



NORTH KITSAP HERALD

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Close knit:
Hundreds have
contributed
to community
scarf project.
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Poulsbo creek hides vibrant habitat

By JENNIFER MORRIS
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POULSBO — Crews made environmental improvements to a portion Dogfish Creek this month, a stream tucked between State Route 305 and the Poulsbo Village, with a bed, little larger than a drainage basin.

Signs of a vibrant fish habitat were recently discovered along a 200-foot stretch of the creek, where it winds through Poulsbo's commercial core.

"Most of us look at the creek, thinking it is a ditch," said Suquamish Tribe Biologist Paul Dorn, who oversaw recent mitigation work. "It is full of life. We found several dozen cutthroat, hundreds of juvenile brook lamprey, crawdads and a lot of aquatic insects."

Crews excavated overgrown foliage, created a healthier stream bed and planted a variety of trees along the creek adjacent to the Village. The work was paid for by a \$15,000 grant from the Department of Fish and Wildlife and a matching sum from the Village.

The effort joins recent movement to restore the creek's south fork. The City of Poulsbo recently developed a master plan for the south fork, which begins near Caldart Avenue and stretches to Liberty Bay. It has shown several signs of being a healthy stream, including a freshwater mussel habitat that signifies a salmon population.

"It is a productive small stream, that is now greatly improved with rock, wood and structure that makes the stream more productive, and mimics a more natural state," Dorn said.

Crews began excavating overgrown willow trees and remov-

Timber and trails

Kitsap landholders seek balance of conservation and commerce.

By TAD SOOTER
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At the Ueland Tree Farm on a recent morning, Rex Thompson pointed at tree seedlings pushing their way upward amid a forest of spindly Douglas firs being harvested for utility poles.

"This is probably some Western hemlock, coming up here," said Thompson, a consultant for Ueland. "And red cedar is coming up already."

This mix of native trees is exactly what the tree farm is looking for. The Central Kitsap company is creating wetland buffers, preserving seed trees and allowing more tree species to mix with the cultivated stands of fir blanketing the hillsides. For its ecological efforts the tree farm was recently certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, a label similar an to organic foods certification.

"The things that go on here and the values, surpass just trees," Thompson said.

Ueland Tree Farm is among a number of private and public landholders in Kitsap studying how to manage healthy forests while providing recreation and making money. At the county level, Commissioner Steve Bauer is laying the foundation for a forestry management policy.

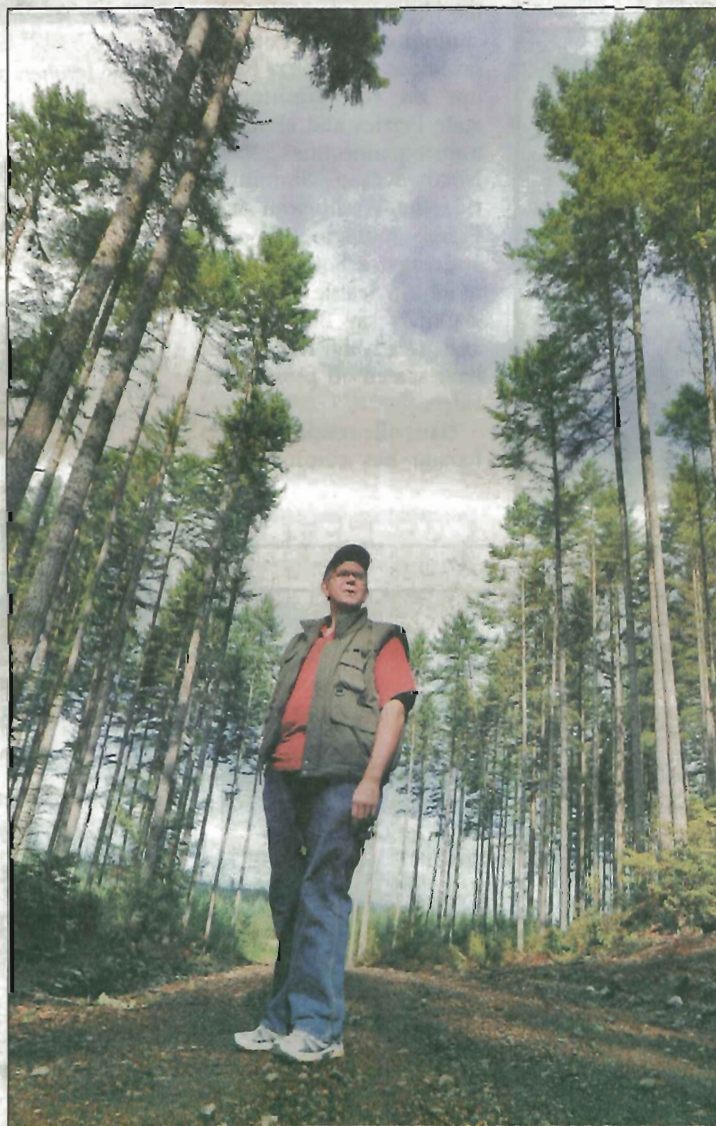
The plan would set standards for caring for and harvesting trees on the county's 6,000 acres of wooded forestland, along with 7,000 acres of North Kitsap forest it could soon acquire from Pope Resources through the North Kitsap Legacy Partnership.

