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## Trust Land Transfer Revitalization Pilot Project

# Blakely Island Packet

July 2022



WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

# **Trust Land Transfer Revitalization Pilot Project: Blakely Island Packet**

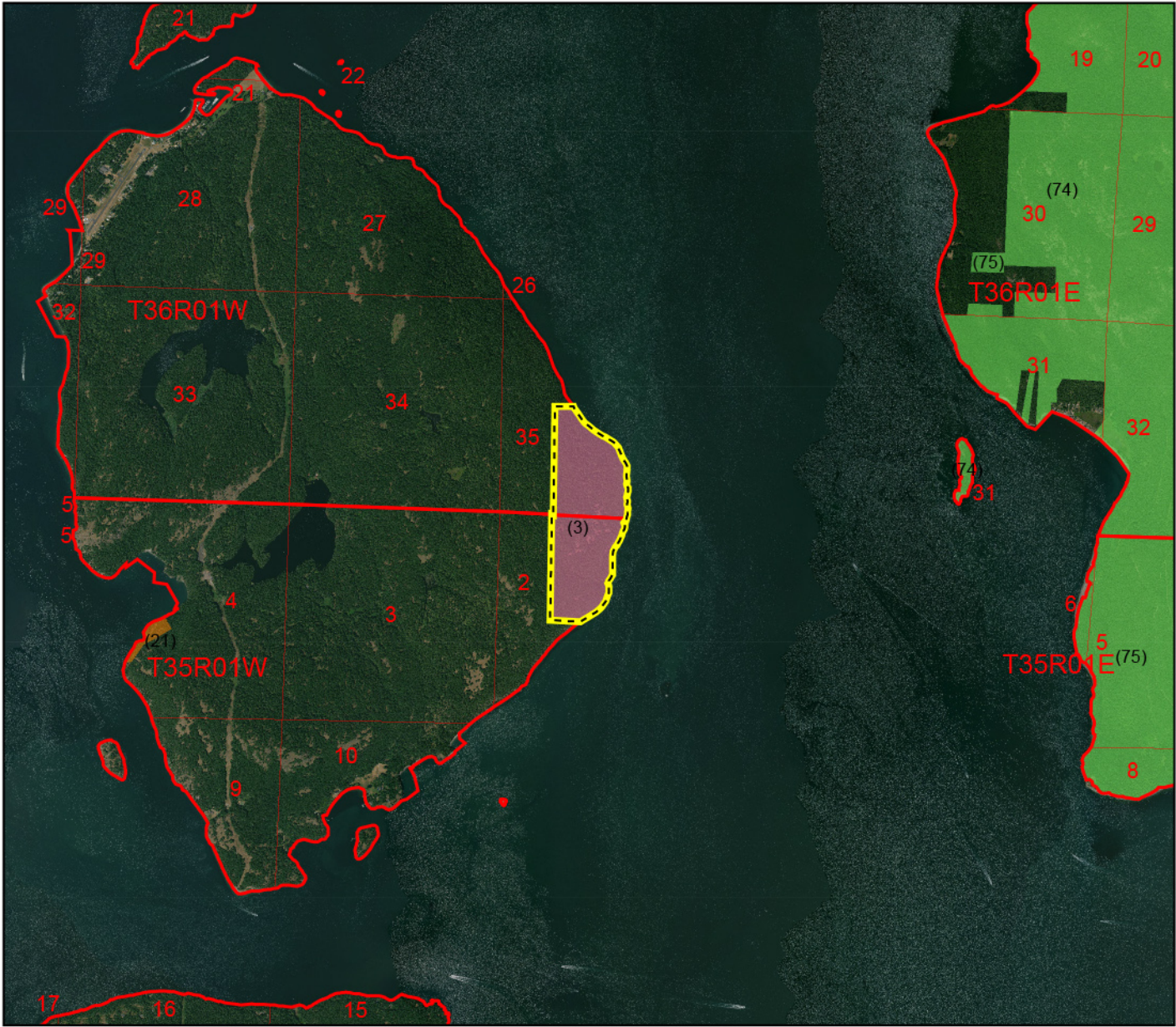
**July 2022**

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
Product Sales and Leasing Division  
1111 Washington Street SE  
PO Box 47014  
Olympia, WA 98504-7014

