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Ueland Tree Farm recognized for its forest stewardship

Bremerton, WA - Great Peninsula Conservancy is proud to announce that Ueland Tree Farm has received recognition for its forest management practices from the prestigious Forest Stewardship Council. This recognition is in response to Ueland Tree Farm's dedication to environmentally-friendly forestry. Forest Stewardship Council certification extends over 1330 acres of the Ueland property west of Kitsap Lake, which helps this local working forest meet its economic goals while also protecting the environment.

"Great Peninsula Conservancy approached Ueland Tree Farm a year ago to explore Forest Stewardship Council certification for their forestland," said GPC Executive Director Sandra Staples-Bortner. "FSC certification demonstrates an exceptional commitment to growing an ecologically-diverse forest while still allowing sustainable harvest of trees. We are delighted that Ueland Tree Farm has joined its neighbor, Green Mountain State Forest, in carrying the FSC certification. The public can rest assured that these lands are providing important public benefits of clean water, clean air, aquifer recharge, and habitat protection, while continuing to provide forest products for local mills," added Staples-Bortner.

Ueland Tree Farm (www.uelandtreefarm.com) covers nearly twenty percent of the Chico Creek watershed on Bremerton's western boundary. The forest plays an important role in protecting Chico Creek's productive salmon runs and water quality. Ueland Tree Farm is part of a large swath of contiguous forest in Central Kitsap County: to the west lies Green Mountain State Forest (a 6,000-acre FSC-certified forest); the City of Bremerton Watershed stretches along the southern border; and Kitsap County's Newberry Hill Heritage Park and the Mountaineers Foundation's Rhododendron Preserve are situated to the north.

"Niki and I are both pleased and honored that our forestry management practices meet the highest stewardship standards in the country," said Craig Ueland, upon learning of FSC certification. Craig Ueland, and his wife, Niki, are co-owners of the Ueland Tree Farm.

Certification of sustainable forests is one way to protect Great Peninsula forests, whether they are managed primarily for habitat and recreation or for timber production. FSC certification is the gold standard for forest management and promotes retention of older trees and leafy canopies, reduced size of forest openings, and expanded protection for sensitive areas. Endorsed

by the nation's leading environmental organizations, Forest Stewardship Council (www.fsc.org) is an international non-profit membership-based organization established in 1993 to promote responsible management of the world's forests.

Ueland's FSC certification was granted by Northwest Certified Forestry (www.nnrg.org/nw-certified-forestry), which will monitor Ueland Tree Farm's compliance with the certification standards. Northwest Certified Forestry, a program of Northwest Natural Resource Group, oversees approximately 65,000 acres within its membership in the Pacific Northwest.

"FSC certification recognizes landowners who are managing diverse forests that produce a diversity of products and ecosystem functions," said Kirk Hanson, Washington Director of Northwest Certified Forestry. "Ueland Tree Farm exemplifies a new model of forest management that prioritizes conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat, direct involvement of local communities, and retention of local forest-dependant jobs."

Northwest Certified Forestry's network of forests throughout the region produces forest products to the highest standards in the world for local markets. "Consumers who are interested in buying local and supporting well managed forests, such as the Ueland Tree Farm, should ask for FSC certified wood products at their local lumber yard," says Hanson.

Great Peninsula Conservancy (www.greatpeninsula.org) is a private, nonprofit land trust protecting forever the natural habitats, rural landscapes, and open spaces of the Great Peninsula – a region encompassing Kitsap, western Pierce, and most of Mason counties, Washington. Great Peninsula Conservancy works in partnership with Northwest Natural Resource Group and other groups to grow sustainable forests on the Great Peninsula of West Puget Sound.

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