



# THE STEWARDSHIP Messenger

newsletter of Stewardship Partners

Helping Landowners Preserve the Environment

Winter 2007/Spring 2008

## Washington Vineyards Becoming Salmon-Safe

Washington wines have become world renowned. Now the Salmon-Safe label is being used to brand our unique wine growing region and recognize local vineyards for their environmental stewardship practices. Cover cropping bare soil to prevent soil erosion, planting native grasses between rows of grapes to provide habitat for ground nesting birds, carefully monitoring water use and restoring streamside habitat are some of the practices that make a vineyard Salmon-Safe.

As part of our start-up activities with farms around Puget Sound, we certified two wineries as Salmon-Safe: Lopez Island Winery and Bainbridge Island Vineyard and Winery. Now, building on the success of the Oregon industry, where one third of the commercial vineyard acreage is Salmon-Safe, Stewardship Partners is reaching out to premier



Photo: Roddy Scherer

*Tom Alberg and Judi Beck, owners of Novelty Hill Winery, proudly hold up a bottle of Spring Run Rosé*

winemakers around Washington State. We are proud to announce the most recent addition, Stillwater Creek Vineyard, the estate vineyard of Novelty Hill Winery, owned by longtime Northwest residents Tom Alberg and his wife Judi Beck.

Stillwater Creek, a 240-acre site on the Royal Slope of the Frenchman Hills, is the first Columbia Valley vineyard to earn the certification for protecting water quality and habitat. The site is known for its careful vineyard management and innovative clonal selection, which allows the winemaker to select grapes for desired traits. To be certified as Salmon-Safe, Stillwater Creek had to meet a rigorous set of guidelines focused on efficient irrigation and water conservation measures, erosion control, integrated pest management, and native vegetation and habitat management.

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## Save the Sound—Build a Rain Garden

### New Program Addresses Stormwater Impacts

The abundant rainfall of the Pacific Northwest is a critical element of our unique ecology—our lush forests, salmon-filled rivers, and rich farmland. However, the stormwater produced when this rain falls on our increasingly urbanized areas is fast becoming one of the biggest threats to Puget Sound water quality.

When rain falls in a natural setting, it is absorbed by vegetation, infiltrated into the ground, and evaporates back into the air. In contrast, when rain falls on the rooftops,

roadways, and parking areas associated with urban and suburban development, it becomes stormwater, carrying pollutants into local waterways. By imitating the natural hydrology of a building site and using a series of techniques that allow rainfall to infiltrate into the ground instead of flowing off impervious surfaces, the negative impacts of development can be substantially reduced.

Stewardship Partners has launched the Sustainable Building Program, promoting Low Impact Development (LID) to

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**Stewardship Partners helps private landowners restore and preserve the natural landscapes of Washington State.**



## Stewardship Partners Helps Farmers in the Snoqualmie Valley



*Volunteers work to restore habitat*

If you have ever taken a farm tour out to Carnation, shopped at one of Seattle's many farmers' markets, or gone fishing on the Snoqualmie River, then you have experienced the beauty and bounty of the Snoqualmie Valley.

Stewardship Partners has been working in the valley for five years now lending technical, political, and financial support to help preserve the agricultural landscape, restore salmon habitat, and promote a healthy farm economy. We have established a dozen on-the-ground restoration projects, have promoted local farmers in the marketplace, and are connecting agricultural landowners with available resources to help them be successful environmental stewards. The Snoqualmie was the successful pilot for the Washington Salmon-Safe certification label, which has since taken off

around Puget Sound. We are making a difference for local farmers, for fish and wildlife habitat, and for the citizens of our region.

