit Kellogg Island or the Thea Foss Waterway to know that those shores, too, can be redeemed.

#### **WATERSHED LAND MANAGEMENT**



#### **OUR GOAL**

To protect all the fresh water and marine ecosystems that have not yet been damaged and to bring back to life many of those that have. To achieve this, we propose to:

- Protect the headwaters of our rivers through conservation of our foothills forests. Estimates put the number of acres to be preserved along rivers and streams at 21,000 acres. But these estimates await further refinement through Shared Strategy and local watershed planning processes.
- Preserve and restore another 14,000 acres along Puget Sound shorelines and estuaries.
- Limit impervious surfaces across all seven watersheds to specific targets set to meet local conditions. Innovations in building design and technology will help. Expansion of Transfer of Development Rights programs will be a key element to maintaining the health of our watersheds.
- Recognize that we conserve much of this land by achieving the Agenda's goals. In the long haul, acquisition of wetlands and streams for parks will protect important parts of our watersheds, conservation of working timberlands will protect our headwaters, conservation of farms will sustain the functions of the middle reaches and efficient development in our rural areas will keep watersheds healthy.

#### MAJOR WATERSHEDS



The waters of the region flow through seven major watersheds, crossing varied topography and bridging political boundaries.

#### **DUWAMISH RIVER ESTUARY 1850**



The Duwamish River, like most large rivers that empty into Puget Sound, formed a complex estuary with extensive channels, mud flats and forested wetlands. These areas created rich habitat for wildlife, birds and fish, especially salmon which still rely on the estuary to ease their transition between salt and fresh water. Native American tribes established villages along these rivers, to take advantage of the fish and game, and maintained trails to good hunting and gathering sites in the nearby forest and prairies.

#### **DUWAMISH RIVER ESTUARY 2000 (SEATTLE)**



The Duwamish is much different today, a major international port. These two images illustrate the dramatic changes in our urban areas and the commercial development that now covers much of our major estuaries.

We also use this land that we love. We live on it, we farm it, we harvest its timber, we build commercial centers, and neighborhoods, towns and city centers with soaring architecture that expresses our finest creativity. We have homes, families, jobs and futures.

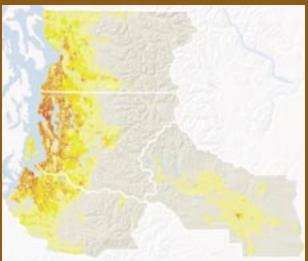
of green and pink and purple.

landscape of the Columbia Basin ahead of us with soft pastels



As a region we are changing culturally and racially. Higher levels of diversity in blue and green are found primarily in urban areas. Tan areas are public lands and other uninhabited areas.

#### **POPULATION DENSITY**



Red shows the high density urban areas, while orange is more suburban style density, and yellow is rural. Public lands and other uninhabited areas are in tan.

#### CITIES, TOWNS AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Cities, towns and neighborhoods are part of the Cascade Agenda because conservation and development are really two sides of the same coin. The Cascade Agenda asks how can we accommodate development but optimize conservation gains elsewhere. We also recognize that the Growth Management Act is the foundation for action: it's the law and we respect that.

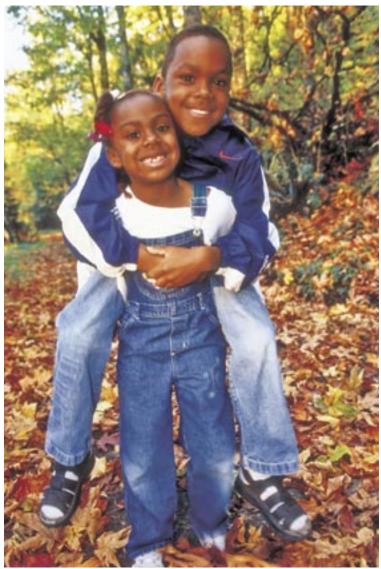
While the Cascade Agenda focuses on the four-county area of King, Kittitas, Pierce and Snohomish Counties, the Agenda also recognizes what happens in Kitsap County will affect the greater Puget Sound Region. And the Agenda recognizes that population will move into Skagit and Whatcom counties to the north and Thurston County to the south – especially if we don't handle our region's growth well.

But the focus for the Agenda is the spine of the Cascades and what happens on either side of it in the four-county area.

The demographics of the region were very different 100 years ago. The Alaska Gold Rush brought a wide variety of risk takers to the area. The fishing industry attracted people from Norway, Sweden and Finland. In the 1840s, the first African American pioneer, in what later became Washington Territory, arrived here and started a farm outside Olympia. His name? George W. Bush. Bush is credited by some historians as having been in large part responsible for bringing present-day Washington State into the United States.

While the region today remains largely Caucasian, it is changing. More than 5 percent of the population said they were of mixed race in the 2000 census. More than 13 percent were Asian, 8 percent African American, 5 percent Hispanic and 1 percent American Indian or Alaska Native.





