



memo portland

To Joantha Guthrie, Island County Public Works
From Cindy Mendoza and Lauren Schmitt, MIG
Re **Public Involvement Summary**
Date 07/15/2010

The work plan we jointly developed for this project includes a variety of public involvement activities to gather feedback from as many residents as possible and to represent the diverse interests of the community, including residents of Whidbey and Camano Island. Outreach activities, conducted by both the consultant team and County staff, targeted a range of stakeholders, residents, park users and natural area enthusiasts. The intent of this extensive effort is to develop a deeper understanding of the issues facing Island County and to identify the needs and priorities of County residents.

This memo provides an overview of public outreach opportunities used in development of the Island County Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan. It also provides a summary of key findings from these activities. Specific public involvement materials and results are provided in appendices at the end of this memo:

- Appendix A: Questionnaire Results
- Appendix B: Intercept Event Data Tables
- Appendix C: Stakeholder Interview Notes
- Appendix D: Focus Group Notes

Overview of Outreach Efforts to Date

Public involvement opportunities to date have included a community questionnaire, focus groups, community intercept events and stakeholder interviews. Later phases of the project will include opportunities to check back in with the public

- **Community Questionnaire**

The community questionnaire allowed participants to respond to a range of questions related to parks and natural areas in Island County, on their own time and at their own pace. The questionnaire was available online on the Island County website (www.islandcounty.net) from May 17th to June 14th, 2010. In total, there were 666 participants, with 621 full responses and 45 partially completed responses. Appendix A includes a summary of results including responses to the open ended questions.

- **Focus Groups**

Two focus group meetings provided a more in-depth discussion of specific topics, to provide the planning team with a better understanding of key characteristics and needs of the County. The meetings also provided participants with an in-depth discussion on opportunities, priorities and perceived needs for County parks and habitat conservation areas. Meetings were held on both Whidbey and Camano Islands to understand the different needs in each area. In total, 20 participants attended the focus group meetings. Fourteen participants met at the first focus group meeting held in Coupeville on Thursday, May 20, from 6:00-7:30 pm. Six community members participated in the second meeting on Friday, May 21, from 2:00-3:30 pm at Four Springs Lake Preserve on Camano Island.

- **Community Intercepts**

Community intercept events allowed the planning team to take the planning process to the public during scheduled events in the community. There were three intercept events held in different parts of the County. Interactive display boards were used to get feedback, and members of the planning team were on hand to discuss and answer questions about the Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan. A total of 245 participants took part in the intercept events. On May 21, the planning team held the first event at Camano Plaza (370 NE Camano Drive, in front of the market) from 4:30-6:30 pm. The second event occurred on May 22, at the Bayview Farmers Market (at SR 525 & Bayview Road in South Whidbey). The third event occurred on May 22, at the Coupeville Farmers Market (in the green space behind the library in Coupeville). Appendix B provides a complete summary of the intercept events.

- **Stakeholder Interviews**

The planning team conducted ten interviews with representatives from several different agencies and jurisdictions involved with providing parks, natural areas and recreation opportunities in Island County. These interviews provided the perspective of key stakeholder groups, who were identified by County staff and Commissioners. The groups were intended to represent key players at the local, regional, state and national levels of planning, as well as specific interest groups.

Key Findings

The public involvement activities identified valuable information for the plan, including several key findings that were common through the different outreach efforts. A summary of these findings is provided below, presented in four categories: parks and facilities, habitat areas, maintenance and operations, and funding.

Parks and Facilities

- According to questionnaire respondents, the two most important benefits of parks, recreation and open space are providing opportunities to enjoy nature/the outdoors (79% of responses) and protecting the natural environment (66%). These were the top two benefits noted by intercept participants as well.

- According to questionnaire respondents, the most frequently used types of facilities (more than once a month) are beaches (59%) and trails (56%). Nearly 88% of respondents have visited beaches (88%) and trails (87%) at least a few times a year.
- In comparison, 55% of questionnaire respondents use picnic shelters at least a few times a year. Fewer people have used dog parks (38%), boat launches (35%), and sport fields (21%) this frequently. Yet many of the open-ended questionnaire responses cited a need for dog walking areas and dog parks.
- Almost half (52%) of questionnaire respondents use sports fields. Only half of these respondents (54%), however, report using County-owned sport fields.
- State and federal parks are popular among questionnaire respondents. Approximately 76% of respondents visit a state park on Whidbey or Camano Island at least once or twice per year, and 64% have visited Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve that frequently.
- Nearly 65% of questionnaire respondents indicated that more trails are needed in the County. According to nearly one-third of respondents, unpaved trails for non-motorized use are needed most to support hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use. The top two reasons to develop more trails include for recreation (28.4%) and nature experiences (27.8%). Focus group participants also noted the need for trails, for connectivity and improved park and water access. Many additional comments submitted with the questionnaire noted that more equestrian trails specifically are desired.
- In the questionnaire and all intercept events, land suitable for developed County parks and land suitable for sport fields were the two lowest priorities for land acquisition. Habitat areas needs were also prioritized over recreation facilities by focus group participants.
- Based on feedback from focus group participants, there is a lack of family parks and places for children to play on Camano Island. Intercept event results indicated that 24% of Camano respondents believe sport fields or courts are the most needed facility in the County. The results indicate that Camano Island needs are different from Whidbey Island's needs.
- Improved signage in parks and natural areas is an important need according to responses from both focus groups. This includes park identification signage (to improve County image), informational/directional signage, and especially interpretive signage.

Habitat Areas

- Most questionnaire respondents (91%) felt that conserving habitat and natural areas is important or very important. All three intercept events and the stakeholder interview showed a similar high level of interest in conserving habitat and natural areas.
- Over 71% of questionnaire respondents indicated that more park land or habitat areas should be acquired by Island County. Inland conservation lands (33%) shoreline conservation areas (20%), and public access to water for recreation (11%) are the community's highest priorities for acquisition. Intercept event participants noted similar top responses, but in different ranked order.

- From a list of ten different types of recreation opportunities, most questionnaire respondents (54%) felt that nature preserves or conservation areas are the most needed in the County. Public access to water (29%) and agricultural/farmland preservation (23%) also ranked highly. The intercept events had similar top results, although in different ranked order.
- While most questionnaire respondents (83%) are aware of the Whidbey Camano Land Trust, only 39% have visited one of the Trust's land preserves. (Note: Many of WCLT's holdings do not allow public access.)
- Proximity of parks and facilities play a big role in determining what habitat areas people visit. At Whidbey Island's two intercept events, respondents indicated that Greenbank Farm (79%), Saratoga Woods (41%) and Deer Lagoon (34%) are the Island's most popular natural areas, based on the percentage of people who have visited those sites. According to responses at the Camano event, Elger Bay (61%), Camano Ridge (37%) and Iverson Preserve (35%) are visited the most frequently.
- According to stakeholder interviews, population growth, impacts of overuse and coordination of conservation efforts are some of the key issues facing habitat areas. Many of the open-ended questionnaire responses supported a need for stronger development regulations.

Maintenance and Operations

- According to respondents in the focus groups and stakeholder interviews, parks maintenance needs improvement (and better funding).
- Stakeholder and focus group respondents suggested a variety of ideas about the role Island County should play in providing parks and habitat areas. Some indicated that the County should play a lead role in initiating projects, forging partnerships and leveraging resources, while relying on other providers to maintain sites and facilities. Another primary role of the County should be pursuing and managing land acquisition, and applying greater financial analysis into decision making, especially when considering purchase of property. There was some agreement that the County should focus more heavily on passive recreation opportunities.
- According to several stakeholder and focus group respondents, there is a need for a vision that unifies park and habitat conservation-related efforts. As part of this vision, the County could build a network of partnerships to enable communication, while raising public awareness through education and marketing.
- Another key finding in stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings was that the County should leave the responsibility of recreation programming to other providers, such as cities, park districts, and schools. Many participants indicated that sport facilities should be the responsibility of recreation districts.
- Focus group and stakeholder input suggested that the presence of a parks department is lacking on Camano Island. There is a perceived issue that there is a lack of oversight and management, with no clear understanding of responsibilities or source of information.
- The strong volunteering efforts on both islands (noted in both focus group meetings) suggest that there is opportunity to help improve and maintain facilities through

recruitment of volunteers. However, several participants cautioned that volunteer labor can be problematic without proper training, equipment and supervision. Increased County oversight is needed.

- According to questionnaire respondents, a variety of media forums would be helpful to publicize park and habitat opportunities. The top media forums (in ranked order) include: printed maps and brochures, County website, local newspaper, park kiosks, and WCLT website.

Funding

- As noted in stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings, a lack of a funding is the greatest challenge for the Parks Department. This affects the acquisition, development, maintenance, and operation of parks and habitat conservation areas across the County. Input from the stakeholder interviews indicated that much of the funding for parks comes from the County's general fund when it should be coming from a separate and dedicated funding source.
- When asked whether they would be willing to pay a fee for park and facility use, 37% of questionnaire respondents said yes, and an additional 39% said maybe. Only 15.8% of respondents said they would not be willing to pay a fee to ensure that a facility would be open, in good condition, and available when they wanted to use it.
- Recognizing that the County struggles financially to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has, questionnaire respondents were willing to support the following for land maintenance and management:
 - Volunteer efforts (74%)
 - Non-profits (62%)
 - County tax dollars (49%)
 - User fees (40%)
 - A new park district with its own tax base (35%)
- The planning team has observed that two of the five preferred methods for maintaining and managing parks (noted above) are not associated with a funding mechanism.
- The importance of keeping park opportunities at a low cost for families was noted in stakeholder interviews.
- Forty percent of questionnaire respondents would be willing to support user fees as a funding mechanism. However, this is not as favorable as using County tax dollars.
- Thirty-five percent of questionnaire respondents are willing to pay for a parks district, while 22% indicated maybe.

Recreation Participation

Based on questionnaire responses, Table 1 notes the frequency in which respondents have participated in various recreation activities. It also indicates the types of activities respondents would most like to do if they had unlimited time and resources.

The last column of the table also notes latent demand—the difference between what residents want to do and what they are currently doing.

Table 1: Recreation Participation Ranked by Frequency (Questionnaire)

Rank	Results	Annual Average	Monthly Average	Preferred Rank	Latent Demand
1	Walking for Exercise or Pleasure	68.84	5.25	3	-2
2	Wildlife Watching	48.23	3.67	5	-3
3	Bird Watching/Feeding	46.33	3.54	7	-4
4	Nature Walks	38.17	2.86	2	2
5	Dog Walking/Dog Parks	37.14	2.83	4	1
6	Beach walks	36.52	2.71	1	5
7	Volunteer Activities	21.14	1.58	14	-7
8	Hiking/Backpacking	17.82	1.32	6	2
9	Bicycling	14.07	1.05	9	0
10	Jogging/Running	12.89	0.98	18	-8
11	Horseback Riding	12.39	0.95	10	1
12	Fishing	6.90	0.51	13	-1
13	Playground (visit/play)	6.67	0.49	20	-7
14	Picnicking	6.53	0.46	15	-1
15	Clamming/Crabbing	5.84	0.43	12	3
16	Swimming (beach)	5.53	0.41	18	-2
17	Boating (power)	5.34	0.39	16	1
18	Canoe/Kayaking	4.68	0.34	8	10
19	Mountain Biking	3.15	0.23	21	-2
20	Camping	2.50	0.19	11	9
21	Boating (sailing)	2.13	0.16	17	4
22	Orienteering/Geocaching	1.91	0.14	22	0
23	Hunting	1.65	0.13	23	0
24	Dirt Bike/ATV/ORV Riding	1.65	0.12	24	0
25	Windsurfing/Sailboarding	0.25	0.02	25	0

- As noted in the table, the five most popular recreation activities noted by respondents include (in ranked order):
 1. Walking for exercise or pleasure
 2. Wildlife watching
 3. Bird watching/feeding
 4. Nature walks
 5. Dog walking/dog parks
- Ten of the top 11 recreation activities are (or can be) trail related.
- If questionnaire respondents had unlimited time and resources, the five most popular activities they would participate in include (in ranked order):
 1. Beach walks

- As indicated by the word cloud, trails were the subject of the most comments.
- As the image shows, many responses noted concerns over land, use, public, access, and habitat, with more comments relating to Whidbey Island than Camano Island.

Conclusions/Next Steps

In looking at the results of the public involvement opportunities to date, we can draw a number of conclusions and identify some policy considerations to help direct the Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan. It appears that public priorities are placed on the conservation of natural areas—both for habitat and for public access. Input indicates that uplands, shorelines, and agricultural areas are important to preserve, and that shoreline access and facilities that support walking and wildlife viewing are also popular. Many residents appear to be willing to consider alternative park funding measures to support parks and recreation, but strong public support is shown for the use of volunteers, non-profits, partners, and friends groups to help develop and maintain parks and habitat areas. According to feedback, the County should consider their primary role as providing strong leadership, collaborating with key partners, leveraging funding and resources, and coordinating and guiding assistive efforts to support park lands and natural areas. However, to some extent, there is still a desire for the County to be able to help meet different needs in different parts of the County.

Based on this input and a technical analysis of park and habitat resources, the planning team will develop a community needs assessment to evaluate needs for parkland, habitat areas, recreation facilities and trails in Island County. The results of the needs assessment, combined with an operations analysis and case studies of other County agencies, will help identify and define the County's role in meeting community needs.

