

Illahee Preserve

A Kitsap County Heritage Park



STEWARDSHIP PLAN

REVISED WORKING DRAFT

February 23, 2015

Prepared by the
Illahee Preserve Stewardship Committee

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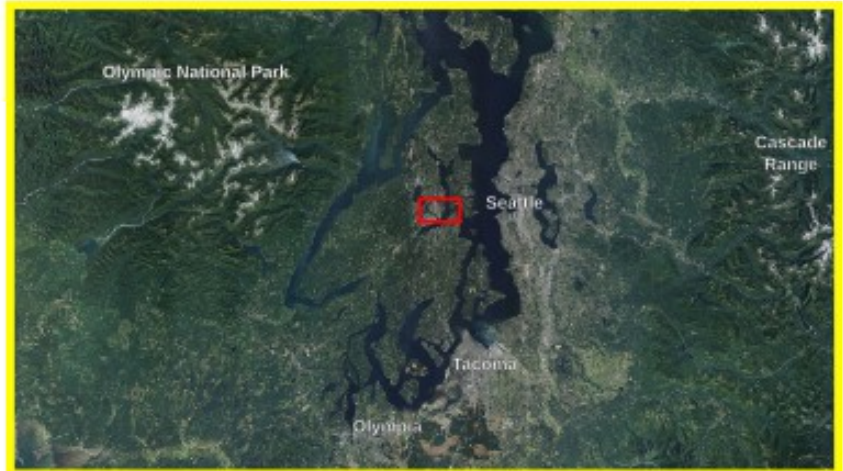
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Illahee Preserve Vicinity

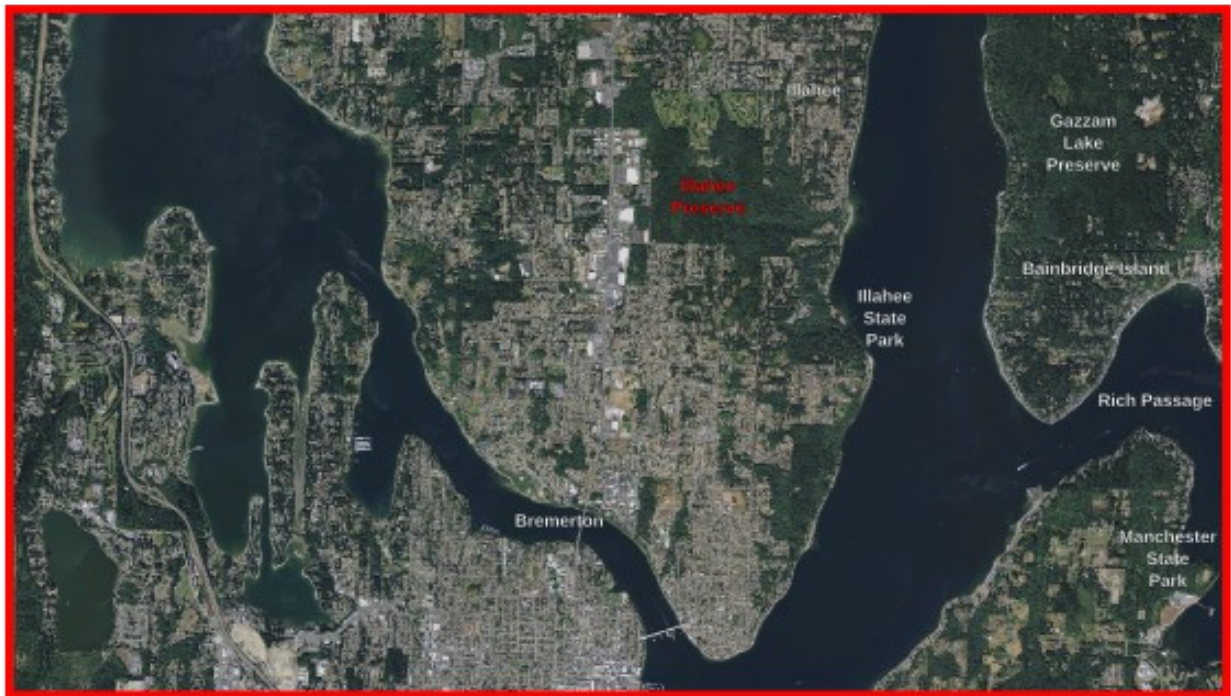


Figure 1: Illahee Preserve location



Figure 2: Oblique view of Illahee Creek watershed looking due West

"These are islands in time – with nothing to date them on the calendar of mankind. In these areas it is as though a person were looking backward into the ages and forward untold years. Here are bits of eternity, which have a preciousness beyond all accounting."

– Harvey Broome

Executive Summary

The Illahee Preserve is a unique natural forest area situated in Kitsap County between the densely populated communities of Bremerton and Silverdale. It is becoming increasingly popular and important as a recreation area as it is further developed and expanded.

The Illahee Preserve serves as a model for volunteer management of a large park. With minimal resources from the county, volunteers manage everything from day to day maintenance to the long range planning crystallized in this document.

The Preserve lands were protected over the years by challenging topography and the fact that a major portion was set aside in 1889 as school trust land. For nearly 25 years local residents have led the effort to protect the area, eventually resulting in Kitsap County, together with the State of Washington, purchasing the 352 remaining acres of the school trust lands from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in 2001.

Local residents continued to advocate for extending beyond the original boundaries of the Preserve into adjoining undeveloped forest and riparian areas with the goal to ultimately preserve nearly 700 acres of pristine forest and a major portion of the salmon bearing Illahee Creek watershed. Over the last 10 years the Preserve has grown to over 440 acres through acquisitions. With the donation of the 104 acre Rolling Hills Golf Course in 2010, total acreage is now approximately 545 acres. The community has identified an additional nearly 100 acres of properties for protection either through acquisition or conservation easements.

Residents have funded and supported scientific studies of the area verifying features such as unstable slopes, a critical aquifer currently being impacted by existing wells in the area, and resulting low the base flows in the creek adversely affecting fish. The Department of Ecology/Port of Illahee study of the Illahee Creek watershed also showed severe adverse impacts of stormwater on the creek, culvert, and Puget Sound coming from developments located outside of the Preserve. These studies verified the concerns of residents and further emphasized the need to protect, preserve, and restore the area.

The Preserve currently provides:

- A forest setting of mature trees with a diverse understory
- A nearly self-contained watershed, primarily in its natural state, draining into Illahee Creek
- The only type II refugia salmon stream in an urban setting in the county, capable of supporting four species of the family salmonidae
- An old growth forest area containing Douglas-Fir, Western White Pine, Western Hemlock and Western Red Cedar
- A wildlife preserve area with steeply incised canyons restricting human access
- An active use area with walking, hiking and biking trails

The Preserve's goals for the future:

- Protect additional adjacent riparian and forest habitats
- Develop site-sensitive recreational areas
- Create a regional trail systems connecting Preserve and community
- Develop an environmental learning/interpretive center
- Provide educational opportunities and interpretive signage

The Illahee Preserve continues to grow and expand services with the help and support of area and local residents, organizations, schools, businesses, governmental agencies, and tribes to help further establish and develop the Preserve into a premiere nature preserve and park for the education and enjoyment of this and future generations.

Introduction

Site Description

Illahee Preserve is located in the East Bremerton area of Kitsap County, generally just north of the Bremerton city limits. The Preserve includes 352.42 acres of property owned by Kitsap County (known commonly as Illahee Forest), as well as additional lands adjacent to the forest, including: undeveloped sections of the Illahee Creek riparian corridor; Rolling Hills Golf Course, which lies north of and adjacent to the County land; and, an in-holding of residential lots within the forest. These areas are noted in the following maps and are described in greater detail in the Management Plan Section of this document.

Main access points to the Preserve are the parking lot off Almira Drive and the parking lot off Riddell Road at Thompson Lane. A number of trails also connect to streets for neighborhood access as shown on the trail map.



Figure 3: An intrepid volunteer in the forest

“The human spirit needs places where nature has not been rearranged by the hand of man.”

– Unattributed

Vision

The Illahee Preserve has been spared from direct development partly due to its topographic features such as unstable slopes, deeply incised canyons, and densely vegetated riparian corridors. It also helped that much of the area was designated School Trust Lands when the state of Washington was established. Despite some logging in the 1930's, other areas remain as pristine old growth forest. Illahee Creek and most of its watershed remain primarily in its natural state.

It was these unique natural features that prevented its development that also caught the attention of area residents. They have been its most ardent supporters for preservation and protecting it as an example or a remnant of what this country once looked like to the native population and the early settlers.

Goals

The goals of the Illahee Preserve were established at the very beginning by community advocates and remain unchanged:

- To establish and develop a premiere nature preserve and park for the education and enjoyment of this and future generations.
- To preserve to the greatest extent possible the natural character of Illahee forest lands and the Illahee creek watershed, including vegetation and wildlife habitat.
- To provide limited appropriate active and passive recreational opportunities while maintaining sensitivity to the natural character of the sites.
- To solicit the support and help of local residents, organizations, schools, businesses, government agencies, and Native American tribes to work together to carry out the vision and plans for the preserve.
- To promote the Native American meaning of the word Illahee as a “place to rest.”

Long Term Objectives

- Protect additional adjacent riparian and forest areas before they are lost forever.
- Develop site-sensitive recreational areas within the Preserve.
- Create a regional trail systems connecting the Preserve with the wider community.
- Provide enhanced educational opportunities and interpretive signage.
- Develop an environmental learning and interpretive center.

Brief History

The Illahee Preserve is the result of some unique circumstances. Its natural features made it challenging for road access and any early development was limited to the perimeter and the Puget Sound shoreline.

In 1876, when Washington became a state, Sections 16 and 36 were selected to remain undeveloped and set aside to fund schools and were managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Illahee School Trust Lands were relatively protected until several serious proposals were made in later years to log off the area and build homes, apartments, and even a suggested high-rise at the center. The local community resisted the efforts over a period of 25 years and each time the property was spared, which allowed it to be rescued in 2001 when the county and state legislature found funding to purchase the remaining 352 acres for \$4,984,000. The purchased property is outlined in green in Figure 4.



Figure 4: IAC Grant Proposed Acquisitions (yellow outline, green outline shows original DNR purchase)

In 2002 community representatives began meeting and the first version of this Stewardship Plan was drafted in 2003. This plan looked not only at the 352 acres that had been purchased, but also at the forest and riparian areas around Illahee Creek that also needed to be preserved and protected. At the same time the Parks Department submitted a grant with the Interagency Committee's (IAC) Washington

Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) “Urban Wildlife Habitat Category”. While it scored high locally, it ranked lower with state DNR and WDFW projects and didn’t make the cutoff in 2002, but instead remained on a recommended alternate project-funding list. Figure 4, shows the properties in yellow that were targeted for acquisition.

The project’s importance to Kitsap County was time critical as the local match for the project had been spent acquiring the DNR property for the county and a waiver of retroactivity with the IAC was about to expire. Partial grant funding in the amount of \$620,000 was received in 2004 with a drop dead date of June 30, 2005. This resulted in the addition of approximately 90 acres of forest and riparian lands, but left untouched approximately half of the other targeted properties for a possible purchase or conservation easement to a later grant and the match expired mostly unused.

The largest tract of land acquired in 2004/2005 was 66 acres of watershed property that represented the early community of Illahee’s water source. When the North Perry Water District was formed to provide the local area communities with water, including Illahee, the land was deeded over to North Perry. The grant allowed the exchange of 66 acres to be transferred to the Illahee Preserve for acreage desired by North Perry for its water tower and laydown yard on the former DNR property. Other properties acquired by the partial funding are noted in the acquisition project matrix on page 32 as project numbers Acq-2 through Acq-6.

In the meantime, the Preserve had to be cleaned up of garbage, derelict vehicles, and the debris that had been dumped there over the years. Volunteers, inmate crews, Park’s personnel, and Americorps personnel helped clean up the site clearing tons of garbage, 22 junked cars, 9 engine blocks, 17 large appliances, and one telephone booth. To stop the dumping, concrete barriers were installed, ditches and earthen barriers were created, and 2000 linear feet of guardrail was installed.

In 2007 the Illahee Forest Preserve, the non-profit corporation created to support the Illahee Preserve, received a Coastal Protection Fund grant that included funds necessary to purchase a one acre key riparian property at the confluence of the North Tributary of Illahee Creek with its mainstem.

Crucial to any newly acquired and future desired properties are scientific assessments and much of what was found was not good. Water quality checks showed Illahee Creek on Ecology’s 303(d) Category 5 list for impairment due to elevated fecal coliform bacteria and low dissolved oxygen. The deeply incised slopes of the creek are unstable and prone to failure. The Illahee Creek culvert was being impacted by high sediment loads, raising the flood plain and filling the culvert to near failure. Surface water runoff from the perimeter of the watershed has altered the natural hydrology resulting in channel erosion and sedimentation that has degraded salmonid and aquatic habitat. And the aquifers are not being recharged at a rate necessary to maintain the base summer flows in the stream. In response to these findings, monitoring and restoration efforts began and will need to continue well into the future.

In 2011 one of the biggest gifts ever given in Kitsap County was the \$4,000,000 gifting of the Rolling Hills Golf Course. Don Rasmussen, the owner of the Rolling Hills Golf Course, worked out an agreement with Kitsap County that supported his favorite charity, the Olympic Peninsula Meals on Wheels Program, retained the current staff to operate the golf course, and then gifted the 104 acre golf course to the county and the Illahee Preserve. Not only will the golf course represent a revenue source for the Parks Department, but it also will become the prime location for remediation of the stormwater impacts to Illahee Creek and Puget Sound.

The Illahee Preserve continues to be developed and expanded, but currently the Preserve consists of approximately 545 acres that have been acquired to date, with plans to acquire or otherwise protect approximately 100 additional acres as the properties and funding sources become available.

The map below, Figure 5, shows in dark green the original 352 acre purchase. In lighter green are the acquisitions of approximately 200 acres that followed over the next 10 years. Future targeted purchases are shown in red with future targeted conservation easements shown in yellow.