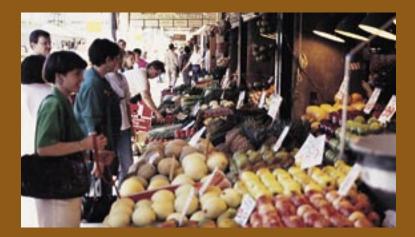
Latino and Hispanic populations are growing rapidly here and in Eastern Washington. Caucasians already are in the minority in California and the Census Bureau estimates that by the time today's kindergarten children are eligible for Social Security, Caucasians will make up 49.6 percent of the total U.S. population. Hispanics will be 26.6 percent, African Americans 13.3 percent, Asian Americans about 9 percent and American Indians/Alaska Natives about 1.5 percent.

Increasingly the diversity of the region is not separated by race but by class. Median household income in Washington State is about \$45,000 but the range within the four-county region runs from less than \$15,000 to more than \$75,000.

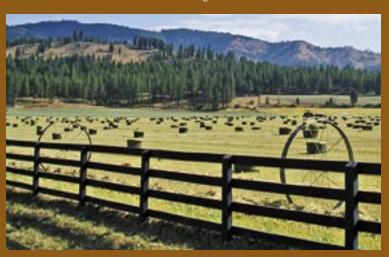
There are several challenges facing us. Broad segments of our community do not engage with the natural landscapes that define it. And for many members of our community there are far more immediate concerns than environmental conservation. We want to make saving a pristine forest important to all communities.

#### **FARMING**

Washington is blessed with fertile soils and an ideal climate for growing crops. Our state is second only to California in the diversity of its produce, with more than 115 different agricultural products. Although our four counties have lost many of their farmlands to development, we still have a rich variety of farms and orchards, some passed from generation to generation for more than 100 years. Moreover, the remaining farms and orchards in the Cascade region are the life blood of a growing trend that is providing locally produced farm products that are fresher and healthier for our area residents. While the local market holds the most promising boost for the future farm economy west of the Cascades, Kittitas farming will rely on several key commodities for the world market such as timothy hay while increasing the production of goods for local consumers.



Unless we take action now, however, the odds are that farms and orchards will continue to vanish from our landscape as development pushes farther into the countryside and city dwellers buy up agricultural land as country estates. The State Growth Management Act, locally defined Agricultural Production Districts, coupled with such programs as King County's Farmland Preservation Bonds, have provided a measure of protection in many rural areas, but in other rural areas, where land is zoned to permit one home for five or ten acres, land is quickly being converted to other purposes with little conservation benefit for the region.



#### **OUR GOAL**

Is that both farms and the business of farming will be preserved as permanent elements of our landscape and our way of life. Farmers' markets will continue to thrive, and new strategies will be found to assure our farmers can make a living on the land. Our goals are to:

- Conserve 85% of the agricultural land that remains in the four counties, including 106,000 acres on the west side of the mountains and 200,000 acres in Kittitas County.
- Support the regional farm economy by promoting more consumption of locally produced foods. Increase local consumption of local produce to about 5 percent of what we eat, an increase that will make farming a viable local industry.
- Provide an adequate and consistent supply of water, an important part of the agriculture industry in Kittitas County.

#### **AGRICULTURAL LANDS**



While Kittitas County (right) has large contiguous areas of agricultural land, those on the west side are small and scattered. Only a few cohesive agricultural districts remain, more in Snohomish County than the other two west side counties, making conservation difficult and expensive.

#### **PARKS**

When the Olmsted Brothers created their visionary plan for Seattle's park system 100 years ago, they sought to make the natural environment a prominent element of every neighborhood within the city. In large part, they succeeded. The areas of our region that are graced with their parks (and those of their followers) have retained their livability and economic value, through good times and bad, throughout the past century. There is a lesson in that success: well designed parks and space for recreation are essential elements of vibrant cities – just as important to the life of our cities as any other part of the urban infrastructure.

The people of our region are blessed with wonderful parks, from National Parks to tiny urban pocket parks, providing opportunities to pursue an almost endless variety of recreational activities. Today, these recreation lands constitute a huge asset for our community and are a magnet that attracts and helps to hold a skilled workforce in our region. Yet not every neighborhood is well served by the park systems we have today, and, with hundreds of thousands of new residents expected, more park land must be acquired to keep pace.



Like many parts of the Cascade Agenda, county-to-county recreational land needs vary. In more densely populated areas of King County, land prices are higher and additional park lands will more frequently come from smaller purchases. Programs such as the Green Seattle Partnership also will help restore existing parkland.

Development and population growth are moving at a different pace in Kittitas County where the challenge is to maintain and enhance its spectacular recreational assets. Because the county is geographically and politically "divided" into "Upper County" and "Lower County," it will be important to create a recreation network that connects people to the vast areas of public lands as well as to the two parts of the county.

