



Bainbridge Island Shoreline Stewardship Program Conservation Easement Pilot Project

Are you a landowner on Bainbridge Island who owns waterfront property with an undisturbed shoreline area covered with native vegetation? Are you committed to protecting the ecological health of your shoreline and nearshore habitat? Do you want to ensure that your stewardship commitment to these resources lives on forever? Would you like some financial assistance to permanently protect these fragile natural resources? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, please read on to learn more about the Shoreline Stewardship Program and the Conservation Easement Pilot Project.

Our Island and the Work of the Bainbridge Island Land Trust:

- Bainbridge Island has 53 miles of shoreline. Puget Sound shorelines are exceptionally valuable as spawning and rearing areas as well as migratory pathways for fish, birds, and other wildlife due to the rich interface between marine water, fresh water, and terrestrial ecosystems. An estimated 82% of our shoreline properties have been wholly or partially developed. Development on the shoreline has degraded important riparian, nearshore, and estuarine habitats upon which many Puget Sound aquatic, plant, bird and wildlife species rely.
- The Bainbridge Island Land Trust (BILT) has worked since its formation 20 years ago to increase the amount of protected and restored shoreline on the Island.
- BILT currently holds eight conservation easements on privately owned lands protecting over 6,600 linear feet of shoreline.
- BILT has also helped to purchase and permanently conserve five public parcels that protect an additional 9,900 linear feet of shoreline.

Shoreline Stewardship Project:

- The City of Bainbridge Island’s Shoreline Stewardship Program has been engaged in a long-term study of the ecological health of our shorelines, which has been documented in two Nearshore Assessment reports. The program has also conducted a long-term beach seine monitoring project in partnership with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Suquamish Tribe, and community volunteers. This work has been a model for Puget Sound nearshore studies and provides valuable information useful to understanding our Island home in Puget Sound. Visit www.bi-landtrust.org for more information on this study.
- As part of the Shoreline Stewardship Program, grant money is available to assist in the preservation of shoreline habitat.

(more on back)

- Consequently, an enhanced opportunity now exists to protect more undisturbed shoreline on Bainbridge Island. Recognizing that the remaining undeveloped shoreline properties provide a level of ecological function critically important to sustaining or improving populations of aquatic and terrestrial species, BILT is working hard to increase the amount of protected shoreline and nearshore habitat on the Island. You can help.

Voluntary Protection of Shorelines by Landowners:

Voluntary protection of shoreline property through conservation easements is a way to create a living legacy that will benefit the Puget Sound region's people and marine resources forever. Conservation easements are *voluntary* legal agreements between a landowner and a qualified conservation organization, such as Bainbridge Island Land Trust. Conservation easements permanently protect identified natural features and conservation values. While conservation easements limit development and certain other land uses, they allow landowners to continue to own, live on and enjoy their property (and to sell it or pass it on to their heirs). They can also, at times, provide valuable federal tax relief and reductions on local property taxes. (For more information on conservation easements, visit BILT's web site: www.bi-landtrust.org and click on the link for "What are Conservation Easements?") Conservation easements are an important tool to help increase the amount of permanently protected shoreline in Puget Sound.

We are interested in talking with you . . .

In 2009, we have an opportunity to provide financial support to assist with the costs of conserving shoreline properties that provide high ecological function. In addition, if a conservation easement is not the best option for you, we are still interested in exploring other methods and resources that can help you to protect or restore your shoreline property on Bainbridge Island.

Please Contact Us: Bainbridge Island Land Trust
Brenda McMurray, Stewardship Director
221 West Winslow Way, Suite 103
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
(206) 842-1216 brenda@bi-landtrust.org
www.bi-landtrust.org

We look forward to hearing from you!