Appendix A: Questionnaire Results

Field Summary for 1:		
What is your age?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	22	3.30%
10-17 (1)	3	0.45%
18-24 (2)	3	0.45%
25-34 (3)	33	4.95%
35-44 (4)	68	10.21%
45-54 (5)	137	20.57%
55-64 (6)	231	34.68%
65+ (7)	169	25.38%
Non completed	0	0
Field Summary for 2:		
Female or Male?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	33	4.95%
Female (F)	407	61.11%
Male (M)	226	33.93%
Non completed	0	0
Field Summary for 3 :		
Do you live on Whidbey Island or Camano Island, with your primary residence in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	21	3.15%
Yes, north Whidbey Island (1)	74	11.11%
Yes, central Whidbey Island (2)	155	23.27%
Yes, south Whidbey Island (3)	276	41.44%
Yes, Camano Island (4)	93	13.96%
No, I have a vacation home here (5)	19	2.85%
No, I'm visiting Island County (6)	28	4.20%
Non completed	0	0

Field Summary for 3A:		
Where in Island County is your vacation home or secondary residence?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	647	97.15%
North Whidbey Island (1)	2	0.30%
Central Whidbey Island (2)	3	0.45%
South Whidbey Island (3)	10	1.50%
Camano Island (4)	4	0.60%
Non completed	0	0
Field Summary for 3B :		
If you are a visitor to Island County, why do you come here?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Waterfront/beachfront activities (1)	13	1.95%
Boating or fishing (2)	5	0.75%
Camping (3)	6	0.90%
Historic and cultural places (Ebey's Landing or other) (4)	14	2.10%
Festivals, fairs or special events (5)	15	2.25%
Restaurants and shops (6)	12	1.80%
Visiting friends or relatives (7)	12	1.80%
Work (8)	3	0.45%
Don't know (9)	0	0
Other	12	1.80%
Field Summary for 4:		
If you live in Island County, do you have to leave your island of residence to get to work or school?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes, I work on another island or the mainland (1)	81	12.16%
Yes, I attend school, college or another educational institution on another island or the mainland (2)	5	0.75%
No (3)	510	76.58%

Field Summary for 5:		
Which of the following benefits of parks, recreation and open space are most important to you?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors (1)	524	78.68%
Improve health and wellness (2)	110	16.52%
Protect our natural environment (3)	438	65.77%
Provide special events and social opportunities (4)	33	4.95%
Enhance community image and sense of place (5)	45	6.76%
Promote Island County as a recreation destination (6)	32	4.80%

Field Summary for 6:

How often do you use the following facilities on Whidbey or Camano Islands?

Answer	Boat Ramps or Marinas		Beaches		Picnic Areas/Shelters		Dog Parks		Trails		Sports Fields		Four Springs Lake Preserve	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
No answer	75	11.26%	40	6.01%	62	9.31%	72	10.81%	29	4.35%	91	13.66%	145	21.77%
Frequently (At least once a month) (1)	65	9.76%	393	59.01%	76	11.41%	169	25.38%	372	55.86%	63	9.46%	17	2.55%
Sometimes (A few times a year) (2)	169	25.38%	192	28.83%	290	43.54%	83	12.46%	209	31.38%	80	12.01%	51	7.66%
Rarely (Once every few years) (3)	120	18.02%	25	3.75%	165	24.77%	50	7.51%	36	5.41%	101	15.17%	68	10.21%
Never (4)	225	33.78%	4	0.60%	61	9.16%	280	42.04%	8	1.20%	319	47.90%	373	56.01%
Non completed	12	1.80%	12	1.80%	12	1.80%	12	1.80%	12	1.80%	12	1.80%	12	1.80%

Field Summary for 7:		
If you use sports fields in Island County, do you use sports fields at the following parks?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Rhododendron Park (1)	76	11.41%
Dan Porter Park (2)	57	8.56%
Dave Mackie Park (3)	40	6.01%
Camano Park (4)	13	1.95%
Not sure (5)	26	3.90%
I do not use sports fields (6)	319	47.90%
I have not used sport fields at these sites (7)	115	17.27%
Field Summary for 8:		
Do you visit Ebey’s Landing National Historic Reserve?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	23	3.45%
Yes, at least monthly (1)	192	28.83%
Yes, once or twice a year (2)	233	34.98%
Yes, but not recently (3)	151	22.67%
Never (4)	43	6.46%
Not sure (5)	6	0.90%
Non completed	18	2.70%
Field Summary for 9:		
Do you visit Deception Pass State Park, Cama Beach, or one of the other State Park sites in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	15	2.25%
Yes, at least monthly (1)	199	29.88%
Yes, once or twice a year (2)	306	45.95%
Yes, but not recently (3)	120	18.02%
Never (4)	7	1.05%
Not sure (5)	1	0.15%
Non completed	18	2.70%

Field Summary for 10:		
Have you visited any of the following habitat and natural area sites in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Greenbank Farm (1)	510	76.58%
Putney Woods (2)	254	38.14%
Saratoga Woods (3)	338	50.75%
Elger Bay (4)	97	14.56%
Swantown Lake (5)	100	15.02%
Deer Lagoon (6)	195	29.28%
Camano Ridge (7)	81	12.16%
Iverson Preserve (8)	98	14.71%
I have not visited any of these sites (9)	36	5.41%
Not sure (10)	13	1.95%
Field Summary for 11:		
Are you aware of the Whidbey Camano Land Trust?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	23	3.45%
Yes (1)	553	83.03%
No (2)	50	7.51%
Not sure (3)	21	3.15%
Non completed	19	2.85%
Field Summary for 12:		
Have you visited any of the following preserves owned by the Whidbey Camano Land Trust?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Hammons Preserve (1)	101	15.17%
Naas Natural Area Preserve (2)	110	16.52%
Del Fairfax Preserve (3)	46	6.91%
No (4)	475	71.32%

Field Summary for 13:		
How would it be easiest for you to find out about parks and habitat conservation sites?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Information kiosks at sites around the Islands (1)	269	40.39%
County website (2)	370	55.56%
Whidbey Camano Land Trust website (3)	266	39.94%
ENewsletters from agencies/organizations (4)	190	28.53%
Printed maps and brochures, e.g., Island County Bicycle Touring Map (5)	371	55.71%
Local newspapers (6)	340	51.05%
Social networking (7)	169	25.38%
Other	28	4.20%
Field Summary for 14(1):		
How would you rate the importance of conserving habitat and natural areas? [Response]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	13	1.95%
Not Important (1)	10	1.50%
- (2)	14	2.10%
Important (3)	49	7.36%
- (4)	26	3.90%
Very Important (5)	534	80.18%
Don't Know (6)	0	0
Non completed	20	3.00%
Field Summary for 15:		
Are more trails needed in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	28	4.20%
Yes (1)	432	64.86%
No (2)	81	12.16%
No opinion (3)	104	15.62%
Non completed	21	3.15%

Field Summary for 15A:		
What is the primary reason to develop more trails in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	216	32.43%
Support non-motorized transportation (1)	31	4.65%
Experience nature (e.g. hiking, interpretation, birdwatching) (2)	185	27.78%
Exercise (3)	24	3.60%
Recreation (walking, dog walking, biking, horse riding) (4)	189	28.38%
Non completed	21	3.15%
Field Summary for 15B:		
What type of pathway or trail is most needed in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	217	32.58%
On-street commuter bicycle lanes (1)	41	6.16%
Off-street paved trails for bicycling, walking, rollerblading, etc. (2)	71	10.66%
Nature/interpretive trails (3)	92	13.81%
Unpaved trails for non-motorized use (hiking, mountain bike, equestrian) (4)	217	32.58%
Unpaved trails for motorized use (ATV, motorbikes) (5)	7	1.05%
Non completed	21	3.15%

Field Summary for 16:		
What is your primary reason for not using pathways or trails in Island County more frequently than you do now?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	209	31.38%
Too far away, not conveniently located (1)	53	7.96%
Lack of trails and connections (2)	113	16.97%
Lack of trailheads or parking (3)	46	6.91%
Conflicts with other types of trail users (4)	31	4.65%
Don't know where they are located (5)	131	19.67%
Not interested in using trails (6)	42	6.31%
Poorly maintained (7)	4	0.60%
Feel unsafe (8)	16	2.40%
Non completed	21	3.15%
Field Summary for 17:		
Which of the following are most needed in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Nature preserves or conservation areas (4)	361	54.20%
Public access to water for swimming, boating, fishing, etc. (1)	190	28.53%
Agricultural preserves/protected farmland (5)	152	22.82%
Nature centers/environmental education facilities (6)	94	14.11%
Equestrian trails/facilities (9)	90	13.51%
Dog parks (10)	86	12.91%
Areas for special events, festivals, and performing arts (2)	41	6.16%
Sport fields or courts (7)	32	4.80%
No new facilities are needed (11)	30	4.50%
Hunting opportunities (8)	26	3.90%
Outdoor large group facilities (picnic shelters, reunion venues, etc.) (3)	19	2.85%

Field Summary for 18:		
Should more park land and/or habitat areas be acquired by the County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	20	3.00%
Yes (1)	473	71.02%
No (2)	57	8.56%
Not sure (3)	87	13.06%
Non completed	29	4.35%
Field Summary for 18A:		
What type of land should be the highest priority for acquisition?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	170	25.53%
Public access to water for recreation (1)	71	10.66%
Shoreline conservation areas (tidelands) (2)	135	20.27%
Inland conservation lands (forests, uplands) (3)	219	32.88%
Land suitable for developed County parks (4)	33	4.95%
Land suitable for sports fields (5)	9	1.35%
Non completed	29	4.35%
Field Summary for 19:		
Is there a need for additional organized outdoor and recreation programs in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	43	6.46%
Yes (1)	172	25.83%
No (2)	165	24.77%
Don't know (3)	257	38.59%
Non completed	29	4.35%

Field Summary for 19A:		
Who should be responsible for providing additional organized outdoor and recreation programs?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Cities or park districts (1)	96	14.41%
Island County (2)	95	14.26%
Non-profit organizations (3)	76	11.41%
Private businesses (4)	31	4.65%
Other	7	1.05%
Field Summary for 20:		
Would you be willing to pay a fee to use a park or facility, if it meant the facility would be open, in good condition, and available when you want to use it?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	19	2.85%
Yes (1)	249	37.39%
No (2)	105	15.77%
Maybe (3)	259	38.89%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 21:

21. Because of funding limitations, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. Which funding options would you be willing to consider for maintenance and management of these lands?

Answer	Current County Tax Dollars		A New Special Parks District with its Own Tax Rate		User Fees		Volunteer Efforts		Non-Profits	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
No answer	127	19.07%	150	22.52%	103	15.47%	82	12.31%	130	19.52%
Yes (Y)	328	49.25%	232	34.83%	268	40.24%	493	74.02%	411	61.71%
No (N)	61	9.16%	103	15.47%	86	12.91%	10	1.50%	13	1.95%
Maybe (M)	116	17.42%	147	22.07%	175	26.28%	47	7.06%	78	11.71%
Non completed	34	5.11%	34	5.11%	34	5.11%	34	5.11%	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(1):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Beach walks]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	37	5.56%
Several times per week (1)	115	17.27%
Once per week (2)	106	15.92%
1-2 times per month (3)	182	27.33%
Every few months (4)	130	19.52%
A few times over the past two years (5)	62	9.31%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(2):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Bicycling]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	315	47.30%
Several times per week (1)	47	7.06%
Once per week (2)	33	4.95%
1-2 times per month (3)	66	9.91%
Every few months (4)	61	9.16%
A few times over the past two years (5)	110	16.52%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(3):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Bird Watching/Feeding]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	206	30.93%
Several times per week (1)	209	31.38%
Once per week (2)	48	7.21%
1-2 times per month (3)	50	7.51%
Every few months (4)	58	8.71%
A few times over the past two years (5)	61	9.16%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(4):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Boating (power)]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	408	61.26%
Several times per week (1)	15	2.25%
Once per week (2)	12	1.80%
1-2 times per month (3)	37	5.56%
Every few months (4)	53	7.96%
A few times over the past two years (5)	107	16.07%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(5):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Boating (sailing)]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	485	72.82%
Several times per week (1)	5	0.75%
Once per week (2)	5	0.75%
1-2 times per month (3)	15	2.25%
Every few months (4)	38	5.71%
A few times over the past two years (5)	84	12.61%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(6):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Camping]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	347	52.10%
Several times per week (1)	5	0.75%
Once per week (2)	2	0.30%
1-2 times per month (3)	21	3.15%
Every few months (4)	93	13.96%
A few times over the past two years (5)	164	24.62%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(7):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Canoe/Kayaking]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	382	57.36%
Several times per week (1)	11	1.65%
Once per week (2)	11	1.65%
1-2 times per month (3)	41	6.16%
Every few months (4)	64	9.61%
A few times over the past two years (5)	123	18.47%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(8):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Clamming/Crabbing]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	352	52.85%
Several times per week (1)	17	2.55%
Once per week (2)	11	1.65%
1-2 times per month (3)	37	5.56%
Every few months (4)	75	11.26%
A few times over the past two years (5)	140	21.02%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(9):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Dirt Bike/ATV/ORV Riding]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	591	88.74%
Several times per week (1)	7	1.05%
Once per week (2)	1	0.15%
1-2 times per month (3)	4	0.60%
Every few months (4)	11	1.65%
A few times over the past two years (5)	18	2.70%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(10):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Dog Walking/Dog Parks]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	311	46.70%
Several times per week (1)	169	25.38%
Once per week (2)	34	5.11%
1-2 times per month (3)	46	6.91%
Every few months (4)	33	4.95%
A few times over the past two years (5)	39	5.86%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(11):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Fishing]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	407	61.11%
Several times per week (1)	20	3.00%
Once per week (2)	17	2.55%
1-2 times per month (3)	43	6.46%
Every few months (4)	64	9.61%
A few times over the past two years (5)	81	12.16%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(12):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Hiking/Backpacking]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	249	37.39%
Several times per week (1)	57	8.56%
Once per week (2)	41	6.16%
1-2 times per month (3)	100	15.02%
Every few months (4)	114	17.12%
A few times over the past two years (5)	71	10.66%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(13):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Horseback Riding]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	499	74.92%
Several times per week (1)	54	8.11%
Once per week (2)	17	2.55%
1-2 times per month (3)	14	2.10%
Every few months (4)	17	2.55%
A few times over the past two years (5)	31	4.65%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(14):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Hunting]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	577	86.64%
Several times per week (1)	6	0.90%
Once per week (2)	3	0.45%
1-2 times per month (3)	4	0.60%
Every few months (4)	17	2.55%
A few times over the past two years (5)	25	3.75%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(15):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Jogging/Running]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	492	73.87%
Several times per week (1)	51	7.66%
Once per week (2)	26	3.90%
1-2 times per month (3)	29	4.35%
Every few months (4)	15	2.25%
A few times over the past two years (5)	19	2.85%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(16):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Mountain Biking]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	526	78.98%
Several times per week (1)	8	1.20%
Once per week (2)	10	1.50%
1-2 times per month (3)	21	3.15%
Every few months (4)	31	4.65%
A few times over the past two years (5)	36	5.41%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(17):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Nature Walks]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	100	15.02%
Several times per week (1)	135	20.27%
Once per week (2)	96	14.41%
1-2 times per month (3)	133	19.97%
Every few months (4)	106	15.92%
A few times over the past two years (5)	62	9.31%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(18):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Orienteering/Geocaching]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	552	82.88%
Several times per week (1)	5	0.75%
Once per week (2)	6	0.90%
1-2 times per month (3)	10	1.50%
Every few months (4)	24	3.60%
A few times over the past two years (5)	35	5.26%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(19):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Picnicking]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	282	42.34%
Several times per week (1)	7	1.05%
Once per week (2)	27	4.05%
1-2 times per month (3)	75	11.26%
Every few months (4)	148	22.22%
A few times over the past two years (5)	93	13.96%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(20):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Playground (visit/play)]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	427	64.11%
Several times per week (1)	18	2.70%
Once per week (2)	20	3.00%
1-2 times per month (3)	41	6.16%
Every few months (4)	65	9.76%
A few times over the past two years (5)	61	9.16%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(21):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Swimming (beach)]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	438	65.77%
Several times per week (1)	15	2.25%
Once per week (2)	16	2.40%
1-2 times per month (3)	31	4.65%
Every few months (4)	70	10.51%
A few times over the past two years (5)	62	9.31%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(22):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Volunteer Activities]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	281	42.19%
Several times per week (1)	74	11.11%
Once per week (2)	50	7.51%
1-2 times per month (3)	82	12.31%
Every few months (4)	80	12.01%
A few times over the past two years (5)	65	9.76%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(23):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Walking for Exercise or Pleasure]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	78	11.71%
Several times per week (1)	302	45.35%
Once per week (2)	93	13.96%
1-2 times per month (3)	85	12.76%
Every few months (4)	50	7.51%
A few times over the past two years (5)	24	3.60%
Non completed	34	5.11%
Field Summary for 22(24):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season.		
[Wildlife Watching]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	193	28.98%
Several times per week (1)	205	30.78%
Once per week (2)	74	11.11%
1-2 times per month (3)	77	11.56%
Every few months (4)	51	7.66%
A few times over the past two years (5)	32	4.80%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 22(25):		
Which activities have you done in the past 2 years? For each activity you participate in, please select the bubble that most closely represents how often you participate when the activity is in season. [Windsurfing/Sailboarding]		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	613	92.04%
Several times per week (1)	0	0
Once per week (2)	2	0.30%
1-2 times per month (3)	2	0.30%
Every few months (4)	4	0.60%
A few times over the past two years (5)	11	1.65%
Non completed	34	5.11%