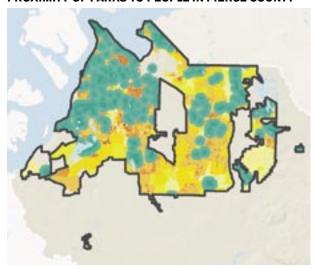
In Snohomish County, people want a system of trails that connects their communities to the high mountains; in Pierce County, residents are concerned about the health of estuaries and the links to the salt water beaches of Puget Sound.

#### **OUR GOAL**

To weave parks and recreation land into the fabric of every neighborhood in the region, and to connect our cities and towns to one another by trail systems that encourage walking, running and cycling. To achieve this we propose to:

- Design recreational opportunities in the Cascades that meet the needs of diverse users while protecting natural features of our limited public land base.
- Work with private timberland owners to maintain and expand public access programs for recreation.
- Connect and improve regional trail networks with a regional consolidation and gap analysis of local plans to identify needed links.
- Keep pace with population growth by adding 30,000 acres of urban parks, ensuring that there is a park within a half-mile walk of all urban residents or within an eighth-mile in more densely populated areas.
- Maintain the quality of experience our residents now have at regional destination parks such as Point Defiance in Tacoma, by adding 82,500 acres to destination parks over the next century.
- Make water and shoreline access available along every eight miles of our rivers in rural areas.

#### PROXIMITY OF PARKS TO PEOPLE IN PIERCE COUNTY



The dark green shows existing parks within the urban growth boundary in Pierce County. Lands within a half mile of those parks are shown in light green. The red, orange and yellow show areas of high, medium and low population densities that do not have close access to parks. Industrial area inside boundaries shown in gray.

#### **BRIDGING THE LANDSCAPES**

BECAUSE NATURE IS, IN FACT, A SINGLE SYSTEM, THERE ARE FORCES AT WORK ACROSS THE LANDSCAPES WE HAVE DESCRIBED: THE MOVEMENT OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS, THE SHIFTING TIDES OF HUMAN MIGRATION AND EVEN THE MOVEMENT OF TIME ITSELF.

#### NATURAL HERITAGE

For centuries, the people of our region have been deeply connected to the natural world. Native Americans depended for their survival on a sophisticated knowledge of the land and its bounty for food, shelter and spiritual well-being.

A desire to catalogue, identify and understand has been a part of our natural heritage for years. Lewis and Clark catalogued many species in their Voyage of Discovery. David Douglas, a famous 19th century botanist, visited the Pacific Northwest in the 1820s, sending back numerous plant samples to the Royal Horticulture Society in Great Britain. The name of our most well-known conifer, the Douglas fir, speaks to his legacy.

A desire to protect this region's abundant resources has a rich and deep tradition as well. For the first human residents, it was a matter of survival – they depended on the availability of resources for food and shelter. Today, it is still a matter of survival – for endangered species such as the Spotted Owl and the Puget Sound Chinook and for us, our culture. With the right combination of actions, we can secure their survival and restore the great and diverse ecosystems that characterize the Cascade counties.

#### **OUR GOAL**

That after 100 years, our region's natural heritage will be far more secure than it is today, and the survival of our region's iconic species will be assured. To achieve this, we propose to:

- Maintain our region's biological diversity by striving to protect about 30% of the original extent of our region's various habitats, an area that we estimate to be 140,000 acres on both sides of the Cascades.
- Retain the spectrum of natural species that are unique to our area.
- Maintain the means for wildlife to move throughout traditional ranges.













#### **STEWARDSHIP**

Perhaps it goes without saying, but a plan for 100 years must include a commitment to stewardship. For even when we are successful in acquiring the right to preserve land or water, that prize will not be passed intact to future generations without a sustained effort.

For the past several decades, stewardship has focused primarily upon correcting the mistakes of the past – by cleaning up pollution, reviving natural patterns of forest succession and restoring waterways to health. Today new challenges are emerging, created by invasive species, fragmentation of habitat and even the simple pressure of too many boots hiking the same beloved trails. We know that we cannot fully predict how such challenges will evolve or what new issues our children and grandchildren will encounter as they work to protect the legacy of lands and waters we wish to leave them.

But we can predict with certainty that their success, like ours, will be contingent upon finding ways to work together.

It is our responsibility to leave them with some examples. The Cascade Dialogues have demonstrated a formula by uniting environmental organizations, business leaders, government agencies, tribes and other community organizations in common cause. But the Dialogues do not represent the only example or even the first.

We are building on a tradition that is exemplified by many others, such as the Mountain to Sound Greenway Trust and its allies, who have succeeded in mobilizing hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours each year to improve and care for the Greenway. Their example teaches us that extraordinary things can be accomplished when we plan thoughtfully and work as one to achieve our conservation goals. Perhaps we cannot predict all the challenges, but we can state our intentions.

