

SPRING 2025 | Vol. 35, No. 1

InLandNEWS



Setting priorities for a resilient future

PHOTO CREDIT: Angela Marie

Letter from the Executive Director

By Dave Schaub

Some years ago, my wife Heidi started what has become a New Year's Eve tradition with our family and friends when she grabbed a deck of "Angel Cards" and brought it out to the bonfire. With forced sobriety she announced that we were all to close our eyes, open our intentions to the year ahead, and draw a card as she walked around the circle, presenting us with the fanned deck. "Let go of expectations," she coached us as we each reach out for guidance through the year ahead.

Most years I forget my word sometime around Valentine's Day, but this year's is different. "Resilience" has turned out to be precisely the word I needed as we stepped into the uncertainty that 2025 has brought.

While the recent uptick in use of this buzzword has eroded some of its weight, I find that its meaning deepens as it becomes more relevant to our work. On a national scale the conservation landscape is changing rapidly and unpredictably as funding programs are put on ice and federal agencies' workforces are dissolved. Inspiring projects that we've been working with partners for years are now on indefinite hold. To adapt we must apply the tenets of resilience to ourselves, our organizations, and our communities.

Your Conservancy recently completed a strategic planning process with input from staff, board members, partners, and supporters. Through this process, we have refined our commitment to adaptive planning while advancing a diverse portfolio of projects and programs. These efforts

aim to engage a growing number of partners, funders, and community members in our work protecting lands and waters essential to life in the Inland Northwest. The role that YOU play in helping to advance this work is more important than ever. Thanks to our robust community of supporters, the people who love these lands and give generously to ensure their protection and stewardship, INLC is in a strong position to continue our mission, achieving lasting impact for years to come.

We turn to nature for its lessons of resilience, and we are reassured by the indications that we are on the right path - nurturing numerous partnerships, developing a diverse range of projects, engaging funders of varied capacities, fostering connectivity and learning as we go. You are an essential part of Inland Northwest Land Conservancy's resilience, and our hope is that we are part of yours, too.



▲ Dave Schaub and his word of the year

Optimism

By Jane Hirshfield

*More and more I have come to admire resilience.
Not the simple resistance of a pillow, whose foam
returns over and over to the same shape, but the sinuous
tenacity of a tree: finding the light newly blocked on one side,
it turns in another. A blind intelligence, true.
But out of such persistence arose turtles, rivers,
mitochondria, figs – all this resinous, unretractable earth.*

(c) Jane Hirshfield from *THE ASKING: NEW & SELECTED POEMS* (Knopf, 2023); used by permission of the author, all rights reserved.



PHOTO BY: Lorenzo Menendez

Artist Profile: Angela Marie

Interviewed by Gillian Rowe, Philanthropy and Communications Assistant

What is your favorite way to spend time outdoors?

The best lesson my parents taught me early on was to “get outside.” Beginning each day by being active outdoors is imperative for nourishing my soul, clearing my mind, and energizing my body. I love to play outside, from skate skiing and kayaking to swimming and hiking to eating (I am really good at this). From team sports and biking to walking our dogs. And, of course, photography.

The big year of 2020 (for birds and the obvious) turned my focus from 40+ years of performing in bands to studying photography. Wildlife photography has extended my love of early mornings. The anticipation of what I may see at dawn wakes me before my alarm. My favorite part of the day is just before sunrise and the next hour - the magical lighting of a new day is full of hope and is the most active time for all the wildlife.

When did you get involved with the Conservancy?

I was so excited and honored to receive an email in February of 2023 from the Conservancy expressing interest in my wildlife photography. The ultimate goal and achievement of my photographic work is to provide education and improve lands for wildlife habitat, native plants, and clean air and water. My relationship with INLC is a perfect match, especially working with inspirational people like Carol Corbin and Gillian Rowe. I am so grateful and wish to do more for such an important organization.

What are some of your favorite places to explore/pull inspiration from?

I lived in the Hangman Creek area when I first moved to Spokane 22 years ago. Before this, I was born and raised in Cheeseland, a.k.a. Wisconsin, and then lived in the Seattle area for ten years. My eyes were open wide with excitement

upon my first moose sighting in the Hangman Creek area, and I was astonished at seeing a wildfire barreling toward my home. I am in awe, from the area's numerous waterways to the scablands to the magical firs and tamaracks of north Idaho. I pull inspiration from every type of terrain.

Does photography help you connect to nature?

One of the surprises I have found with wildlife photography is how much more in the moment I am looking through the lens. Photographing with a 200-500mm lens allows a safe and ethical distance between myself and the subject. I am always on foot (or in my kayak), which connects me deeply to each element of the habitat. I am enlivened beyond words by closely witnessing the inhalation and exhalation of beings, let alone individual behaviors.

There is the wild excitement of seeing a rare species, yet getting to know the “regulars” is just as fulfilling. The more I photograph, the more I get to know the species - flora, and fauna- which leads me to a deeper connection as I dive into studying their nature in and out of the field via experience, books, the internet, and human teachers.

I will oftentimes wait 2-3 hours at a time in a ditch or marsh in ridiculous temperatures, camera up and ready, for an animal to wake up or a bird to take flight. Some call it wacky; I call it thrilling. The more I learn about the species and their habitat, the better I get to know and predict behavior, enhancing my photography and deepening my connection to nature.

For the full interview visit inlandnwland.org/news

Angela Marie and Partner Kat ▼



PHOTOS BY: Angela Marie



PHOTO CREDIT: Jeanne Dammarell

© J. Dammarell



PHOTO CREDIT: Carol Corbin

▲ Parnassian butterfly on dogbane at Mt. Spokane

Mt. Spokane Priority Area: Then and Now

By Caroline Woodwell, Conservancy Volunteer

When the founders of Inland Northwest Land Conservancy (INLC) gathered around a kitchen table in the 1990s to talk about ways to protect the landscapes they loved, they considered: the pine, fir and cedar forests, the alpine meadows, the lakes, rivers and streams, and the wildlife of eastern Washington and North Idaho. No place exemplifies those values more than the region of conservation focus INLC now calls the Mt. Spokane Priority Area. These 202,394 acres sit on the state line, at the nexus of four counties: Spokane and Pend Oreille Counties in Washington, and Bonner and Kootenai Counties in Idaho, including the 5,887-foot Mt. Spokane.