Field Summary for 23:		
Which 5 activities would you like to do most? Assume you have the time, money and transportation to do whichever 5 activities you want.		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Beach walks (1)	434	65.17%
Bicycling (2)	134	20.12%
Bird Watching/Feeding (3)	164	24.62%
Boating (power) (4)	71	10.66%
Boating (sailing) (5)	63	9.46%
Camping (6)	109	16.37%
Canoe/Kayaking (7)	159	23.87%
Clamming/Crabbing (8)	101	15.17%
Dirt Bike/ATV/ORV Riding (9)	17	2.55%
Dog Walking/Dog Parks (10)	202	30.33%
Fishing (11)	84	12.61%
Hiking/Backpacking (12)	169	25.38%
Horseback Riding (13)	117	17.57%
Hunting (14)	18	2.70%
Jogging/Running (15)	49	7.36%
Mountain Biking (16)	38	5.71%
Nature Walks (17)	324	48.65%
Orienteering/Geocaching (18)	27	4.05%
Picnicking (19)	75	11.26%
Playground (visit/play) (20)	42	6.31%
Swimming (beach) (21)	49	7.36%
Volunteer Activities (22)	79	11.86%
Walking for Exercise or Pleasure (23)	310	46.55%
Wildlife Watching (24)	184	27.63%
Windsurfing/Sailboarding (25)	6	0.90%

Field Summary for 24:		
Is there anything else you would like to tell us about parks and habitat areas in Island County?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
Answer	268	40.24%
No answer	398	59.76%
Non completed	0	0

Appendix A: Questionnaire Results

Question 3B: If you are a visitor to Island County, why do you come here?

Let my Service Dog have a hard earned run in one of your off leash parks

Dog Off Leash Area

geocaching, hiking

Music programs

horseback riding

horseback riding

bird watching

horseback riding

birding

foot and stock trail system

horseback riding (trails)

Horseback riding

Question 13: How would it be easiest for you to find out about parks and habitat conservation sites?

book: getting to the waters edge

Handouts available on ferry car deck

local radio/TV

Highway signs

e-mail

Trail maps for Saratoga woods area

Road signs, Sherlock....

camanocommunty.net

Mailer

Half link Bicycle Shop

trail maps at Chamber of Commerce Info Stations

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word of mouth

FOCIP

Signage

county newsletter?

EMAIL CONTACT AGENCY

Whidbey Animal Guild

Emails

Face Book

Email

Island County Tourism web site

email distribution like Drewslist

Highway signs

Internet

the crab cracker

Newspaper articles

hate social networking

maps for equestrians

Question 19A: Who should be responsible for providing additional organized outdoor and recreation programs?

all of the above

I would love to see adult softball league or something like it. I think Oak Harbor or the Park Districts could provide a program like that. If they did, maybe private business owners would chip in for uniforms, or something.

Parks districts

all of the above

parks and rec

ALL

Develop a Municipal Park District

Question 24: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about parks and habitat areas in Island County?

We need more properties conserved for habitat and public access.

Island County is very special. We love it here. Let us know how we can help keep it special.

We feel Swan Lake should be designated as a park to help preserve the habitat for wild life.

The more open space / parks the better. Too much development ; too fast

need bike lanes on west beach rd so i can ride my bike would like to see salmon recovery on swan lake if fesible

All the county stuff that I would use seems south or on Camano. i use OH or the state parks.

Love the many parks we have--really would love to have a nature center with environmental education about the area--its wildlife, birds, sea life, etc. and a working farm to expose kids to where their food comes from, animals, etc. Would like both of these to be destination spots for local tourists (e.g. Seattle families) to also promote the local economies of our small towns, specifically Langley and Coupeville.... The ones we do have need better promotion to the wider Seattle area so we do become a nature hiking, beach walking, bike riding destination!
Have various agencies/departments/districts share resources

If we do not create more and diverse recreation places in Island County, I will be moving to Whatcom County/Bellingham where there are trails aplenty.

Preserve our Wild Spaces!!!!

The trail from Ebey's Landing that goes above Perrigo Lake needs to be extended to Fort Ebey and tie it together with the Pacific Northwest Trail

I love Patmore Pit, Greenbank Farm and Double Bluff for dog parks. Patmore is getting more used and abused...more land would help. Joseph Whidbey State Park should have unleashed beach access. Clover Valley Park is really abused and needs a lot of help...and it's really poopy. North Whidbey needs a Patmore Pit park.

I mostly use your/our dog parks: they are quite wonderful! I come across from Seattle and make a day of it and my SD and I have a great time. Thank You!

We have a special and unique island. Let's keep it that way!

I really appreciate the dog parks!

we need a orv park, the state has funs to use so build it and thay will come!!!

It is of utmost importance to preserve as much of Island County as possible from development, since the reason people come here to spend money is the "Natural" look and resources of the islands. If we lose the attractiveness of Island County, we will lose tourist income. Its a pretty simple equation.

I think the dog parks (especially Double Bluff) are great! Also enjoy South Whidbey park and the summer concerts. Am in favor of protecting Greenbank Farm and surrounding area.

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perceived conflicts between user groups can't really be resolved by "voting" with survey responses. Decisions should be based on honest consideration of the wishes of minority user groups in addition to the most popular user groups. Often public forums devolve into demonizing one group or the other based on widely-held misconceptions or perceived conflicts. Hopefully this process will help the county in making good public vs good politic decisions.

I feel very fortunate to live and work on Whidbey island. We have a variety of activities to choose from here. I believe if we ALL work together, we can develop a comprehensive plan that makes sense, is fair to the majority of user groups and allows for safe land management.

Help maintain the beauty that is Whidbey ISland!

Many dog owners such as myself appreciate the ability to responsibly walk our well behaved dogs at the Greenbank Farm and other dog parks. I am interested in helping maintain these parks and I believe many others I walk with would also be willing to help with this.

We're losing it. Our kids and grandkids won't get to experience nature the way we have.

There are some areas where my wife absolutely will not go by herself, even with our large and Alpha male Irish Terrier for fear of meeting up with some of our local "runaways" or school drop-outs who live off the land, free-food handouts, and roam around the island. It is a big problem, check out Lone Lake and woods behind Freeland Hall?

A sunny campground location would be nice.

We stumbled across Double Bluff Park and the off leash area and were so impressed we joined FETCH. We used to go up to visit Fort Casey, but now we mostly hit the off leash area. It is closer to the ferry, although we still enjoy getting up to Coupeville. Langley is also a lot of fun.

I think it's imperative to conserve the beauty and wildlife of Whidbey Island as much as possible. It's an amazing place that shouldn't be overdeveloped and needs to be saved so generations to come may enjoy it.

Yes -- quit trying to find new ways to get/spend tax dollars in Island County while the economy is in the tank and most people have a hard time paying their bills -- that's assuming they are not out of work. Finding new 'environmental causes' on which to spend our hard-earned tax money is completely irresponsible, given current realities. You DO understand 'reality', don't you ???

would like to see more community classes for adults re; arts and crafts, exercise, -- community education courses that don't cost college fees.

I think that Island County should promote Whidbey Island as a cycling destination. Hwy 525 and 20 should have more shoulder area for bikes. Some areas are just dangerous. Work with your natural assets and use your existing resources as much as possible.

In my driving around the Island, Mukilteo and Everett, the parks that get the most use by adults and children I have noticed are the neighborhood-community-pocket parks with a combination of grass and play equipment for parents to use with children. As the saying goes, "All politics is local", I would add that "All recreation is local". Thanks for asking.

The public should be encouraged to participate in the maintenance of THEIR parks and habitat areas. Putney woods is a great "model" All parks and habitat areas should be integrated with the Adopt a Park/habitat area program. We should exercise great foresight about our parks

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and habitat areas. Our vision should not be limited by the current economy. It will recover eventually. If we lose or give up or fail to add to our parks and habitat system, future generations will be all the poorer and our failures will be their misfortune. Parks and habitat areas provide economic, environmental and community benefits and these benefits should not be underestimated. As the future population of Island County continues to grow, so too will its appreciation of parks and open space. Let's be farsighted, plan well and demonstrate hope and confidence in the future. Such action will be appreciated by all current and future residents.

I would like to have some time for off-leash dog walking in the trails behind SWHS. Maybe designated times of the day.

It seems there are less and less families spending time outdoors and I worry about the future of such a beautiful place if there is no sense of connectedness with our natural surroundings. I think we need to find more creative solutions to connecting youth and families to this place we call home. Perhaps through school programs, inexpensive on-island overnight summer camps for youth, etc,

we have a great start; let's maintain and add to as funds allow

Having access to a variety of places with a diversity of trails and land types brings a high standard of living and quality of life to Whidbey residents.

I'm glad to see the county is putting thought into this. Once lands are developed it's too late to start thinking about it...

I DREAM OF A TRAIL FROM OLYMPIC VIEW MOBILE HOME PARK TO KEYSTONE FERRY!

Keep them simple and rustic, and that keeps costs down. Maintaining public areas like our parks is a better use of tax money than yet another fire station, for instance. How many multi million dollar fire houses does the S. end need?

Having parks and wildlife habitat areas is why I live here. I cannot imagine living in a city without these areas at my doorstep.

I FEEL BLESSED TO LIVE ON THIS BEAUTIFUL ISLAND WITH PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT HABITAT CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

I am a huge fan of the dog parks here in Island County. Its great to see owners out having a good time with their dogs. The majority of our citizens are responsible owners and help keep the parks as nice as they are. That being said, County funds need to be spent to ensure the safety of our citizens. All the parks and trails in the world aren't valuable unless you feel safe out enjoying them. We need to cut back on the opporutnities for preserves and county sponsored recreation inorder to properly fund the criminal justice systems.

More parks on Camano.

we have a uniquely beautiful area; we need to preserve it and teach folks to enjoy it responsibly.

I would bicycle more if there were shoulders/bike lanes on the main roads - can't bicycle to state parks on W Camano Dr as it is

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A lot of people from off island use our dog parks and off leash beaches and think they are wonderful. I don't want to see pay boxes for these. No one wants to "pay to use", but with budgets being tight, it may be necessary for specific uses, ie boat launching, sports fields, atv use or specific horse trails. Beaches, nature, picnics, bird watching, trail walking need to remain free. I would support, and I think others would also, donation boxes.

