

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

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Mountaineers Foundation Rhododendron Preserve protection expanded in cooperation with Ueland Tree Farm, LLC.

The Mountaineers Foundation is pleased to announce the acceptance of a gift of a conservation easement from Ueland Tree Farm, LLC protecting approximately 100 acres of critical watershed near Chico and Lost Creeks in perpetuity. The conservation areas are in the northern portion of the Ueland Tree Farm property in central Kitsap County and borders the Mountaineers "Rhododendron Preserve". The easements include critical portions of the Lost Creek and Chico Creek watersheds. This generous gift ensures that riparian zones adjacent to these watercourses in the Rhododendron Preserve, near the Mountaineers Forest Theater, are preserved in perpetuity and is another step toward ensuring the long term health of these important salmon-bearing stream systems. The agreement also includes an option for the Foundation to purchase 68 acres of Ueland's property as an addition to the Preserve.

"We first approached Craig Ueland about purchasing this acreage when Ueland Tree Farm acquired the property as part of its larger purchase of over 1,700 acres in 2004," says James Gordon, President of the Mountaineers Foundation. "The protection afforded these areas demonstrates Ueland Tree Farm's commitment to environmentally responsible management of their property. We have continually had a positive relationship with Craig Ueland and his associates, and we hope to continue it in the future. I believe there is still more opportunity for mutual benefit as we work with our neighbor in conserving the natural beauty of the Preserve."

"The Chico Creek basin is a special place, one that deserves to be protected for future generations," added Craig Ueland, Managing Member of Ueland Tree Farm, LLC. "As a major landowner in the watershed, we take our stewardship responsibilities seriously and are honored to join with the Mountaineers Foundation to preserve this property."

The 360-acre Rhododendron Preserve in central Kitsap County is one of the largest remaining examples of Puget Sound lowland old-grow forest in the Puget Sound basin. The property surrounds the Mountaineers' beautiful outdoor Kitsap Forest Theater and historic Kitsap Cabin. These places provide opportunities for recreation, education, and conservation of our irreplaceable Pacific Northwest environment. The Mountaineers Foundation is proud of our stewardship of these magnificent places. Your support is welcomed. More information is available at <http://mountaineersfoundation.org>.

Ueland Tree Farm owns over 2,000 acres in Kitsap County, most of which is located just west of Kitsap Lake. This property is bordered by the City of Bremerton watershed to the South and West, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to the Northwest, and the Mountaineers Foundation to the North. Ueland Tree Farm occupies nearly 20 percent of the Chico Creek watershed, which supports Kitsap County's largest salmon run. The tree farm has been used to provide logs and other natural resource products to the Kitsap community for over 100 years. The tree farm also contains large deposits of mineral resources (gravel and hard rock). Ueland Tree Farm is heavily used by the public for a variety of informal recreation activities including walking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and hunting. More information is available at <http://www.uelandtreefarm.com>.

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