It's not surprising that one of INLC's first large protection projects is found here

The Conservancy has long recognized an opportunity for large landscape conservation here where five surface water streams feed the Rathdrum Prairie-Spokane Valley Aquifer, and where moose, elk, bobcats, mountain lions and

Washington's newest wolf pack, roam. So, it's not surprising that one of INLC's first large protection projects is found here.

In 2001, Bob and Jane Takai donated a 250-acre conservation easement on their land at the heart of the Thompson Creek watershed, which feeds Newman Lake, about 15 miles from downtown Spokane. Their goal was forest protection, but over the next 25 years, they did far more. Slowly, they learned enough about forest management to counter the effects of years of fire suppression and return the forest to ecological health. They thinned, removing fir trees and planting fire-resistant species such as Larch. Now, they say, they've made their land fire-resistant, almost eliminating the possibility of a crown fire, and that the forest is ecologically healthy.

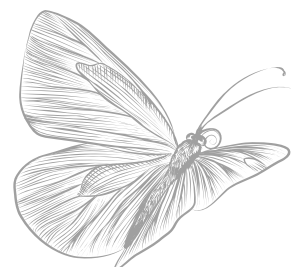
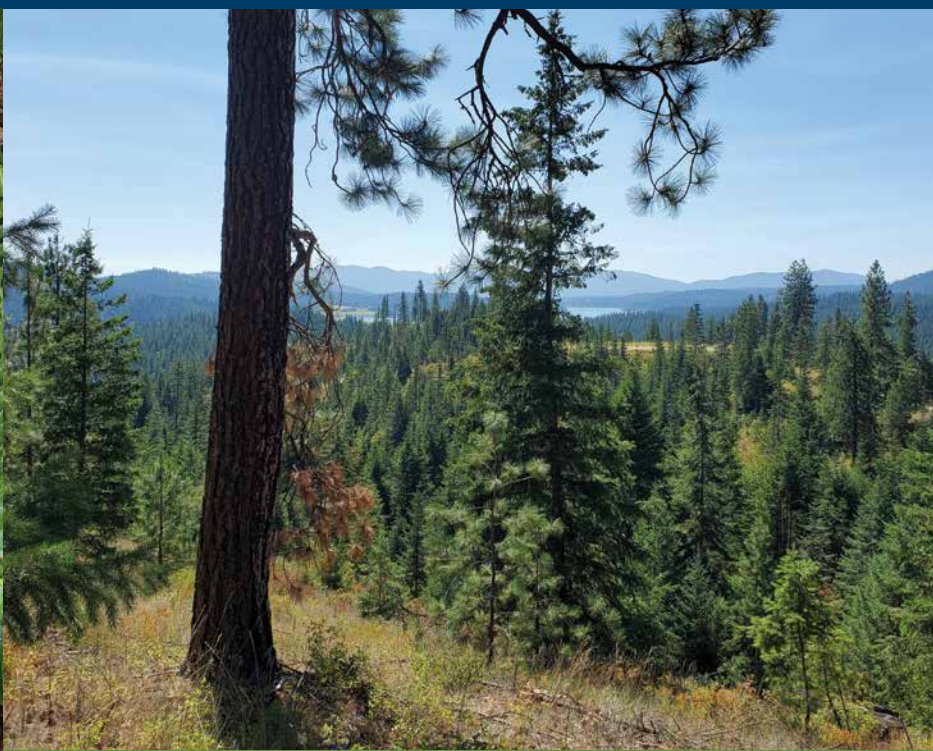




