



STATE OF WASHINGTON: SOUTH PUGET SOUND COASTAL FOREST

In collaboration with the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and The Trust for Public Land worked with landowner Green Diamond Resource Company to protect approximately 20,000 acres of private forest lands in Mason County, near Puget Sound. Without protection, this land would have been at risk of conversion to non-forest use due to population pressure from nearby metropolitan areas. Protected, this working forest supports the local economy as well as critical habitat.

“Mason County’s proximity to Puget Sound and Hood Canal makes it an attractive development opportunity,” explained David Walters, Vice-President of Acquisitions and Business Development at Green Diamond. “By removing development rights on Green Diamond’s land in this area, we ensure working forests will continue to be an important part of the economy in this region.”

The project provides benefits that reflect the priorities of stakeholders, including rural communities, conservation groups, and local tribes.



The South Puget Sound Coastal Forest project protects over **55 miles** of stream riparian habitat, including over 30 salmon-bearing miles, and over 1,500 acres of wetlands.

“The working forestland protected by this (conservation) easement supports the vital recreation, environmental and economic values that make south Puget Sound an attractive place to live, work and play,” said WA DNR Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz. “Collaborating with like-minded partners in forest conservation ensures that this



forest will continue to provide benefits to the public and the environment.”

Streams protected by the project empty into vulnerable commercial shellfish tidelands, including those in Oakland Bay, Hood Canal, and Case Inlet.

Forest conversion threatens water quality, which is essential to the local shellfish industry’s survival. Securing a conservation easement on the property safeguards downstream water quality for shellfish on 1,400 acres of tidelands in Oakland Bay for more than 20 shellfish companies and 2,000 recreational and tribal harvesters.

“This conservation easement is a critical step in helping to protect the water quality in the nearby inlets,” said Bill Taylor, President of Taylor Shellfish. “The easement will help to ensure that these inlets will continue to produce shellfish for tribal harvesters, recreational harvesters and shellfish farmers. The easement will not only benefit the environment in the long term but also the local economy.”

Healthy, productive waters for salmon and shellfish are important for the Squaxin Island Tribe and Skokomish Tribe ways of life.

The project supports the region’s forestry industry, which provides 8% of Mason County’s direct jobs



and 7.5% of its direct wages. The project lands support over 100 direct and indirect jobs worth over \$5 million in wages.

“Working forests are a major part of Mason County’s economy, and this project helps to ensure a healthy forest products industry here for many years to come,” said Blayde Fry, Vice President and General Manager at Green Diamond.

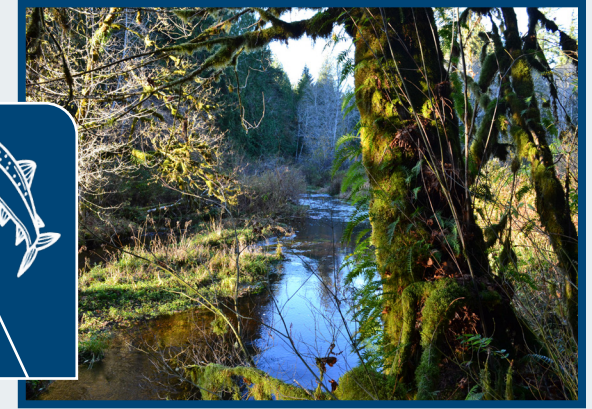
Green Diamond is donating over 21 miles of trail easements across the project’s footprint to provide increased public access to recreation in perpetuity.



Permanently secures public access for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and other non-motorized outdoor activities.

The South Puget Sound Coastal Forest project demonstrates the utility of the Forest Legacy Program in supporting local economies that are not strictly dependent on forestry-related activities.

Preserves habitat for state species of concern and federally threatened and endangered species including **Puget Sound Chinook salmon** and **Puget Sound steelhead**.



AT-A-GLANCE



Supports over **100 jobs** worth over **\$5 million** in wages.



Helps safeguard water quality for shellfish on **1,400 acres** of tidelands for more than **20 companies & 2,000 harvesters**.



Supports the region’s forestry industry, which provides **8%** of Mason County’s direct jobs and **7.5%** of its direct wages.



Secured public access on **22,353 acres**.



Green Diamond is donating over **21 miles** of trail easements.



Created a **10-mile** long conservation corridor connecting the project’s **20,000 acres** to over **24,000 acres** of state, local, and private lands.

Top L: Aerial photo of project site in the foreground with Mt. Rainier in the background. (Photo: Justin Reznick); **Middle L:** Area south-east of project site shows example of conversion of adjacent forests. (Photo: Justin Reznick); **Top R:** Taylor Shellfish harvests manila clams in Oakland Bay, downstream from the project site. (Photo: Darcy Kiefel); **Bottom R:** A salmon-bearing creek and adjacent riparian area that the project protects. (Photo: Eric Schallon)

For more information, visit <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/leaving-legacy-forests>.