"One concern we've heard from citizens is how we'll manage the land once we get it," Bauer said. "And that's a valid concern."

Seeing green

Bauer believes the county needs a forestry plan, even without new acreage from Pope.

Despite its large holding of forested land the county has no cohe-



Brad Camp/For The Herald

Rex Thompson surveys a stand of Douglas fir on the Ueland Tree farm. The Central Kitsap company was recently certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

sive policy for thinning overgrown stands or removing dead snags before they fall on roads or power lines, Bauer said. A forestry program could keep the public forests healthier and it could produce a scarce resource for the county: money.

Trees culled from the forest would be shipped off to mills to be processed and sold. Bauer believes the profits could sustain the forestry program and hopefully supply money for trail work and park maintenance. The idea has been on Bauer's mind as he watches

groups like the North Kitsap Trails Association seek funds.

"I thought we could do selective thinning and logging and find a way to pay for trails," he said.

The profit stream could be critical to the success of the North Kitsap Legacy Partnership.

The county is in early negotiations with timber company Pope Resources to assume 7,000 of its acres in North Kitsap while allowing the company to add denser development to Port Gamble.

Pope still grows and harvests

Lefse cooks carry on tradition

By JENNIFER MORRIS
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POULSBO — Kristan Stenman transferred a piping hot tower of just-baked lefse from one counter to another in the First Lutheran Church Christian Center Oct. 8, where the smell of the traditional Norwegian flatbread clung to the air.

A third-generation dinner volunteer, Kristan Stenman was one of 20 lefse-makers preparing for the church's 98th annual lutefisk dinner on Saturday. Volunteers rolled, balled and flattened potato dough in clusters, a fast-paced assembly line working smoothly from years of experience.

Like many, Kristan Stenman learned the trade from family. Her grandparents, Bill and Tilda Stenman, helped put on the dinner, and now her father, Gordon Stenman, co-organizes the event.

Many generations of families have boiled cod, rolled meatballs and chopped salad as part of a cultural and community tradition. Gordon Stenman estimated more than 100 volunteers will pitch in this year, many of them kids learning the ropes.

"You have to watch out who your parents are, because you're going to get to do whatever they are doing," said lefse-maker Marje Fossum.

Joyce Holzhey learned to make lefse for the dinner a decade ago. She returns to the task to offer her services, and to reconnect with friends.

Mary Kirkendall joined the crew five years ago after answering a notice in the First Lutheran bulletin.

TIMBER

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trees on much of the acreage.

The deal would more than double the county's inventory of open space, stretching scarce Parks and Recreation money even further. Selective logging is already being discussed as a way of paying for upkeep on the properties.