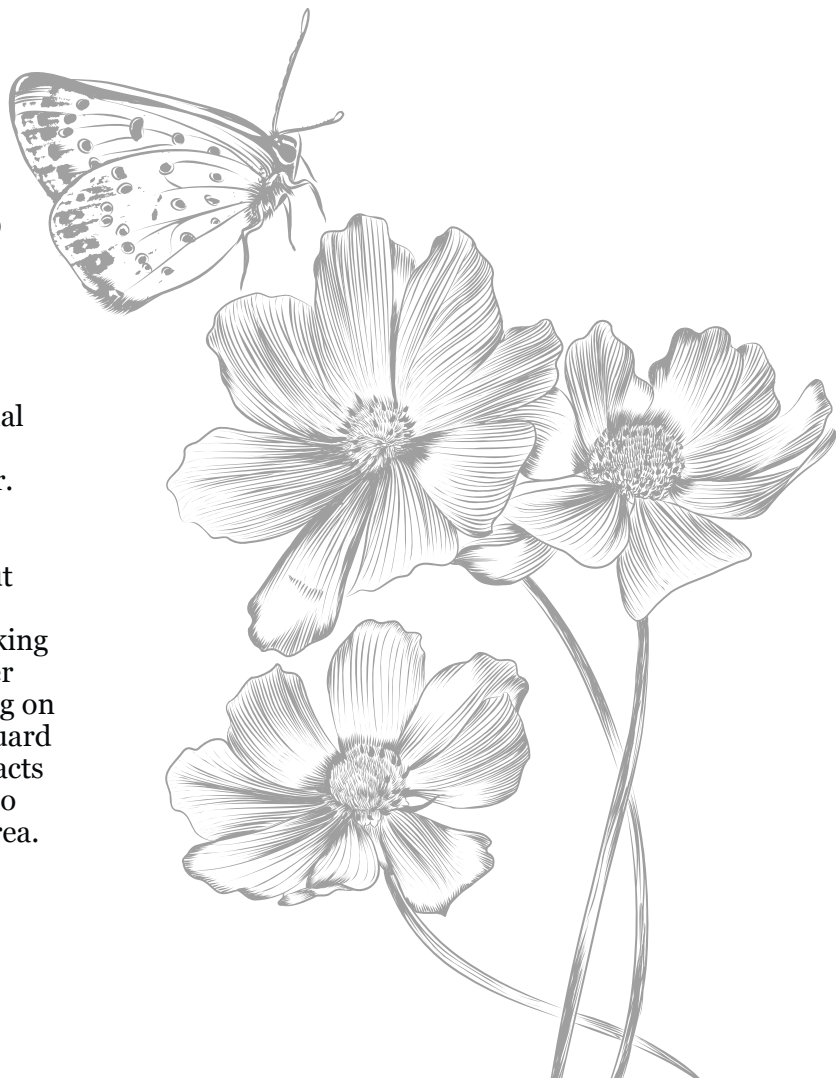
PHOTO CREDIT: Angela Marie



▲ Takai property

Since that early easement, your Conservancy has helped to protect almost a dozen properties in the Mt. Spokane Priority Area, contributing to the 27,629 acres of protected lands. “Unique to this part of the region,” says Todd Dunfield, INLC’s Public Lands Protection Specialist, “is the existence of private parcels of 3,000+ acres”. Those large parcels offer an opportunity to protect intact forestland, contiguous habitat, and the aquifer. They could also aid in regional climate resilience by protecting the north facing mountains that hold snow longer and later in the year.

Jane Takai, who was a Conservancy board member when she and Bob donated their easement, hoped, but didn’t know, that their land would become part of a much larger regional conservation effort. Today, working with partners including the Tribes, commercial timber companies and government agencies, INLC is building on that early easement to link protected lands and safeguard watershed properties. The goal is to conserve large tracts of healthy, working forests from the lakes and rivers to the mountain summits of the Mt. Spokane Priority Area.



Priority Areas

By Lindsay Chutas, Chair of Land Protection Committee and Conservancy Board Member

The Inland Northwest Land Conservancy (INLC) prioritizes five key areas for conservation, each with unique ecosystems and environmental challenges. These areas are crucial for preserving biodiversity and addressing climate change, water conservation, and habitat restoration.

1

Hangman Creek Priority Area:

Flowing from the Rocky Mountain foothills to the Spokane River, Hangman Creek is one of Washington's most impaired waterways, facing threats from urbanization and agriculture. INLC collaborates with diverse stakeholders to improve water quality and fish and riparian habitats, with a focus on preserving stream flows. This area has the potential to demonstrate the power of public and private partnerships in revitalizing damaged waterways.

2

Mt. Spokane Priority Area:

Located at the southern tip of the Selkirk Mountains, Mt. Spokane is rich in biodiversity, supporting species such as deer, elk, and black bears. It is also a key source of surface water for the Rathdrum Prairie Spokane Valley Aquifer, which provides drinking water to the region. INLC works to conserve water resources, protect working forests, and preserve scenic views and recreational opportunities in this popular outdoor destination.

3

Mica Peak Priority Area:

Stretching across the Idaho-Washington border, Mica Peak is home to resilient forests and important wildlife habitats, including elk, moose, and gray wolves. INLC's efforts focus on expanding protected areas, especially on the Idaho side, to safeguard watersheds that feed into the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer. The area also has cultural significance for members of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, who have traditionally used it for hunting and gathering.

4

Coeur d'Alene River Priority Area:

The Coeur d'Alene River, historically vital to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, faces environmental degradation due to past mining activities that left heavy metals in the ecosystem. INLC works to conserve land around tributaries and wetlands, improving water quality and restoring riparian habitats while supporting ongoing clean-up efforts to revitalize this vital waterway.

5

Channeled Scablands Priority Area:

Carved by Ice Age floods, this area is known for its unique biodiversity, including species like the Pygmy Rabbit and Sage Thrasher. The Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, located within this region, provides vital habitat, and INLC aims to expand conservation efforts by protecting surrounding lands. The region also holds cultural importance for local tribes, who traditionally harvested plants like camas and bitterroot.

These priority areas reflect INLC's dedication to protecting critical landscapes and ecosystems, ensuring long-term sustainability for both wildlife and communities. By focusing on these areas, INLC can strengthen its impact through targeted land acquisitions and strategic conservation efforts.

*Priority areas are listed in no particular order

“All properties that INLC works on undergo a rigorous evaluation process. We select projects based on five core criteria: lands that provide lasting, landscape-scale impact; lands that are resilient and play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of climate change; lands that foster deep connections to nature; lands that support tribal land conservation and access; and lands with opportunities to restore vital habitat or enhance ecosystem function. INLC employs a science-based, up-to-date approach to ensure our efforts create a lasting impact in these key areas.” - Mike Crabtree, Conservation Director

“We are incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to spend quality time outdoors in our region’s natural habitats. It is critical that we continue to preserve these lands and waters not only for our enjoyment, but for future generations to enjoy as well.” Pete Stanton, WA Trust Bank, speaking about the Rimrock to Riverside conservation project

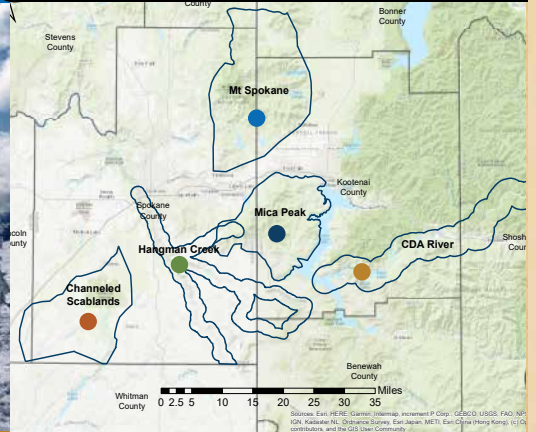
Hangman Creek



Mt. Spokane



Priority Areas



Mica Peak



Coeur d'Alene River



Channeled Scablands



▲ Lindsay Chutas

Lindsay is an environmental scientist and avid outdoor adventurer. As an environmental scientist, she specializes in riparian restoration, biological function and value assessment and monitoring, watershed scale planning, and environmental permitting. She loves all things outdoors including climbing, skiing, and trail running, and loves sharing those activities with her family and friends. Her passion for conservation and strategic development guides her work professionally and as board member and Land Protection Committee chair for the Conservancy.