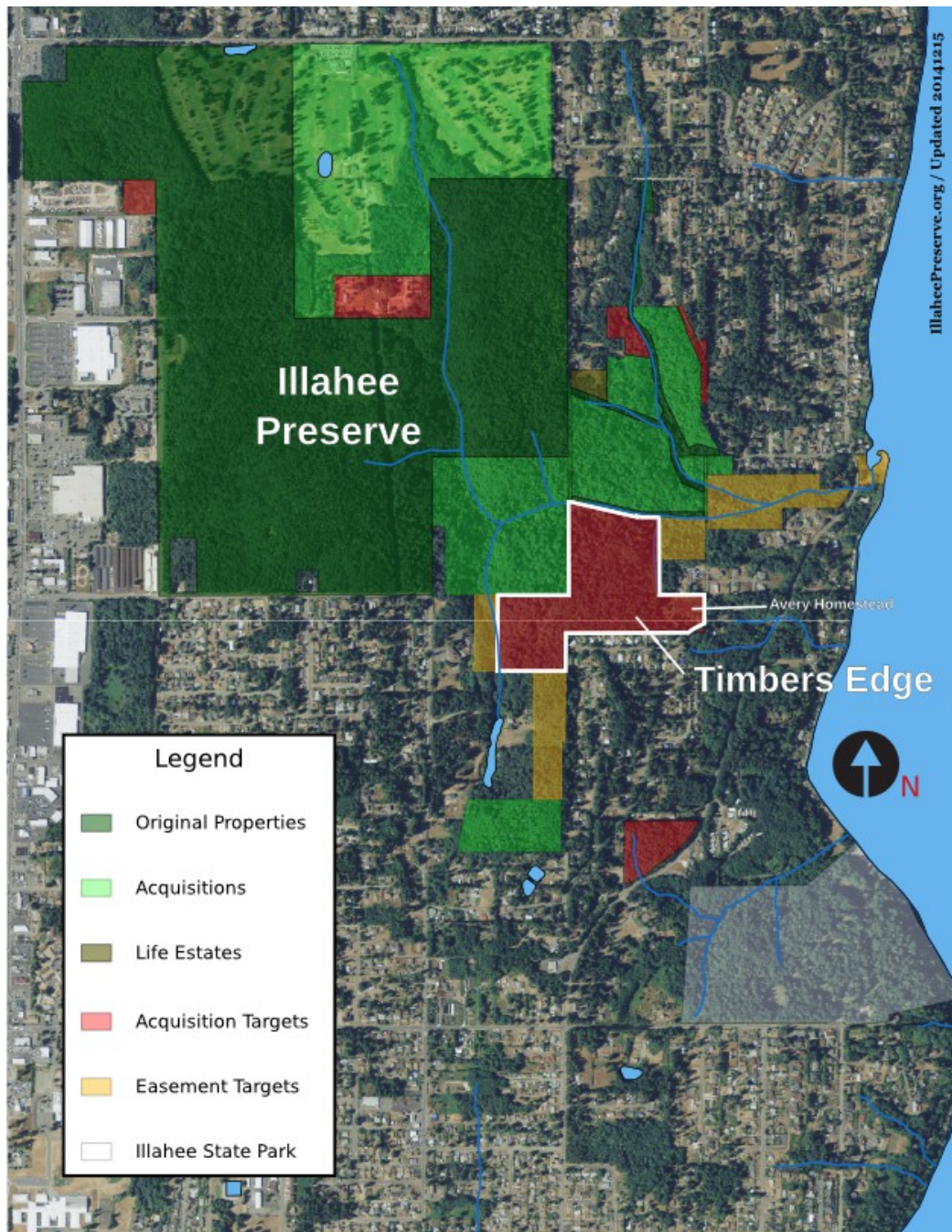


Figure 5: Illahee Preserve properties and protection targets

Governance

The Illahee Preserve serves as a model for volunteer management of a large park. With minimal resources from the county, volunteers manage everything from day to day maintenance to the long range planning crystallized in this document.

Development and day-to-day operation of the Illahee Preserve is carried out by local volunteers coordinated by the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Committee which works collaboratively with the Kitsap County Parks Department. Volunteers have also established the Illahee Forest Preserve 501(3)c non-profit (IFP) to raise funds and further the goals of the Preserve. The IFP can legally accept tax-deductible donations, own equipment, and hold fund raising campaigns. The IFP is currently spearheading a capital campaign to purchase additional properties, and pays for such basics as the lighting bill for the Thompson Lane parking lot.

County and Stewardship Committee Responsibilities/Roles

Kitsap County Facilities, Parks and Recreation and the Illahee Stewardship Committee both have a strong interest in and responsibility for the preservation, maintenance and development of Illahee Preserve, as outlined in this Stewardship Plan. In order to work most effectively in the best interest of the forest and the public, it is important that there be a clear mutual understanding of the most appropriate and effective role and responsibilities of each partner. These roles, responsibilities and relationship may evolve over time, and as they do, those changes should be documented in future revisions of this plan.

Joint Responsibilities

1. Planning for the property, including site-planning elements such as trail locations, classifications and development standards.
2. Review this Stewardship Plan biennially and recommend revisions as deemed appropriate.

Stewardship Committee Roles and Responsibilities

1. Be an organizing force and a focal point for people wishing to become involved with the preservation, restoration, maintenance and development of Illahee Preserve and the Illahee Creek Watershed.
2. Hold regular public meetings open to community participation.
3. Work to secure corporate and individual donations of funding and/or time and labor for the maintenance and improvement of the forest.
4. Work with the County Parks Department's Special Projects and Volunteer Coordinator to organize work parties in the park building trails, restoring degraded habitat, removing invasive exotic plants, and other such projects, as identified in this Stewardship Plan.
5. Work with the County Parks Department to organize a volunteer "eyes and ears" program for monitoring the forest, with an established procedure for recording and reporting inappropriate behavior or other situations within the forest requiring County attention.
6. Work with land conservation organizations and property owners to secure conservation easements or land purchases, as discussed in this Plan.

County Parks Department

1. Work with the Stewardship Committee to facilitate work parties, consistent with the Stewardship Plan. The County can provide materials and tools to facilitate planned projects.
2. Assist with attempts to acquire high habitat value properties surrounding the Preserve as outlined in this plan.
3. Include in the County's Capital Facilities Plan funding necessary to make improvements recommended in this stewardship plan.
4. Employ integrated pest management practices, minimizing the use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers in management and operation of the forest.

Action Items

- The Stewardship Committee needs to review the new KCPR Stewardship Committee Handbook and adopt any new guidelines.
- The Stewardship Committee needs to adopt written bylaws for maximum transparency.

Management Plan

Guiding Principles

In order to protect the natural features, beauty, wildlife, and ecosystem health of the Illahee Preserve, the following guiding principles have been established:

- The area has evolved over eons, is mostly still in its natural state, and needs to be preserved as such.
- The area is the home of wildlife that have fewer and fewer habitat options – they need a home.
- Portions of the Preserve have been degraded and need to be restored.
- As the natural features and wildlife are protected, there is also the corresponding need for mankind to be able to see, enjoy, and appreciate the natural features of the area.
- Educational opportunities need to be maximized.
- Trail systems need to be enhanced to connect with the community and regional trail systems.
- Enhanced recreational opportunities need to be provided at suitable sites. Sites previously developed or inhabited, such as Heart of the Park properties, are particularly appropriate for development as recreational sites.

Preserve Uses and Improvements

All uses of the Preserve must be in accordance with this Stewardship Plan and Kitsap County Parks Department policies and regulations.

Any proposed improvements or changes to Preserve property beyond day-to-day maintenance or emergency situations must be brought to a public meeting of the Stewardship Committee for review and approval. The Parks Liason must also be informed as approval may also be required from the Parks Department. An emergency situation is where there is an imminent danger of serious injury.

Day-to-day maintenance is defined as things related to:

1. Removing trash and junk
2. Removing invasive/exotic species
3. Cutting and moving deadfall or brush across trails
4. Spreading wood chips on trails
5. Maintaining signs and notices
6. Regular maintenance of structures, parking lots, and landscaped areas

Examples of things requiring Committee approval

1. Removing any native element from the Preserve
2. Cutting native trees
3. Introducing living organisms, including seeds
4. Permanently rerouting or creating a new trail

The following uses are deemed inappropriate for Preserve visitors:

1. Camping
2. Motorized vehicles outside of roads and parking lots
3. Paintball
4. Hunting
5. Brush picking
6. Fires or fireworks

High Level Management Priorities

1. Protect the existing Preserve flora and fauna.
2. Find innovative ways to protect as much nearby unspoiled habitat as possible.
3. Perform day to day maintenance on the Preserve.
4. Enhance the user experience at the Preserve through improved amenities and services, including development of a regional trail system.
5. Expand awareness of the Preserve in the region for active recreation and educational opportunities.

Specific Two Year Priorities

Kitsap County Parks and the Illahee Stewardship Committee should concentrate our efforts over the next two years on the following actions:

1. Develop a comprehensive plan for the Almira parking lot. A picnic type shelter and low maintenance native landscaping are desired. The goal is to welcome visitors in any weather and through named stones or pavers raise funds and allow recognition of donors. Site should be functional, aesthetically pleasing, and no longer look like it is under construction.

2. Try to protect nearby wilderness corridors with twin goal of using these for a larger regional trail system to Illahee State Park and potentially even further down the Manette Peninsula. Investigate defining a connecting water trail (kayak) to the nearby Gazzam Lake Preserve on Bainbridge Island. This project will require establishing new connections with other community groups and landowners.
3. As part of the above trail system, define a route for the Forest to Sound trail.
4. Define a trail to a small subsegment of the Old Growth Area from the Trail Area to provide public access.
5. Come up with a management plan for the Compass Circle meadow to combat invasive plants and enhance the flora for wildlife. The remaining exotic trees should be removed.
6. Continue to identify and remove invasive exotic plants, particularly the rapidly spreading Yellow Archangel ground cover along Thompson Lane and near Rest Place.
7. Come up with a plan for a formally recognized trail through the closed off portion of Rest Place/Roosevelt Street NE which would also remove invasives and limit vehicle access.
8. Develop a strong Stewardship Program for the park, recruiting as many interested groups and individuals as possible, including: corporations, schools groups, youth groups, church groups and individual citizens.
9. Prepare a forest management plan for the Preserve, with forest health, habitat diversity and fire safety as the primary concerns.

General Resource Status and Plans



Figure 6: Areas with sword fern understory

Forest Areas

Status

The forested area consists of both Preserve lands and private land that has been targeted for acquisition and covers a range of topographies from riparian to plateau. Late 1800 and early 1900 logging efforts in the area harvested many of the extreme old growth trees, though there are pockets of trees that escaped those efforts and the more recent logging in the 1930's. The forest as a whole is diverse, complex, and healthy, with the following exceptions: Areas of white pine blister rust have been identified and where extreme, western red cedar saplings have been planted. Limited areas of laminated root rot are presumed. Small, but persistent patches of invasive species, such as Scotch broom, English holly, Irish ivy (often mistaken as English ivy), Japanese knotweed, blackberry, and yellow archangel have been identified.

Plans

Preservation and acquisition of the remaining forest land is of the highest priority, especially in the riparian areas along Illahee Creek. Preserve lands will be surveyed and science-based managed by the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Committee in accordance with Kitsap County's four year pilot Integrated Forest Stewardship Policy program that was adopted in 2012. Plans are to continue to monitor the white pine blister rust and identify laminated root rot areas, and to continue to identify and eradicate invasive species.



Figure 7: Mallard couple near Almira parking lot

Watershed

Status

The primary watershed of the Preserve is the Illahee Creek watershed with only one other watershed, the Steel Creek watershed, having its headwaters at the northwest corner of the Preserve. The Illahee Creek watershed is 820 acres comprised of a north fork and a south fork which converge and flow easterly to Puget Sound. An aerial view of the watershed shows a substantial forested area surrounding the mainstem of Illahee Creek and its tributaries. To view it from this perspective, one might conclude the creek is sufficiently protected from urban growth or stormwater impacts. This is not the case. Despite the excellent riparian conditions afforded by the Illahee Preserve, Illahee Creek and its tributaries are being impacted by stormwater runoff and reduced aquifer recharge from development outside the forested area. A Department of Ecology (DOE) / Port of Illahee (POI) funded study of the watershed found the following issues impacting the watershed: excessive surface water runoff, landslides, reduced aquifer recharge, impaired water quality, an impacted culvert, and degraded salmonid habitat. It also reported recovery is possible and the county and community began implementing recommended strategies with DOE grants helping with the funding.

Plans

The Illahee community, in partnership with the county and others, has largely accomplished one of the most important aspects of stewardship, the protection of most of the resource lands in the watershed. Acquisition of over 500 acres, that is now the Illahee Preserve, make it possible to address other issues in and outside of the watershed, and reverse the trend of degradation. The strategies are many and varied and include educational, planning, and capital strategies with a number that have been completed, some ongoing, and others yet to be implemented. Stormwater issues are being addressed at an accelerated pace by Kitsap County due to the possible failure of the Illahee Creek culvert due to excessive sediment buildup. Approximately 100 acres of neighboring habitat is targeted for protection through acquisitions or conservation easements before these are lost to development. This is largely dependent upon the availability of funding and grants.

Streams

Status

Illahee Creek is the only type “F” (fish bearing) stream in the Illahee Preserve, though the headwaters for the south branch of Steele Creek begin in the northwest corner of the Preserve with this tributary being a type “N” (non-fish bearing) stem. Despite nearly all of Illahee Creek being in a protected forest setting, the stream is impacted by storm surges originating from development outside the Preserve—primarily at the ends of the north fork and along the north tributary. The storm surges dislodge sediment in the deeply incised canyons which fills downstream pools and is eventually being deposited in Puget Sound. Additionally, Illahee Creek is on Ecology’s 303(d) Category 5 list for impairment due to elevated fecal coliform bacteria and low dissolved oxygen. Its base flows are also being impacted by reduced aquifer recharge from human development that further impacts salmonids. In spite of these detriments, Illahee Creek supports limited numbers of coho and chum salmon, and steelhead and cutthroat trout.

Plans

“If we can’t save a stream like Illahee Creek, there is no hope for any of Puget Sound’s smaller streams.”

– Derek Booth, Stillwater Sciences

The restoration of Illahee Creek to near historic function is a priority for the Illahee Community and the Illahee Stewardship Committee. Illahee Creek is being cared for and monitored by the Illahee Community non-profit, the Illahee Forest Preserve non-profit, the Port of Illahee, Kitsap County Public Works, the Health District, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Suquamish Tribe, Kitsap Conservation District, North Perry Water, and adjacent landowners. Volunteers monitor the health of the stream with Kitsap County. Landowners recently worked with the Conservation District to install a log jam project on their property to increase stream pooling. The primary restoration project which is a priority for all is the alleviation of the storm water surges, followed by preventing any further development that would negate the progress being made.

Riparian and Wetland Areas

Status

The wetlands in the Preserve are continuous in the riparian zones of Illahee Creek and the headwaters of Steele Creek, and extend beyond the Preserve boundaries. Wetlands perform a variety of vital functions. Water quality is improved when the wetland area traps sediment and filters contaminants. Wetlands also provide flood attenuation by storing surface water runoff and slowly releasing it downstream. This water storage feature also provides stream baseflow stabilization by slowly discharging water downstream into the mainstream to maintain its summer flows, which is needed in Illahee Creek because of low summer baseflows. The wetlands are also vital in support of a wide variety of wildlife species such as birds, mammals, fish, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, and wetland plant communities.

Plans

The plans are to continue to protect and preserve the wetlands. The purchase of the Timbers Edge project will ensure the riparian wetlands along the south property line of the main stem of Illahee Creek

are protected and preserved. The purchase of a conservation easement from the Friday's will ensure the south property line of the main stem of Illahee Creek will be protected and preserved. And the purchase of a conservation easement from the Krigsman's will ensure the main stem and confluence of the North Tributary of Illhaee Creek are protected and preserved.