The idea of a county forestry program is encouraging to some conservation and recreation groups.

The Great Peninsula Conservancy is educating local policy makers on ecologically friendly forest practices and is interested in holding conservation easements for the county on North Kitsap Legacy land.

Executive Director Sandra Staples-Bortner said a well-managed program could restore more natural forests to the Pope properties, which have been logged and cultivated for more than a century.

"We want to see something more healthy and more diverse," she said.

For the county, the main goal of the Legacy Partnership will be to preserve bands of forest for habitat and recreation. North Kitsap Trails Association board member John Willott said a forestry program wouldn't conflict with those goals.

"(Pope) is already commercially logging up there now and there are trails running all through there," Willett said, referring to the popular trails that wind through Pope's properties.

Ideally the program would pay for trail building, while protecting habitat and providing longterm jobs, Willett said.

"How you do it is the question," he said.

The trail ahead

The county has plenty of models to choose from.

Bauer has been studying the program used on the U.S. Navy's northwest bases. The Navy's program removes trees selectively



Brad Camp/File photo

Pope Resources' North Kitsap properties are already laced with popular hiking and biking trails.

— sometimes using horses — to keep woodlands on base thinned and produce money to sustain itself.

On an even larger scale, the Department of Natural Resources runs a statewide forestry program that raises money for schools and other public entities.

Natural Resources owns about 15,000 acres in Kitsap, including Green Mountain, a swath of forest in Tahuya and some patches of land near Kingston. Many Kitsap residents know Green Mountain as a hiking destination but its wooded slopes are also a money generator. Natural Resources draws \$750,000 to \$1 million in timber sales from Green Mountain each year, said Doug McClelland, who oversees south Puget Sound properties.

It does this without major clearcutting. Like the Ueland Tree Farm, Natural Resource's harvests are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. The designation can be compared loosely to an organic food certification.

The accredited tree farm or forest must develop a plan for sustaining habitat and healthy forests. Standards include leaving bands of buffering trees around wetlands to cleanse water and prevent erosion. Harvests are limited in size and foresters must replant cleared areas and leave mature trees to reseed. The forests are inspected each year by a

certifying organization. Northwest Certified Forestry in Port Townsend handles many northwest farms, including Ueland.

Maintaining these standards and limiting harvest sizes is more expensive for businesses. But, as with organic food, lumber certified by the Forest Stewardship Council is given a label recognizable by buyers.

McClelland said the market for FSC labeled lumber is growing.

"People are beginning to recognize it, people are beginning to understand it and people are willing to pay more for it," McClelland said.

It's too early to say what direction the county will take, if any. Bauer said he is still in the brainstorming stages of developing a management plan, which would eventually need approval by the board as a whole. North Kitsap Legacy Partnership negotiations could stretch out over years and, if approved, the land transfers could take much longer.

Staples-Bortner of the Great Peninsula Conservancy said that leaves time to develop goals and craft a careful plan for reaching them.

"I think we need to develop a community vision for how to manage forests," she said.

ARTS BRIEFS

John Nilsen to perform at UMC Kingston

Award-winning pianist, singer/songwriter and recording artist John Nilsen will perform for the public at 7 p.m., Friday, Nov. 12, at Redeemer United Methodist Church in Kingston.

A Seattle native, Nilsen tours the world giving 240 performances annually. He has performed with such notables as Jose Feliciano, Kenny G, Alex De Grassi and David Foster and has released 17 recordings — most on his highly successful independent record company, Magic Wing. His latest CD, "Places I Go," features nine original piano compositions with elements of folk, classical and jazz.

Nilsen currently performs solo as well as with the John Nilsen Trio and his guitar/vocal band, John Nilsen & Swimfish.

Nilsen's concert at Redeemer is free; however, there is a \$10 suggested donation. CDs will be available for purchase afterward and refreshments served.

The church is located at 9900 Shorty Campbell Road. For concert details, contact (360) 297-4847. For information about Nilsen's recordings and upcoming concerts, visit www.johnnilsen.com or www.magicwing.com.

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