Last fall saw one of the most devastating floods in Snoqualmie Valley history. Stewardship Partners is working on behalf of farmers to help address the concerns that floods pose for the future of farming in the valley. While moderate flooding is part of the natural valley ecology and is a key element of its productive agriculture, in the past 16 years the valley has experienced the four most devastating floods in recorded history. Farmers have lost thousands of dollars worth of crops and sustained damage to equipment and structures. A recent FDA ruling stated that any crops that survived flooding had to be destroyed, further exacerbating the economic impact of the flooding. Unnaturally high floods also harm salmon by scouring eggs out of their gravel nests, causing increased erosion and siltation, and harming rearing habitat.

To support Snoqualmie farmers, we have focused on efforts to minimize the damage caused by these large floods and to develop solutions that will decrease the frequency of devastating floods. We have made sure King County officials understand that farmers must be able to use "critter pads" in the floodplain to keep equipment and animals out of harm's way. We are encouraging governmental agencies to research creative ways to control flood events beyond the conventional levee system, which is designed to protect homes and cities but does not adequately protect farmland. Flood storage, Low Impact Development on the hillsides, and wetland creation are some of the strategies we would like to see explored and eventually implemented.

Our principal work with Snoqualmie farmers continues to be riparian restoration; we are exploring new and more efficient ways to do this. We recently turned to the Monroe Corrections Facility, using their prison work crew to assist in some of our most difficult tasks. We have also begun experimenting with a different type of worker, goats, for clearing invasive blackberries before we establish native plantings. For that project, we partnered with a valley-based dairy goat owner interested in diversifying her business.

We still maintain a small Snoqualmie-based work crew

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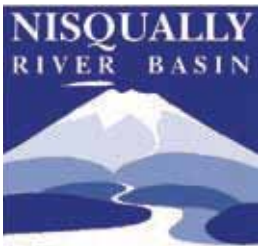
# Nisqually Awarded EPA Grant for Collaborative Market-Based Conservation

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Stewardship Partners' support of collaborative conservation among different interest groups in the Nisqually Watershed was given a boost when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced this summer that the Nisqually Sustainability

Project was one of only sixteen projects nationwide selected as a finalist to receive the agency's Targeted Watershed Grants.

Nestled between the alpine glaciers of Mt. Rainier and the salmon nursery grounds of the Nisqually Delta, the Nisqually River Watershed has become a poster child for cooperative conservation among private landowners, environmental groups, the Nisqually Tribe and government agencies. Now, under this highly competitive EPA grant, the Nisqually River Foundation will receive \$883,000 for several collaborating partners to promote market-based conservation and sustainable land use in forestry, agriculture, and residential development that will preserve the habitat and water quality of this relatively pristine Puget Sound watershed.

The Nisqually Sustainability Project builds on Stewardship Partners' work in developing the collaborative Nisqually Stewardship Plan as a means to preserve the ecological integrity of the watershed while simultaneously promoting rural economic vitality. The three-year effort has strengthened the capacity of local organizations, introduced a suite of incentives for landowner-based conservation, and brought together diverse interests, including the tribe and farming community, to develop a common vision guided by their mutual sense of place.

The EPA grant will move this effort forward by implementing sustainable land use strategies and developing markets for local, environmentally produced products. Third party certification and labeling programs such as Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Salmon-Safe agriculture as well as a local watershed branding strategies are key tactics to achieve this. The project will also look at ecosystem service markets such as water quality credits, whereby forest



*The EPA announces Nisqually partners as a grant finalist*

owners or farmers could be paid for their implementation of best management practices by an industrial business. Low Impact Development (LID) guidelines will encourage residential developers to manage stormwater on-site instead of allowing it to flow off impervious surfaces into local waterways.

Stewardship Partners is collaborating with three main project partners in this comprehensive approach to watershed sustainability. The Nisqually River Council is a network of twenty local, state, and federal agencies, the Nisqually Tribe, organizations, and citizens. The Nisqually Land Trust preserves ecologically sensitive lands through acquisition and conservation easements. The Northwest Natural Resource Group is implementing a program to certify forest landowners under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) label and market their certified forest products to local consumers. Stewardship Partners itself is implementing the Salmon-Safe program to certify and market agricultural producers, introducing LID techniques to developers in the watershed, and working to develop a Sustainable Nisqually branding campaign for local businesses.