Aquifers

Status

Studies show that the aquifers in Illahee are at water balance, meaning that the amount of precipitation infiltrating into the underlying Manette aquifer is the same as the amount of ground water being withdrawn by wells and discharging as stream base flows. Additionally, Illahee Creek competes with well withdrawals for base flow, as has been shown using the Bainbridge Island USGS modeling data. These two facts indicate that this area has likely reached the maximum development density that the underlying aquifers can continuously supply, and that no further growth should be permitted without commensurate assurance that the aquifers will be replenished.

Plans

With the Manette aquifer at water balance and Illahee Creek's flows already impacted by development, it is incumbent upon county officials and the community to require the critical aquifer recharge areas be retained in their natural state, and for these areas to remain undeveloped or be minimally developed.



Figure 8: Salmonid in Illahee Creek

Fish

Status

Four species of salmonid are native to Illahee Creek: chum salmon, coho salmon, steelhead trout, and searun cutthroat trout. However, only small remnants are now found in the stream. The decline is the result of a number of factors.

For years two 36 inch diameter culverts handled the stream flows from Illahee Creek until upstream development began at the extremities of the watershed and stream flows increased, primarily during

storm events. Finally, in 1999, a 14 foot wide bottomless box culvert was installed with the understanding that would solve both the flow and salmonid passage issues. While this appeared to work for the first few years, it did not solve the problem of excessive sedimentation.

High volume stormwater flows from perimeter developments are entering into Illahee Creek and scouring the deeply incised slopes which results in high volumes of sediment being deposited in the stream and out into Puget Sound. The volume of sediment is filling the new culvert at a frequency such that annual or semi-annual dredging at the downstream end of the culvert is necessary to keep the culvert minimally functional. The adverse impacts of the shrinking culvert clearance and dredging on fish need to be mitigated.

Plans

One of the goals of the Illahee community and the Stewardship Committee is to restore salmonid use to near historic levels. This will take a concerted effort by a number of agencies to make happen. The biggest obstacles to overcome are the excessive stormwater surges and the resultant excessive sedimentation that plagues Illahee Creek. These issues and their solutions are discussed in the Illahee Creek Watershed Surface Management Plan of September 2008. The Management Plan is the result of the Port of Illahee securing a Department of Ecology Centennial Clean Water grant. Sediment was not only affecting the stream but also the delta next to the Illahee Community Dock where sedimentation at the innermost float was measured at 32 inches. If the rate of sedimentation kept increasing the Port could possibly be looking at dredging to maintain adequate water depth at its floats. The Ecology/Port funded report documents the stormwater problems and recommends solutions, many of which are being implemented by Kitsap County Public Works.

Fish pools are a related issue as the excessive sedimentation has filled stream pools that are necessary for fish to migrate upstream. Local landowners recently worked with the Kitsap Conservation district to install a log jam project on Illahee Creek to begin restoration of the stream and create pools. Additional restoration projects need to be accomplished in concert with the mitigation work being accomplished by Kitsap County Public Works. Another fish and culvert related issue yet to be resolved is the fact the flood plain area on both sides of the culvert has risen approximately 18 inches, possibly necessitating a new culvert or major modifications to the old culvert.

Wildlife

Status

The following are statements from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW):

“Fish and wildlife are public resources. Balancing human needs with those of fish and wildlife is a challenge and responsibility we all must accept. Although the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is charged with protecting and perpetuating fish and wildlife species, the agency has very limited authority over the habitat on which animals depend. Instead, protection of Washington's fish and wildlife resources is currently achieved through voluntary actions of landowners and through the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Growth Management Act (GMA), Forest Practices Act (FPA), Shoreline Management Act (SMA), and similar planning processes that primarily involve city and county governments.”

“Landowners, agencies, governments, and members of the public have a shared responsibility to protect and maintain these resources; all are resource stewards. The condition of our fish and wildlife mirrors our performance as stewards, and it represents our commitment to sustaining these resources for our children and theirs.”

The fact that the Illahee area is rich in fish and wildlife habitat is noted in Figure 9, Illahee WDFW Habitat Evaluation, which gives the highest habitat rating to much of the south portion of Illahee. This is the largest and highest habitat rating area in the East Central Kitsap and East Bremerton area, and shows the connectivity to another high habitat rated area, the Cheney Estate area south of the Illahee Preserve.

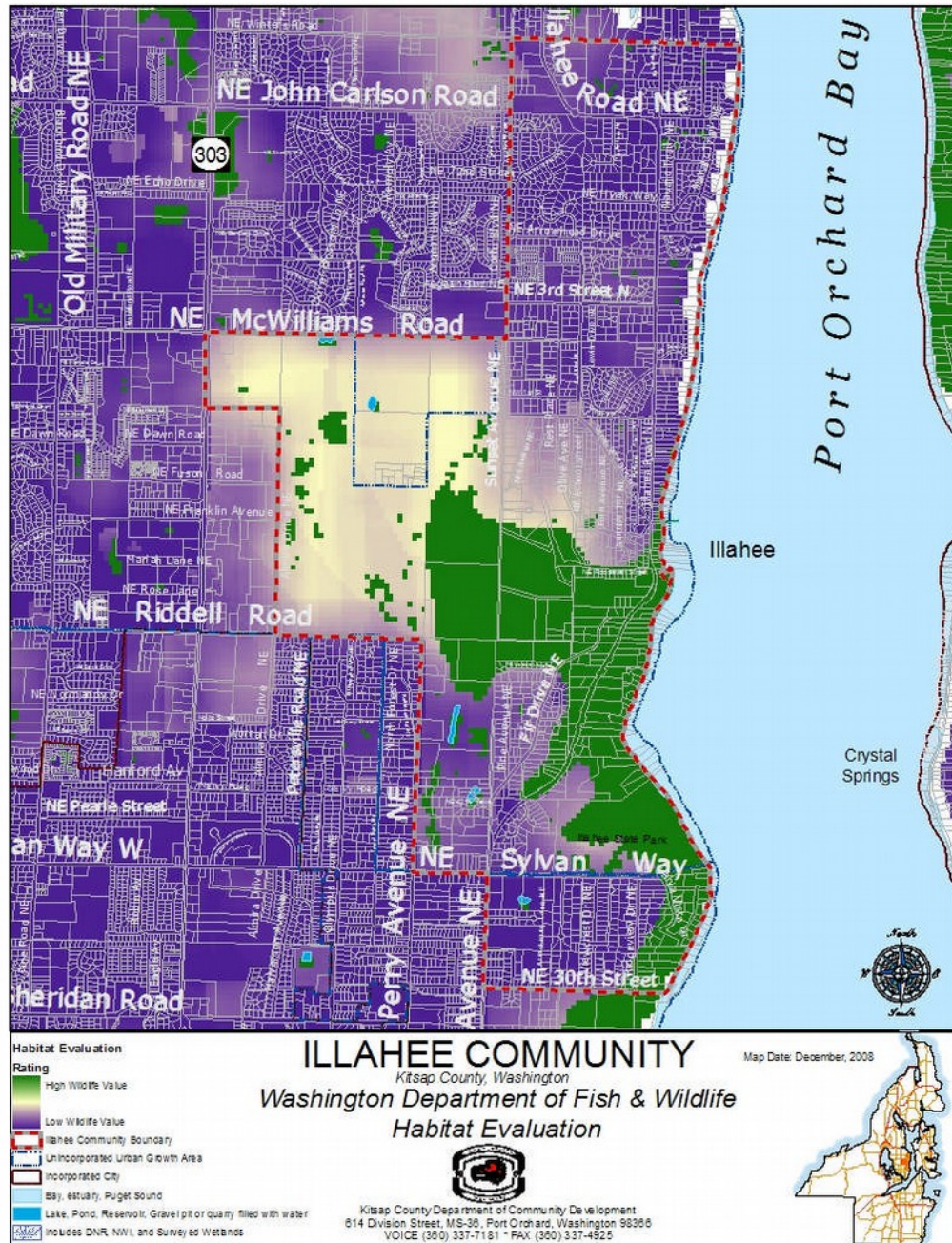


Figure 9: Illahee WDFW Habitat Evaluation

With the abundance of natural resources in the area and the prime fish and wildlife habitat these resources provide, the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Committee has had to determine how it would respond to the issue of fish and wildlife in the Preserve and the issue of wildlife corridors. WDFW can note that the habitat is there, but formal land use controls over that habitat must be supported by the

community and enacted by the county through land use regulations along with other protections implemented by willing landowners.

The fish and wildlife issue is front and center for Preserve users and Illahee citizens every day, out their windows, along the shorelines, in their yards, and along the roadways. In addition to learning to live with the natural features that make the area unique, the community has had to learn to live with the fish and wildlife that have lived here long before humans came to the area. Recent surveys indicated a wide spectrum of feelings in the local community regarding the general issue of fish and wildlife. These feelings range from annoyance to exuberance, but when pressed, even those annoyed by terrestrial wildlife foraging in their gardens are ultimately wildlife supporters.

This Plan defines “Wildlife Habitat Patches” as significant wildlife habitat areas where significant acreage and quality habitat support a variety of wildlife species. Two major wildlife patches exist within the Illahee community boundaries, and the third wildlife patch, the Cheney Estate–Enetai community area, is contiguous to the Illahee community.

The largest of the Wildlife Habitat Patches is located in the Illahee Preserve. The Preserve has been designated as a primary wildlife preserve conservation habitat area by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The wildlife preserve area is comprised of old growth forest and a significant portion of Illahee Creek watershed in its natural state. This represents a premium wildlife habitat area that was recently expanded from 352 acres to the current 440 acres, with plans to further increase the preserve boundaries via conservation easements and land purchases.

The next largest Wildlife Habitat Patch in Illahee is the 75-acre Illahee State Park. This shoreline park with approximately one-half mile of waterfront is heavily forested and is a sanctuary for both marine and terrestrial wildlife.

The Cheney Estate–Enetai Community is a third Wildlife Habitat Patch of approximately 100 acres of primary wildlife habitat immediately south of the Illahee community’s southern border. The area is heavily forested with minimal development along the nearly one linear mile of shoreline. Discussions with community and estate personnel indicate it is highly unlikely the area will be developed beyond its present state. This area also has the highest available WDFW habitat rating in the countywide habitat assessment.

The wildlife within these three Wildlife Habitat Patches are prone to species isolation unless they can connect with other patches. This is less of a problem for birds that can fly between patches. It is a larger problem for terrestrial mammals that must traverse overland to reach other wildlife patches.

Wildlife Corridors can provide safe paths for wildlife to travel between areas used for sleeping, accessing drinking water, foraging or hunting, and breeding. Wildlife corridors can range in quality from high to low depending on the obstacles encountered. Lower quality paths are encumbered by more private residences, fences, roadways, and other obstacles that tend to interfere, but not deter, the movement of wildlife. Every consideration must be made to maintain the tree canopy that will provide some kind of continuity for wildlife migration.

Plans

Four Wildlife Corridors already exist in theory in the Illahee community and connect the three Wildlife Habitat Patches, i.e., the Illahee Preserve, Illahee State Park, and the Cheney Estate–Enetai community area. These corridors are shown in Figure 10 and need to be recognized, protected, and promoted as an asset to the community.

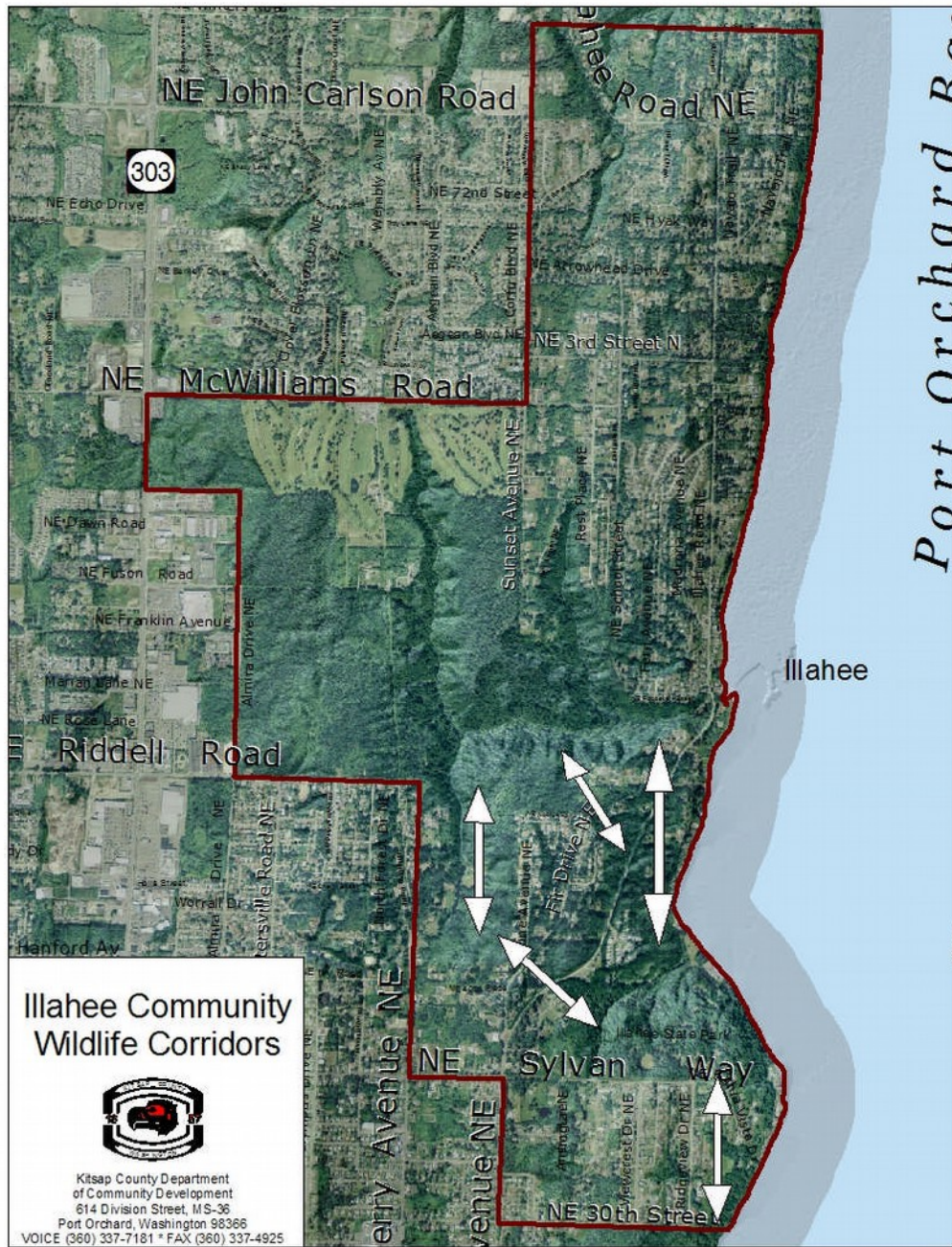


Figure 10: Illahee Wildlife Corridors

The first is a corridor already used by wildlife and links Illahee State Park with the Cheney Estate–Enetai Community. With the near build-out of this corridor area in the 1960s as semi-rural and the fact that there is little vehicle traffic in the area, this Wildlife Corridor functions well to provide movement of wildlife between the two Wildlife Habitat Patches. Because of the natural features in the area, the Illahee community requested the designated housing density for this area to be changed from an Urban Low designation (5-9 housing units per acre) to an Urban Restricted designation (1-5 housing units per acre). The lower density housing designation is more compatible with the natural features of the area and lower densities support the continuation of this already established wildlife corridor. The requested lower zoning changes were agreed upon by the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners and were included in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update.

