



March 19, 2009

Jeroldine Hallberg  
Skagit County Planning and Development Services Department  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Ms. Hallberg:

Skagit Land Trust supports the goals for conservation of green connectors, wildlife habitat corridors and open space outlined in Washington State's Growth Management Act and Skagit County's Comprehensive Plan. The proposed Open Space Concept Plan will help our community achieve these goals.

Well-designed and maintained trails and open space corridors within and between Urban Growth Areas will help maintain a high quality of community life, continued growth of green tourism, and a diversity of wildlife here in Skagit County.

In recent discussions with our members, "green connectors" and open space corridors were noted as a strong need for this county, particularly as our population and urban area density increases. Although we recognize that much work has been done to provide trails and connectors to date, we believe the county has many opportunities to improve and expand the current network. Many connectors are still quite fragmented or absent in key locations. The Open Space Concept Plan helps set the framework to make further progress and identifies areas where we are currently deficient such as through open space in and between the UGA's and connecting natural corridors such as along marine shorelines and river corridors.

Many of the concepts noted imply narrower corridors for walking or bicycling and we strongly support these types of connectors. However these narrower "human" corridors would probably not be effective as wildlife corridors. Thus we hope to also see emphasis in planning on the importance of more expansive open space corridors for wildlife needs.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this plan and commend the county for its work.

Sincerely,

Molly Doran  
Executive Director  
Skagit Land Trust