"The Nisqually Sustainable Watershed project is a model for integrating sustainability and collaboration, as well as leveraging resources to achieve results in forestry, agriculture and Low Impact Development in urban areas that are threatened by overdevelopment," said Benjamin Grumbles, an Assistant Administrator with the EPA at a recent event supporting the newly formed Puget Sound Partnership. "The significance of the project is to demonstrate effective tools to promote water quality while serving as an example to other watersheds in the Northwest and elsewhere."



## Monitoring of Restoration Projects Shows Success

by Sarah Close, Program Associate

As the interface between the river and the land, “riparian zones” play an important part in river and floodplain ecology and are essential for salmon survival. In a natural state, they consist of a vegetated corridor of trees and shrubs that shade streams to keep the water cool, serve as a filter for sediments and pollutants, provide nutrients from their leaves, and put large habitat structures into the river system.

Five years after beginning our work to restore salmon habitat in the Snoqualmie Watershed, our riparian restoration projects with area farms are progressing well and new projects are underway. So, it seemed like the right time to find out, through on-the-ground monitoring, what has worked, and what has not, when it comes to riparian restoration in the Snoqualmie Valley. As an intern for Stewardship Partners this past summer, I spent much of my time at the restoration projects monitoring their progress. And that progress is tangible and significant.

Out of the approximately 10,671 plants that were present at restoration sites, on average less than three out of every one hundred died; a mortality rate much lower than expected. Almost 11 acres of riparian buffer have been planted, which amounts to more than three miles of stream bank. The data we have collected give us an accurate

count of each species we have planted and how they are progressing to a full functioning riparian forest.

In addition to their role in supporting salmon, riparian forests are some of the most productive and diverse habitats. In western Washington, riparian zones support an estimated 300 different species of wildlife, including many bird species, amphibians, mammals, and insects. In addition to the benefit to species and habitat diversity, planting trees and shrubs through riparian restoration produces benefits for air and water quality by filtering pollutants. The eleven acres of riparian habitat that we have planted so far will sequester 6,000 tons of carbon over the next fifty years, doing a small but measurable part to combat global warming.

A visit to the farms in the Snoqualmie will allow you to see that these projects are improving the landscape for fish and wildlife. Consider Full Circle Farm, where I arrived one day to see a bald eagle sitting on a snag within the restoration project, surveying the river below, or Blue Dog Farm, where it is not uncommon in the fall to see Coho salmon making the journey up Ames Creek. Beyond this anecdotal evidence, the monitoring project this summer gives us real data that we can use to adapt and improve our restoration methods, and through photo-point monitoring we can see how far we’ve come.

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*The riparian buffer at Oxbow Farm being planted in 2004 (above), and after just one year of growth*

# Monitoring of Restoration Projects

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It has been estimated that out of the \$15 billion spent annually on river restoration efforts throughout the United States, only 10 percent of the projects are monitored. While it is not always the most exciting or groundbreaking part of a project, monitoring is an important way to assess a program and adapt it to guarantee continued and improved success in the future. The results of this monitoring project have been compiled into a comprehensive report, detailing the overall findings as well as individual summaries for

each of the sites. Copies of the report are available on our website.

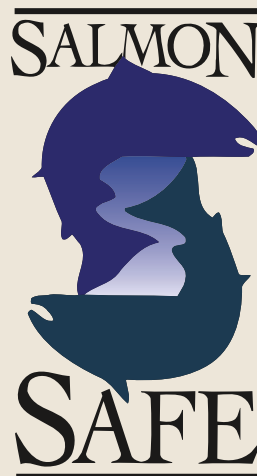
There is no better way to become familiar with Stewardship Partners' work in the Snoqualmie Valley than to spend time at these sites, and through this internship I was able to do just that. I encourage anyone who has the opportunity to join us for a tour, volunteer for a planting project, and experience firsthand the restoration that is taking place.