#### **OUR GOALS**

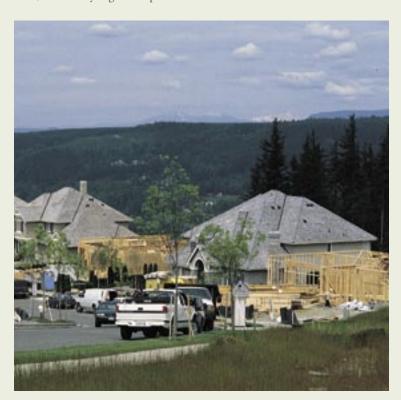
- Establish a plan and the financial resources for the stewardship of each property we preserve.
- Restore, whenever possible, self-sustaining ecosystems by repairing the damage from past practices.
- Prevent the proliferation of invasive species that threaten to destroy the balance of natural systems.
- Maintain, to the greatest extent possible, the existing level of biodiversity within our region.

#### THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Cascade Agenda would not be complete without a vision for the communities in which most of our people live and work. In fact, in a very real sense, conservation and development are two sides of the same coin. Both begin with the same premise – there are going to be more people living here in the next 100 years, and they will need homes and places in which to work. The question is how to meet those needs while protecting the natural resources that make this region unique.

The Growth Management Act has been a powerful and a strong force in guiding development and encouraging conservation. Maps of the region, charting growth patterns, provide some encouragement. While the maps show that tremendous growth has occurred during the past 10 years, the vast majority of that growth has stayed within the boundaries set by the Growth Management Act. Go out a few years, to 2020 and the picture remains hopeful.

But if we go out 100 years to 2100, the picture begins to change. If land use regulations and zoning codes remain as they are for the next 100 years, our urban areas will begin to spill over the current boundaries but not drastically so, because the density within the growth boundaries would be much higher than it is today. Seattle is destined to look more like downtown Vancouver, B.C., with many high-rise apartment and condominium towers.



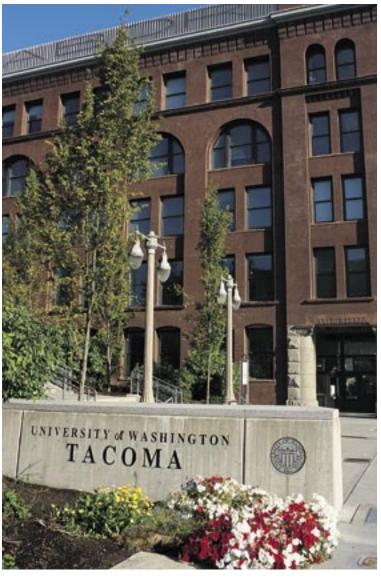
Yet, urban growth boundaries and residential densities are set by elected officials, and they are subject to many pressures. Even a slight change in the policies they choose could unleash a huge surge of development in the rural areas and foothills forests of the region.

In Kittitas County, the issues are different. It is still a largely rural area although it is increasingly attracting people from the west side of the mountains to establish second homes there. Most parts of the county are less than two hours drive away from the urban centers on the west side. Kittitas County population may grow by as many as 100,000 people over the next 100 years. But that estimate could grossly understate the population gains – people with second homes in the county are not counted as residents, for example, since they are already counted in their county of primary residence.

Our vision for the cities, towns and villages of our four counties is that they will become even more alive and interesting than they are today. We expect to see infill of our urban neighborhoods, but with more and better parks – neighborhoods in which it is possible to live, work and play without needing a car.

We must make our cities vibrant and vital, providing a real draw for many of the 3.5 million people coming this way. It is happening already in Tacoma, Everett, Ellensburg and Seattle where innovative developers are building bold communities with new economic hubs housed together.

Whenever development issues were discussed during the Cascade Dialogues, most participants seemed to be in agreement on how we need to grow our cities and towns. But when it came to the rural areas, the discussion almost immediately turned to the question of growth management, the critical areas ordinances and the growing discord among mostly rural property owners. The conclusion reached during many of the discussions was that the Cascade Agenda, and the spirit of civil discourse it represents, may provide a unique opportunity to begin a rational discussion of the issues of land use and property rights in the rural zone. People expressed a real hunger for a middle ground and a common future.



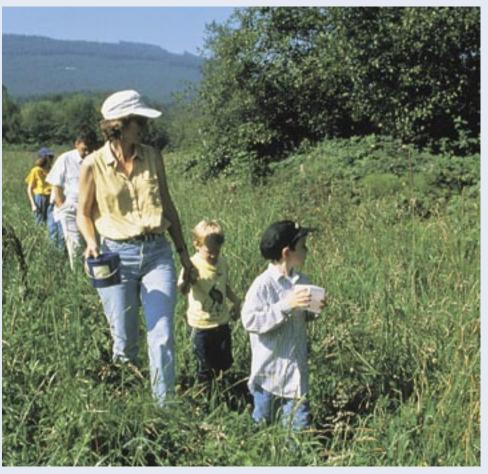
#### **OUR GOAL**

That all those who have a stake in the future of the rural zones work together to identify the features of the rural landscapes they most value and create better ways of maintaining them. We imagine new approaches to rural development, guided by the principles of conservation that recognize and respect the economic interests of the land owners. To achieve this goal we propose to:

- Convene the stakeholders in constructive conversation.
- Provide the best possible analysis of the conservation and community values of rural lands.
- Assist the stakeholders in reaching agreements and creating new tools
  to preserve the character of the rural zone such as implementation
  of Transfer of Development Rights programs as a means to preserve
  important landscapes while providing a fair economic return to land
  owners.