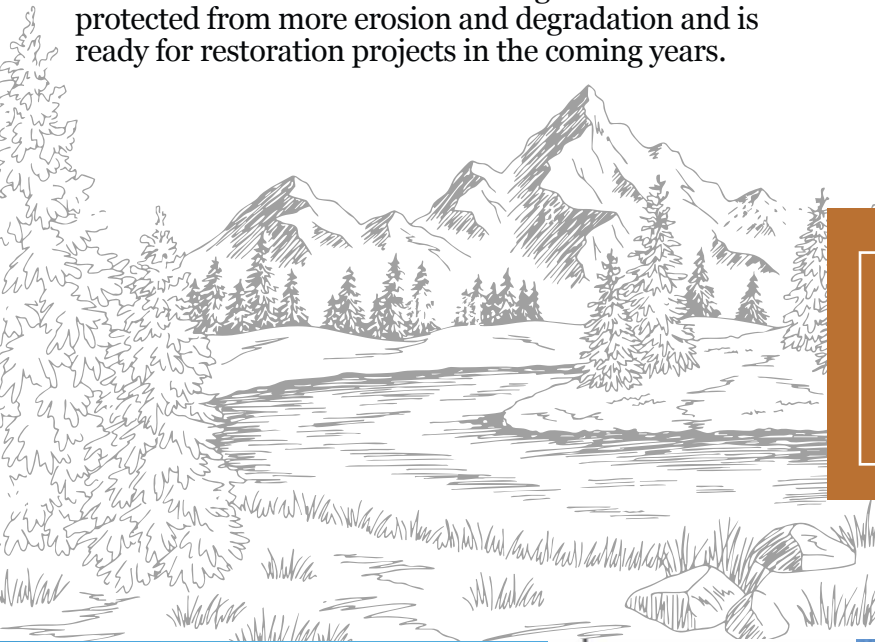
Ode to the Coeur d'Alene River

By Carol Corbin, Philanthropy and Communications Director

Some of my toughest accomplishments have been alongside the Coeur d'Alene River—my first century ride (100-mile cycle), five Jackass Half Marathons, and bikepacking through mosquito clouds. I've shed blood, sweat, and tears along its corridor from Mullan to Plummer. And some days, as I push through the miles, I glare at the River, envious of its effortless flow.

But the River has bigger problems than I do. Over a century of mining in Idaho's Silver Valley left a toxic legacy of lead, zinc, and arsenic in its waters and floodplains, making it one of the nation's largest Superfund sites. While cleanup efforts have improved water quality, toxic sediments persist, especially during floods.

That's why the Coeur d'Alene River is a Conservancy priority. With several conservation easements already in place, our team will work with more landowners to ensure the land along the river is protected from more erosion and degradation and is ready for restoration projects in the coming years.



This series of haikus celebrates the River's abundance and the many miles of Type 2 fun I've enjoyed there.

Haiku for a Cheerleader

(The time a loon "cheered me on" at the start of a chilly half-marathon.)

Cold October mist
Surrounded by pounding feet
A haunting Hurrah!

Haiku for What's Left

(The time my little naturalist correctly identified moose poop.)

Five-year-old wisdom
Who was here? Learn from the signs
Mom, is that moose scat?

Haiku for a Thimbleberry

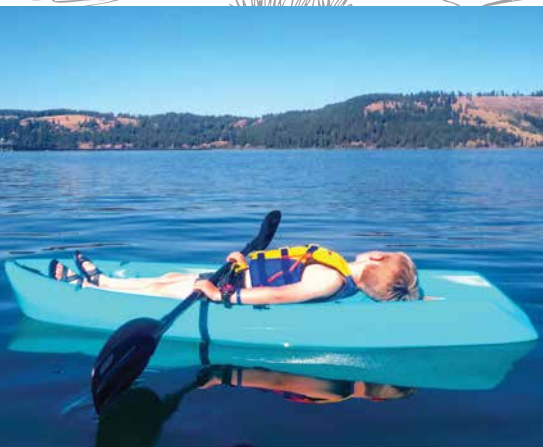
(The time our loooong bike ride required a berry snack break.)

More miles! Keep going!
But...stop. Sweet June, berry's burst
Juice for the pedals

LEARN

Want to learn more about the plants and wildlife of the Coeur d'Alene River corridor? Check out our brand-new Field Guide to the Coeur d'Alene River at InlandNWLand.org/Merchandise

▼ Carol Corbin with Conservancy volunteer and supporter Patti Ziegler



YOUR 2024 IMPACT



January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

Together we are leaving a legacy of open spaces and conserved habitats. Future generations will be grateful we did.