If a pool is considered, the lap pool which would be used most frequently should be inside due to weather constraints in the NW. Amusement pool could be outside and seasonal. People would pay a nominal amount to use a pool as in Oak Harbor. I would, for one.

Thank you for supporting geocaching as a recreational activity!

utilize county properties not presently improved. provide opportunities for hunters, atv/dirt bike just we do for walkers and bikers. provide greater financial support to volunteer groups. do not impose use fees.

I'm against hunting in the parks and in favor of removing noxious weeds.

thank you FOCIP!

Parks, recreation and wildlife habitat make us what we are. Without them, Island County would lose its essential character and be less attractive as a place to live and visit.

I don't have children but have always voted for taxes that support parks. Recently it seems that most of those taxes have gone to sports fields. I would REALLY like to see more of those tax revenues go to facilities that those of us a bit too old for soccer or softball can use - hiking/walking paths, natural areas, bike trails, etc Thanks!

I feel a very LUCKY to live in Island County and be able to enjoy all the parks we have here

Camano Island needs to be more than a Whidbey Island step-child. There is much that can be done here with several organizations trying to develop and maintain areas to use by Camano and Stanwood area citizens.

I see ATV/ORV listed - please, please, please don't open our parks to motorized toys! They pollute the air, waste fuel, are loud, dangerous and will scare the wildlife! Not to mention that you would opening yourself to insurance issues.

Island County parks are a treasure and need to be preserved. I know in the difficult economic times we are in the idea of increasing taxes for parks would be unpopular but they are needed

It would be very helpful if leash laws were enforced. Four Springs is especially bad about off lead dogs. Perhaps volunteers could take on the job of reminding offenders? (My husband and I would be most willing to sign up for this duty!) We moved to Camano Island parting because of the wonderful opportunities for dog walking but avoid certain parks and trails because of encounters with off lead dogs.

There are many official and also informal trails on the island and it would be great to have one central location to get information. It would also be great for there to be a simple process for private landowners to provide trail easements with no liability to the landowner.

I live next to Iverson Preserve and I am astonished the large group of users that drive to the parking lot in the morning and again in the afternoon and use the County property as a dog off-leash area. Also concerned that the limited "public" beach is overwhelmed most nice weekends with large crowds now moving onto adjacent private beaches. With so few public beaches in the

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Camano/Stanwood area the "Reserve" has constant vehicle traffic for people coming to exercise their dogs, play on the beach or dig up the tide flats for bait to fish for sturgeon (6 to 12 fisherman at low tide most days. No longer a "preserve" but a very active park. Something that wasn't discussed at the time the County bought the farm property out of development.

We need other opportunities/activities to get the children in Island County excited about the beautiful natural setting we live in and how to take care of it.

We need more paved bicycle paths from the ferry north. Get the people and bikes off of the highway. I am surprised more are not killed as dark as it is most of the time.

LIVING ON CAMANO ISLAND IS A PARADISE FOR ME.

more places for camping that are not so expensive please. Also if some folks want to start a RenFaire up here, more power to them.

There are many volunteers who go into the Putney Woods and the Saratoga Woods and clean up fallen trees after wind storms. Without these volunteers these trails would be a mess. I believe that if the participants take an interest they will help to keep it alive, safe and healthy. I support trail systems for motorized and non-motorized activities. I have seen them work well together in other areas of the state.

I think it is important to establish ORV riding sites on Whidbey Island. I know that if there is nowhere to ride then people will trespass to be able to ride on the island. If an area is established with hours then maybe trail conflicts can be minimized.

Without the parks, green areas and wildlife, we're in danger of becoming a suburban bedroom community and losing the quality of life that brought most of us here.

I do not believe we need more sports parks as they are so rarely in use. Natural areas such as trails serve far more people. Love the dog parks!!

I think it's time the county discontinued allowing hunting on county owned trails.

I don't use them as often as I'd like, but that's due to my own schedule and poor time management. I'd like to be able to help, by volunteering/user fees/etc, to ensure we're all able to continue using them.

Being older and somewhat lazy, I do less of all this than others, but I want there to be a variety of activities available for all ages here. But the less noise the better! Conservation and views are more important to me now.

We need shoreline access and access to tidelands over the whole island, this could be accomplished without purchase if regulations were updated. Upland parks are also important and should be purchased.

Tax dollars are and will continue to be hard to obtain. To maintain and grow parks and habitat areas will need cooperative effort between County & non-profit organizations and volunteer support.

There needs to be more of a focus on Camano Island. Whidbey Island, especially Ebey's Landing, shouldn't be the sole focus of funding and preservation efforts.

There should be NO hunting. Parks try to enhance life -- hunting is the antithesis of that goal. If a hunter wants to experience nature, give him a camera -- without a zoom lens.

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Tourism would be enhanced by expanding bicycle(et.al.)paths from at least Deception Pass to Keystone/PT ferry. This would effectively extend the Olympic Peninsula's Discovery Trail and Jefferson County's Larry Scott Trail. These trails are very popular among Canadians, Europeans and Americans riding "the loop"; Vancouver, Whidbey, Port Angeles, Victoria. Such trail would also enhance bicycle commuting between Oak Harbor and Coupeville. Re: boating - Mooring buoys at parks are delightful. Thanks for asking!

Over the years, I've been dismayed at the reduced access to water. Not for swimming. But it seems like the shore is becoming more and more private.

its good, it needs to be better and we need to create more spaces where individuals and families can feel safe getting outside and getting more exercise and decreasing the percentage of obesity in the country and on this island.

More publicity... I'd not heard of some of the areas listed in this survey and I've lived her for about 8 years.

We need adult softball fields! They bring alot of revenue to a community.

The most difficult question on this survey was, for me, being forced to choose between tidelands and uplands as conservation areas. We need both.

Better, more clearly marked, and more accessible beach/coastal access.

There are some parks I will no longer go to because dogs are allowed to roam freely: Double Bluff, Greenbank Farm rank among those.

The highest priority should be to reserve as much land as possible.

Whidbey Island is paradise because of all our wonderful parks rich with the beauty of nature and wildlife. The parks, woods, beaches, trails, habitat areas and the people who work so hard to obtain and maintain them are treasures that make life so beautiful!

conserve all that you can before the developers eat it up.

I love living on Whidbey Island. We have an abundance of activities here. The parks are well maintained. I use the trails systems for hiking and walking my dog.It's also a great place for birdwatching. We are very blessed to be living here.

The current parks system on Camano Island is excellent; however, for those of us who walk it would be nice to have the parks and reserves connected by trails. Currently, to get in any real walking miles the choice is to walk in circles or along the edge of a two lane roads where visibility may be bad. It is very nice to be able to walk between Cama Beach and Camano Island State Park and it would be even nicer to walk across the Island. The Friends of Camano Island State Park should be complimented for their active role in maintaining the current parks. It isn't good to depend on volunteers for our park maintenance, yet there is benefit for people to feel ownership. We intend to become more active with this group. And, there shouldn't be private beaches. Even though I live in an area that has private beaches, I don't agree with the concept. Washington State should have done what Oregon did many years ago. The beaches are set aside for everyone who lives in the U.S. I know that private beaches that exist cannot be taken away but the continuing addition of more private beaches should be curtailed. Finally, parks should be available to everyone, not just those who can afford the fees. I believe our taxes should pay for the parks - NOT FEES. If we expect young people to participate in healthy activities, then we need to make places available that support healthy living. If we want people to appreciate the environment and respect it, then they must have access to beautiful,

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educational places. Many people cannot afford additional fees for what should be available to every American. Look to Washington D.C. where the tax payer is supporting wonderful museum experiences for anyone who can afford to travel to the East Coast. Why shouldn't the same provisions, in the form of parks, be provide to our taxpayers. Where is the Federal Government providing the same support for people who don't live near the Nations Capital?

I visit the off-leash dog parks on Whidbey Island on a daily basis, more frequently the ones on North Whidbey. I love them and wish there was the opportunity for them to be able to be better maintained. Especially because they are so popular with people visiting even during both sunny and rainy days.

We need an ORV park. It's a fun family activity. A BMX track is also needed. In the survey there was no mention of Skate/Bike parks which I use with my son as often as we can. The current parks could be updated. Is there any chance of a public place to ride motorcycles with my four year old son?

I believe that Rhody park needs new baseball and soccer fields to support the young people in the community.

Central Whidbey needs to partner with the school district and build a mega sports complex in Coupeville.

Thank you for maintaining our wonderful parks.

The town of Freeland needs to increase the size of its parkland next to Holmes Harbor.

We LOVE to go to Margrite Brons Off Leash Dog Park! It is an awesome place to be able to have fun with our dogs. I think being able to let my dog run free through the wooded trails is the best!

Not sure exactly what you're trying to gather from this survey. Improvements or the inability to maintain what you already have? If so, why ask for more? I'm concerned at the location of Rhody Park, we should have a sports complex in town that can be used by everyone in the community. If it were in town it would be used more. If this isn't possible than a lot of money needs to be put into this park so it can be used by both soccer and Little League. Again, this survey is confusing. Why can't our taxes continue to pay for maintenance expenses as they have in the past? Is our money being redirected to other non-specific programs?

I fully believe that Island County should make the preservation of "wild places" a top priority. This is a sacred place.

Dirt Bike/ATV/ORV's need somewhere to ride. I'm an equestrian and believe in shared use of the trails and Leave No Trace. I support the motorized users right to a space to have fun, although not at the same time as the non-motorized and not in the same areas.

I would like to see the Anacortes trail use plan adopted here. They seem to make it work well. I grew up on the island and have seen the near elimination of opportunities for ORV use.

Preserve as much forest as future old growth as possible. Protect and make beach access a high priority.

more ball parks and open fields for playing

We need a ropes course or an activity area that promotes team work and interaction with our peers.

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I would appreciate the county maintaining the existing beach access areas on Camano before considering purchasing/maintaining additional accesses.

Please protect as much of the undeveloped land as possible for current and future residents and visitors to Whidbey Island.

It is great to have parks, access to the beaches, hiking trails etc. Thanks for your efforts

I believe they are doing a fair job maintainig the facilities.

Camano has a very large volunteer base. We do our share to keep the parks open. If you close parks, you'll lose the enthusiasm of these volunteers and they'll get involved in something else, and probably won't be available if you later open that park. What a loss to the county.

Really appreciate the beauty of our area and would like to see it protected. Wish there was a bike lane around the whole island (Camano Island in this case). Thanks for all you do :)

all guns and hunting should be banned in parks and nature preserves, all places where people walk. Its not safe, an accident waiting to happen.

You've done a wonderful job already - I've watched Cama and Four Springs grow, and groups like FOCIP and CARE have been a wonderful influence. Thanks for helping make Camano a great place to live. The only problem (and it's a huge one for me) is that there is no place to moor a sailboat. Even Utsalady, marginal in some wind conditions, has no legal parking or safe place to leave a dinghy. Can't imagine where it would be, but a marina would make a huge difference in my life... I currently keep my boat in Oak Harbor, and that is completely impractical.

Keep developers from cutting down trees and raping the land.

Bicycle trails, or paths would be a great asset, both for children and adults. Walking trails within easy access to other public areas would also be great.

Parks on Camano do a great job of providing services- willing to pay annual or daily use fee- paved or non-paved connector trails such as the Burke-gilman to provide walking opportunities are biggest need in addition to key habitat preservation opportunities

We need more habitat connectivity. Isolated patches do not support all the species native to the area. Core areas need to be protected from human influence by routing trails around their edges rather than through their hearts. NO MORE BOARDWALKS OVER WETLANDS. We need to run the 1% Real Estate Excise Tax to generate funds for acquisition and maintenance of parks and open spaces.. We also need to organize 'friends of' groups for each park and habitat area, to keep eyes and hands on them. Such groups would do weeding, make sure no cowboys are building unofficial trails, watch the wildlife, etc.

Land conservation, nature preserves, environmental management, zoning, and prudent infrastructure development are all essential -- to maintain options for the future of quality of life in the County. If all these aspects are not attended to, irresponsible development and land use will remove many options for chances for maintaining the best possible quality of life for Island County residents and visitors.

We have too much preserved open space, and cannot afford more. I don't think we should allow land trusts to buy "at will". There needs to be a formal study done of how many acres are permanently held out of development, and a master plan decided on what the final goal should be. The final goal must be stated.

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I have closely watched the creation of the Rotary Adventure Playground at Freedom Park/Terry's Corner, Camano. I think in these difficult time that volunteerism is the best way to care for the existing parks....people are just not going to vote for more expenditures out of pocket at this time. We love the existing parks on Camano and use them. We feel we have already paid for them for 50 years of taxes.

Thank you for saving our Island!

Get and Keep more volunteers involved on an organized way and get organizations involved more

Cama Beach is a historic gem. It must be preserved. Please help keep all parks both state and county open for future generations to enjoy.

Save Trillium Woods!

They are our most important resource and should be TREASURED.

Better cooperation with Federal, State and Local entities that controls parks, recreational lands. Organize and coordinate volunteer efforts to maintain and build trails.

Leave private property owners alone.

need more tennis courts, near fort ebey (perhaps subsidize a public court on Sierra Country Club land?).

Protecting natural habitat is vital for our fragile island environment and to leave a natural legacy. Island park/preserve decisions need to honor the natural habitat and its value to the community when determining usage. Low impact use should lead decision making to protect the fragile island ecosystem.

I like to ride my horse on the trails but at some places the parking is terrible (not big enough areas. I don't feel comfortable going out in some areas because I don't have good maps. I am afraid of getting lost. There aren't enough signs clearly marking the routes. I have in the past, and am willing in the future to help maintain the trails that are closer to my home. PLEASE BAN HUNTING from the trails that are so widely used by bikers, horseback riders, hikers, children, and Moms with babies in strollers. It is very unsafe for anyone to be hunting on the Kettles trails with them being used by so many people now for recreation purposes. Thank you very much for listening!