# County Snapshots



#### KING COUNTY

King County is the most urban of the four counties with more than 1.5 million residents. The land in the county is under the most pressure because of the growing population and increasing development.

Yet even in such a populous county there are successes. In September 2004 King County and Hancock Timber Resources Group, the company that operates what's known as the Snoqualmie Tree Farm, signed an historic document that will keep 90,000 acres as a working forest. That's an area twice the size of Seattle.

The agreement was one of the largest public purchases of development rights in the Pacific Northwest and one of the biggest such contracts in U.S. history. Under the county's agricultural zoning, the forest could have been broken into 80-acre plots. King County Executive Ron Sims said at the time that the market would have welcomed that kind of development.

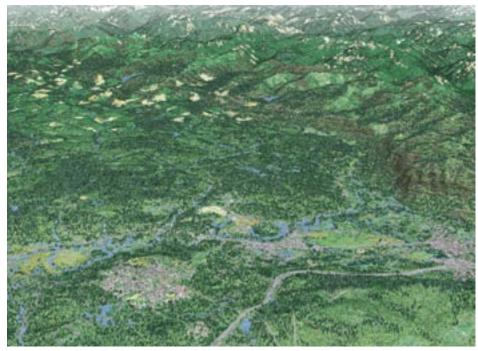
Using sophisticated mapping techniques, CommEn Space, an environmental map maker, showed how the area might have been developed. The maps show how different the Snoqualmie Valley could have looked in the years ahead without the action taken by the county, Hancock and groups such as the Cascade Land Conservancy, which helped facilitate the transaction.

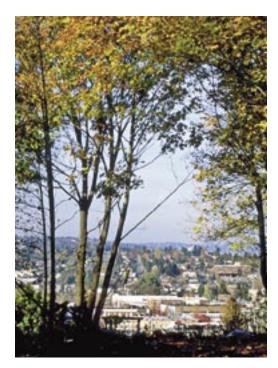
"This is a deal that involves a willing private property owner and government officials who see the bigger picture," said an editorial in the Seattle Times. "Future generations will only marvel at the opportunity they seized."

If we are going to succeed in conserving what we value about this region far into the next century, startling changes in perspective will be required from all of us, especially in King County.

How will we secure sufficient space to accommodate a growing population while also ensuring proper stewardship of our natural environment? Working to improve development practices may, on its face, seem contradictory to the goals of land conservation, but the two objectives are two sides of the same coin. Creating desirable neighborhoods that efficiently use our developable land base and concentrate population within vital urban centers and vibrant rural communities is fundamental to protecting our open spaces.

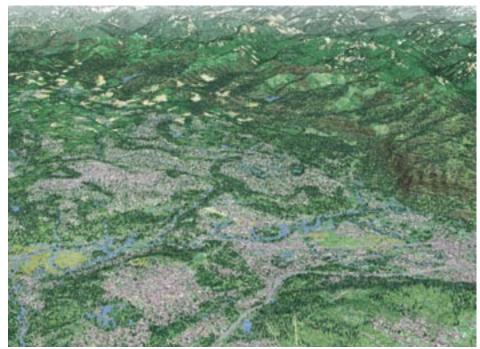
#### **SNOQUALMIE VALLEY PRESENT**





Currently large areas of private timber land cover the foothills, backed up against the more mountainous national forests in the upper part of the image. I-90 crosses through the lower right corner near the town of North Bend and Snoqualmie Ridge development shows at lower left. In 2004, King County purchased development rights on the Snoqualmie Tree Farm, shown in the center of this image. This will ensure these lands will remain forested.

#### **A MUCH DIFFERENT VIEW**



This is what the Snoqualmie Valley could have looked like in 2100 without the recent acquisition of development rights on the tree farm. Suburban development could have spread through the Snoqualmie Valley and across the tree farm, as shown in the middle portion of this image, developed using geographic information models and population forecast data from the State of Washington.

#### KITTITAS COUNTY

While farms, ranches and the rural quality of life continue to be defining aspects of the county, changes are rapidly occurring. In 1954, there were about 1,100 farms with an average size of 602 acres, totaling 680,600 acres. In 2002, there were only 230,646 acres in farm land.