The next Wildlife Corridor already in use connects Illahee State Park with the forested area along the South Fork of Illahee Creek. The Wildlife Corridor runs northwest along the ravine from the State Park boundary, through the Fisher Park area, across Illahee Road, and then directly west across several private properties to the recently acquired Kitsap County Parks property. This area, like the previous area, was approved for the Urban Restricted zoning designation.

The third Wildlife Corridor connects two disjoint Preserve properties. The Illahee Preserve Stewardship Committee identified a number of properties along the Illahee Creek corridor that were targeted for purchase or conservation easements. Two intermediate properties, or portions thereof, were not secured by previous grants and are being targeted with future grants. Portions of both properties are considered essential for maintaining a viable Wildlife Corridor in that area.

The fourth Wildlife Corridor also connects Illahee State Park with the natural areas to the north, which are all private but not developed primarily because of the steep slopes along both sides of Illahee hill. This corridor extends upland toward the Fir Drive area and also northward along the shoreline, both of which terminate along the Illahee Creek corridor. The housing density in this area was changed from Urban Low to Urban Restricted based on the natural features of the area. As stated in the previous paragraphs, the lower housing density also supports the already existing wildlife corridors in these areas.

To reiterate, the protection of fish and wildlife resources and habitat within the Illahee borders is ultimately the responsibility of the Illahee community. While two Wildlife Habitat Patches within Illahee are publicly owned, the Wildlife Corridors are primarily in private ownership, and the success of maintaining the habitat quality will depend on the voluntary actions of Illahee landowners.

There are varying habitat standards for Wildlife Habitat Patches and Wildlife Corridors that are only briefly mentioned here. The first is to maintain the natural features to the maximum extent possible such as wetlands and streams. The second is to maintain natural vegetation as much as is possible such as native trees, shrubs, and plants. The last is to avoid barriers such as solid fences, etc., to the maximum degree possible.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Status

Puget Sound Steelhead Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) were listed as a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act in 2007. Illahee Creek was noted as a steelhead stream, in addition to coho and chum salmon, and cutthroat trout, in a report dated August 22, 2002 by Dr. Christopher May (See Appendix IV: Salmonid Habitat Analysis on page 54) for inclusion in Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Manual 18, dated September 23, 2002. May and Peterson (2003) note steelhead utilization within the lower mainstem of the stream (2003 Kitsap Salmonid Refugia Report: Landscape Assessment and Conservation Prioritization of Freshwater and Nearshore Salmonid Habitat in Kitsap County). Additionally, residents have noted steelhead activity in the stream during spawning seasons.

Locally, Douglas squirrels (*Tamiasciurus douglasii*) are being displaced by introduced eastern gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*). Misguided homeowners have been found illegally trapping and releasing nuisance eastern gray squirrels directly into the Preserve. The Douglas squirrel is protected under state law ([WAC 232-12-011](#)).

Some stands of western white pine (*Pinus monticola*) have been locally decimated by the Eurasian white pine blister rust fungus (*Cronartium ribicola*). The life cycle of this fungus is incredibly complex, involving five distinct spore stages and at least two different hosts. Other hosts, such as currants (*Ribes* species), appear to be largely absent in the Preserve. Micro-climate conditions critically influence the

spread of the disease through the air. Some areas of the Preserve have young and mature pines that appear unaffected.

Plans

Because the watershed is primarily forested, with ongoing efforts supported by grants to implement Low Impact Development (LID) practices on the remaining watershed areas, the Illahee Creek watershed comes as a high conservation value area with a low economic impact (when applying ESA Section 4(b) (2) criteria), making it a prime candidate for inclusion as a critical habitat area for Puget Sound steelhead. The National Marine Fisheries Service has been petitioned to designate Illahee Creek (WRIA 15.0266) and the Illahee Creek Watershed as a critical habitat area for Puget Sound Steelhead.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Status

Historic and cultural resources include archaeological sites and objects, as well as traditional sites and objects used by Native Americans. Washington State law provides for protection of these sites and resources. The Illahee Preserve and surrounding area was used by Native Americans as evidenced by cedar trees in the riparian area that have been stripped of their bark for clothing, baskets, or other uses. These culturally modified trees are currently located on private property that has been targeted for acquisition for the Illahee Preserve.

At the center of the Heart of the Park is the Thompson Homestead complete with the remaining orchards, and on the Timbers Edge plateau is the Avery Homestead.



Figure 11: Old Avery homestead, acquisition target

Plans

These properties are already targeted for acquisition. If successful, plans are to determine if a path or trail can be established for the public to observe these culturally modified trees. Plans are to evaluate the Thompson and Avery Homestead properties, if acquired, for any significant historic or cultural resources.

Site Specific Status and Plans

Trails – Almira Area

Status

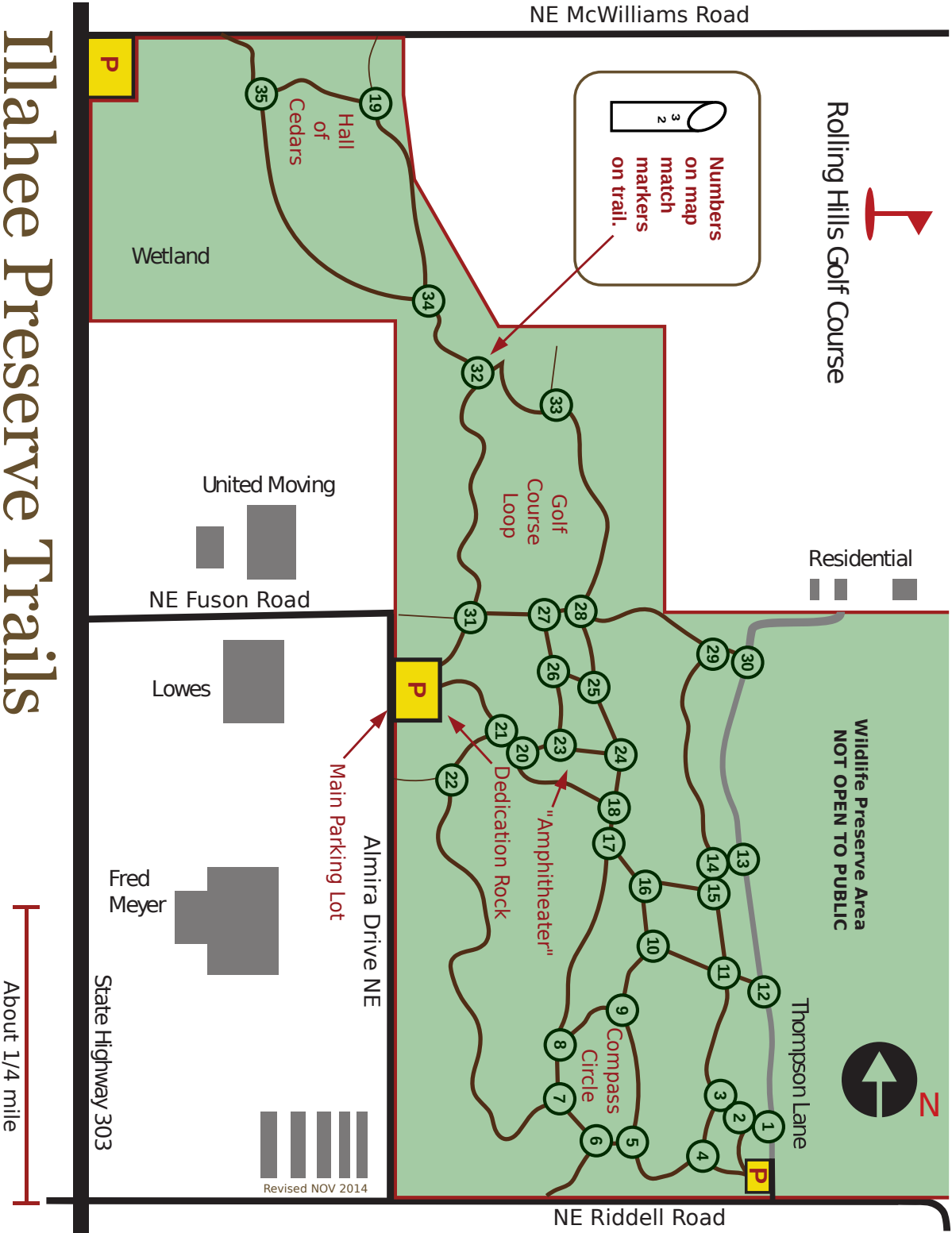
This resource area constitutes approximately 200 acres and, by virtue of the topography, vegetation, access and its unique history, is best suited for active recreational uses. Homeless people have at times colonized portions of this area, with garbage accumulation, under story destruction and sanitary consequences. Brush pickers and timber thieves have cut and removed living trees and other flora within the area. However, with increased public use and volunteer monitoring of the area, these activities have been significantly reduced.

One of the reasons for the increased use is the increased number and quality of the trails. Many of the inner trails are wide and compacted from years of offroad vehicle use prior to establishment of the Preserve. Their widths would be classified as two or double track trails. The newer trails, primarily on the perimeter and the Hall of Cedars loop trail have greatly increased access to other parts of the Preserve and have provided additional forest and terrain diversity. Those trails have been recently established on the forest duff, are not hardened and are narrow, and are classified as single track trails.

Trail quality has been enhanced by signage, improved maps, and continuous maintenance which has included the spreading of wood chips on much of the five miles of trails in this area. Additionally, volunteers and a service club have taken responsibility for keeping the trails cleared of fallen trees, and one year cleared over 100 trees that had fallen across trails.



Figure 12: A wider trail section



Illahnee Preserve Trails

Figure 13: Almira area trail map

Plans

The plans for this area are to continue to maintain the trail system to the highest standards. Trail maintenance needs to continue and increase with increased usage. Additional volunteers and volunteer maintenance crews will be needed.

Double track trails should be suitable for shared use trails, including foot, bike, and equestrian use. If pedestrian trail usage increases in popularity, equestrian usage may need to be re-evaluated. Unhardened and single track trails will not be open to equestrian use due to the narrowness and soft composition.

Interpretive signage along some of the trails has been proposed to help park users become familiar and knowledgeable about the trees and shrubs and other natural features along the trails. Others have complained there are too many signs which detract from the natural environment. As a compromise, interpretive signs should be kept near trailheads or on a special short nature trail loop at the Almira trailhead. Trailhead facilities, including restrooms, are proposed to be added in the near future considering the increasing number of people now using the parking lots and trails. There is also a plan to add a picnic shelter and finish the Almira parking lot landscaping with native plants.

Trails – South Illahee Creek Plateau

Status

With the expansion plans of the Illahee Preserve's boundaries, there will be opportunities for additional trail systems along the South Illahee Creek plateau. The area to the south borders a number of properties where there is an equestrian population. Recently equestrian proponents from these areas have requested shared use trails in the Preserve.

With the possibility that increased pedestrian and bike usage in the Almira area could necessitate making the trails off limits to horses, it is especially important to establish an equestrian shared use trail system in the south plateau area. The South Illahee Creek plateau area offers new options in support of equestrian activities.

The South Illahee Creek plateau area is an area that has been targeted for acquisitions and conservation easements in the original Stewardship Plan. During the first grant cycle for the Preserve a crucial property in this area was purchased. This property is currently isolated from the other Preserve properties, but was available for purchase at the time and contains the headwaters of the south fork of Illahee Creek.

Plans

Current plans are to purchase or obtain conservation easements on at least portions of the remaining plateau properties that would connect all the properties with the Preserve. Along the south side of one of the properties targeted is a logging road (Carr Street) that provides the stable trail system suitable for horses, which could be connected to a ridge trail system. This in turn would connect with Trenton Avenue. All plans for this area are predicated upon the acquisition of the properties and the targeted conservation easements being proposed.

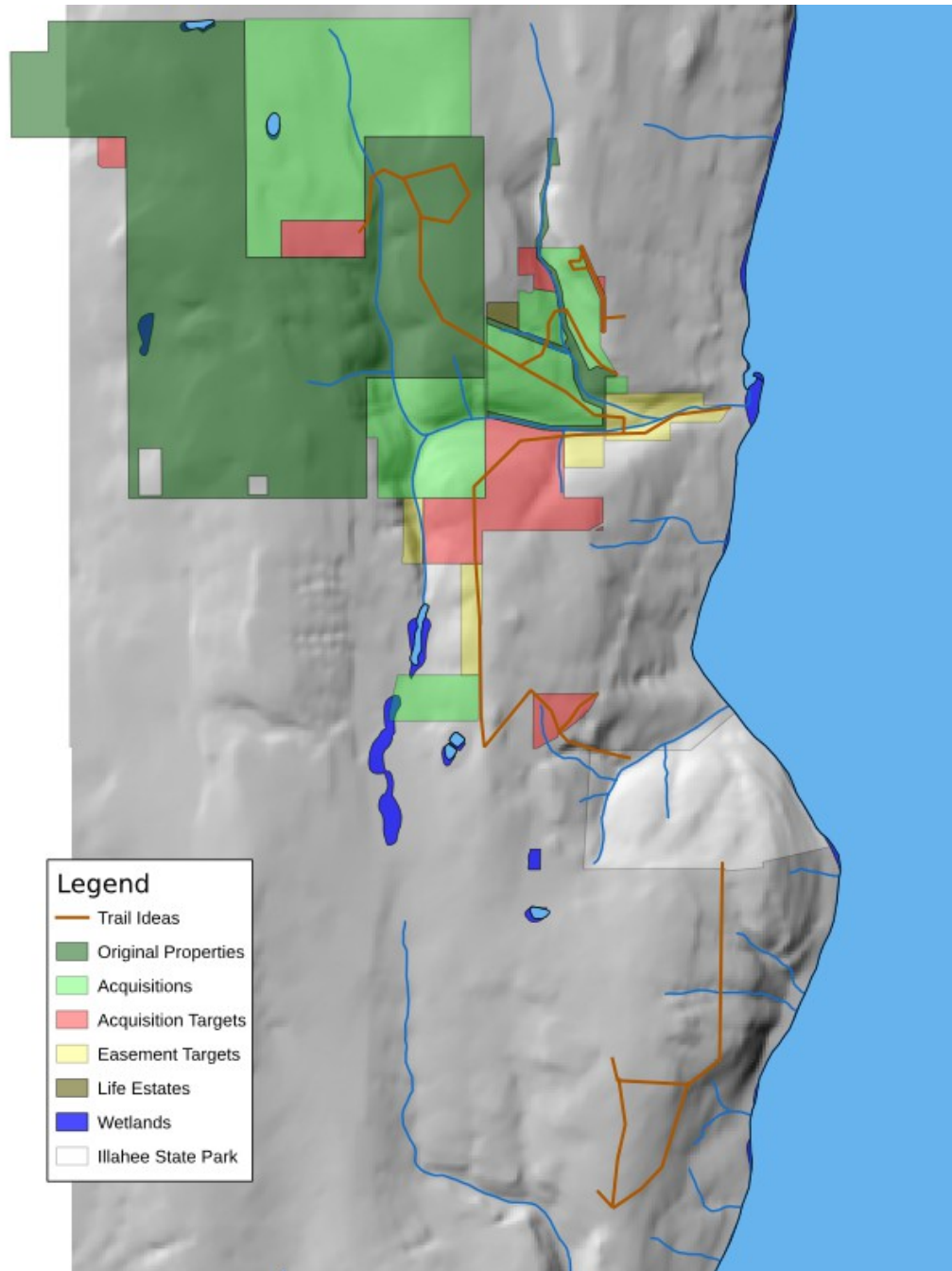


Figure 14: Illahee topology and possible regional trail concepts

Trails – Regional Trail System

Status

The trail systems of the Illahee Preserve lend themselves to be an integral part of a regional trail system of the Manette Peninsula of Central Kitsap County.