Camano Island needs an off leash park for dogs -- at least I don't think we have one. Thanks

Island County parks and habitat areas are vital to the well being of the county's citizens, and preserving the plant and wild life which are indigenous to the islands.

They can and should be our treasures, our crown jewels. Thanks for wanting to make them so.

We need a better marina.

As population growth continues the ability to escape to Island County will be a larger draw for tourism. The quality of our parks and amount of open space will be huge draws. In addition youth sports tournaments are becoming a significant tourism industry. Having the facilities to host these tournaments would have a positive economic impact on the community.

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Need better signage. Boat ramp on Cavalero road is dangerous, too narrow, too crowded. Need more access for boating and crabbing and clamming as well as public areas for picnics, access to beach.

Island County has an abundance of parks, trails and wild-life habitat areas. When considered with other publicly owned lands (park districts, cities, etc), the Island is served very well. The County should focus on maintaining what it has, rather than pursuing new lands.

I regularly work on the trails to keep them trimmed and cleaned up almost every time that I ride horseback on them. Most of my horseback riding friends do that also. We try to do our part and always pick up the parking site as well. A safer and less noisy (off #20 and Libbey Rd.) parking at the Kettles would be appreciated someday.

we need the natural surroundings for many reasons. 1) for all to use, many live in small places 2) water shed 3) tourism opportunities 4) activities for families 5) exercise 6) to preserve what god has given us

I'd love to see the separate equestrian trails all joined together.

Thank you for the survey and the opportunity to comment.

Even though I do not engage in sports, I totally value having sports fields, getting kids outdoors, playing whatever, and I want to see more of them closer to home.

The Putney woods are an example of volunteer maintained trails. This is a good system to be repeated whenever possible to keep the beauty and wonder of Whidbey Island for this generation and generations to come.

Central Whidbey/Greenbank is lacking in public Equestrian open spaces and trails

The reason for living on Whidbey Island is the nature and wildlife, the access to enjoy the variety of places to go with dog or horse. State parks should go back to charging minimal use fees to help pay for maintenance and safety of having rangers present. State parks should be open to equestrian use and trails marked like Anacortes Community Forest Land does. A FEW trails are unsuitable for equestrian, such as the unfenced bluff trail at Fort Ebey or the one to Lake Pondilla but the boundary line against horses should be removed and individual trails in Ebey such as the ones above, marked no horses. We horse riders use every single trail in Kettles and long to ride the rest of kettles, mainline, tunnel, etc as well as Joseph Whidbey's wonderful trail and meadow trail as well as the rest of Coronet Bay/Ducken Rd. should be open to all non-motorized users. We are extremely grateful for those trails that ARE open to us, but would appreciate the rest being open as well. WE clear trails! We ride with saws and hand clippers and can reach higher than pedestrians for removing overhanging broken branches and we help keep the trails clear of impassable small trees that have fallen. Thank you. Without horse trails, I would not wish to live here. Please conserve as much of the land as you can. Development is not the future of Whidbey, nature preserve is. People who want asphalt, chain stores, and more houses can go live elsewhere. Save Island living for those who love nature. Please preserve nature and give us access to enjoy it. Thank you!

The reason I love Whidbey so much is because of all the access opportunities to farms and nature in so many environments (shore, inland, etc) in a relatively small space. This is an oasis that needs to keep as much natural space as possible. The ability to 'explore' is disappearing rapidly from so many other areas that Island County needs to take every option to keep making the Islands 'the shortest distance to far away.' I like that line!

I would walk more but the area I prefer is Greenbank Farm and I'm afraid of the hunters.

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I think it's time to develop a central parks & rec district, or a island wide municipal park district. One solution to cover Central Whidbey is to extend SWPRD boundaries to encompass CW. Central Whidbey NEEDS sports fields desperately. Maintaining growing youth activities is a priority!

Love Putney Woods and Saratoga Woods. Marguerite Brons dog park I go to twice a day 7 days a week. Ride my horse weekly on trails.

I don't even know where I can get maps of the existing areas

I am VERY opposed to hunting in the woods at the Greenbank Farm. It is a tiny area and very dangerous to mix hunting with walkers. It is very dangerous to allow big game hunting on county land so close to residences and other human activity.

having a parks district in Central Whidbey would be helpful to local sports programs which keep our youth active, healthy and out of trouble.

It would be great to set up recreational activities that would cater to a wide audience and would have the least impact on the environment at parks that do not have a lot of use. I recommend Disc Golf. It is a great sport for all ages, people who play Disc Golf love the environment and take care of parks very well. Most Disc Golfers are willing to travel far and wide to play at a course. This brings income to the local economy, helps support community, and conservation. We need a trail that can connect Oak Harbor to Clinton.

We need a softball complex that could be used for adult league and tournaments.

build more baseball/softball parks!

If the county does not have the will or resources to maintain and protect the park lands it owns, it is time to form park districts and give the resources to them.

Adequate maintenance of existing facilities is the highest priority for use of existing funds. However, it is vital to create partnerships to fund purchase of additional properties for habitat preservation and/or recreation.

Too many of the wrong kind of people in habitat areas.

We need to preserve our large tracts of habitat and agricultural fields. Other than portable toilets, an info kiosk and trash pick-up, I don't need or expect much in the way of facilities.

we need more parks and open space, less development by greedy pig developers and their greedy pig politico friends

I'd like to see careful and sustainable engineering done for the Libbey Rd. County Park Beach access so people can get to and from the beach reliably and not have to climb around the fences (which they do).

Now that I'm older and have knee problems, I'm not able to take full advantage of the opportunities offered in Island County. Alas.

PLEASE, enforce the laws as to wildlife (don't allow people to shoot beavers, don't allow people to encroach on stream buffers, prevent people from creating trails on public land!!).

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I have lived here to really dig to find info on parks, beach access, and preserves. Little or no signage exists (which may be good to keep usage low and quality high...). I found the notice for this questionnaire on the ground in the Plaza parking lot !

IC has too many large parcel public land holdings. Some should be sold and funds used to acquire additional shoreline property and tidelands for beach access. There is enough tourism in the IC I do not want any additional tourism campaigns. Mainlanders stay away! Four springs should be sold or at least managed privately by a non-profit. The County should not be in the business of running event centers. Who runs Freeland Hall? I think it's a non profit and I have contributed private dollars for maintenance in the past, same should be done for other properties for beach access, toilets and other improvements. IC should pay to maintain all parks land. County code should be changed to allow up to half of conservation futures funds to be spent on parks maintenance and improvements. We really do not need to take more land out of private ownership. We do not need to buy more forest land.

I'd like to see more maintenance money made available for parks. They are very important for preservation, wildlife, and people's mental and physical health yet the park budget does not represent their importance. If I was king I'd take money from roads and spend it on parks.

Thanks.

Need more trails for multi-use, ie: horsebackriding and dirtbiking

Thanks for asking about our needs and desires regarding parks. This is such a special place and we need to be sure that we preserve its beauty and share it with residents and visitors.

I would like to see more brochures showing where parks and trails are located.

We live near Lone Lake, & are concerned about algae blooms, milfoil, plus red tide & pollution in Holmes Harbor. We launch our boat in Langleys & are concerned about water quality there too. Thanks for all you do.

It is really offensive to go to a boat public boat ramp and see on either side of it no trespassing signs. only being able to wals straight down and straight back sucks!

Need a comprehensive/redily available horse trail guide. horse trail heads need more space for trailers,loading, unloading ect...

You didn't have agriculture/farmland preservation as a choice in the land needed to be preserved. I would have selected it first.

I am concerned about the Camano Island Preserve. There are individuals who are making new trails (largely for bicycles) and hunters who are building blinds and baiting wildlife and then using motor vehicles to move the game. I would like this lovely preserve to have a plan for those of us who desire longer trails and remote, undisturbed nature.

Available funds should be used for purchasing additional areas for preservation.

I currently live and work in a not for profit nature conservancy, therefore, do not utilize many of the county's great parks services. Our non profit is challenged too as to how to get the word out, dollars and volunteers hours in, etc. I love Island County and think the parks and habitat places are cared for in an excellent way, especially considering funding challenges. Thank you. Kristi O'Donnell Thank you for this survey.

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I love Island County's parks. I understand the financial limitations, and have donated hundreds of hours to Putney Woods. Encourage volunteer labor. It's works in Putney and has created quite the community of devoted volunteers. Next ... Trillium :)

Please elevate Camano Island in your priorities - there are VERY limited options on the Island. Iverson is spectacular, but ENGLISH Boom could use an extended trail so you can walk more than 10 minutes. Cama and State Park are wonderful, but are a half hour drive down island. Please balance recreation with conservation - the heron rookery and TNC lands are critical and should remain recreation free.

Please save the Trillium property somehow. Also please keep the Whidbey Animal Guild informed about activities that impact wild or domestic animals. whidbeyanimalguild@gmail.com "WAG" has a discussion board where it posts all relevant topics, events, issues, and ideas. <http://www.meetup.com/Whidbey-Animal-Guild/about/>

Please keep Parks open. They are for the good of our society. Land needs to be protected for my children. County, State & Federal Parks need to partner. Think of eco-tourism as a source of revenue. Thank you

tHERE CAN NEVER BE ENOUGH

Thanks for asking for input from the public. Parks and habitat areas are essential for our quality of life in Island County. We MUST find a way to fund them.

Hunting should not be allowed in the Camano Ridge Preserve. We need an off leash dog park at Four Springs (far away from the house).

Protect road end accesses such as Wonn Rd. Bainbridge Is. has a special advisory group to address keeping such live road ends open. It would be a good example to look at. It is available on their website.

Rain or shine I try to walk the trails at South Whidbey State Park (Ridge Trail and down to the beach) every day for physical exercises and to be out in and experience the natural world.

we need them!

reduce services, paving, building and landscaping in favor of keeping the parks open. Funds spent on education should educate people that this is wilderness, not necessarily safe and that they should not expect urban level services, safety and care taking in a wilderness area. The first line of volunteers should be the visitors themselves taking proper care of themselves and nature.

As a frequent equestrian, I am concerned with keeping the trails open to horseback riders. Generally I have found the equestrians are respectful of others on the trail and very concerned with safety and trail maintenance. We regularly volunteer to clean up the trails and most of us carry clippers and/or saws to clear and maintain the trails, doing our part to help. We can cover more area on horseback and report to the Island Trail Council if there are larger trees down that require a chain saw. Please consider opening more trails to equestrians for cooperative volunteer maintenance. We are a good resource for volunteer efforts, as able bodied, not afraid to get dirty, and can cover many miles of trails in shorter time. We are happy to help maintain the trails!

I appreciate the open space we have on Whidbey. It is necessary for Island County to promote and protect public access to the beaches and shoreline and not allow private encroachment on public road ends. This is vital!

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We need to add Trillium Woods to the system, much the same as Putney/Saratoga Woods, supply a trail head parking lot and then let volunteers maintain them. (Seems to work well there)

I'm surprised Camano Island has never invested in paved bicycle/walking trails. There are many people that come here to bicycle but all they have is the main roads. I also wonder about neighborhood parks. Perhaps in land development, a small park shouldn't be included.

There should be more dates, at least once a month, for the public to volunteer and clean up the trails, like the Saratoga and Putney Woods.

We need jobs not parks.

These things are critical to keeping Whidbey Island and Camano Island the reason so many of us live here. If we over develop we risk "loving it to death" which has happened to so many places. Keeping out strip malls and strip clubs is important to keeping Whidbey's sense of place and personality. Tourism is a clean industry that means we keep nice parks, places to recreate, good restaurants, interesting shopping, wineries, and other entertainment. It all combines to create a destination worth visiting and worth living - but we have to preserve and cherish these things we all love. If not, we will end up like Woodinville, Issaquah, Lynnwood, which were all rural places that lost touch with who they were and have become overgrown and places people come to Whidbey to escape from. Thanks for asking for my opinion and thanks for staying focused on what matters to all of us, a healthy and beautiful environment.

Don't waste money on Trillium.

These areas are not just important for various activities. They are also important for those who can only passively view them and benefit from the beauty of the natural world.

Please get the spending under control; Parks and Rec is still taking the "same" 15cents they did at the beginning and I applaud their efforts, but that 15cents is a heck of a lot more bottom line dollars than it was in the beginning.

You should not acquire more land when you can not take care of what you have!

NO NEW TAXES!!!!!!

When my husband was alive he daily used island boat launching sites. His main complaint (other than closed salmon seasons) was that the boat launching areas were not kept clear of sand and or logs and DOCKS WERE PULLED IN TOO EARLY in the fall.

Forest preservation for this Island is my highest priority and specifically areas like Trillium Forest. These areas are disappearing rapidly and cannot be recovered.

Save undeveloped area while we can; limit development.

These are the types of areas that make living here most pleasurable and wonderful. These areas keep us from becoming like overdeveloped, ugly, busy, noisy, polluted Everett. e.g. If we want to keep tourism alive on Island County, buying and preserving these areas would be dollars well spent.

I think the county does a good job with the resources it has.

Island County should cease from acquiring future land that they are unable to fund/maintain. In

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addition, the county should be more knowledgeable about the land they acquire so as not to invade private owners beach and land rights with the assumption that it's good for all to allow public access.

An abundance of Natural areas in Island County are critical to the county's long term ecological and social health. Their importance cannot be over rated.

I included Kiteboarding in Windsurfing/Sailboarding. Double Bluff is a premier spot in the Puget Sound for this activity.

Open space, trail easements & beach access... get ownership or easements whenever you can! Development of sites is less important than protection NOW.

There are not enough places for horses

We are glad to see this effort moving forward. We are very interested in preserving areas such as Camano Ridge for low-impact activities. We are opposed to any hunting on Camano; it simply is no longer appropriate. We are looking to the County to establish and enforce adopted policies and rules and hope groups such as FOCIP will be part of the solution to the funding problem. Please keep us informed as the process moves ahead.