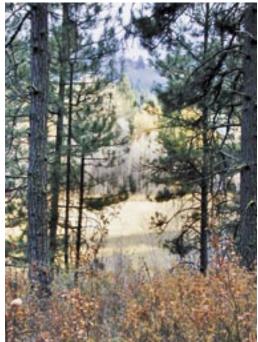
Farmers in Kittitas County have recognized and supported the need to preserve viable agricultural lands in the county, yet they know change is happening. Kittitas County is the fourth fastest growing county in Washington State. The county is increasingly supporting the eastward migration of people from western counties. People are attracted to the county's way of life, low population, abundant open space and recreation opportunities.

More than 2,000 people living in Kittitas County commute to jobs on the west side of Snoqualmie Pass. Many others have built recreation and vacation homes there, especially in the rolling forested foothills and along the river valleys.

Kittitas County acknowledged the importance of its natural amenities to economic development when the Kittitas County Commissioners created a Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC). The RAC was asked to create a county recreation plan that includes an economic analysis of recreation and tourism, maps of the county's recreational infrastructure and a plan to enhance and fund that recreational infrastructure.

In the lower county, availability and access to trails and open space will need to be fully incorporated with new housing developments and planned accordingly to sustain projected increases in county population. With the increased fragmentation and development of private forest tracts in the upper county, the community will have challenges in acquiring and maintaining recreation easements across private lands as well as funding for the stewardship and management of trail corridors that can serve a wide array of users in both summer and winter seasons.

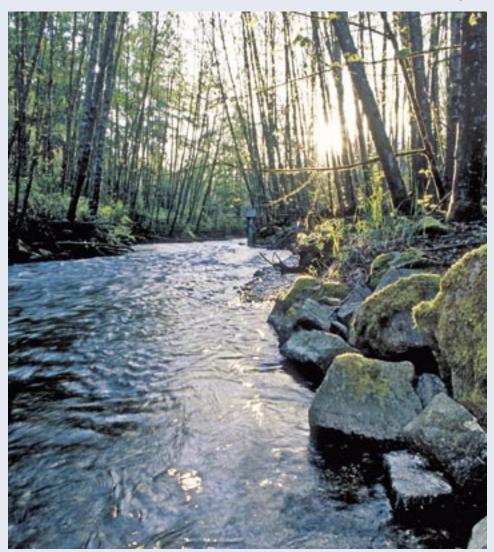






#### PIERCE COUNTY

With Mt. Rainer in its backyard, it is no wonder that residents of Pierce County are proud of what they have.



At a Town Hall meeting as part of the Cascade Dialogues process, residents said the county has beautiful and diverse natural landscapes that support a diversity of species. The community has succeeded in implementing landscape-scale conservation, protecting urban open spaces, parks, trails, views, mature forests, estuaries and natural shorelines that are nearby and publicly accessible.

Communities in Pierce County have been successful in implementing creative, collaborative, watershed-level conservation efforts, with broad community support for conserving natural lands, maintaining watershed health and salmon recovery.

And the people of the county have developed and maintained important urban and neighborhood infrastructure.

A continuing struggle is that not everyone has easy access to parks. For instance in Pierce County the last transit stop into the Cascades is in Buckley, 16 miles from the gates of Mt. Rainier National Park.

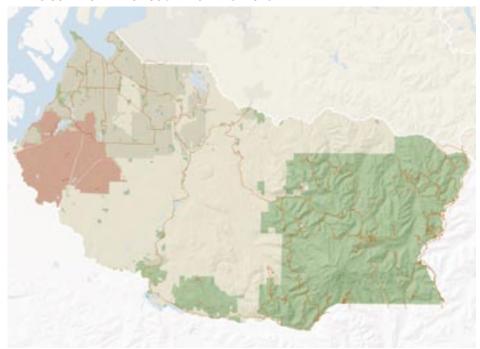
Pierce County is a good example of some of the deep analysis that went into the Cascade Agenda. In recreation, for example, the Agenda has a goal of an urban park within walking distance of every resident. Experts helped the framers of the Agenda study the location and size of parks within the urban growth boundaries of Tacoma. Similar studies were done in the other counties, but Tacoma's was particularly representative.

The analysis demonstrated both underserved areas for the existing population, as well as opportunities for park expansion as the population grows. Also it is worth noting that this analysis clearly identifies low population areas such as Fort Lewis and the Port of Tacoma, where additional recreational acquisitions are not a priority from a walking-distance or population density standpoint.