Plans

The plans for this area are predicated upon the acquisition of the properties and the targeted conservation easements being proposed. Proposed trails include connecting to Puget Sound near the Illahee Creek estuary, and via the South Illahee Creek Plateau to Illahee State Park.

Rolling Hills Golf Course (RHGC)

Status

The Rolling Hills Golf Course was generously gifted to the county by owner Don Rasmussen in 2011. Income from the course is funneled to the Olympic Peninsula Meals on Wheels charity until 2030 as a condition of the gifting. After that point income will be used to support the Preserve and Parks and Recreation programs throughout Kitsap County. The 18 hole golf course covers approximately 140 acres, of which 40 acres (seven holes) was leased from the county and the remainder was privately owned until it was gifted to Kitsap County. (The golf course had a fifty-five year lease on the county land that would have expired in June 2026.)

Plans

Kitsap County should continue to implement storm water surge suppression solutions on the golf course and areas upstream to reduce scouring in Illahee creek. Kitsap County and the course operators should evaluate options for an ecologically appropriate course maintenance regime that would reduce fertilizer, pesticide, and water runoff into Illahee and Steel Creeks. The Stewardship group should assist with native plant based solutions to improve the habitat value of the course without affecting usability



Figure 15: One of Illahee's oldest residents

Old Growth Area & Wildlife Preserve

Status

This one hundred plus acre area consists of that part of the Preserve east of the Bonneville Power right-of-way and east of the North Fork of Illahee Creek, and is recognized as the most environmentally significant portion of the forest. The old growth trees consist of a large stand of Western White Pine, as these trees were not considered marketable when the area was logged in the 1930's, along with remnant Douglas fir, Western Red Cedar, Pacific Madrona, and Western Hemlock.

Plans

The area should be managed as prime natural habitat, with restrictions on access and uses that would compromise the wildlife corridor features. Public trail development should be limited to a small area. The trail should be located and designed to allow users to observe the old growth trees of various species, while minimizing damage to those trees. The entire North Fork of the Illahee Creek ravine should be preserved for wildlife, with no trails down to the creek, and trail layout done to discourage attempts to get down to the creek. Viewing platforms near the Heart of the Park can be built at the edge of the ravine, with signs educating users of the fragility of the slopes, and of wildlife's need for privacy.

Heart of the Park

Status

This roughly 8-acre area consists of 14 platted lots owned by three separate private individuals. The properties are surrounded by the Illahee Preserve, three sides by forest and on the north by Rolling Hills Golf Course. Physical access to the Heart of the Park is via a half-mile long public road, Thompson Lane, through the Preserve. Thompson Lane has been the site of illegal dumping in the past and still at times is problematic for dumping.

Plans

The County should, over time, purchase these lots as they become available for purchase, and the area should be developed for active use recreation opportunities and possibly an Interpretive Center. Additionally, Fuson Road should be considered for possible access to this area with the Thompson Lane roadway becoming a spine trail for the park.

Interpretive Center

Status

The 'Heart of the Park' was noted in the original Stewardship Plan as the recommended location for an Interpretive Center. It has also been mentioned as a possible site of an Environmental Learning Center. Also, included in the original Stewardship Plan was another educational center, an Educational Salmon Hatchery that was proposed for the lower reaches of Illahee Creek, just west of the culvert under Illahee Road.

Plans

There appear to be a number of areas that lend themselves to learning centers for various purposes. The area near the mouth of the creek represents the ideal location for a marine or stream environmental learning center, while the more heavily forested area would be ideal for a forest interpretive center. A marine educational center would be predicated upon purchase of property in the area, and likewise would be the same for a forest interpretive center. These must remain long term goals pending the outcome of property acquisitions.

Implementation Plans & Projects

Acquisitions (Purchases & Conservation Easements)

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
Acq-1	Trade 60+ acres of North Perry properties for 4 acres in Preserve for NP pump station, water tower, and laydown yard	The 60+ acres were the water source for the Illahee Community and were given to NP when NP became the water purveyor for the area.	COMPLETED 2004
Acq-2	Purchase Rest Place properties (IAC grant)	The 10.82 acres abut the east side of Illahee Creek's North Tributary	COMPLETED 2005
Acq-3	Purchase Rogers/Cannon properties (IAC grant)	The 6.49 acres abut the west side of Illahee Creek's North Tributary	COMPLETED 2005
Acq-4	Purchase Life Estate on Morris south property (IAC grant)	The 1.81 acre property abuts the north side of a seasonal IC tributary	COMPLETED 2005
Acq-5	Purchase Conservation Easement on Kitsap Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (KUUF) property (Parks Dept)	The ~5 acre property straddles a section of the South Fork of Illahee Creek.	Initiated 2004 Finalizing 2014/2015
Acq-6	Purchase Bogan property (IAC grant)	The 10.84 acre property straddles a section of the South Fork of Illahee Creek, and is the primary source of seeps and springs feeding the South Fork of Illahee Creek	COMPLETED 2005
Acq-7	Purchase Roosevelt property (Coastal Protection Fund Grant)	The 1 acre property abuts the North Tributary of Illahee Creek	COMPLETED 2007
Acq-8	Accept Gift of Rolling Hills Golf Course (RHGC) (Gifted by Don Rasmussen, RHGC owner)	The 104 acre golf course was gifted to Kitsap County by owner Don Rasmussen conditional on \$200K annual contribution to the Olympic Peninsula Meals on Wheels program from the golf course profits	COMPLETED 2011 \$4,000,000
Acq-9	Purchase Belden property in Heart of the Park (Parks Dept)	The ~1 acre property is the part of the Thompson Homestead.	Initiated 2014

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
Acq-10	Purchase the Holms' properties in the Heart of the Park	The ~6 acres represent 12 properties located on the site of the Thompson homestead.	Landowner Agrmnt 2014 2016 Grant?
Acq-11	Purchase Cutrell property in the Heart of the Park	The ~2 acre property represents the 14th and final Heart of the Park property desired to be purchased. Owners did not want to sign Landowner Agreement papers.	Try again in 2016
Acq-12	Purchase Van Bynum property	The ~3 acre commercial property contains wetlands contiguous with the Preserve.	Landowner Agrmnt 2014 2016 Grant?
Acq-13	Purchase Winger property	The ~3 acre property abuts the west side of the IC North Tributary and is the access property for the Hicks Avenue Stormwater Drainage Project.	Landowner Agrmnt 2014 2016 Grant?
Acq-14	Purchase Turnquist property	The ~1 acre property is the location for the drainage for the Hicks Avenue Stormwater Drainage Project.	Landowner Agrmnt 2014 2016 Grant?
Acq-15	Purchase Conservation Easement on Elliott property	The undeveloped ~8-10 acres of the east side of the property provides connectivity with the Preserve property to the south, and a wildlife corridor and future regional trail system to Illahee State Park, and beyond.	Landowner Agrmnt 2014 2016 Grant?
Acq-16	Purchase Chaffee property	The undeveloped ~5? acres (7 parcels) provide wildlife connectivity with open space tracts and Illahee State Park.	Landowner Agrmnt 2014 2016 Grant?
Acq-17	Purchase Timbers Edge properties, either as a whole or by parcels (see items Acq-17a thru 17e below)	The ~36 acre set of 7 properties effectively block connectivity with other Preserve properties. They also abut the main stem of Illahee Creek.	Landowner Agrmnt 2014 2015 Purchase?
Acq-17a	Purchase Timbers Edge parcels 012401-1-168-2002 (6.14 acres) & 012401-1-001-2003 (4.54 a)	This 10.68 acre property ensures north south connectivity between the Preserve and the Elliott property and the Preserve property Acq-6 that was acquired in 2005. (Priority 1 of 5)	Contingency Plan for 2015

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
Acq-17b	Purchase Timbers Edge parcels 4429-026-001-0108 (10.2 acres) & 4429-026-001-0009 (1.11 a)	This 11.31 acre property ensures east west connectivity between the Preserve and the TE Acq-17c property (Priority 2 of 5)	Contingency Plan for 2015
Acq-17c	Purchase Timbers Edge parcel 4429-026-004-0006 (3.48 acres)	This 3.48 acre property ensures east west connectivity between the Preserve and the Friday property (Priority 3 of 5)	Contingency Plan for 2015
Acq-17d	Purchase Timbers Edge parcel 062402-2-013-2001 (5.3 acres)	This 5.3 acre parcel is the site of the Avery Homestead, which covers approximately 4 acres of the 5.3 acre parcel. (Priority 5 of 5)	Contingency Plan for 2015
Acq-17e	Purchase Timbers Edge parcel 062402-2-014-2000 (5.42 acres)	This 5.42 acre parcel is at the high point of the TE properties and remains wooded. (Priority 4 of 5)	Contingency Plan for 2015
Acq-18	Purchase Conservation Easement on Friday property	The undeveloped ~5 acre portion of the property abuts the south side of the main stem of Illahee Creek.	Obtain Landowner Agrmnt for 2016 Grant?
Acq-19	Purchase Conservation Easement on Krigsman property	The ~12 acre property straddles the main stem of Illahee Creek.	Obtain Landowner Agrmnt for 2016 Grant?
Acq-20	Purchase Conservation Easement on Mossano property	The ~1-2 acre portion of the property that abuts the north side of the main stem of Illahee Creek. The area is an estuary wetland and flood plain.	Obtain Landowner Agrmnt for 2016 Grant?
Acq-21	Purchase Conservation Easement on property adjacent to Illahee State Park	The ~3-5 acre undeveloped north portion of the property contains wetlands and provides wildlife corridor connectivity with Illahee State Park.	Obtain Landowner Agrmnt for 2016 Grant?
Acq-22	Purchase/place permanent easements on original 352 acre DNR property.	The current deed restrictions expire in 2031. Long term protection is required for recovery of the watershed and ecological functions.	Work with GPC and Parks to complete prior to 2030

Capital Projects

Access Projects

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
AC #1	Provide parking access, security gate and security cameras at Thompson Lane entry to the Preserve	County Park's installation.	2005 COMPLETE
AC #2	Provide primary entrance, access, and parking along Almira Road	Location recommended by Stewardship Committee, County funded for \$188,000.	2009 COMPLETE
AC #3	Provide parking access along Sunset	Sunset Residents opposed access and parking plans. Project dropped.	2006 DELETED
AC #4	Provide Preserve dedication plaque on large erratic rock at Almira entrance to the Preserve.	Plaque to recognize Audrey Boyer, Frank Chopp, KC Commissions, Illahee residents and volunteers.	2008 COMPLETED
AC #5	Provide dedication walkway	Conceptual plans developed by Parametrix and Leadership Kitsap	2015
AC #6	Provide kiosk at Almira entrance	Kiosk installed as an Eagle Scout project by Elliott Orando	2012 COMPLETED
AC #7	Provide shelter structure at Almira entrance	Project being considered by Rotary for possible 2015 completion	2015?
AC #8	Provide donor recognition at Almira entrance	Project would be interfaced with dedication walkway project AC #5 and is a naming opportunity should trust grant funds be received.	2015?
AC #9	Provide restrooms at Almira	Low maintenance restroom facilities are needed as Preserve usage continues to increase	2017?
AC #10	Provide tool storage facility	Preserve tools are currently stored at United Moving & Storage in a Mini container. Container is proposed to be moved behind the new restroom facilities	2017?