## Salmon-Safe Expands to Urban Areas

In the May 2007 "Green Issue" of Vanity Fair magazine, Salmon-Safe was listed as one of the most reliable food eco-labels in the country, comparable to Fair Trade and USDA Organic. Stewardship Partners has played a key role, together with Salmon-Safe Inc. (the Portland-based headquarters office) and other regional partners, in elevating the Salmon-Safe label to this national status.

Salmon-Safe has become a well-recognized label for agricultural producers in the Puget Sound region and, increasingly, across the State of Washington. There are 42 area farms now in the program and regional marketing, advertising, and promotional campaigns are linking consumers with Salmon-Safe farm products. Most importantly, the program has served as an effective tool to improve on-the-ground practices for protecting water quality and restoring streamside habitat.

With the success of the label, Salmon-Safe has expanded beyond the agricultural landscape to address water quality and habitat concerns in urban watersheds. The Salmon-Safe Corporate and University Campus Certification Program was piloted in Oregon with some high profile initial participants including Nike Corporate Headquarters,



Toyota's regional distribution center, and Oregon Health and Science University campus. Now, through a new partnership with the Seattle-based Network for Business Innovation and Sustainability (NBIS), the urban Salmon-Safe program is coming to Washington. Over the next year, several local corporations, government agencies, and universities will undergo the assessment process under a set of rigorous guidelines that address stormwater runoff, irrigation efficiency, pesticide reduction, and protection of streams and wetlands.

The Salmon-Safe logo has become a powerful symbol for environmentally sound land management and Stewardship Partners is exploring additional opportunities to expand the program into other sectors, such as golf courses and residential development. The expansion of Salmon-Safe into more urban and suburban areas will help foster a deeper connection between urban residents and the direct impact they have on water quality and habitat, which is often difficult to see amidst the skyscrapers, developments, and corporate campuses. The urban expansion will not only help promote local farm products by building recognition of the label, but will also take the program to the next level by encouraging residents to not only buy Salmon-Safe, but be Salmon-Safe.



## New Program Addresses Stormwater Impacts (continued from front page)

builders and developers throughout Puget Sound. Specific LID techniques include vegetated roofs, rain gardens, permeable pavement, and rainwater collection systems.

Meetings, workshops, conferences, publications, and collaboration with local jurisdictions are taking place in order to inform and encourage the development community to consider the advantages of adopting LID as part of standard design and construction practices. Our progress to date includes training of approximately 80 landowners, contractors and public officials; initiation of a model sustainable community plan with the town of Eatonville; a public rollout, along with WSU Cooperative Extension, of the Rain Garden Handbook for Western Washington Homeowners (authored by Curtis Hinman, WSU Pierce County Extension faculty); and a collaborative effort with the Built Green Program of the King and Snohomish Masters Builders Association to incorporate LID and site design into existing green building programs.



*Example of a constructed rain garden*

One of the most feasible and effective LID techniques that landowners and homeowners can implement on their properties is the establishment of rain gardens. A rain garden consists of native trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses planted in compost-amended soils in a shallow depression and strategically placed to effectively capture rainwater and slowly filter it into the ground. Rain gardens are very effective at filtering oil, grease, fertilizers, pesticides, and other pollutants. They also help prevent flooding damage, provide habitat for wildlife, enhance property values by beautifying the landscape, and reduce landscape maintenance costs.

Stewardship Partners has collaborated with several organizations and agencies to create the “Puget Sound Rain Garden Challenge” as a means to create awareness and capacity to install LID projects. We are implementing a series of rain garden training and installation workshops, collaborating with WSU Pierce County Extension to distribute their Rain Garden Handbook for Western Washington Landowners, and coordinating applications to Thurston and Pierce counties for landowners to install rain gardens under a consolidated Stormwater Management Implementation Grant from the Washington Department of Ecology. Pierce County alone has agreed to the installation of 100 rain gardens.