TRAILS CONNECT PIERCE COUNTY OPEN SPACES

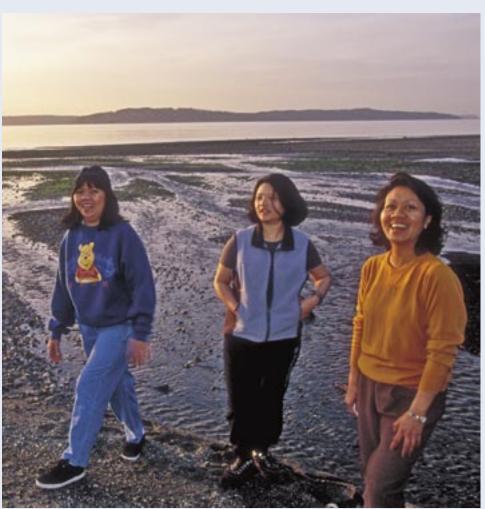


The existing trail system in Pierce County is an excellent example of providing connections and alternative transportation routes. Urban dwellers can walk or ride bikes throughout the lowlands or to the shores of Puget Sound or the mountains and our national forests and parks (green). Pierce County has plans for more trails and connectors. Fort Lewis/McChord Air Base (red) is a special situation, where a large block of land is not open to the public. But military needs may change, leaving the future uses of this broad expanse of prairies, forests, barracks and runways in question.

#### SNOHOMISH COUNTY

The waters that sustain us are especially true in Snohomish County.

For example, the Snohomish watershed is the largest watershed in our region. It encompasses almost 1,000 miles of rivers including the Snoqualmie, Skykomish and Snohomish Rivers, as well as 77 miles of shoreline within its 1.2 million acres.



The Snohomish estuary is the second largest estuary in Puget Sound. Historic and current computer simulations of the estuary from Smith Island show how this area has changed in the last 150 years and CommEn Space, the environmental map maker, shows us again what was and might be.

Like the other estuaries in our region, the close proximity to a major water body and the nutrient rich soils attracted the early settlers who logged, diked and drained the estuary to raise crops and earn a living. While farming is still a major activity in the watershed, other land uses such as tribal lands, large urban centers like the City of Everett and Mukilteo, and economic drivers like the Port of Everett, all play a dominant role in the condition of the estuary and shoreline.

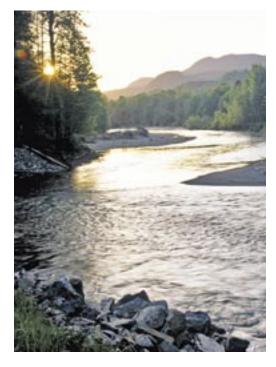
The historic extent of the Snohomish estuary is 14,000 acres. The current estuary extent is 4,650 acres, placing it just over the Agenda's goal of protecting 30% of the historic habitat extent (4,200 acres).

Beyond the waters, the people of Snohomish County told us they are proud that the county balances a diversity of landscapes and land uses including economically and ecologically valuable wetlands, lakes, rivers and Puget Sound shorelines; productive and sustainable agricultural lands and forests; historic and vibrant downtown urban and residential areas for all people, and beautiful scenery.

At a Town Hall meeting, the people in Snohomish County said they are committed to taking a regional view to enhance the quality of life for all of us. For example, communities in Snohomish County have come together to make salmon recovery possible and support such initiatives as the Wild Sky Wilderness proposal.

#### **SNOHOMISH ESTUARY 1850**





Among the counties of the Agenda, Snohomish expects the greatest increase in population over the next 30 years. Today more than 75,000 acres of farmland and several rural towns dominate the historic floodplain of the Snohomish River, imagined here as it may have looked prior to settlement by Europeans.

#### **SNOHOMISH ESTUARY 2000**



To date, more than 1,000 acres of estuarine habitat have been restored in the Snohomish by tribes, county and city government and the port. On top of that, watershed groups have developed an ambitious recovery plan for the endangered Chinook Salmon. The Agenda will support and build on these efforts to recover habitats that can flourish amidst growing communities.

### HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THESE GOALS?

THE ROADMAP IS BEFORE US, THE SIGNPOSTS ARE CLEARLY MARKED. AND A 100-YEAR HORIZON FOR THE JOURNEY THE AGENDA EMBARKS UPON MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

IN THE END, THE CASCADE AGENDA IS ALL ABOUT COMMUNITIES AND HOW TO SUSTAIN THEM OVER THE NEXT CENTURY – MAINTAINING RURAL COMMUNITIES AND TRANSFORMING OUR CITIES AND TOWNS SO THAT THEY INVITE NEWCOMERS TO LIVE, WORK AND RAISE THEIR FAMILIES.

The time frame is divided into three segments with a broad strategy for each.

The Agenda calls for us to act now to conserve the working land base and support foresters and farmers while also preserving recreation and natural resource lands.

#### THE LONG TERM

The Agenda says we must sustain what we have accomplished. New revenue streams will make the working forests and farms economically feasible, stewardship of natural resources will be enhanced and adequate and consistent maintenance funds will be established.

#### THE MID TERM

The Agenda tells us to connect what we have done. The emphasis is on restoration of preserved lands, on expanding programs to support private land stewardship, on developing the community and economic links to the working land. For example, more farmers' markets can provide additional markets for regionally grown produce.