Maintaining the natural environment is the key to the future of Island County.

Need to get them better funded and also get a committed volunteer network to help maintain them.

We have a lot of parks and habitat areas on the South End of the Island. Beautiful ball fields. We use the ball fields but little else. Island County should focus on its budget woes and not concern itself with adding parks and habitat areas.

We need the Wonn Rd access issue in Greenbank to be solved. Don't fill Greenbank Farm with tree seed orchards.

I would like to see the county finally develop the beach access at the end of Wonn Road near Greenbank Farm

Thank you for taking care of natural habitat -- we need to protect more of it! Please do whatever you can to acquire more land to save it from development.

we need larger areas set aside and connectors to those for both people and animals. Most places are so small and there are too many trails in one small place that causes confusion and cuts the land up too much. that also creates more trail maintenance. Farmland preservations is critical here also.

For funding- perhaps an annual parking pass would be appropriate as is done for the national forests.

thanks for all your hard work. This is the most beautiful place in all my world travels. Glad to call it home.

There is a need for separate areas for conflicting activities such as dog walking vs. hiking vs bike/atv

Island County needs to be more effective in protecting the public accesses and public tidelands that are already in existence, as inventoried in the Island County Public Access Study of 1977.

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Funds for parks should be raised by taxing private tideland at higher, more reasonable assessments and rates.

Thank goodness for the presence of state parks and Beach Watchers in Island County. County government has never really made a commitment to parks and recreation in the county.

We are getting too many homeless people in the blm land. It's too dangerous to go there on Camano. There is never dog poop bags at 4 Springs any more.

As a resident of Camano Is., I don't need the parks to do these things. But I guess visitors do? Or residents cramped in developments?

Protect habitat now.

There should be more public areas for hunting and fishing and not close the few that we have. Hunters are taxpayers and should not be discriminated against as they have in the recent past. The taxpayers should not be asked for an increase in taxes in these economic times.

I don't understand why WCLT and Island County are getting so cozy - how can WCLT help keep all of the lands in good shape for Island County? Where would the funds come from for maintaining all these acres of land? Central Whidbey needs a parks and rec department like south and north Whidbey. They never have anything to do in Central Whidbey.

Preserve undeveloped high-quality wetland, riparian, upland, and shoreline habitats. Future developed uses should be planned and constructed without undue environmental destruction. Marine and freshwater public access should be well-signed and adjacent private property owners ought to be fined if they encroach on/or limit public access points. Sports fields which require higher maintenance expenditures should require use fees which defray costs. Equestrian and mt bikers should be charged fees (or in-kind volunteer effort) commensurate with the level of increased trail maint their use requires.

This survey was too limited in some areas where we could only choose ONE option....hard to say between shoreline and forest habitat protection...for me it is a both/and situation and depends on the case. Also, the final list of how often I engage in the recreational/park activities did not give the option for "never." Not sure why because many of those activities some of us NEVER do. Thanks for asking. Hooray for parks and habitat areas in Island County.

Island parks and habitat spaces are a treasure that must be protected and cared for by all of us. These spaces make us whole as human beings and provide a basis for a quality future for us, our animal friends and our environment.

The natural beauty of Whidbey Island is important to anyone who experiences it. We should do everything we can to save it.

Very much appreciate the parks and habitat areas that we now have and hope they continue to be accessible to residents and visitors of Whidbey Island.

LOVE the new Rotary Adventure Park on Camano Island! What a great addition and asset to the area.

I want to see as much of the native vegetation left as undisturbed as possible. I'd like to see more education about the values of native vegetation and the problems non-native invasives present when disturbance occurs. Next time maybe add Botanizing or Plant appreciation to the list of activities.

Island County Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan

Conservation of lands, shoreline and habitat for future generations should be a high priority for Island County.

thank you for South Whidbey St. Park...my favorite nature trail. And for the Wilbur trail across the street!

We need to preserve as much of the natural wild lands and open spaces including agricultural lands, as possible now before it's all developed and chopped up. Please promote density where it belongs to accomplish this.

A yearly pass for frequent users would be reasonable.

Please protect as much forest land as possible, especially along roads and viewscapes to maintain a natural feel through all of Whidbey Island. Thank you for all your efforts!

Do it now before it is too late to preserve our islands.

work limits my current use

Although I can afford to pay a fee to use the park service, for many people, particularly those with children, this is one of the few enjoyable and healthy free activities for those with few resources! We have some wonderful parks - wish there were more public beaches

Population pressure and future population dictates that it is vital to preserve and add to public lands to provide green areas free from development.

I moved here from NJ to a paradise! We need to preserve our natural assets as best we can.

Save Trillium Woods from development, support wclt conservation funding.

We need to preserve wide swaths of forested land to ensure the well-being of our nesting birds and other wildlife. Pets and even people do not necessarily have to be admitted into these areas.

- Connection trails for long walks are key. - Trails NOT in the woods are best in winter when we really need them near by, would be great to have more places like Deer Lagoon, but with longer walks. - Too many horses = I don't want to go there.

Parks/openspaces/nature are good for our souls! And necessary for the health of the planet.

Two things: One - connectivity is important for wildlife so I support protecting contiguous tracts of land. Two - I think the county should offer incentives to developers and land owners not to log/clear prior to sale or on spec, especially when the land is heavily forested or has other ecological value.

If there is a "budget crunch" why does not Parks and Port of So. Whidbey accept AT&T's offer to pay long term money for use of a small piece of the ridge over Cultus Bay on Possession Point???????? Use of this area by AT&T would have little impact on this park, it would contribute over time significant funds to Island County and would benefit a significant number of Island County residents. The objections to this land use seem to be from a SMALL group of very local residents who put their "not in my backyard" preferences over the benefits to the Island County community as a whole.

More open space needed

Island County Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan

I think we have a valuable resource in farm and natural lands that need to be preserved for future generations.

One day water will be a major issue on Whidbey. We have only aquifer water available to us and we don't know how much there really is. If we continue to expand human density and continue to use our water as if it will flow forever, suddenly salty water will come from our taps and our wells will go dry. Preserving open spaces will add pleasure for humans, protect natural habitats and help us keep clear clean water coming from our well systems. Preservation of open space is essential.

I would like to see us keep the rural environment as much as possible. I do not desire to see it become as an amusement park or the like. Please keep it natural!

Thank you for your good work!

would love a swimming pool -- indoor!

Please offer more saddle and pack stock trails. Volunteers would help build and maintain them.

Preserving habitat is critical and should be a priority for the county. Offering opportunities to use preserved areas that could complement and not disturb the area would be of great benefit...like bird or wildlife viewing. I think volunteer groups such as Whidbey Audubon, Beach Watchers, Fishing clubs, 4H CLubs, etc. could assist in the care and maintenance of some county properties. There would be the need for direction and guidance, but some work could be done by knowledgeable, trained volunteers. Thank you for this opportunity to respond to this critical concern.

My biggest frustration is the overlap - Federal sites (Ebey), state parks, county parks, So Whidbey Parks, Langley Park, and Whidbey Camano Trust properties. Surely some maintenance and administration collaboration could save money/improve services. Second, this entire survey is about recreation. Part of your mission that you should be recognizing is the value preserving and/or restoring natural areas. The public needs to be reminded that it gains real, tangible benefits from wetlands and mature trees and unpaved areas. Unfortunately the survey just reinforces the notion that parks are all about play spaces

Putney Woods is the best!!!

Are habitat areas and ground water supply is at the point where we are not going to be able to recover from these losses. Without water, we will be having a very large problem. People pretty much do what they want, including contractors that no better, because Island County does not enforce their own laws and codes that are in place to protect what we do have here on whidbey, Like water and lakes and trees. There is far to much over grading and hopefully whomever is reading this understands what happens when the laws and codes that are in place are not enforced. Instead of fining the crap out of someone that breaks the rules that we all sufer for , I.C. helps and spends time and money to help legalize an activity to the land that was ilegel in the first place. The word around the Island is just do what you want, there is no restoration required, so the damage is done. You can just get a after the fact permit if you are caught. From what I have read you want the Island to be a destination spot, well in my opion why even spend the money, at the rate we are losing our resources no one will come here, because the reason that they come will be gone. There are greedy people that are making decisions for their own personal gain, why has the County not figured this out and do something about it. I feel the county has an opportunity to make money, if things were were ran in an honest and ethical manner. It has been rumored we had a great person running parks for the county, but this person did not want to give the parks money to the general fund. Any way I feel things have become out of control. I feel County employees that most want to do the right

thing, but are afraid if they say too much they would lose their job. The county is run by developers and the real estate family, this is my opinion and they just want to make money now for themselves and are not really worried about how their actions will affect the future of Whidbey Island. If we lose the watershed that the Trillium property provides this would not be good for anyone. This property would also be a reason for tourists to come here. Why are we giving money to the port at this time when we have a whole watershed that is @ jeopardy, the marina is not going anywhere. Anyway I guess I have said enough, as best as I can tell things are not improving. We are currently losing Lone Lake, I saw this coming years ago and have said so to the County. The county has a MOU with the DOE but the county was asked to come to a site visit with the DOE, but know one from the county showed up, might of seen some of the Lakes problem. But it seems know one really ever wants to listen, or do anything. I probably would not want to lose my job either, especially when there is really no one that has your back, even if you try to do the right thing. Thanks for the chance to make a comment. I have some really good ideas, that might save this Island and make the County Money. I wish all people felt that what we have is more important than how much money we can make right now. I am really busy, trying to save my own little piece of property. I also want to eat and retire someday, but not off of someone else's back.

I just became acquainted with some fellow equestrians belonging to Backcountry Horsemen of WA on Whidbey Island and plan to explore the riding areas in Island County (I was not aware they had an equestrian trail system).

Island County is a unique place that provides a wonderful combination of natural and historical features that deserve to be maintained, honored and preserved for residents/visitors and for future generations alike. Island County has done a wonderful job of looking after its natural environment and should continue to make such efforts a top priority in its planning processes.

Parking is a serious problem at the trails. There are many areas I'd like to walk on, but have nowhere to leave my car to get on the trail. Intermittent parking areas so one could use portions of the trails are needed. It's ridiculous to have trails without a place to park after driving there to get onto the trail. I end up dropping people off and I go home and wait to pick them up....I would like to walk too...but can't find anywhere to leave my car. A bus stop by the trailheads would serve a purpose, but it would mean crossing the highway on foot to get on the Kettle Trail. Not a good solution.

Keep a balance of recreation and conservation. Let forest preserves and their trails be designed so they're sensitive to wildlife and allow appropriate public use. I like jogging and biking in the kettles but am disappointed in how many trails there are - it's so segmented. :(

Island County should not have intensive public use parks, except for beach access areas. Instead, it should focus on larger landscapes that are relatively undeveloped with wildlife habitat protected and trails where appropriate. However, there should be plans for trails and public use before they are put in because many places have too many trails. This fragments wildlife habitat and, as they say, "Habitat is the key to wildlife". We have to balance our use and refuge for our wonderful native wildlife species. Get out of active buildings.

Would like users of the dog parks in Oak Harbor to be responsible for picking up their dog poop. At Technical drive I sometimes pick up 12-18 piles of poop right out in the open.

Would like encouragement/volunteers & plants to help set up mini-native habitat areas on private property. We have small winter wetland area--neighbors have cat-tails, we only have sedge. Impossible to dig by hand --ex: I'd like cat-tails & native iris.

Figure out how to fund maintenance of the parks.

Island County Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan

Needed: a true cross-island trail (both islands). Make an effort to connect existing trails to complete the route