Trail Projects

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
TR #1	Provide trails system utilizing and cleaning up along existing trail system as necessary. Also see Restoration item RES #1.	Parks and Stewardship Committee task that included cleanup along the trails with the help of Parks Maintenance personnel, Purdy & Mission Creek inmate crews, Alternatives to Detention, Americorps and community volunteers. Approximately 50 tons of garbage, 22 cars, 9 engine blocks, and 17 large appliances were removed.	2002-2004 COMPLETED
TR #2	Provide new west side trail.	Trail designed and developed by Preserve Steward Dale Boyle who named it "Spotted Doe".	2007 COMPLETED
TR #3	Evaluate trail paralleling Thompson Lane	Trail developed by unknown person or persons, therefore the name "Bootleg Trail". Trail was considered an asset by the Stewardship Committee.	2009 COMPLETED
TR #4	Provide trail signage	Trail signage was first attempted as an Eagle Scout project by Justin McAlister who used engraved cedar signs, only to have them destroyed by vandals. Subsequently a trail intersection sign system was developed by a Leadership Kitsap team and installed in 2011.	2010 COMPLETED 2011 COMPLETED
TR #5	Provide loop connection to "Hall of Cedars" trail.	Loop trail recommended by David Grellier and approved by Stewardship Committee. Trail work by collaborative effort of Stewards, Rotary, Navy, Washington Youth Academy, and Preserve volunteers	2012 COMPLETED

Restoration Projects

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
RES #1	Cleanup of the Preserve from decades of using the DNR School Trust Lands as a dump ground.		
RES #2	Close off Preserve to dumping		
	Compass Circle Meadow restoration project		2008-PRESENT ONGOING

Stormwater Projects

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
SW #1	Upgrade Stormwater Pond #288	Pond is undersized and overflow contributes to stormwater surges plaguing Illahee Creek. This is a KC Public Works project.	2014 COMPLETED
SW #2	Enlarge stormwater drainage ditches and retention areas at RHGC		2013 COMPLETED

Public Information and Education

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
PIE-1	Form a Stewardship Committee to develop a Stewardship Plan for the Illahee Preserve	13 community members were appointed on 2/24/03 by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to complete the task (Resolution No 38-2003)	Feb 2003 COMPLETED
PIE-2	Approve the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Plan of July 2003 (Document was approved by the BOCC on 26 August 2003)	Stewardship Plan was prepared by the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Committee with the help of Rick Fackler, Park Planner	August 2003 COMPLETED
PIE-3	Establish a not-for-profit corporation under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code to support and implement the goals and objectives of the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Plan	The name of the corporation is the Illahee Forest Preserve, Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 30-0221632 State of Washington UBI: 602 363 044	Feb 2004 COMPLETED
PIE-4	Establish a website for Illahee Preserve issues	The illaheecommunity.com website was set up as an umbrella website for both the Illahee Preserve and the Illahee Community.	June 2006 COMPLETED
PIE-5	Establish email newsletters	Residents reported they wanted a newsletter type of email with wildlife information and photos.	2007 COMPLETED
PIE-6	Hold public meetings to brief community on watershed, ground water, and aquifer issues.	Public meetings were scheduled in the evenings at the Norm Dick's Government Center,	Mar 11, 2008 Jan 29, 2009 Jun 30, 2009 Mar 29, 2011 COMPLETED
PIE-7	Transition website to a Content Management System (CMS) to expedite the timeliness of newsletters.	WordPress was selected as the CMS to prepare website updates, which are subsequently copied and sent out as emails.	2011 COMPLETED
PIE-8	Determine Educational Sign Concept for use in the Illahee Preserve	Decision was made to use 2' by 3' interpretive signs, similar to local, state and Federal groups.	2011 COMPLETE

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
PIE -9	General Information Signs	Locate at primary entrance points	2011 COMPLETE
PIE-10	Native Plant Demonstration Rain Garden Signage	Locate along rain garden pathways	2011 COMPLETE
PIE-11	Kiosk Signage	Locate at Almira Entrance	2011 COMPLETE
PIE-12	Produce documentary film of the Illahee Preserve and restoration efforts.	Film is entitled “Illahee – Saving Puget Sound One Watershed at a Time” and runs for about 35 minutes.	2011 COMPLETE
PIE-13	Promote Illahee Film showings locally and regionally	Film is being sold and circulated with showings in many venues, including showings in Bremerton, Tacoma, Port Townsend, and Portland.	2012 CONTINUING
PIE-14	Develop Illahee Preserve website and project management system	A separate website focused on the Preserve and IFP, and focused on project management was launched.	2013 COMPLETE
PIE -15	Use website more effectively for project management and volunteer hour tracking.	Requires more training and reminders.	2015
PIE -16	Update the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Plan		2015

Monitoring

Water Quality (WQ) Monitoring

Monthly water quality monitoring began in 2006 in an effort to identify pollution sources in the Illahee Creek watershed. Based on the Health District's trend monitoring data, Illahee Creek had failed the Washington State Department of Ecology fecal coliform (FC) bacteria water quality standards for 9 of the past 11 years. The monitoring effort completed in 2009 and indicated the FC pollution was coming from the populated areas outside of the Preserve.

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
WQ-01	Monitor FC of Main Stem, 500' upstream of the culvert	The findings of this station should closely correspond with those obtained the Health District.	2006-2009 COMPLETE
WQ-02	Monitor FC of North Tributary prior to confluence with main stream flows	The North Tributary had sufficiently high fecal coliform counts to warrant establishing stations WQ-06, 07 & 08	2006-2009 COMPLETE
WQ-03	Monitor FC of North Fork prior to confluence with South Fork	FC counts were significantly diminished at this station and testing was shifted to station 2A	2006-2007 COMPLETE
WQ-04	Monitor FC of South Fork prior to confluence with North Fork	FC counts were significantly diminished at this station and testing was shifted to station 2A	2006-2007 COMPLETE
WQ-05	Monitor FC of South Fork prior to flow into the South Fork pond	While FC counts were high, indicating upstream concerns, they were significantly diminished downstream and testing was shifted to station 2A. Testing was also stopped because of access issues. While the geometric mean was 39 it exceeds the allowable 10% limit.	2006-2007 COMPLETE
WQ-06	Monitor FC of North Tributary at entrance to Wise Street Culvert	There were no flows at this station for 5 months of the year, but the geometric mean was 55 which exceeds the allowable level of 50.	2006-2009 COMPLETE
WQ-2A	Monitor FC of Main Stem, upstream of confluence with North Tributary	This location was picked to replace locations WQ-03 & 04 based on one year of good test results.	2006-2009 COMPLETE

ID #	Description	Comments	Timeframe
WQ-07	Monitor FC of West Flows at Wise Street prior to confluence at Wise Street Culvert of North Tributary	The only significant flows at this station are during extended rainy periods, and it should be deleted.	2006-2009 COMPLETE
WQ-08	Monitor FC of North Flows at Wise Street prior to confluence at Wise Street Culvert of North Tributary	The only significant flows at this station are during extended rainy periods, but it has a high geometric mean of 79, which exceeds the allowable level of 50.	2006-2009 COMPLETE
WQ-09	Monitor FC of North Fork at McWilliams Road culvert	This location showed high FC counts with a geometric mean of 63, which exceeds the allowable level of 50.	2006-2009 COMPLETE
WQ-10	Monitor FC of North Fork at Rolling Hills Golf Course	This station showed acceptable FC counts.	2006-2009 COMPLETE
WQ-11	Consider another round of testing based on storm water capital projects completing in 2015	FC monitoring requires an agreement with the Health District to cover FC laboratory testing expenses.	Planned For 2015/2016

Document History

2014-2015

- Large updates and revisions.

2003

- Initial document produced.

References

- Aspect Consulting, 2006, Preliminary Baseflow Investigation of Illahee Creek, Prepared for the Port of Illahee
- Keta Waters LLC, 2006, Storm Water Effects in Illahee Creek Watershed, prepared for the Illahee Forest Preserve, Bremerton, Washington
- Parametrix, Keta Waters Consulting and Stillwater Sciences, 2008, Illahee Creek Watershed Surface Water Management Plan, Prepared by Parametrix, Bellevue, Washington, October 2008
- Virginia Tech/U.S. Forest Service, 2005, Research for the Development of Best Management Practices to Minimize Horse Trail Impacts on the Hoosier National Forest, Prepared by Virginia Tech, Department of Forestry, Blacksburg, Virginia, March 2005

Appendix I: Extended History to 2003

In the distant past in what Native Americans called Illahee, "a place to rest," a forest of Douglas-Fir, red alder, big leaf maple, and western red cedar grew unfettered. Native Americans came to the place to relax. They walked the land, and trails were formed among the undergrowth of sword fern, salmonberry, and Oregon grape. Then a fire happened, by causes, unknown causes, that opened the canopy about 271 years ago (approximately 1732 AD), allowing western white pine and western hemlock to sprout up among the more established species. Time passed and the forest recovered, and the natives returned to rest. Not too long thereafter immigrants came to the land, and homesteads were established. Then a 640 acre piece of this area became the Illahee Trust Land by federal decree. Next came timber companies, and "a place to rest" was "high-graded" in the mid- 1920's. The smaller old growth Douglas-fir went untouched and by 2003, they reached the age of 270 plus years. Below this stand less fortunate trees were clear cut in the 1930's. A 68 year old stand of red alder grew on that cleared land. Time passed and various efforts were undertaken to clear cut this forest and develop it for commercial and residential purposes. Citizens arose and lamented the possible loss of "a place to rest." They organized and after a 25 year campaign, they convinced farsighted government leaders and agencies to designate the land as park and preserve. A record of that struggle was recorded and is captured below.

The Illahee Trust Land came into being originally via the Federal Land Ordinance of 1785. The Continental Congress ordered that all new lands acquired by purchase or treaty be surveyed and divided into grid patterns of thirty -six sections of land, each section being 640 acres, or into divisions of six square miles called townships. The Land Ordinance of 1785 went on to decree that: "There shall be reserved the lot No. 16, of every township, for the maintenance of public schools within the said townships." When the colonies formed a union and declared themselves the United States of America in 1789, the Federal Land Ordinance of 1785 continued as the principal land management vehicle.

It was over 100 years later before the State of Washington was created and the land act held, eventually giving the original 640 acres of Illahee Trust Land to the State for school construction purposes. The Commissioner of Lands of the State of Washington was responsible for all trust lands. The DNR (the Department of Natural Resources) was created eventually to manage these lands on behalf of the Commissioner of Lands for the benefit of schools. These lands have undergone many passages in the last hundred plus years since the State of Washington was formed. In an issue of Columbia: The Magazine of Northwest History, the summer 2001 issue, Linda Byers attests to this journey in an essay titled "Forest Reserves Vs Money for Schools." In this article Ms. Byers summarizes some of the battles that have taken place to keep in tact the Trust Lands for Schools.

The Illahee Forest of Kitsap County has also undergone many changes since its original status as 640 acres of land. Over the years about 240 acres of it was sold for commercial or residential uses, the proceeds going to school construction. An additional 40 acres was leased to the Rolling Hills Golf Course. That lease expires in 2026. The remaining 360 acres contains a salmon stream and is heavily forested. A major feature is a stand of approximately 50 acres of old growth conifers. They have been here since at least 1732. These trees were 53 years old when the Ordinance of 1785 was passed by the Continental Congress. These trees were 157 years old when the State of Washington was formed. And these trees will be there for a long time to come for the future generations of Kitsapers.

The first efforts to protect the remaining acres of the Illahee Forest started in 1978 and lasted into 1981. The DNR announced in late 1978 that the Illahee Trust Lands were going to be logged and that the land would be developed into 1200 housing units, including town houses and several six to eight story elevator apartment buildings. This announcement was the spark that ignited citizen activists to come to the rescue of the Illahee Forest.

Pat and Margaret Carey of the Sheridan Neighborhood Association immediately called for citizen attendance at DNR hearings on the disposal of the Trust Lands. Citizens from various neighborhoods began writing letters to the editor of the Bremerton Sun, decrying the push to log the forest and to build such high-density housing. Citizens crowded into the DNR hearings asking for alternatives to logging and development. The Bremerton Area Council of Neighborhoods under the leadership of President Glenn Vockrodt demanded that an Environmental Impact Statement be filed on the DNR's development proposal. The council also noted that increased population required increased open space and parks, and that the forest should be set aside for educational use by school districts in the county. Hearings were held in January 1979 at Esquire Hills Elementary School.

Practically all of 1979 saw encounters between the DNR and citizens' groups as in other areas. The Bremerton Sun reported on the many meetings that were held during that year. The DNR, charged with developing income for the schools from the land holdings, didn't give up their charge easily. The DNR hired a consulting firm in May of 1979 to propose plans for the development of the Illahee Trust Land and to deal with the environmental impact issues and citizens groups.

Pat and Margaret Carey of the Sheridan Neighborhood Association took action through their organization by: writing letters to the Kitsap County Commissioners; requesting the County to purchase the land for park use; writing to the consulting firm, hired by the DNR, inviting State Legislators to visit the Illahee Trust Land for guided tours of the property; writing letters to Bert Cole, the then Public Commissioner of Lands for the State of Washington; and writing to Joe Murphy Pat Carey wrote a letter to Joe Murphy, the then Chairman of the Washington State Democratic Party, asking for assistance in turning the Trust Lands into Park. Pat Carey also spoke before the Bremerton City Council, asking them to become involved in the fate of the Illahee Trust Lands.

The Bremerton Council of Neighborhoods enlisted the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters, PSNS Local #631 to write to Bert Cole. They did so, asking for alternatives to logging and development. A citizens group led a movement to create a Central Kitsap Parks District.

These actions went on non-stop throughout the summer and fall of 1979. Pat and Margaret Carey were veterans at preserving public lands for open space and park use. They had led the way in getting Blake Island so designated earlier. Many other citizens attended meetings, wrote letters to editors, and participated in leading tours of the Illahee Trust Land. The DNR had the charge of creating revenue from the land, but activists were aware that the original tract of land had been 640 acres. The acres sold from the original 640 acres had provided significant funds already for school construction.

Other developments continued during this first time period from late 1978 to summer of 1981. A market survey from a DNR consultant reported that between 1350 and 1670 housing units could be built on the 360 acres of Illahee Trust Land. This was an increase from the earlier 1200 units proposed. The report contained three scenarios-single family lots plus 330 apartment units and townhouses. The second proposal was for 800 townhouse units, 300 small lots for houses and 100 units in an elevator apartment building. The third proposal was for 600 units in a 25 story high rise and 600 more units in garden apartments and townhouses. Needless to say this last option caused a furor in the neighborhoods surrounding the Trust Land.

Counter proposals circulated in the coming months. The DNR suggested that Bremerton annex the Illahee Trust Land. The owner of the Rolling Hills Golf course supported that annexation. Bert Cole proposed that the Kitsap County Commissioners consider purchasing the Trust Land. At a public meeting on January 16, 1980, Pat Carey asked Rep. Norm Dicks to seek federal funds to purchase the Trust Land as a park. Rep. Dicks promised to look into it. The League of Women voters of Kitsap County supported the idea of the County's purchase of the Trust Land for park purposes. Pat Carey attended the Bremerton Parks and Recreation Committee meeting at Sheridan Village Community Building. The committee agreed to support the purchase of Illahee Trust Land for park purposes.

Citizens signed petitions to get the county to purchase the Illahee Trust Land for park purposes. Citizens also circulated petitions for signatures to place a measure on the November ballot to buy the land through a bond issue. The petitions didn't get the necessary 4500 signatures. On April 9, Pat Carey wrote to the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission for a spot on their agenda for their April 1980 meeting in Bremerton.

And so the process continued, for this was a serious grass roots citizen's effort. Finally the DNR withdrew its proposals, but the suggestion by Pat Carey and Bert Cole that Kitsap County purchase the Trust Land was the first sign of the ultimate resolution to the issue. The political will, however, was not there during the ensuing seven years.

Because of the lack of resolution to this issue during this interim period, on February 18, 1987 a newspaper article appeared announcing the DNR's renewed intention to log the trees and sell the land of the Illahee Trust Land within 6 months for development purposes. On March 26, 1987 a new group entered the dispute. The Illahee Trust Land Committee was formed to oppose logging and development of the Illahee Trust Lands. This group was formed largely of citizens who lived just south of the Trust Land. Members of this group and many other citizens wrote letters to the editor opposing the sale of the land. Olav and Cynthia Brakstad led the charge with incisive letters throughout the period. Ken Martin wrote a series of columns for the Bremerton Sun that asked penetrating questions regarding the issues of development and preservation. A succession of leaders headed this committee including Steve Davies, Brooks Synder, Orville White, and Steve Rodgers. This period of confrontation lasted from 1987-1989.