Stewardship Partners’ work in the LID field stems from our targeted effort in the Nisqually Watershed developing LID

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*Preparing the soil to install a rain garden*

## The Power of the Purse: New Puget Sound Community Card to Support Stewardship Partners

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Market-based conservation. Checkout activism. Social commerce. These are some of the terms used to describe the growing trend toward consumers supporting sustainable businesses with their purchasing power. Building on this concept, Stewardship Partners is part of an innovative new program that links everyday purchases with the opportunity to build a socially and environmentally sustainable Puget Sound economy.

Locally owned businesses want to attract a loyal customer base, consumers increasingly want to support local community-oriented businesses, and the non-profit sector is always seeking new ways of raising money for local causes. Enter the Puget Sound Community Card, a loyalty discount program to support local merchants where a community rebate is directed to the consumer as a cash reward and a cash donation is made to local non-profits and schools.

Although not a form of payment, it works like a credit card in that it is processed using similar technology. Every time the community card is swiped at a participating merchant, a percentage of the transaction is returned to the customer and an equal percentage is donated to a local non-profit or school. The price point and rebate is set by the merchant. To alleviate the hassle of showing your card every time you shop, you will be able to directly link your Community Card to your credit or debit card.

Interra, the Seattle-based non-profit behind the program, launched their pilot Boston Community Change Program in 2006 in cooperation with Boston Mayor Thomas Menino. So far, it is proving successful with over 100 participating business and thousands of card holders. With experienced business leaders in commerce and technology behind the program, this success is not surprising. Interra was started by Dee Hock, founder of VISA International; Greg Steltenpohl, founder of Odwalla; and Executive Director Jon Ramer, founder of ELF Technologies and SmartChannels.

Stewardship Partners has been selected as one of the few initial beneficiaries to receive donations from the program. By obtaining a Puget Sound Community Card, designating Stewardship Partners as the prime beneficiary, and using it at participating merchants, you could directly support our mission, and those of our partners, to create a vibrant and sustainable local economy.

Get your Community Card by filing out an online order form at [www.pugetsound.cc](http://www.pugetsound.cc) or picking up your card this winter at any Puget Sound area PCC Natural Market.

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### Impacts of Stormwater *continued from page 6*

and Architectural Guidelines, promoting LID techniques to local developers, and working with local jurisdictions to adopt LID ordinances. Based on this successful start-up, the program has received funding from the Sequoia Foundation, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and through

a direct allocation from the Washington State Legislature. Stormwater management is one of the most important environmental issues effecting Puget Sound and Stewardship Partners is well poised to assist the development community in making the transition to LID practices.



## Washington Vineyards Becoming Salmon-Safe (continued from front page)



photo: Roddy Shear

*Stillwater Creek Vineyard*

Novelty Hill is an independent winery crafting elegant wines from the best Columbia Valley vineyards. Their Stillwater Creek–designated Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah will soon feature the Salmon-Safe logo.

In June, Novelty Hill jointly opened a destination winery in Woodinville with consulting winemaker Mike Januik. In conjunction with its opening, the winery is donating \$2 of every bottle sold of their new Spring Run Rosé to Stewardship Partners' Salmon-Safe program.

In addition to Stillwater Creek, nearby Conner Lee Vineyards has also been certified. There are a number of wineries that produce wine with grapes from these fine vineyards, including, Arbor Crest, Buty Winery, Chelan Estate Winery, Coeur d'Alene Cellars, Latah Creek, Saviah Cellars and Woodinville Wine Cellars. For a complete list of Salmon-Safe vineyards and wineries, please visit our website.

### **Snoqualmie Valley** *continued from page 2*

and have added a new work crew from the Washington Conservation Corps. In addition to these sources of labor, we are increasingly drawing on the experience, equipment, and knowledge of the farmers themselves to streamline the work of riparian restoration and allow us to expand our projects throughout the valley.