#### THE NEAR TERM

This period is the most crucial term. The toolbox already developed is large and sophisticated, but additional tools will have to be added to make the goal of near-term acquisition a reality.

We will need authority to issue Community Forest Bonds. The Agenda calls for additional assistance with Transfer of Development Rights and clustering. We can encourage long-term investments with additional federal tax benefits. New ways of financing acquisition can be developed through such innovations as the Cascade Land Conservancy's Conservation Investment Fund. We need to find ways to deploy new revenue sources coming from carbon sequestration or the storm-water storage capacity created by the forest canopy.

The Agenda is a call to action to help support landowners.

Among small family foresters, the Agenda will help with Group Habitat Conservation plans, technical support, cash flow pools, new incentives for long-rotation/selective harvest and cost control support such as funding for law enforcement.

On the farm, the Agenda calls for expansion of Puget Fresh and other marketing support, inexpensive financing for investing farmers, help with diversifying products and investment in infrastructure and land bank quality lands at risk of conversion.

# WHEN IT COMES TO INVESTMENT, THE AGENDA ADVOCATES:

- Creation of performance-based economically incentivized regulation.
- Rewards for landowners who do the right thing.
- Introduction of new technology and expediting regulatory recognition.
- Landscape-scale conservation benefits by permitting rural villages and conserved lands.

The Agenda recognizes the complexity of the situation. There is the need, for example, to invest in infrastructure to support working lands and urban lands. In order to have the kind of density the Agenda calls for, we need better transportation systems.

A working forest means mills and other processing facilities. New mitigation techniques, such as swales, vegetation along roadways, more permeable surfaces in developments, are needed. Cities already are recognizing the need to look at surfaces in a different way – the City of Seattle has a new program of street design that accomplishes that goal.

#### WHAT DOES IT ADD UP TO?

Of the 5.3 million acres in the four-county area, 54 percent of the land is already protected through preserved public lands and conserved private forests.

The 2105 conservation goal is to have 4.1 million acres, or 77% of the region protected. About 2.8 million acres are protected today as public lands or through conservation easements.

About 1 million additional acres of primarily private land will be conserved as working farms and forest. And about 265,000 acres will be preserved as public parks, natural areas and shorelines.

It will not happen without cost – the estimate to conserve and preserve the lands identified in the Cascade Agenda is about \$7 billion in today's dollars, an average of about \$70 million a year over the 100-year time frame – or a few good sales days for Boeing.

Our analysis shows that about \$2 billion of that total will be outright purchase of sensitive land. About \$1 billion can be accomplished in the capital markets with a variety of strategies such as mitigation banking, voter approved funding measures and conservation development.

The rest, as much as \$4 billion worth of conservation, can be done in the private market with aggressive use of transfer of development rights, a tool we have used on a number of smaller projects that we believe can be applied on a larger regional scale to compensate land owners for the value of their holdings. In fact, we estimate that using the leverage provided by TDRs, almost a quarter of the new housing needed for population growth could be accommodated.

To do it right, however, the acquisition piece of the Agenda will have to be frontloaded, with more land acquired in the next 30 years than over the life of the Agenda.

Some have asked if 100 years is too long, questioning if it will weaken the sense of individual responsibility – making the future so big, so far out that we might turn our backs on the actions we must take today.

But is it such a long time? Like many people born in the 1950s, Gene Duvernoy, Cascade Land Conservancy President, can hold a photograph of his French-born grandfather in one hand and a photograph of his Koreanborn daughter in the other. His grandfather was born in 1865. His daughter, Sina, could easily live to 2075 given current longevity. Duvernoy holds nearly 200 years in his hands.



IT IS NOT SUCH A LONG TIME AWAY AFTER ALL. WE HOLD THE FUTURE IN OUR HANDS. WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAVE OUR CHILDREN'S GRANDCHILDREN A LEGACY OF A REGION THAT GOT IT RIGHT.

#### **LEADERSHIP**

May 19, 2005

The Cascade Agenda published today represents a lot of hard work by many people.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the many individuals and groups who made this report possible. Many of you gave generously of your time and talent while others supported us financially in this ambitious endeavor.

We often talked about the "big tent" that was needed to make the Cascade Agenda a reality. What we have not mentioned often enough is the fact that many rolled up their sleeves and went to work once inside that tent. The participation was sweeping with more than 150 people involved in working groups and one-on-one meetings helping us gain the knowledge and understanding of the complex issues in the Agenda.

The full text of the Agenda is posted on the new Cascade Agenda web site, including the long list of those who have been a part of this extraordinary effort.

Together we have created a unique and powerful vision. In this pause, as we stop for a moment to present what we have found before taking the next steps, I wanted to simply say thank you to everyone involved.

Gene Duvernov

President - Cascade Land Conservancy



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Steering Committee members who have endorsed The Cascade Agenda have done so as individuals and do not necessarily represent endorsement by their organizations.

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