The first action of the Illahee Trust Land Committee was to request a 2 -year moratorium on the proposed logging of the Illahee Trust Land. The request was sent to Brian Boyle, the new commissioner of Public Lands. The Illahee Trust Land Committee sent a letter to the Dept. of Fisheries concerning the Illahee Trust Land salmon stream. Letters were written to local State Representatives. An effort was made by the committee to get a Parks and Recreation District on the ballot once again. Three other earlier participants in the struggle to save the Illahee Trust land for park purposes came back into the fray. The Sheridan Neighborhood Assoc., the Bremerton Area Council of Neighborhoods, and the League of Women voters organized meetings, passed around petitions, and wrote letters to Brian Boyle, the County Commissioners, and other political representatives. Prominent figures in this joint effort were Pat and Margaret Carey. These groups were digging in for another long campaign to save the forest.

Another direction that the Illahee Trust Land Committee took was to involve various environmental groups. David Hecker had a hand in this effort. He contacted the local Chapter of the Audubon Society to do a survey of the bird life in the Illahee Trust Land. They agreed to include the Trust Land in their survey but because of migratory patterns of birds this would take at least nine months. He recruited Margaret Ashworth, a faculty member at Olympic College, to do a survey of the plant life in the Trust Land. She did so and produced a five-page listing of plants on the western two-thirds of the Trust Land. He contacted the Nature Conservancy to see if they wouldn't examine the Trust Land to see if it could find reason to purchase the property for preservation. He attended several regional meetings of The Nature Conservancy and wrote letters to state and national leaders of the organization. The Nature Conservancy investigated and made the decision not to purchase the land, but it succeeded in getting the Washington Natural Heritage Program to do a survey of the property.

This state funded program had money to purchase property for conservation. Rex Crawford, a plant ecologist who worked for the Washington Natural Heritage Program, did the survey and wrote the report which was completed by October 13, 1987. Since the old growth had been selectively harvested in the 1920's, the property didn't fit the criteria for conservation under the Natural Heritage Program. The report did, however, contain the following words: "This does not, however, lessen the value of the forest as a native environment in an increasingly urbanized landscape. As urbanization continues, these high

graded old-growth stands will become more valuable as representatives of natural diversity. Since the stand is less than a mile from Illahee State Park and next to a golf course, the local community could gain by acquiring it as a natural park or an open space site. If recreation is the designated use for the site, the Douglas-Fir stand should be minimally developed."

There was another lull in the DNR effort to develop the Illahee Trust Land, but by 1996 it started another campaign to sell the property. A new group of citizens rose to meet this challenge from the DNR. The Illahee Community Club, led by Audrey Boyer and friends, assumed the stewardship of action to protect the Illahee Forest. This group met at Audrey Boyer's home in the community of Illahee. By then the political leadership was in place to make the dream that citizens had held for nearly 25 years come true. Audrey Boyer, Irwin and Judith Krigsman, and others attended meetings of the Kitsap County Commissioners, urging them to find a way to preserve the Illahee Forest for future generations, emphasizing the County's need for picnic areas, parks, and hiking trails. The DNR countered with a proposal to the County Commissioners to rezone the land from forest to an urban designation. This action would have driven the value of the land to higher and higher levels, making it impossible to purchase as recreational and preservation property.

The Washington State Legislature came to the rescue. In 2001 under the leadership of Frank Chopp, Speaker of the House and with the support of Jennifer Belcher, the then Commissioner of Public Lands, the legislature created a Trust Land Transfer Program. Under this program Kitsap County, via the leadership of Charlotte Garrido, Chris Endresen, and Tim Botkin, purchased the Illahee Trust Land for \$3 million, using conservation futures, a portion of property tax funds. The trees on the property, valued at \$ 2 million, were purchased by the State, the trees transferred to Kitsap County with the land and the funds deposited to the State's School Trust Fund. Debbie Van Buren administered the trust land transfer for the DNR.

With the Illahee Forest finally free from development purposes, the next phase of the process to create a park and preserve started. Under the leadership of Irwin and Judith Krigsman, Jim Trainer, and Rick Fackler, planner for the Kitsap County Parks Department, citizens met to consider options for the forest. Meetings were held at the Log Cabin on property owned by the Krigmans.

County Commissioner Patti Lent joined the group and suggested that the group apply for Stewardship Committee status. They did so, and on February 24, 2003, thirteen citizens (members of the Jim Aho family, Audrey Boyer, Cynthia Brakstad, David Hecker, Cynthia Holben, Irwin and Judith Krigsman, Hugh Morris, Frank Richmond, Cathy Stensen, and Jim Trainer) were appointed by Kitsap County. Their charge was to work with Kitsap County's Park Department to develop a master plan for uses and management of the property. Before that major goal could be approached, a few preliminary measures had to be undertaken.

The first order of business was to remove debris and many abandoned auto and pick-up truck bodies. Commissioner Lent found the funds and Dori Leckner, staff member of the Kitsap County Parks, arranged for the removal of trash and vehicle frames. The second order of business was to secure the park from squatters, motorized vehicles, paintball and wood cutting activities as well as vandalism. These objectives were accomplished through many avenues and involved law enforcement agencies. Another concern was the health of the property itself. Laura Boyle arranged for a visit by Steve Arno, a University of Montana forester who also happened to be her brother and former Kitsap County resident.

He joined a hike through the western half of the Illahee Forest. He pointed out significant features of the forest, especially the healthy stands of western white pine, and located trouble spots where potential forest fire hazard existed. He advised immediate action to curb extreme erosion that exists at the forest's boundary with the golf course. Finally the Illahee Stewardship Committee started on its master plan for the Illahee Forest. Ann Lovell joined the Committee and arranged for the use of a meeting room at the

Kitsap Unitarian Universalist Fellowship property. Other meetings were held at the Kitsap Regional Library on Sylvan Way.

They met frequently and considered a wide range of possible uses for the forest. Preservation, education, and recreation topped the discussions. It was decided to designate the parts of the forest as old growth preserve, greenbelt, active use area, and trail area. Committees were formed to work on each area with timelines established for results. Comprehensive plans for each area were written and discussed as a whole and resulted in concrete plans for each section of the forest. Two-year priorities were proposed to fulfill the plans as laid out.

Long-range plans for acquisitions to extend the forest were also a part of the master plan deliberations. A parcel of land in the center of the forest that had originally been homestead land and subsequently developed as a small housing project was determined to be the first priority in acquisitions. Its eventual purchase would allow the building of an Environmental Interpretive Education Center. A second purchase would be lands held along the Illahee Creek outside the present boundaries of the forest. Securing these properties and/or establishing a conservation easement would allow several future developments: a forest to sound trail, salmon habitat preservation, and an educational salmon hatchery. The final purchase would be acquisition of the Rolling Hills Golf Course. Nearly one-third of it is now leased from the County, a lease that expires in 2026.

Thus concludes the history of the Illahee Trust Land and Forest up to mid-summer 2003. During that time Kitsap County Commissioners adopted the master plan as formulated by the Stewardship Committee and Kitsap Park staff. This action brought to conclusion a long process over a 25 year period.

Citizen activists, various conservation societies, federal and state government agencies, Kitsap County Commissioners, and a number of plant and forest specialists acted in a democratic process to secure a park and preserve for present and future generations of Kitsap County residents.

So more time will pass. If enlightened government officials and vigilant citizens work together to carry out the master plan, generation upon generation of youth, adults, and seniors will enjoy "a place to rest." The stand of old-growth trees will mark its 300th birthday and the stand of red alder will attain centennial status. Swordfern and salmonberry will continue to flourish. By and by the time may come when this place will become known as the "Central Park" of Kitsap County.

Appendix II: DNR Resource Inventory (2001)

Resource Inventory

Material provided by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided the basis for most of what is written in this section of the Stewardship Plan. The DNR has extensively examined this site in the recent past, and we have been given reports written by hydrologists, wildlife biologists, botanists and foresters. Additional information provided by Dr. Christopher May addressing salmon habitat values of the stream has also been consolidated and reformatted with the DNR material to create this Resource Inventory.

Geomorphology, Soils and Hydrology

Eleven thousand years ago, at the end of the most recent episode of continental glaciation in North America, there was a sheet of ice more than a mile thick over Kitsap County. That ice sheet was littered with rocks, gravel, sand and silt that it had scoured and collected in its travels from the north and from the mountains surrounding the Puget Trough. As the glacier melted, the earth has been relieved of the weight of that ice, and has been rising relative to sea level. That “rebound” phenomenon is responsible for the steep ravines with unstable slopes within which many of the streams of Kitsap County, including Illahee Creek, are entrenched. The earth is rising at a rate with which the streams are yet unable to reach equilibrium. Given time, erosion by the streams and gravity will result in valleys with much gentler slopes, but not for thousands of years.

As the continental glacier melted over Kitsap County, the material carried by the ice was deposited like a blanket over the landscape. That material, mostly an unsorted mixture of clay silts, sand and rocks of varying sizes formed a layer called till over the underlying rock formations. The till, having a clay matrix, is a hard, impermeable layer, resistant to infiltration of water. This is the material upon which the soils of Illahee Forest are and have been accumulating since the last glaciers melted. The soils of the forest that lay over that till are relatively coarse and porous.

Rainwater that makes its way to the ground and is in excess of what the soil can absorb filters down through the soil to the impermeable till layer. It then flows laterally until it emerges in springs or stream channels.

Clearing of vegetation or disturbance of the soil can alter this hydrologic process. Development of impermeable surfaces such as roads, driveways and building roofs reduces the amount of precipitation infiltrating into the soil. That water enters the surface water features – by pipe or over the hard surfaces, rather than by the slower route through the soil. This water also carries more pollutants directly into the streams, as they are not filtered out by the soils.

When there is a storm with heavy rainfall, land that has been cleared or developed with impermeable surfaces contributes that storm water to the stream more quickly than if it were filtering through the soil. That increased water flows with greater energy, scouring the stream bottom and banks, causing both erosion of the banks, and increased sedimentation downstream, when the water slows and no longer has the energy to carry the sediments.

Over one third of the Illahee Creek watershed has been developed for residential use or roads, particularly that part south of McWilliams Road. Calculations by Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) hydrologists estimate that that development increases the volume of water in the stream by more than 50 percent during a storm of a size that occurs once every two years. The impact of development on the volume of water in the stream is less for larger storms, but even a storm of a magnitude that would statistically occur once in 100 years would have twenty-five percent more water

flowing during the storm as a result of the roads and residences developed in the watershed. While very little of that development is within Illahee Preserve, the impacts to that portion of the creek that traverses the forest are evident. There are landslides occurring on the steep hillsides along the creek through the forest, where the raging storm water undercuts the banks. Tons of sediment generated by this erosion have been deposited downstream near Illahee Road, where the stream gradient levels.

These sediments cover gravel streambeds, degrading their habitat value for fish.

Another significant storm water problem is where storm water collected by Rolling Hills Golf Course is discharged directly into the northwest part of the forest. The volume of water flowing from two pipes is causing severe erosion (and subsequent downstream deposition) problems in that part of the forest.

Vegetation

Most of the 352.42-acre Illahee Preserve property acquired by Kitsap County from DNR is forested with vegetation typical of this region – a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees including Douglas fir, Western hemlock, western white pine, western red cedar, red alder, maple and madrona. Logging has occurred over the entire site at different times in the past 150 years, but not within the last thirty years. Understory plants include salal, evergreen huckleberry, oregon grape and sword fern in varying densities and combinations throughout the site. A list of the plants found in the forest is attached as Appendix III: Common Vegetation of Illahee Preserve on page 53.

The cleared areas that are the exceptions to this are areas for which leases or easements were granted by the DNR prior to county acquisition of the property. The largest of these areas is approximately 33 of the 40 acres leased for Rolling

Hills Golf Course, which has been developed as most of seven holes of the golf course. This area is mostly highly maintained exotic grass fairways and greens, with a few native conifers left between the fairways. Other areas within the forest that are cleared include two small areas leased to North Perry Water District for a water tower and a well, a power line corridor and road rights-of-way through and next to the property.

Illahee Forest includes four distinct timber types, all of which are mid-seral temperate forest. The northwestern-most portion of the forest (near the intersection of McWilliams Road and Wheaton Way) is composed of mostly red alder mixed with red cedar and maple. This area was logged in the 1930's, and again in the 1970's. Much of this area has wet soils.

The remainder of the property west of the incised Illahee Creek stream corridor is forested with 50 year-old Douglas Fir, western hemlock, red cedar, madrona and some white pine tree stands. This area was partially logged in the late 1970's. There is evidence of blister rust on some of the white pine trees

That part of the Illahee Creek canyon on county property, between the slope breaks, was last harvested in the 1930's and is now a stand of mostly red alder and big leaf maple, with patches and scattered Douglas fir and western red cedar, some of which are 100 to 200 years old.

The final forested area within the county's ownership is the approximately 35 acres lying on the easternmost portion of the property, east of the Illahee Creek ravine. There is a stand of 115-year-old western hemlock, red cedar and white pine with a scattering of 270-year-old Douglas Fir. Root rot is killing many of these old growth trees, as evidenced by the "blown down" rate. DNR foresters surmise that the 270-year-old trees likely originated after a fire, and that the stand was apparently opened or the canopy was partly burned 125-145 years ago. Stumps and growth rings of adjacent trees indicate that the forest was "high-graded" (the largest, most commercially valuable trees logged) in the mid 1920's.

Vegetation management issues within the county-owned forest include fire protection, root rot pockets, blister rust and controlling invasive non-native (exotic) plants, such as English ivy, Scotch broom and grasses. One likely source of the exotic plants is yard waste being dumped in the forest by neighbors.

Wildlife

This section of the stewardship plan documents an evaluation by a DNR biologist, Deborah Lindley of existing and potential wildlife habitat functions of Illahee Forest on May, 1997. She visited the site, walking several representative areas and surveying the entire area by helicopter. Further information regarding wildlife occurrences and habitat concerns was provided during a meeting with citizens and local officials, also in May 1997. The evaluation is based upon

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) data on Priority Habitats and Species (PHS), DNR Natural Heritage Sites, Threatened and Endangered species, literature on habitat relationships, the Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team (FEMAT) report (1993), and the field visit and meeting mentioned above.

Wildlife Values

In addition to their intrinsic value, wildlife communities are fundamental elements of healthy ecosystems. Interactions among wildlife species and their habitats are many and complex, and are essential to ecosystem processes and functions. In the process of meeting their life needs, animals accomplish important ecosystem "work". For example, chipmunks and squirrels disperse mycorrhizal fungi (supports nutrient cycling for tree growth); birds, bats and shrews consume insects (including tree defoliators); other birds and mammals disperse seeds (maintain vegetative diversity); woodpeckers and beavers modify physical structures (create microhabitats).

E.O. Wilson urged us to remember the "little things" that run the world.

Invertebrates also perform vital ecological functions. According to FEMAT, the litter and soil of the forest floor have some of the greatest biological diversity found anywhere. One square yard of soil may have 200,000 mites from a single group, and tens of thousands of other mites, beetles, centipedes, pseudoscorpions, springtails, and spiders. They are critical to many ecosystem functions; some may be indicators. Scientists estimate that 20 to 30% of the species have not been described yet. FEMAT described eleven functional groups, based on ecological roles: (1) coarse wood chewers, (2) litter and soil dwellers, (3) understory and forest gap herbivores, (4) canopy herbivores, (5) epizootic forest species, (6) aquatic herbivores, (7) aquatic detritivores, (8) aquatic predators, (9) pollinators, (10) riparian herbivores, and (11) riparian predators.

