

North Olympic Land Trust  
Robbie Mantooth, volunteer communications specialist  
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For immediate release

Land Trust supporters learn about  
100-year visioning opportunities

A 100-year visioning process starting next month in Clallam County could be a model for small-town and rural America.

Nicole Hill, a Conservation Director for Cascade Land Conservancy (CLC), based in the Seattle area, offered that opinion to about 100 participants in North Olympic Land Trust's annual meeting Saturday (Jan. 31) at Peninsula College.

Hill said her opinion is based on the success CLC has had so far in the Olympic Peninsula's Mason and Jefferson counties, as well as the towns and cities of King, Snohomish, Pierce and Kittitas counties, where its visioning process began as the Cascade Agenda.

"Our goal was linking significant landscape conservation with livable, vibrant cities and towns," she said.

Through the Cascade Agenda, Hill said CLC staff members talked with more than 3,000 people, including people with expertise in science, economics and industry, as well as elected leaders of more than 100 municipalities and government entities, and other residents. They came up with 50 strategies for such goals as retaining farmland to increase supplies of local food, making sure forests would be sufficient to supply mills, and keeping development in the most appropriate areas. So far, the organization has protected more than 150,000 acres of such lands and raised \$17 million toward a \$20 million goal for protecting additional land.

CLC led a similar visioning process in Mason County, at the invitation of its county commissioners, and in collaboration with Jefferson Land Trust, in Jefferson County.

Hill said the larger organization chose North Olympic Land Trust as the leading partner for extending the visioning process to Clallam County because of its "longstanding reputation as a strong conservation organization."

Although economic conditions are different than during the earlier visioning programs, Hill said she believes Clallam County can produce “a model for rural America” that will be valuable far beyond current times.

“We want to know what you want lands to be in the next 100 years and together we’ll build a strategy to get there,” she said. “We need all of your opinions, technical skills and understanding of industries.”

Hill said people can start contributing ideas now by emailing her at [nixoleh@cascadeland.org](mailto:nixoleh@cascadeland.org) or NOLT executive director Greg Good at [greg@nolt.org](mailto:greg@nolt.org). A Web site for the Olympic Agenda ([olympicagenda.org](http://olympicagenda.org)) will be ready to access in a few days, Hill said.

Public meetings in Port Angeles, Sequim and Forks are being scheduled for late March, followed by meetings of smaller working groups addressing such topics as water, agriculture, forests, industries, economic development, affordable housing, recreation and tourism. Reports and maps are to be produced by July. Representatives from visioning processes in all Olympic Peninsula counties will meet together for an Olympic Summit in 2010 to seek mutually beneficial opportunities, Hill said.

NOLT’s executive director, Greg Good, said he believes collaborating with CLC for the Olympic Agenda will enable the local land trust to serve social and economic aspects of the community as well as environmental protection. In remarks before Hill’s presentation, he said continuing collaboration with other partners, as well as the new collaboration with CLC, will be increasingly important to NOLT. He said those partners include property owners who have permanently protected land through agreements with the land trust, other organizations like Friends of the Fields, Puget Sound Partnership and governmental entities including area tribes.

Other annual meeting speakers were Jim Mantooth, who ended his third year as president by describing the year’s key accomplishment as hiring Good as the organization’s first fulltime executive director, and Conservation Director Allison Lutz, who said agreements to protect seven more properties should be completed soon. She also emphasized the value of collaborating with individuals and groups and recognized Friends of the Fields, Dungeness Valley Creamery, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Ducks Unlimited, Dungeness Habitat LLC, conservation easement donors Ron and Donna Raven, Wild Salmon Center, Eagle Scouts, Willie Nelson’s All Points Charters and Tours, Olympic Park Institute, Olympic National Park and Western Washington University’s Huxley Program at Peninsula College as recent important partners.