Appendix B: Intercept Event Data Tables

Question	Event Location					
	Camano		Bayview		Coupeville	
	Count	%	County	%	Count	%
1. Where do you live?						
North Whidbey Island	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	18	14.88%
Central Whidbey Island	0	0.00%	3	3.85%	83	68.60%
South Whidbey Island	0	0.00%	67	85.90%	6	4.96%
Camano Island	42	91.30%	0	0.00%	1	0.83%
I'm visiting Island County	3	6.52%	8	10.26%	12	9.92%
Work	1	2.17%	0	0.00%	1	0.83%
Total	46	100.00%	78	100.00%	121	100.00%
2: Which of the following benefits of parks, recreation and open space are most important to you? (Choose 2)						
Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors	32	69.57%	56	71.79%	76	62.81%
Improve health and wellness	13	28.26%	16	20.51%	25	20.66%
Protect our natural environment	21	45.65%	61	78.21%	85	70.25%
Provide special events and social opportunities	3	6.52%	3	3.85%	10	8.26%
Enhance community image and sense of place	3	6.52%	8	10.26%	16	13.22%
Promote Island County as a recreation destination	6	13.04%	12	15.38%	12	9.92%
Total	78	169.57%	156	200.00%	224	185.12%
3: Which of the following are most needed in Island County? (Choose 2)						
Public access for swimming, boating, fishing, etc.	19	41.30%	51	65.38%	35	28.93%
Areas for special events, festivals, and performing arts	7	15.22%	11	14.10%	19	15.70%
Outdoor large group facilities (picnic shelters, reunion venues, etc.)	2	4.35%	6	7.69%	7	5.79%
Nature preserves or conservation areas	17	36.96%	42	53.85%	61	50.41%
Agricultural preserves/protected farmland	7	15.22%	18	23.08%	50	41.32%
Nature centers/environmental education facilities	4	8.70%	6	7.69%	26	21.49%
Sport fields or courts	11	23.91%	6	7.69%	5	4.13%
Hunting opportunities	4	8.70%	5	6.41%	6	4.96%
Equestrian trails/facilities	1	2.17%	4	5.13%	5	4.13%
Dog parks	8	17.39%	11	14.10%	15	12.40%
No new facilities are needed	1	2.17%	0	0.00%	2	1.65%
Total	81	176.09%	160	205.13%	231	190.91%
4A. How would you rate the importance of conserving habitat and natural areas?						
1 - Not Important	0	0.00%	2	2.56%	0	0.00%
2	1	2.17%	0	0.00%	2	1.65%
3 - Important	1	2.17%	4	5.13%	3	2.48%
4	3	6.52%	3	3.85%	10	8.26%
5 - Very Important	37	80.43%	51	65.38%	62	51.24%
6 - Don't Know	1	2.17%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total	43	93.48%	60	76.92%	77	63.64%
4B. Which of the following habitat and natural areas in Island County have you visited? (Choose all that apply)						
Greenbank Farm	3	6.52%	69	88.46%	83	68.60%
Putney Woods	0	0.00%	35	44.87%	4	3.31%
Saratoga Woods	2	4.35%	45	57.69%	29	23.97%
Elger Bay	28	60.87%	4	5.13%	5	4.13%
Swantown Lake	0	0.00%	6	7.69%	21	17.36%
Deer Lagoon	0	0.00%	33	42.31%	31	25.62%
Camano Ridge	17	36.96%	1	1.28%	3	2.48%
Iverson Preserve	16	34.78%	2	2.56%	5	4.13%
Hammons Preserve	0	0.00%	8	10.26%	2	1.65%
Naas Natural Area Preserve	0	0.00%	5	6.41%	10	8.26%
Del Fairfax Preserve	0	0.00%	3	3.85%	3	2.48%
Total	66	143.48%	211	270.51%	196	161.98%
5: What type of land should be the highest priority for acquisition? (Choose 1)						
Public access to water for recreation	12	26.09%	31	39.74%	25	20.66%
Shoreline conservation areas (tidelands)	19	41.30%	39	50.00%	37	30.58%
Inland conservation lands (forests, uplands)	12	26.09%	26	33.33%	38	31.40%
Land suitable for developed County parks	5	10.87%	7	8.97%	13	10.74%
Land suitable for sports fields	3	6.52%	1	1.28%	7	5.79%
No acquisition is needed	0	0.00%	8	10.26%	6	4.96%
Total	51	110.87%	112	143.59%	126	104.13%



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interviews
Participant Groups

LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

- South Whidbey Island Park & Recreation District
North Whidbey Island Park & Recreation District
Oak Harbor Parks
- Port Authorities (Coupeville/South Whidbey)
Greenbank Farm
- Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve Trust Board
National Park Service
- School Districts (4 districts)
- Washington State Parks (Whidbey and Camano representatives)
Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Chambers of Commerce (all)
Island County Economic Development Commission
- Island County Conservation Futures Advisory Board
Island County Conservation Futures Technical Advisory Group
- Island County Water Resources Advisory Committee
Island County Marine Resources Committee
- Audubon Society
Whidbey Camano Island Land Trust (WCLT)
Whidbey Environmental Action Network (WEAN)
- Friends of Camano Island Parks (FOCIP)



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
May 17, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?
 - Money to maintain existing and new activities
 - Meeting standards for facilities
 - Providing open spaces, walking paths and similar items
 - Meeting supply when it exceeds demand
 - Demand for facilities and space for trails (including ADA needs)
 - Categorizing assets, having current plans and prioritizing services

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?
 - Partnering with Park Districts
 - Trail connectivity and open space planning
 - Use of underutilized assets (parks)
 - Lack of awareness by the public on assets (District, County and State parks)
 - Missed marketing opportunities
 - Partnerships help bolster grant opportunities

3. What do you **value most** about parks, recreation facilities, trails, and natural areas and/or habitat areas in Island County?
 - Open spaces, beach access and trails (specifically multi-use trails)
 - Serve broad base of population
 - Depend on few public dollars to support
 - Unlike ball fields, these items serve more than a narrow niche
 - Can be ADA compliant
 - Water access for the public

4. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?
 - ADA accessible facilities
 - Partnership with Oak Harbor Parks and Island County regional park site

- Large parks provide economy of scale and more funds being available from grantors
- Central Whidbey lacks facilities and recreational resources
 - No current sense of recreation
 - Underutilized use of current land and holdings
 - Not using exchanges and reclassification
- Park design and development that minimizes maintenance needs

5. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- Partner with districts on services like ballfields
- Provide more north-end opportunities where most of the population is
 - Use impact fees to provide great services
- Either get in or out of the parks business
 - Currently Island County Parks is not totally in or out of the parks business
 - Does not need to include parks programs or the recreation side of parks

6. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- Help with dog park maintenance
 - Helping minimize maintenance costs
- Central Whidbey parks support
- More partnering with local organizations

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Already addressed

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- Lack of a parks vision by Island County government from top to bottom
 - Take ownership and show commitment/leadership to/for parks department
- Getting credit for existing assets and services
 - Taking credit with more signage
 - Demonstrating investment in maintenance and upkeep



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
Key Findings

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?

- Lack of a Plan
 - Having the community all in “concert” through one plan
- Funding
 - Lack of dedicated monies

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?

- Long term conservation – preserve what we have
 - Preserving what we have makes place more valuable to visitors and residents
- Classify lands owned by County
 - Have a plan for all the classifications and/or plans for individual properties

3. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?

- Have County parks system slide toward focusing on passive recreation
 - Have localized recreation districts providing recreational programming
 - Have port districts managing the economically viable boat launches
- Trailheads and restrooms
- Need a plan so they can manage their properties and see what's missing
 - Accurate inventory of County owned properties
 - Land Classification system

4. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- Lead in acquisition and management of passive recreation properties
- If Central Whidbey and Camano had parks districts, then the County should do passive recreation only

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- Trailheads and restrooms
- Maintenance
- Usability of current inventory

6. Because of **funding limitations**, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- Active recreation should be localized (have a parks district that provides active recreation programming to its own constituents)
 - Localize funding
- Economically feasible boat launches could go to the ports
- User fees

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Port and County could partner on development projects
- County and Land Trust could partner on Habitat conservation
- Have the parks districts do active recreation

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- Concerned the County Park Plan needs to be realistic – not “Pie in the Sky”
- Do not just buy property and remove it from the tax roles
 - Look at the cost/benefit ratio when considering buying property (does the benefit justify the cost? Does the benefit outweigh the cost?)
- All jurisdictions should have specific roles and not overlap services
- Ask questions leading with “would you be willing to pay....for X?”
- Prioritize what your goals are
 - Inventory first
 - Look at Conservation and recreational needs
 - Categorize properties



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
May 21, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?

- Population growth
 - Park units will be stressed by additional residents over the next 20+ years
 - Island County must plan now to avoid unplanned habitat alteration
- Funding to provide the County the ability to manage what is in hand now and what will be acquired in the future
 - Decisions must be based on funding reality
 - County should follow a disciplined use of established core values
- The current rush for preservation and how to coordinate efforts

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?

- Use of private-public partnerships
- Growth of the Whidbey Camano Land Trust (WCLT)
 - For management and maintenance of current assets; plan for future acquisitions
- Leverage uses via partnerships
- Farmland conservation is an issue the county has to decide what role to play and what opportunities to take advantage of; hopefully via grassroots public input
- Making use of connections, links and other attributes in parks lands for the good of habitats and wildlife
- Whidbey Island is what Camano Island used to be in terms of open spaces; the opportunity exists to learn from history so Whidbey does not become like Camano
- Need to preserve land on Camano Island

3. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?

- An organized, new, joint 'parks board' to provide resources, vision and plans across the entire two island network of parks agencies (including state, city/town, and private)
- Thoughtful, methodical planning (to guide decades of future decisions and actions)
- Networking of all partners mentioned above

- Provide leadership, facilitation and communication
- No other natural organization can accomplish this role
- Also be a convening body

4. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- Leverage conservation futures fund as a model program and a successful one
- Can be a vehicle for outreach
- Raise public awareness and engagement
 - Recognize that people are busy
 - Work to gain input from the public via meetings, public displays and the internet
- Knowing who the key stakeholders are

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- What exists today is not totally broken; there are successes
 - Such as the 'Trust Lands Trails'
 - Use these successes and build on them
- What should a visitors experience look like and how to build toward that conclusion
 - Plan for 10, 20 and 30 years in the future
 - Have a vision and see visitor experiences as an economic asset

6. Because of funding limitations, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- Be open to creative, non-traditional approaches
- Fee-for-service and donations, volunteerism are good and bad ideas
 - May only work in certain situations
- Consider estate planning and gifting
- Some people want life experiences
 - For example not 'watching' experiences, but 'doing' experiences/activities (people willing to pay for "experiential learning")

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- WCLT for planning, development and management of lands
 - Can also provide eco-system management (such as with plant populations)
- WSU Beach Watchers is a partner role model

- Navy
- Groups like Audubon and Pacific Rim Institute could be County partners
- County must work on a case-by-case, careful and professionally developed

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- GMA and it's use should be considered when doing parks planning
 - Ebey's Reserve has a 'General Management Plan' that can be a model
 - The County could follow the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) format
 - EIS is a very well structured and provides for a well documented end-product
 - EIS process includes public inputs and realistic time frames



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
May 19, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?
 - Funding to support what we have
 - Maintenance of what exists today
 - Resources to develop what may come later
 - Multiple taxing entities chasing the same dollar (overlap of services)
 - A balanced parks plan with assets identified to carry out the plan
 - A plan that is viable, that makes the tough tradeoffs and has options
 - Such as the way DNR generates funding resources

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?
 - Use of interlocal agreements
 - Use for mutual benefits, such as SW Parks and Rec building and allowing use of other entities of their facilities
 - Public looks for wise use of scarce resources via a coordinated parks plan (eliminate overlapping services)
 - Public belief in the value of all conservation lands
 - Unlike other counties, our county residence value preservation and this has risen to a relative level of public importance (valued by students too)

3. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?
 - Right-sized plan that doesn't expand beyond a sustainable dimension
 - Park lands available exceed the resources needed for development
 - Sustainable lands should equal those current, active projects and a few for the future
 - Sustainable planning does not equal recent parks growth rate in services
 - Sustainable planning should reflect future demographic shifts (as seen in the school districts)
 - Partnerships to avoid duplication of effort
 - Think outside of the box for teaming of parks supply and demand (cross-jurisdictional use of facilities as with South Whidbey Rec and Coupeville schools)

4. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- Get a handle on inventory of assets for right-sized plan
 - Should reflect best interests of the public
- Communicate effectively
- Facilitate discussions with other service providers and the public
- Take the point position on the overall county competition for resources
 - Use a tiered approach to who does what and where in the parks business
 - Provide mission clarification and how service providers are complementary

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- Better maintenance of parks
- More interconnectedness of parks with the public consciousness
 - Provide marketing of resources, which provides a sense of ownership
 - Public should know what parks resources the county owns
- Fix the lack of overall parks vision
- Provide direct marketing of the available parks experiences

6. Because of **funding limitations**, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- Use of a strategic plan for scoping
 - This plan would guide the sale, lease, or other actions of County property which would create a funding source for maintenance and other costs
- Use fee based use approach
- Consider using a levy/tax
 - Current tax rate is low, but many entities are going after those same dollars
 - Parks department must be perceived as really needing what they are asking for = 'ask for what you need'
- Perhaps start a 'County Conservation Corps' to create a volunteer pool to help maintain the parks

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Service learning program with the school districts
 - Example is South Whidbey School teacher Rick Parker's program
 - County could lead a service learning leadership program for work crews
- Many good school district partnership examples for the looking and documenting

- These include the Cedar School, home school connections
- Both superintendents would 'love' to partner on vo-tech programs with the County

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- The trails on the south end of Whidbey should be linked with parks, schools and the City of Langley
- Affordability is a big deal for some families and use of parks and open spaces
 - If your child is on a 'select' sports team or is over upper incomes you can afford to go to Oak Harbor or South Whidbey to use parks for recreation or sports
 - However, lower income families have less accessibility to parks and recreation
 - There is an absolute need for more access across all income levels



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
June 3, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?
 - Funding and finances
 - The County has almost no money
 - Similarly the North Whidbey Parks District is nearly broke as well

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?
 - It is not too late to save open space (a lot of it remains)
 - It is also not too late to create a rational Parks plan to preserving open space
 - A Central Whidbey Parks District and a Camano Parks District are needed
 - Many areas could be developed into a park or County-owned spaces like Lake Hancock or Greenbank

3. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?
 - Getting additional funding is job #1
 - Create an integrated, rational County plan with long-term, logical and sustainable sources of funding
 - The priority should not be to tack future parks planning costs onto the General Fund
 - Creating parks districts will provide a designated and sustainable funding source

4. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?
 - If Central Whidbey and Camano Parks District are created then the County would have minimal role
 - Transfer operations to non-county entities like park districts (lease, not sell property)
 - Vision of non-county operations would be: local taxes, local voters, local issues and local solutions!

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- Most have adequate basic facilities
- The County should its part focus rural and compatible with the nature of our county

6. Because of **funding limitations**, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- Structure of four parks districts (2 new and 2 existing) with maintenance and acquisition levies for funding
- Maximize volunteering
- Minimize bureaucracy and localize investments and other costs

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Homeowner associations and volunteer groups like WSU Beach Watchers and the rest of Extension
- Those private individuals and groups with 'deep pockets'
- Ebey's Landing Historical Review coordination on the numerous plans they have

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- Look at other private operations to incorporate into parks planning like Meerkerk Gardens
- Seek economy of scale for all entities



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
June 3, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?

- Funding
- Preserving Wildlife and habitat vs. access to the public
- Encroachment – building close to sensitive areas
- Awareness of what we have and its importance
- County requirements – “unfunded mandates”

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?