Mollusks are a major source of biodiversity in the forest. They are food sources for fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and some birds. Mollusks as a group are vulnerable due to high endemism, rareness, low mobility, specialization and sensitivity to any ground disturbance.

Amphibians are ecologically important because of potentially high numbers and significant biomass (up to 5,000 individuals/acre). According to FEMAT, they are important environmental indicators; loss of overall amphibian diversity would have negative ecological consequences. They are vulnerable because they require specialized habitats such as intermittent streams, down wood, sloughing bark and moist microclimates, and they have low mobility and high genetic variability.

Wildlife Species in the Preserve

Deborah observed, heard or noted signs of the following species: pileated woodpecker, northern flicker, red-breasted sapsucker, downy woodpecker, Wilson's warbler, song sparrow, western flycatcher, chestnut-backed chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, American robin, common crow, Steller's jay, barn

swallow, violet-green swallow, northern junco, black-tailed deer, raccoon, voles (likely southern redbacked) and one bald eagle. Citizens noted observations of one otter and bald eagles roosting in trees on the property. Despite a very thorough search by helicopter at low elevation, Deborah observed no large raptor nests on or near the property. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife data revealed no documented occurrences of threatened or endangered species on the property. There currently are no PHS designations on the property.

Species of Concern Near the Preserve

There are a number of bald eagle nest territories along the shorelines within the surrounding four townships. The nearest territory is one mile to the south. Citizens noted observations of up to nine eagles feeding on the beach east of the property. The closest great blue heron rookery is three miles to the north. WDFW data also indicate purple martin and osprey nest sites, mountain quail, pileated woodpecker and western pond turtle occurrences within six miles of the Illahee property. An osprey was observed on the nest at Kitsap Lake.

Habitat Functions

Habitat on the property likely supports populations of invertebrates (insects, mollusks), small mammals (rodents), bats, and amphibians that are associated with mid-seral mixed conifer forests, conifer riparian communities, snags and down wood. The parcel is large enough to support several pair of pileated woodpeckers, and approximately 10-50 pairs of various species of small-bodied birds associated with mid-seral mixed conifer forests, the mosaic of adjacent openings and urban environments, and conifer riparian communities.

Examples of other wider-ranging animals likely to use the property as part of their home ranges include bald eagles, great blue herons, purple martins, belted kingfishers, saw-whet owls, and generalist species such as the black-tailed deer, coyote, red fox, raccoon, river otter, striped skunk, long-tailed weasel, barred owl red-tailed hawk, and great-homed owl. These generalists are all fairly common, widespread species in Washington landscapes that contain mixed conifer and hardwood forests interspersed with grass/herb/shrub openings and riparian areas.

Deborah observed several large, relic trees along Illahee Creek that would be suitable potential nest sites for bald eagles or other large raptors. Most of the conifer stands on the property would be suitable potential habitat for great blue heron nesting colonies. The parcel's size, topography and proximity to wetlands and the bay make these potential nest sites particularly valuable for long-term protection of these species because of their seclusion and nearby food sources.

Threats to Wildlife

Many of the more mobile species present or likely to be present on the property are there because of the remnant forest patches scattered throughout the peninsula. The greatest threat to their continued existence on the property, and on the peninsula, is continued habitat loss throughout the peninsula from urban development. As the remnant forest patches become smaller and more isolated from each other, they support fewer individual animals. When the distance between them becomes greater than a particular species' travel ability, individual animals cannot interact with others to reproduce, feed or disperse. When the animals die, the isolated patch cannot be repopulated because it is inaccessible to that particular species. Little by little, the species that make up the wildlife community disappear.

Eventually, these small, functionally isolated patches no longer support intact communities of forest-related wildlife. They are occupied instead by common, generalist bird species which are well-adapted to urban-forest mosaics, and the very small-bodied forest species (invertebrates, small mammals, amphibians). Abundance of exotic species (starlings, house sparrows), species associated with human

activity (crows, jays), and brood parasites (cowbirds) can increase and displace some of the more vulnerable, specialized songbirds (neotropical migrants, secondary cavity-nesters, interior forest associates).

The change in vertebrate community composition may affect the invertebrate communities present. Unfortunately, little information is available to enable predictions of potential changes in invertebrate communities that may result from modification of habitats and vertebrate communities. Loss of habitat on the property itself would eliminate associated species. For instance, if the entire property was clear-cut logged, species associated with mid-seral conifer forests and related components would disappear. Since nearby suitable habitat is likely already occupied, displaced species would likely die. If snags and down wood were retained in sufficient amounts, qualities and distributions, woodpeckers, cavity-nesters and some invertebrates associated with openings would survive. If part of the property were not clear-cut, refugia would be available for some species to persist. Protection of the riparian zone and adjacent upland forest would likely ensure suitable habitat for the riparian species mentioned above, as well as some of the upland species. Of course, if the forest vegetation were removed entirely, as in a commercial or residential development, the site would no longer support any of the species.

Salmonid Utilization

Illahee Creek supports populations of coho and fall chum salmon, as well as cutthroat and steelhead. The mainstem and two tributary streams all lie within narrow, incised valleys that provide good spawning habitat. What makes Illahee

Creek watershed unusual is the large percentage (67%) that is still forested, in the middle of one of the most intensively developed parts of the Kitsap peninsula. While the instream habitat for salmonid in Illahee Creek is generally fair to good, the limiting factors are the lack of rearing habitat (ponds), instream (large) woody debris (LWD), and habitat complexity.

Summary

From a broad wildlife conservation perspective, the most valuable habitat functions that the property provides or could provide include:

- Alternate bald eagle, great blue heron and osprey nesting, perching and roosting sites
- Potential nest and roost sites for purple martins and belted kingfishers
- Riparian and adjacent upland habitat for associated invertebrates (some of which may be locally endemic), amphibians, mammals and birds
- Quality down wood and snag components in a diverse forest patch for associated species.
- Preservation of the forested areas, controlling storm water scouring, reestablishing pools in the stream, riparian forest plantings and installing large woody debris would all benefit the habitat value of the stream for salmonids

Appendix III: Common Vegetation of Illahee Preserve

Common Name / *Scientific Name*

Trees

Douglas fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>
Western hemlock	<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>
Western white pine	<i>Pinus monticola</i>
Western red cedar	<i>Tuija placita</i>
Red alder	<i>Alnus rubra</i>
Big leaf maple	<i>Acer macrophylla</i>
Pacific madrona	<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>

Shrubs

Salal	<i>Gaultheria shallon</i>
Dwarf Oregon grape	<i>Mahonia nervosa</i>
Evergreen huckleberry	<i>Vaccinium ovatum</i>
Trailing blackberry	<i>Rubus ursinus</i>
Elderberry	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>
Salmonberry	<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>
Wild rose	<i>Rosa gymnocarpa</i>
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus/mollis</i>
Red huckleberry	<i>Vaccinium parvifolium</i>
Oceanspray	<i>Holodiscus discolor</i>
Prince's-Pine	<i>Chimaphila umbellata</i>
Indian Plum	<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>

Perennial Forbs

Sword fern	<i>Polystichum munitum</i>
Bracken fern	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Siberian miner's-lettuce	<i>Claytonia sibirica</i>
Mosses	
Lichen	
Western trillium	<i>Trillium ovatum</i>
Evergreen violet	<i>Viola sp</i>
Western starflower	<i>Trientalis latifolia</i>
Twin flower	<i>Linnaea borealis</i>
Vanilla leaf	<i>Achlys triphylla</i>

Appendix IV: Salmonid Habitat Analysis

Watershed Ecology

LLC

FM: Christopher May

TO: Whom it may concern

August 22, 2002

RE: Illahee Creek

1. As part of an on-going evaluation of salmon-supporting watersheds in Kitsap County, I have had the opportunity to assess current conditions in Illahee Creek. The attached watershed narrative summarizes present condition of salmonid habitat in Illahee Creek. In general, habitat conditions in the Illahee Creek system can be described as relatively good in comparison to similar urbanizing streams within the greater Puget Sound Lowland (PSL) Eco-region.

2. Illahee Creek is unique in several respects. Although the entire watershed is included in the Urban Growth Area (UGA) of East Bremerton, the level of development within the watershed is only moderate (~15% imperviousness). The most unique aspect of this "urbanized" watershed is the high level of native forest cover remaining. The Illahee Creek watershed is still over 60% forested, with the riparian corridor largely intact and unfragmented except in the headwaters. These landscape-level characteristics appear to have contributed to the creek retaining a significant level of ecological function in spite of the cumulative impacts of historic and current land-uses. Although salmonid abundance and diversity are lower than historic levels, multiple species of salmon and trout continue to utilize Illahee Creek, making it a potentially significant salmon refuge in the eastern part of the Kitsap Peninsula.

3. One of the keys to maintaining and enhancing salmonid habitat within the Illahee ecosystem will be proper watershed stewardship. This should include conserving natural areas that still remain within the watershed as well as restoring other areas that have been degraded or lost. It is important from an ecological perspective that there is a continuity of critical habitat that supports all life-history stages for all species of salmonids supported by Illahee Creek. In particular, there must be adequate (both quantity and quality) migratory, spawning, and rearing habitat for coho and chum salmon, as well as cutthroat and steelhead trout. In this regard it will be imperative that conservation and restoration efforts encompass all components of the ecosystem, from the estuary to the headwaters. This will almost certainly require a cooperative effort between natural resource agencies, local government, watershed citizen groups, and landowners.

4. One area of the creek that has been degraded is instream rearing habitat. This includes pools, wetlands, and beaver ponds that were likely historically present in the middle and upper portions of the stream system. In addition, large woody debris (LWD) and other components of natural instream habitat complexity are also lacking throughout the watershed, but most especially in the headwater areas. The local citizen's watershed stewardship group has already begun to work on these problems. Riparian forest plantings and LWD installation projects have been undertaken and more are planned for the near future. There is also an effort underway to further protect native forest in the uplands of the watershed. These seemingly small projects are the start of the long-term effort that will be required to maintain and enhance the ecological integrity of the entire watershed, including salmon and their habitat. Again, it should be emphasized that an integrated, comprehensive conservation and restoration process will likely be the most effective course of action.

5. The other key habitat area is the estuarine and adjacent nearshore area at the mouth of the creek. These areas are important for juvenile salmonid rearing, particularly for chum salmon and sea-run cutthroat trout. These areas have also been shown to be important migratory refuge areas for multiple species of salmon, both adults and juveniles, as they move between freshwater and saltwater. Maintaining this vital link between the freshwater and marine environments, both critical for the long-term survival of salmon, should be a high priority in any watershed-based conservation effort.

Illahee Creek

Salmonid Utilization

Illahee Creek (WRIA 15.0266) supports populations of coho and fall chum salmon, as well as cutthroat trout and possibly steelhead. The mainstem of Illahee Creek and two tributary forks are located in a relatively narrow valley that provides good spawning habitat. Instream habitat in Illahee Creek is generally fair to good and the riparian corridor is largely intact, with a mixed mature forest found in most reaches. Like most Kitsap Peninsula streams, one of the primary limiting factors for salmonid productivity is limited rearing habitat (pools), instream large woody debris (LWD), and habitat complexity as compared to natural stream systems. Although the entire watershed is located within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) of East Bremerton and is only moderately developed (~15% imperviousness), well over half of the watershed is still forested, mainly in the Illahee Forest Reserve (~360 acres, including a section of old-growth forest). The estuary of the creek has been moderately impacted by a major road crossing and encroachment of shoreline residential development, but is still ecologically functional.

Watershed Description

The Illahee Creek watershed includes mainstem Illahee Creek and two salmonid bearing tributaries (- 2 miles of stream channel). The basin enters the west shore of Port Orchard Bay approximately 1.0 mile north of Illahee State Park. The culvert under Illahee Road was previously identified as a partial fish passage barrier, but was replaced during the summer of 1999 and has provided good passage since. A water diversion dam was located approximately 0.2 mile upstream of Illahee Road. This structure is still in place, but the dam has since been bypassed by the natural movement of the creek within the channel migration zone (CMZ), thus restoring unrestricted salmonid passage throughout the watershed. The north branch stream channel is naturally confined in a ravine for most of its length downstream of McWilliams Road. Most of the north branch flows through the Illahee forest, with development limited to the McWilliams Road corridor. Significant erosion is occurring on the north branch downstream of the Rolling Hills Golf Course. This reach is steep with significant scour ongoing, likely resulting from stormwater runoff from the golf course and development in the headwaters. The north branch channel is incised, and continues to further incise, primarily from this same stormwater runoff from development and the golf course in the north branch headwaters. There is a large wetland (-20 acres) at the headwaters of the north fork upstream of McWilliams Road that provides flow in the north fork during dry summer months. Passage into this wetland area is restricted by culverts at McWilliams Road and at the outlet of the wetland. The south branch of the creek flows through a more developed sub-basin than the north branch. The south channel is incised, and continues to further incise, primarily from stormwater runoff from development in the north branch headwaters. A dam at the outlet of a pond at the headwaters of the south fork blocks normal instream flow, with the south fork often going dry in late summer. The riparian corridor is dominated by mixed, mature forest and is largely intact except in the headwaters of both branches and where the creek is not confined within a natural ravine.

There is a well-developed and relatively functional estuary at the mouth of Illahee Creek. The estuary currently has little shoreline armoring, although there have been some filling and dredging activities that

have occurred in the past. There is also a small, intact salt marsh at the outer end of the estuary. The shallow intertidal delta likely provides good rearing and migration habitat for natal salmonids and other fish passing through the area. There are few such estuaries along this section of the East Kitsap nearshore zone, making even small estuarine areas valuable as salmonid rearing and migration refuges. Just upstream of the mouth, the culvert under Illahee Road has been recently replaced and salmonid migration improved with instream enhancements.

Salmonid Habitat Data Summary

No quantitative instream habitat assessments have been conducted in the Illahee Creek watershed. Completion of a comprehensive watershed assessment, including quantitative (IFW) instream habitat surveys should be conducted as soon as possible. Surveys conducted as part of this project indicate that the creek has adequate spawning habitat in both branches, with relatively good spawning gravel quality throughout. Rearing habitat (pools) is limited due mainly to a lack of sufficient L WD, especially very large, key pieces. However, the rearing habitat that is available is generally of fair to good quality. Abundant juvenile coho and cutthroat were noted on several occasions during habitat surveys and were also noted by water resource survey teams from the North Perry Water District during the summer of 2002 (CR Hydrologic Consultants unpublished data). Unlike many Kitsap Peninsula streams, Illahee creek generally flows year-round, even during the dry summer months, providing suitable habitat for juvenile and adult salmonids during all life stages. The local salmon enhancement and community groups have been actively involved in restoration and conservation efforts throughout the watershed. These efforts should continue.

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