We recently received a \$250,000 grant from the Department of Ecology (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act) to bring new tools to Snoqualmie farmers for conducting environmental work. Carbon offset payments, water quality credits, corporate “adopt a buffer” programs, and agritourism are some of the exciting new program areas that

we will be developing over the coming years. This grant will be leveraged with additional funding from government and private sources to lend us financial stability over the next three years.

The ultimate goal of our Snoqualmie Stewardship Program is to establish the valley as a model for a working agricultural preserve, where farming and environmental protection go hand in hand. Our success in establishing partnerships, conducting restoration, and supporting the economic viability of sustainable agriculture continue to bring the valley closer to that goal.

## New Staff

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Sarah Close

Stewardship Partners has recently added Sarah Close as Program Associate. A Northwest native, Sarah has experience in both the scientific and community aspects of a variety of environmental issues. She graduated from Bowdoin College in May, 2006 with degrees in Biology and Environmental Studies,

and received honors from the Department of Biology for her research on the nutrient and food web dynamics of Lake Tanganyika, Tanzania. Through the School for International Training (SIT), Sarah studied Coastal Ecology in Zanzibar, Tanzania, culminating in a project on Community Perceptions of Islamic Environmental Ethics. Before beginning her position as Program Associate, Sarah worked as an intern for Stewardship Partners, during which she conducted monitoring of Stewardship Partners' restoration sites in the Snoqualmie Valley. She enjoys exploring and salmon fishing at her family's house on Vancouver Island.

## Stewardship Partners Co-hosts Green Drinks Event



Photo: The Daenthauser

*Stewardship Partners, along with Conscious Choice magazine, co-hosted a successful Seattle Green Drinks event on May 8th at evo featuring an abundance of local Salmon-Safe food and wine. Green Drinks is a monthly networking event for people who work in, or are interested in, the environmental field.*

*Going above and beyond the traditional Green Drinks fare, we featured an abundance of locally produced food from Salmon-Safe farms and local food purveyors. We would like to thank the following farms and businesses for making this a successful event: Full Circle Farm, Wilcox Farm, Snoqualmie River Ranch, BelleWood Acres, Seabear Seafood, Small Planet Tofu, Essential Baking Company, Theo Chocolate, PCC Natural Markets, Sierra Nevada, Fish Tales Ale, Novelty Hill Winery, Willamette Valley Vineyards, and Herban Feast Catering. For more information go to [seattlegreendrinks.org](http://seattlegreendrinks.org).*



## What's Fresh at the Farmers' Markets? The Salmon-Safe Label

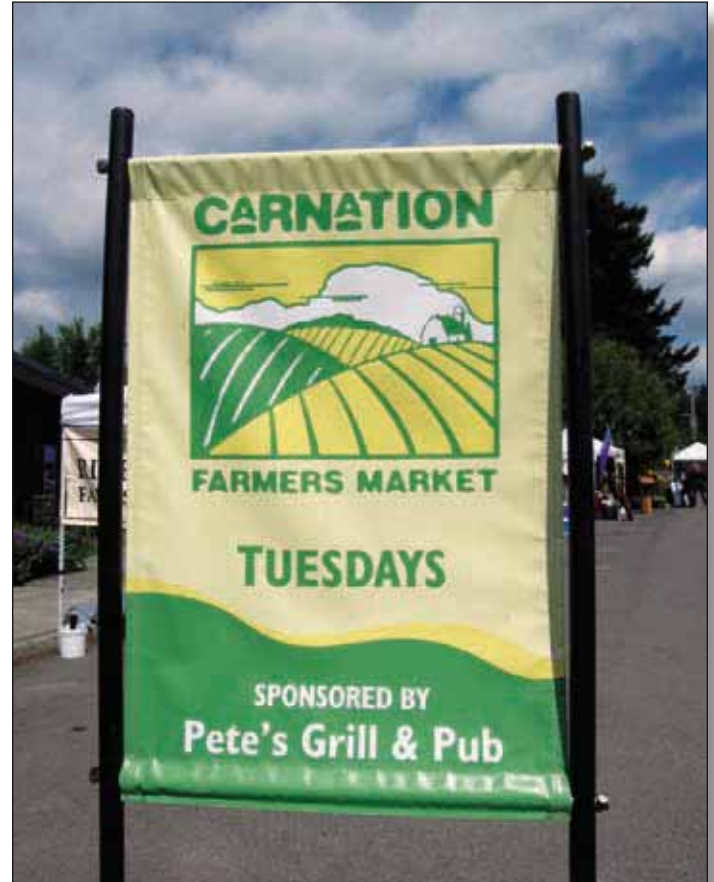
by Nick Thorp, Outreach and Education Intern