-Sally Pritchard, Conservancy Board Member

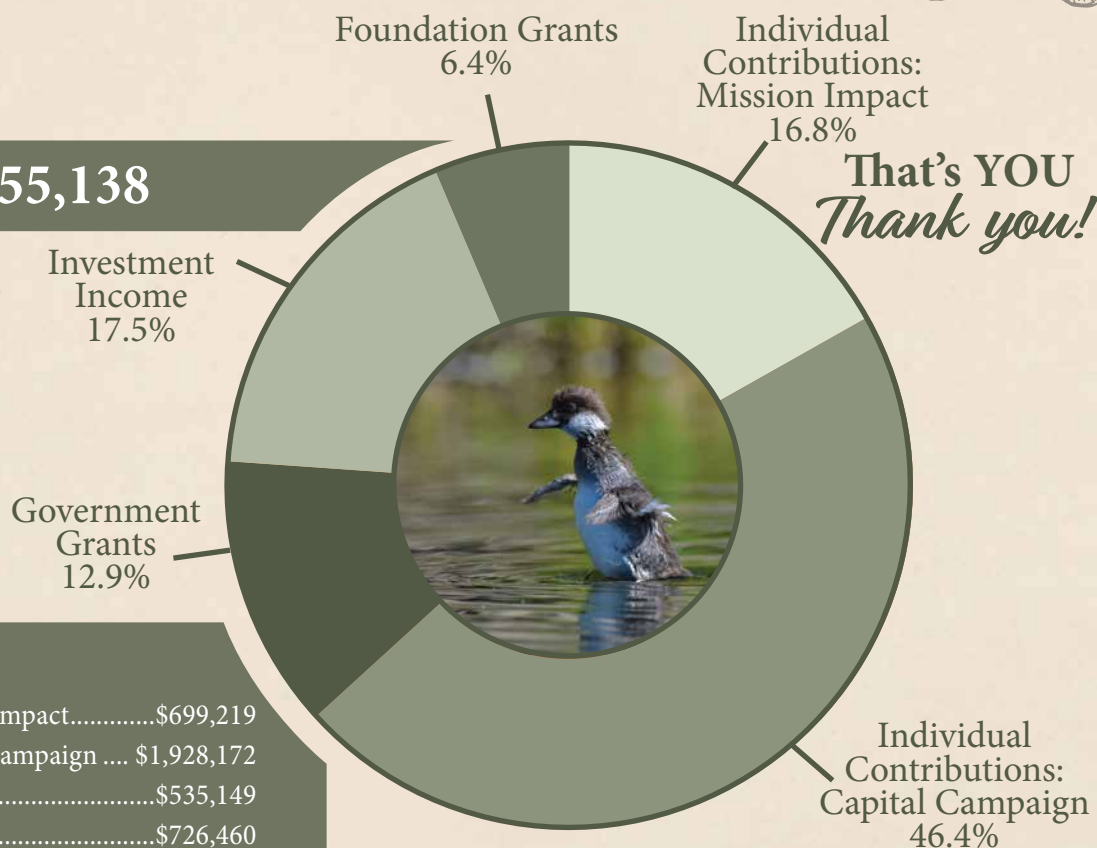
PHOTO CREDIT: Lorenzo Menendez

YOUR 2024 IMPACT

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

REVENUES: \$4,155,138

Generous donors like you have pledged and contributed their support to helping us complete the Glen Tana project and grow our funds to conserve more vital land in the future. (See campaign update on page 12)



REVENUES:

Individual Contributions: Mission Impact.....	\$699,219
Individual Contributions: Capital Campaign	\$1,928,172
Government Grants	\$535,149
Investment Income	\$726,460
Foundation Grants	\$266,138

NET ASSETS: \$16,702,443*

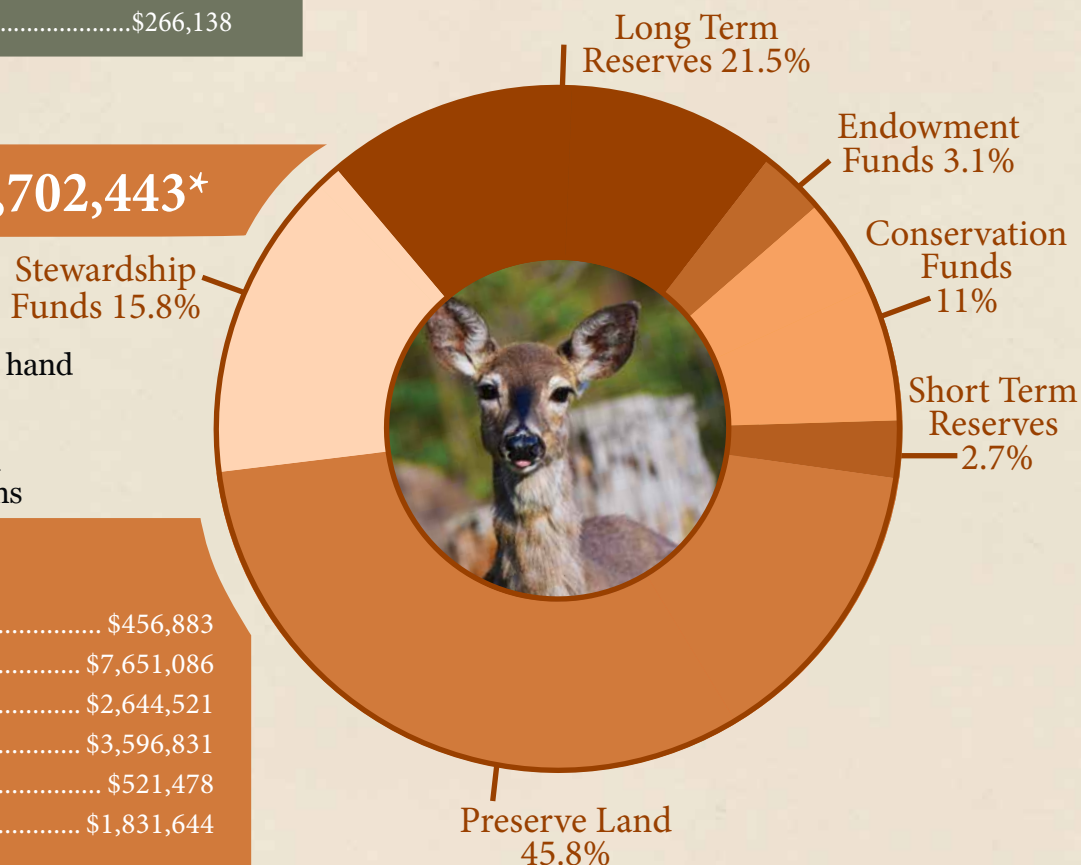
*As of December 31, 2024

Short term reserves: cash on hand to support current operations

Long term reserves: invested assets to sustain future operations

NET ASSETS:

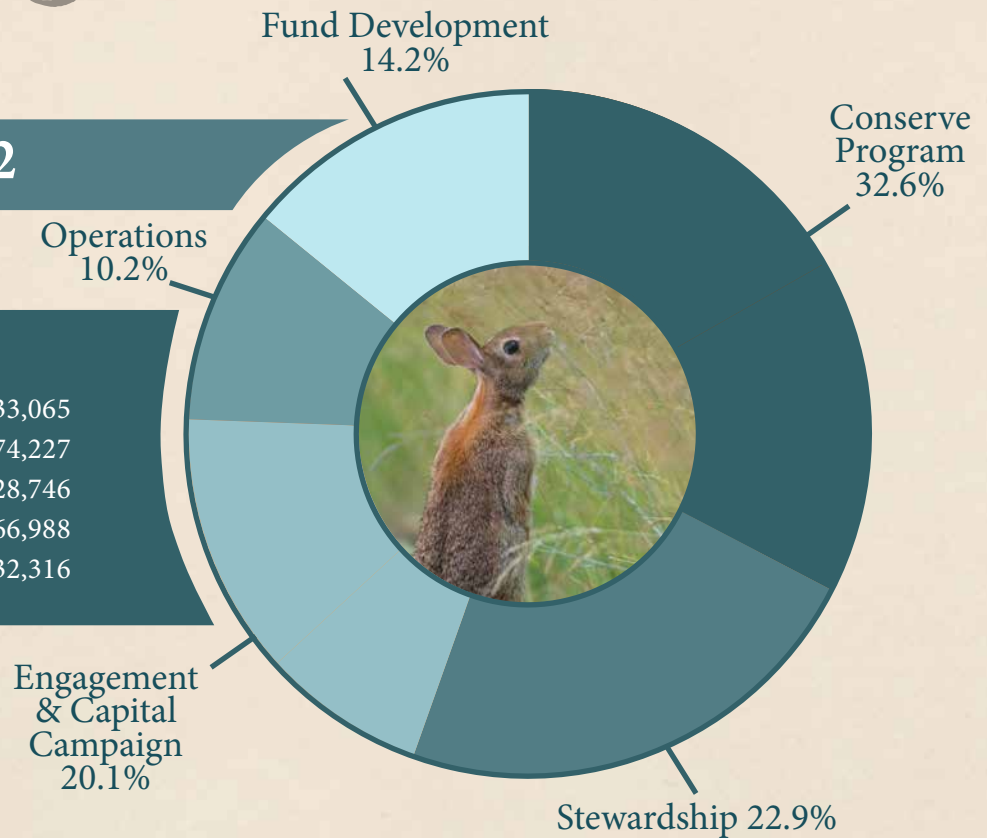
Short Term Reserves	\$456,883
Preserve Land	\$7,651,086
Stewardship Fund	\$2,644,521
Long Term Reserves	\$3,596,831
Endowment Funds	\$521,478
Conservation Funds	\$1,831,644



EXPENSES: \$1,635,342

EXPENSES:

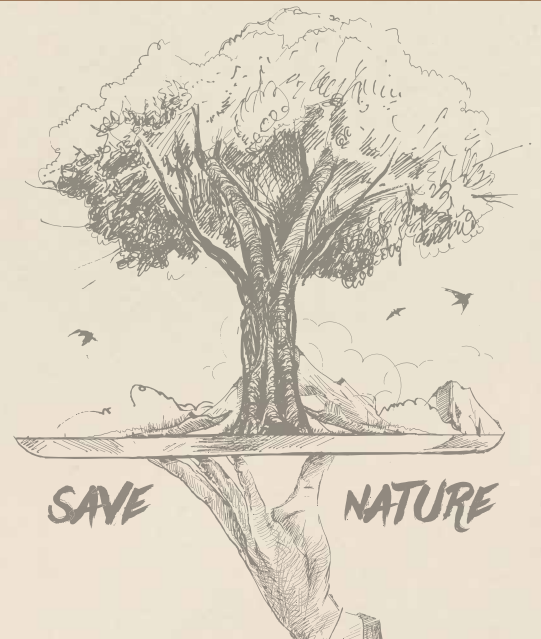
Conserve Program	\$533,065
Stewardship.....	\$374,227
Engagement & Capital Campaign	\$328,746
Operations	\$166,988
Fund Development	\$232,316



2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN:

Several members of the Conservancy Board, in partnership with the leadership staff, crafted a strategic plan that will guide conservation work for the next five years. The plan includes bold goals, such as:

- Protecting an additional 15,000 acres by the end of 2030
- Creating an internship program for conservation professionals
- Increasing engagement and visibility in the community through:
 - Strengthening relationships with local tribes
 - Expanding corporate partnerships
 - Offering diverse opportunities to engage new supporters



Complete audited financial reports are available upon request
PHOTOS BY: Angela Marie