- Education – modeling stewardship
- Tourism
- Trails! Trails! Trails!
- Events
- Access to water – Free, publicly owned (great examples, Double Bluff and Ebey’s Landing)
- Open Space “forever” being open to the public

3. From your perspective, what should the County’s **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?

- Marketing – get the word out about where they are at
- Managing Accessibility to the land

4. What should be the **County’s role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- County must define what their criteria is for parks
- Develop park areas w/ low maintenance and low security costs
- Acquisition of property

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- Need criteria to decide what improvements to make
- Small athletic fields are needed
- Trails!
- Park and Rec district needed for Central Whidbey

6. Because of **funding limitations**, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- Raise taxes
- Form park and recreation district
- Have a dedicated fund for Parks from sales tax revenue
- Private partnerships
- Look at the economic potential of properties currently owned (i.e. Four Springs in currently underutilized)

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Youth Stewardship (Boy Scouts, 4-h clubs, etc.)
- Jail inmates

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- Utilize ROTC, Navy, Church groups, Rotary, Garden Clubs, etc.



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan *Stakeholder Interview*

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?

- Amount of money isn't enough to keep up with park maintenance needs
- Central Whidbey (more specifically Coupeville) is devoid of recreational opportunities away from the schools – when the schools close for summer, there's nothing
- There are more opportunities for habitat properties to protect than there is money to purchase it
 - The commissioners have the capacity to increase the funding for the Conservation Futures Fund; they have not maxed out their taxing capabilities
- Find a way to place "value" on properties that's different from the "market value" of the property

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?

- Establish a County-wide park and rec service area under one umbrella
- Merge the concept in a park that includes trails that provide access to habitat area
 - Being able to access beautiful places – undisturbed habitat (including shoreline)
- Public Trust Doctrine needs to be solidified through the Court system

3. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?

- Open space, trails, beach access/vistas should be the focus
 - Let other (jurisdictions) take care of active recreation

4. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- County should not be active recreation provider

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- More focus on non-motorized trails in the community
 - The County missed a golden opportunity with the Cedars Trail because there was no political will to do the right thing

6. Because of **funding limitations**, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- Organize a county-wide umbrella service organization for parks and recreation
- There needs to be a dedicated source of funds for parks
 - Parks is being squeezed out of the general fund. Parks' money should be separate from the general fund
 - Park impact fees – not a great supporter of this idea, but other jurisdictions already have them and they are successful

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Again, organize a Park and Rec Service area umbrella instead of having the fragmented service provider system we currently have that has national, state, and local agencies competing against each other for funding.

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- Public Benefit Rating System
 - There's no "zeal" from the County agencies to implement this program
 - The County is missing an opportunity by not having a more positive implementation of the system
- There needs to be a commitment from the entire County organization to implement this "community vision" for Parks and habitat conservation. It won't work if just one person or one department makes the commitment; the commitment must come from the Commissioners, the Planning Department, the Assessor's office, from everyone.



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
June 3, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?
 - Money
 - Finding a long-term, sustainable way to fund parks (operations and acquisitions) is the biggest challenge today

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?
 - Partner with the Whidbey Camano Land Trust for common park goals
 - Take advantage of real estate market to preserve open spaces through organizations like The Nature Conservancy – they have multiple available properties and are having financial difficulties

3. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?
 - Sustainable funding should be the County's highest priority

4. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?
 - Because of the large role of WA State Parks (so many great parks) and the local park districts – the role of County parks should only be supplemental
 - County parks should only fill in the gaps and not duplicate services

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?
 - None, they look pretty well maintained now

6. Because of **funding limitations**, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- Dedicated parks operational budget
 - Not taken out of the General Fund

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Whidbey Camano Land Trust is the most optimum fit
- Consider volunteer organizing groups like WSU Beach Watchers
- Consider partnering with other non-profits like The Nature Conservancy

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- None



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
May 20, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?
 - Lack of money and staffing to monitor the properties
 - Island County doesn't have organizational structure to support habitat conservation plan (i.e. natural resource department)
 - Long-term political jurisdiction (County) difficulty in keeping natural habitat intact
 - Natural pieces of habitat are too often lost to recreation
 - Open space are 'over-loved'
 - Examples include the Kettles area, Putney Woods, Saratoga Woods and Rhodie Park
 - Often due to lack of detailed park documentation of permitted and restricted future uses
 - Also due to lack of counter-balancing 'structures' to the need to develop land
 - Lack of vision and priorities, and categorization
 - Need to use a zoning approach
 - Need to have policies on recreation v. habitat priorities
 - Need to include an 'adopt-a-_____' approach to involve user groups
 - Identify land that should be set aside

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?
 - Land prices are lower than in recent memory
 - Lots of local state parks
 - Many people resources to help with volunteer efforts
 - Educating the public that habitat is the key to wildlife
 - The public generally values wildlife
 - Creating a thorough inventory and evaluation of county owned property
 - Passing the 1% Additional Excise Tax (REET per RCW 82.46.070) for conservation land acquisition and management (like the San Juan Islands Land Bank Program)

3. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?
 - Basic services for park assets (like garbage service)
 - Creating a habitat conservation plan or program (which includes land protection)

- Setting priorities for designated habitat areas and tools for implementation
 - Establishing a system from this plan that mimics best parks practices
 - Similar to WA Parks CAMP (Comprehensive Assessment Management and Priorities) Program
- Acquisition of prioritized and needed lands
 - Eliminate current isolated pieces, broken links, corridors, hydrological and other ecological functions

4. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- A focus on larger, regional areas
 - Including passive activities, which would not include ballfields and campgrounds (leave ballfields to park & rec districts, cities/towns and schools)
 - Emphasis on natural areas, habitats, farmland protection and water access
- Only the county can hold on to vital lands and fill ecological links
 - Including less privatization of public shoreline access

5. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- Managing invasive species, based on parks plan that include prioritization, identification and classification
- Moratorium on development of existing open spaces – such as new trails
- Managing what happens between the linked 'core' areas
 - Focus on highway vegetation management, 3rd party actions, connection and fragmentation avoidance of watersheds and related hydrological functions
 - Provide links to GMA and interface with CAO and SMP actions and plans

6. Because of funding limitations, the County currently struggles to maintain the parks, habitat areas and resource lands it has. How do you think the maintenance and management of these lands should be funded?

- REET for conservation, knowing it does not support recreation activities
- For recreation needs complete agency transfer of assets to other recreational service providers that are taxing districts
- Assuming that Central Whidbey and Camano Island do not have parks districts then support them via bond measures and user fees
- Look into ecosystem services financial analysis for economic assessment to determine market value and fee/taxing structures
- Establish dedicated park fund in the budget

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Whidbey Camano Land Trust for land acquisition
- Friends groups for maintenance and stewardship activities
- WA Parks and WA DNR for cooperative stewardship agreements for geographic and labor efficiencies
- Sheriff's Department for carrying out laws for protection of parks and other assets
- Citizens with special skill sets for specialized service needs like botany
- User groups for specific support areas like native plants stewardship

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- Storage of data is an important function of a parks department
- Where does farm land fit into the County parks plan?
 - Issues include ordinances, holding of conservation easements, zoning
 - An example includes Jefferson County farmland protection plan funded by RCO
- Emphasize restoration of ecological functions and grant opportunities to fund them



Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan
Stakeholder Interview
May 17, 2010

1. In your opinion, what are the **biggest issues and challenges** for parks and habitat conservation faced by Island County today?
 - Lack of money
 - Lack of personnel
 - Island County Parks is a 'hidden' department
 - No identity
 - Passed from department to department
 - Inequity between resources given to Camano Island v. Whidbey Island
 - Lack of continuity between support to Camano park resources

2. What are the **biggest opportunities** for parks and habitat conservation in Island County?
 - Creation of a stand-alone Island County Parks Department
 - With a Parks superintendent
 - Representative on Camano Island 2 – 5 times/week
 - Focus on 'conservation parks' v. 'recreation parks'
 - Provide good signage

3. What do you **value most** about parks, recreation facilities, trails, and natural areas and/or habitat areas in Island County?
 - The mission of preserving habitat and providing education
 - Trails for physical activity
 - Walkability
 - Conservation parks
 - Trails, birding, accessibility, all ages, ADA
 - Volunteer partnership helping the funds go further

4. From your perspective, what should the County's **top priority** be for managing and providing parks and habitat areas?
 - A dedicated Island County Parks Department

- Parks plan with timely updates
- Only possible by priorities in Island County overall budgets
- Dedicated parks district for Camano Island
- Buy new lands

5. What should be the **County's role** (versus the roles of other providers) in providing parks and habitat areas in Island County?

- Appreciate the large role and contributions of FOCIP and other partners (Horsemen Association)
 - Lack of appreciation as of now
 - No funds or resources
 - No recognition such as lunches, letters or certificates
- More use of marketing and signage

6. What **improvements** are needed in parks and habitat areas?

- Summer programs across all parks
- Camano Ridge – stopping of unauthorized trail making
- Hutchinson Park – needs small playground to be more of a family park (less vandalism)
- Elger Bay – reduce vandalism
- Four Springs – greater utilization via greater marketing efforts

7. What **partnerships** have the greatest potential for the maintenance, development, operations or management of parks and habitat areas?

- Partnership with other County departments
- Role with WSU Beach Watchers
- Continue role with Island County Marine Resources Committee

8. Is there **anything else** we should keep in mind?

- Good plans with frequent and timely updates

ISLAND COUNTY

Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan

Camano Island

May 21, 2010, 2:00-3:30pm

Four Springs Lake Preserve

STRENGTHS

- FOCIP / Volunteers
 - Acquisition
 - Stewardship
 - Public access
 - Active participants
 - Good working relationship with CFF and WCLT
 - Working relationship for acquisitions
- Maintenance of Camano Center
- Access to public lands (w/FOCIP's help)
- Political environment right now
- Still have natural lands that haven't been built upon (opportunity)

WEAKNESSES

- Park access needs improving
- Lack of guidance from County to volunteers
- Lack of dedicated Parks Department
- Absence of Parks Department presence on Camano
- No kid parks (only 1 playground in system on Camano)
- Lack of family parks
 - Picnic space
 - Open playground (throw Frisbee)
- Lack of youth opportunities
- Signage!
- Visibility on web
- Lack of individual/site plans

COUNTY'S ROLE

- Acquisition, maintenance, and development
- Overhead liability
- Implement non-motorized trails plan on Camano
- Work with community to develop master plans
- Drive process (in an inclusive way) to address ALL community needs
- Public/private partnerships
 - County should not necessarily be responsible for maintenance

NEEDS

- Elevate Parks Department to be equal in status to Public Works, Sheriff, Planning and Health Departments
- Provide interpretation in conservation areas
- Save anything you have the opportunity to get
- Find funding
- Evaluate image
- Preserve Kristopherson Watershed/ Farm
 - Salmon run restoration at Kristopherson
- Preserve Triangle Cove
- Acquire trail corridors (destination trail; wildlife corridor)
- Provide family parks
- Acquire Danielson Farm (363 acres)
- Pair active recreation land with natural interpretive land

FUNDING PRIORITIES

- Implement outreach to encourage public support for funding
- Create a plan; identify opportunities and priorities; identify funding
- Protect undeveloped land from development
- Fund ballparks/family parks
- Make staff position (i.e. Parks superintendent) accessible
- Set aside staff session time with commissioners

VISION FOR PARKS

- Anticipating change
- Appreciation and awareness
- Greater standing with commissioners
- Don't constrain plan by funding
- Amenities (i.e. planning) to support public access
- Planning for next generation
- Balance

ISLAND COUNTY

Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan

Whidbey Island

May 20, 2010, 6:00-7:30pm

School District Annex

STRENGTHS

- Strong volunteer community.
- Parks Department is easy to work with (listen and respond)
- In some places, basic amenities are well-maintained (parking, restrooms, garbage cans)
- Lots of property
- Prioritized well
- Respond to requests for trash pick-ups and project

WEAKNESSES

- Maintaining access (park and beach)
- Maintenance cut backs (in some places basic amenities are not provided or are not well maintained)
- Consistent park identity
- Clarity on who to call when problems arise
- Signage
- Lack of oversight and management
- Better marketing of Adopt-A-Park

NEEDS/IMPROVEMENTS

- Guidelines for volunteers
- Parking/ restrooms are over-used at Rhododendron Park
- Not enough parking at Double Bluff
- Clear volunteer program directions
- Better signage
- Awareness of park locations
 - Partner with Chambers to market parks property
- Balance distribution (fill gaps with facilities). Look at use levels for different times of the year at different parks.
- Interpretive signage to explain stewardship opportunities
- Website with info with who to contact.
- Good citizenship
 - Conduct in parks
 - Volunteer opportunity

COUNTY'S ROLE

- Educate and raise public awareness of public access
- Provide overall guidance

Island County Parks and Habitat Conservation Plan

- Acquire parks in Freeland
 - Improve connectivity and protect watershed
- Respond to public's recreational needs
- Leverage resources/volunteers
- Find money
- Protect watershed aquifer
- Acquire land
 - Shoreline (protection and access)
 - Large forested areas
 - Viewsheds
 - Wetlands

TRAILS

- Trails are a priority
- Trail development can be done by friends groups/volunteers
- Recreational trails – AND – multi-use transportation trails
- Volunteers need guidance/stewardship training

PARTNERS

- Neighbors, individuals
- Volunteer coordinator
- Volunteer guides that are already published
- County point of contact to send individuals localized groups working under County guidance
- Summer interns

VISION

- Trails
- Connectivity between parks
- Deer Lagoon into park
- Well-maintained and constructed trails
- More diverse recreational opportunities
- Diverse access/connectability/ADA, maintenance
- Youth sports facilities
- Expanding access to existing sites
- Undeveloped wild trails
- Acquire large tracts of land
- X2 – Habitat protection balanced with development
- Connected – meets public recreation needs
- Expand awareness of our park system
- Signage and visibility of public property

PRIORITY

- Habitat - 9
- Recreation facilities - 3