“So you’re promoting safely farmed salmon?” Throughout this summer I have had the opportunity to clarify for many people that Salmon-Safe is actually about local agricultural producers (vegetable growers, vineyards, orchards, dairies, etc.) who are protecting water quality and habitat, and that the program is not only something they should be aware of but should support. From Pike Place to the U-District to Phinney Ridge, I have been hitting the farmers’ markets of Seattle, getting the word out to the public about the work of our local farmers to protect one of the Pacific Northwest’s most treasured icons: the salmon.

Farmers’ markets are one of the best ways for urban consumers to directly support farmers. They are booming in popularity, not only in Seattle and the Puget Sound region, but throughout the country. Each market brings



*Luke Woodward of Oxbow Farm at farmers market*



a new group of shoppers, canvas bags in hand, and determination in their eyes to buy the best local produce available. My job was to inform these enthusiastic shoppers that they can use their dollar to support local farmers as well as local salmon by choosing Salmon-Safe products. With five or more of our Salmon-Safe farms at each market, there are endless opportunities to direct an onlooker to do just that. Consequently, along with public outreach, my presence at the markets is strengthening our bonds with our farmers and showing them that we are proud of their work and are here to support them.

The compliments and reassuring remarks from those interested in the program tell me that Salmon-Safe is a welcome addition to our local food system and that its popularity and presence will continue to grow.

# Message from the Chair

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This year Stewardship Partners has witnessed substantial growth in our programs. Our small staff has worked diligently to secure long-term funding and as you will read in this newsletter, we have successfully raised nearly \$750,000 in new grants for the next three years. This brings up the question of capacity.

We have all heard about the need for capacity building. Capacity is the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission in an effective manner. We have seen non-profits limit their effectiveness by failing to develop adequate resources, particularly when measured against the challenges they face. That is why we have worked for three years to build the capacity of local organizations in the Nisqually Watershed to carry out the comprehensive plans we helped them to develop.

With the success of Stewardship Partners' approach to collaborative conservation, we are experiencing a wave of opportunities and requests for our services. How do we react to this market demand? Our first response is to "outsource" capacity growth by hiring contractors to help implement projects and strengthen our collaborative partnerships with organizations, agencies, and businesses

that share our mission. We have also decided to expand our staff by naming Sarah Close, who has served as a part-time intern, our new Program Associate, a permanent position. We will never be a large bureaucratic organization, but we believe this expansion of our capacity will keep us effective in achieving our mission.

The continued strength of this small organization is particularly important as the paradigm shift toward collaborative and market-based conservation takes hold. Almost every major corporation now has an environmental or sustainability department, dozens of popular lifestyle magazines have featured green issues this year, and Al Gore has won the Nobel Peace Prize for his environmental work. Now, more than ever, Stewardship Partners has the ability to use this momentum to help private landowners preserve the natural landscapes of Washington State.

## Newsletter Contributors



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David Hymel, *Sustainable Building Program Manager*  
Sarah Close, *Program Associate*  
Nick Thorp, *Outreach Intern*

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