“It’s In Our Nature” Campaign Update

By Sally Pritchard, Conservancy Board Member and Capital Campaign Chair

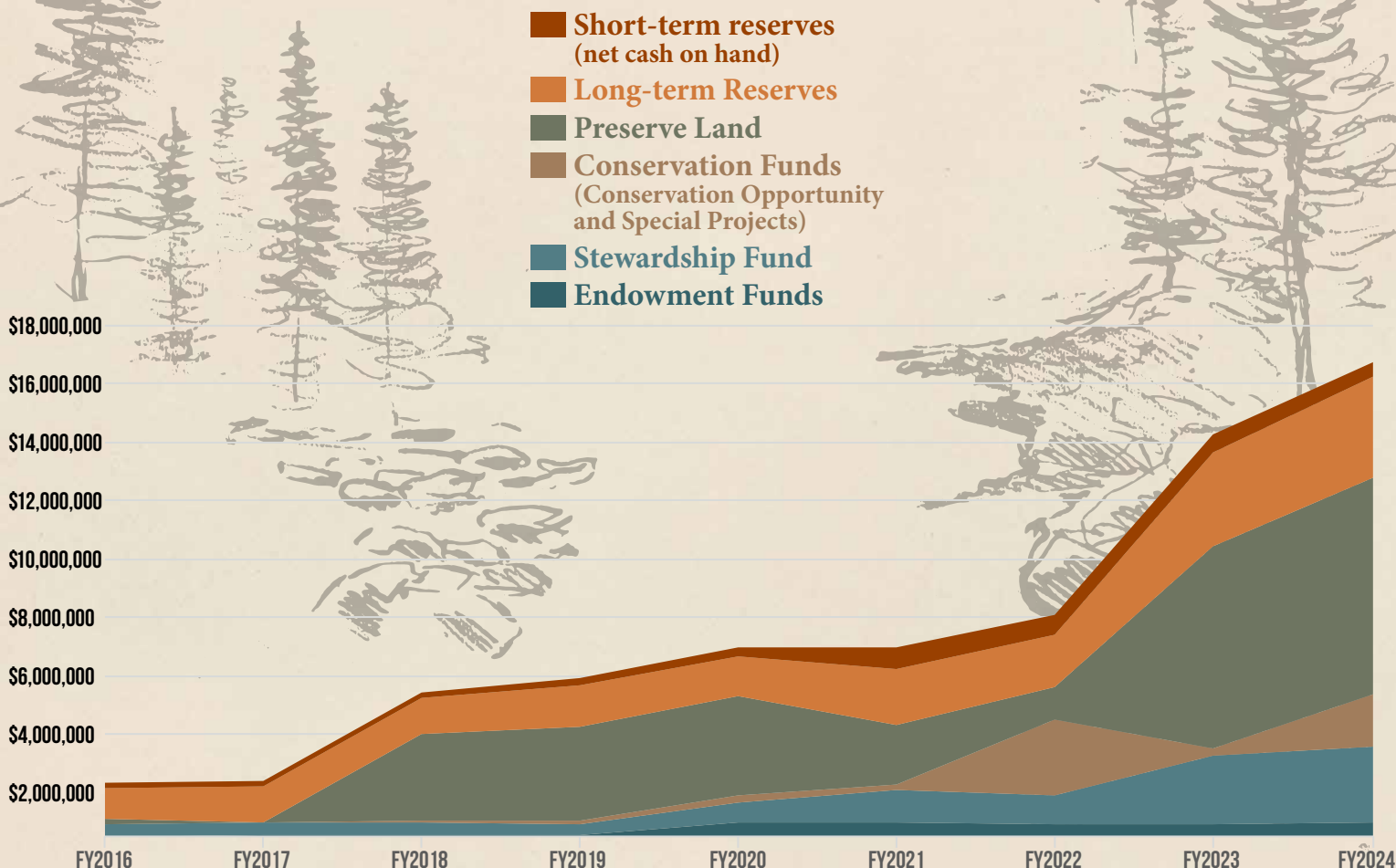
Hooray! Thanks to the generosity of more than 225 donors we recently surpassed \$4 million for the permanent protection of the Glen Tana property along the Little Spokane River. This is the largest project INLC has ever undertaken --in terms of acres protected, number of community members engaged, and amount of funds raised. If you’ve been thinking of contributing to this campaign, we hope to recognize you at our celebration event in June. Gifts can be made to the campaign through May 15. Let’s harness this momentum and use it to protect more special places like it in the future!

“Glen Tana is the crown jewel of a contiguous greenbelt we have helped string around the northwest corner of our city.”

-Dave Schaub, Executive Director (Spokesman Review, Sept. 26, 2024)

Net Asset Growth

Fiscal Year 2016-Fiscal Year 2024



Rimrock to Riverside: A Vision that Keeps Growing

By Dave Sonntag, Conservancy Board Member

It all started with the vision of longtime rancher and neighbor to Palisades Park Craig Volosing: what if the land north of Palisades could be preserved, connecting the park's 10-plus miles of trails to the extraordinary 55 miles of Riverside State Park trails?

Dreams take time. But, with persistence – and an “angel” or two – they often become reality. In 2021, the preservation of 123 acres derived from 12 land parcels and 10 landowners was completed creating a vital wildlife corridor, and public access opportunity from the wetlands and overlooks of Palisades into the forested expanses of Riverside State Park.

“It’s Dave Schaub who had the drive and the vision to pull this off,” said Volosing. But it was Volosing who had the foresight to engage Inland Northwest Land Conservancy’s Executive Director.

Under Schaub’s guidance, angels were identified to purchase parcels of land and hold these treasures until INLC could orchestrate their sale to the Conservation Futures Program for subsequent management by Spokane City Parks.

“Projects like this are a way to cultivate a next generation that values the natural world,” said Bob Ganahl, retired educator and now INLC hike docent, who believes the greatest value of this diverse land is its accessibility and walking friendliness for all abilities while offering amazing views from Spokane Valley to downtown.

One of the angels that made the project a reality, Kyle Baird, said, “It’s one in a million to have a park like this so close to an urban area.”

The vision for this project continues to grow. Spokane City Parks is slated to build the Palisades North Trailhead on the north side of Houston Road. New trails are already under construction leading north, across the BNSF railroad, then connecting to the existing Romine Trail.

The value of this project extends far beyond the connection to Riverside State Park, says Schaub. “Rimrock to Riverside served as a springboard to other community benefit projects in Spokane County including Saltese Uplands, Waikiki Springs, and now Glen Tana.”



▲ Palisades North Trailhead overview map

▼ Romine Trail



PC: Krystin Symons



PC: Bob Ganahl



PC: Dave Sonntag

Opening Access: Making Conservation Information Available to All

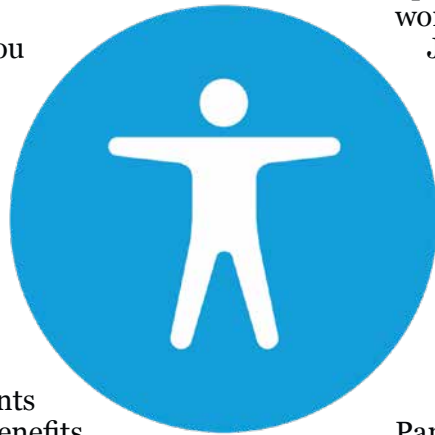
By Mitchell Clark, Conservancy Volunteer

If you're a frequent visitor to Inland Northwest Land Conservancy's website, you may have noticed something new. Your Conservancy has added an accessibility widget to make it easier for everyone to get information on events, conservation efforts, and more.

If you're unfamiliar, it's the blue button floating in the bottom righthand corner of the page. Clicking on it will bring up a variety of options that let you change how the website looks and behaves to better match how your vision works, and how you prefer to read. You can make sure the website is optimized for a screen reader, adjust the contrast and colors on the page, and even remove images or animations.

It's vital that our region's outdoor spaces, and information about them, are accessible to everyone. Robin Redman, a local advocate, points out that there are numerous benefits to outdoor access. "Countless studies have found that outdoor experiences reduce stress, anxiety, ADHD symptoms, obesity, blood pressure, and depression while improving physical fitness and mental health," she said. "It also provides for often lacking social engagement needs of individuals isolated due to lack of mobility and/or vision."

However, according to Redman, not everyone has been able to access all the Inland Northwest's natural spaces.



"It has historically had limited opportunities for adaptive outdoor recreation due to lack of accessible trails, adaptive equipment, and instructors trained in adaptive solutions for individuals with mobility and/or vision impairments," she said.

Things have been improving. Organizations like the Spokane Nordic Ski Association, Washington Trails Association, Washington State Parks, Evergreen East, Spokane County, and the City of Spokane have all worked to address accessibility issues at places like John Shields Park, Bear Lake, and Selkirk Lodge.

"It's exciting to see positive changes happening locally and regionally that address existing barriers to participation in outdoor recreation, providing for inclusion," said Redman.

There remains work to be done, both by the Conservancy and other agencies. Redman points out websites must be compatible with assistive tools and reliably updated with the information needed to decide if we can access a natural area.

Part of what's needed is more awareness about what issues exist. Redman points out a few, such as gates or fences that make trails inaccessible to wheelchair users, and the availability of ADA toilets, shelters, and parking spaces. "As each of us wander in our special natural areas, we should observe our surroundings through the discerning lens of someone who has limited access. It may be that, in the near future, that person needing accessibility will be you or I," she said. "Addressing barriers and providing for accessibility during initial land-use planning is beneficial for all."

Obviously, making the Conservancy's site ADA accessible is only a small step in the journey to ensure everyone can enjoy the Inland Northwest's beauty. However, it's crucial in providing information about ways to get outside and protect these critical open spaces for years to come.



PHOTO CREDIT: Angela Marie



READ

full article on our blog
inlandnwland.org/news

The Earth Awakens

By Dr. Michael Kropf, Assistant Professor of Music Gonzaga University

I am a composer, musician, and teacher. Like many artists, I find that spending time in nature inspires me to create. There is something about the simultaneous feelings of smallness and connectedness in the face of the natural world that spurs the mind towards new ideas.

Palisades Park was one of the first places that I visited when I moved to Spokane, and I was immediately taken with the vastness of the view, as well as by the stark beauty of its Ponderosa forests, wildflowers, and vernal pools. I have since become a constant visitor to the park, using it as a place to walk and think, meet friends, listen to quietness and the distant sounds of the city, and hunt for auroras. When I close my eyes and think about Palisades, I see a place of transition, where the city meets nature, where the plateau meets the mountains, and where our present meets an uncertain future.

When I learned about the Inland Northwest Land Conservancy's vital mission to expand this very special park, I wondered if there was a way that I as a composer could help celebrate and support their work. Was there a

way to capture the unique experience of visiting Palisades, creating musical space for reflection, in the same way that the park creates a space for each one of its visitors, human and animal? On April 30th, I will try and answer this question, in partnership with the talented music students of the Gonzaga University Wind Band, directed by Dr. Peter Hamlin, with the premiere of a new multimedia musical composition called Inland Viewscape. The work will feature meditative video-footage of Palisades captured by my husband Cody Barnhart, and the concert proceeds will serve as a fundraiser for INLC, turning musical notes into protected lands for future generations.

VISIT

inlandnwland.org/events for more unique experiences like this hosted by your Conservancy!



PHOTO CREDIT: Angela Marie



PHOTO CREDIT: Jeanne Dammarell



▲ Dr. Michael Kropf



Inland Northwest Land Conservancy
35 W. Main Ave., Ste. 210
Spokane, WA 99201
509.328.2939

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Spokane, WA
Permit No. 28

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Toni Pessemier
President
Sally Pritchard
Vice President
Tim Sweet
Secretary
Brian Behler
Treasurer
Leyna Bernstein
Immediate Past President

Lindsay Chutas
Sandy Emerson
Ann Fennessy
Julie Johnson
Kris Ryan
Debra Schultz
Dave Sonntag
Jonathan Teeters

STAFF

Dave Schaub
Executive Director
Carol Corbin
Philanthropy & Communications Director
Michael Crabtree
Conservation Director
Chris DeForest
Senior Conservationist
Todd Dunfield
Public Lands Protection Specialist
Vicki Egesdal
Associate Director
Steven Eddington
Preserve Manager
Rose Macaulay
Stewardship Director
Gillian Rowe
Philanthropy & Communications Assistant
Ben Sprague
Campaign Coordinator



For more information visit our website at www.inlandnmland.org or follow us on Facebook and Instagram at InlandNWLand.

Enhance your impact through smart giving strategies like Donor Advised Funds or Qualified Charitable Distributions

Learn more at:
InlandNWLand.org/ways-to-give



Your financial support makes a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the Inland Northwest every day!

YOUR SUPPORT IN THE LAST YEAR MEANS:



699

Community members engaged on the land



27,173

Total acres protected since 1991



15

Volunteer docents leading guided hikes



783

People supported the Conservancy in 2024