Cover: Blakey Island Shoreline photo, Washington Department of Ecology

**Map**

# TLT 2022 - Blakely Island



## DNR-Managed Trust Lands

- State Forest Transfer (1)
- State Forest Purchase (2)
- Common School (3)
- Agricultural School (4)
- University - Transferred (5)
- CEP and RI (6)
- Capitol Grant (7)
- Normal School (8)
- Scientific School (10)
- University - Original (11)
- Community Forest Trust (48)
- NAP / NRCA (74/75)
- Other DNR-Managed Lands

## Located In

San Juan County, Washington

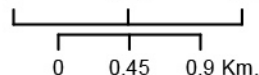


**Transfer Parcel(s)**

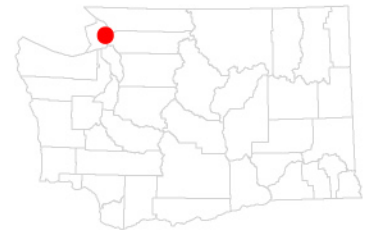
Boundaries may vary at time of transfer.



0 0.45 0.9 Mi.



## Area of Detail



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
**NATURAL RESOURCES**

Disclaimer: Extreme care was used during the compilation of this map to ensure accuracy. However, due to changes in ownership and the need to rely on outside information, the Department of Natural Resources cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, and therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.

# **Application and Best Interests of the Trusts Analysis**

# TRUST LAND TRANSFER APPLICATION

(This application is available electronically.)

Submit by 4:00 PM on June 16, 2022 for consideration for the next funding cycle

The Trust Land Transfer program is an innovative tool for the Washington State Legislature, through the Department of Natural Resources, to address several land management needs. Specifically, this tool enables DNR to achieve the following:

- Transfer out of economically under-performing state trust lands and acquire funds to purchase replacement lands with higher long-term income producing potential
- Conserve lands that have high ecological values or public benefits

## Applicant Information

## DNR Staff contact (if different)

Applicant's name: WA DNR, NE Region	Staff name: Jesse Steel
Address: 919 N. Township Street	Address: _____
City, State, Zip: Sedro Woolley, WA 98284	City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____	Phone: 360-854-8687
E-mail: _____	E-mail: Jesse.steele@dnr.wa.gov
Parcel name/moniker: <b>Blakely Island</b>	_____

## Property Information

**For proposals with more than one trust ownership, or in more than one county, describe parcels separately:**

1.	County: San Juan	Section: 35	Township: 36	Range: 1W	B&M	Parcel#:	163531001000
	County: San Juan	Section: 2	Township: 35	Range: 1W	B&M	Parcel#:	163531001000
	County:	Section:	Township:	Range:	B&M	Parcel#:	
2.	What is the land currently zoned as?		Conservancy				
3.	What is the current land type/land cover?		Forest				
4.	What are the current uses of the property?		<b>No current uses, potentially some dispersed public recreation.</b>				
5.	Total project acres:		<b>184</b>	Total acres forest:	<b>184</b>		
6.	Proposed receiving agency. <b>San Juan County Land Bank</b>						
7.	What trust(s) does this property currently belong to?						
	Trust #1	<b>03 Common School</b>			Acres	<b>184</b>	

## **Property Evaluation**

Please help us picture the uniqueness or importance of this property for Trust Land Transfer.

Projects are ranked on four criteria: (1) ECOLOGICAL VALUES, (2) PUBLIC BENEFITS, (3) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT, AND (4) ECONOMIC IMPACTS. This information will help establish your preliminary ranking with the other projects submitted for consideration. You may attach extra pages, if needed.

The questions and statements under each criteria may be used as general guidance to describe the project in more detail. There may be other relevant or unique characteristics of the parcel, not be listed here, for each criteria that may be used to describe the property being proposed for transfer.

### **CRITERIA: ECOLOGICAL VALUES**

This criterion focuses on the attributes of the property and the ecological values protected or gained from the transfer of the property and its resources.

Ecological values may include:

- Federal or state endangered or threatened plant, fish, or wildlife species
- Rare or unique plant or wildlife communities
- Site with ecological significance on a global, regional, state, ecosystem, or watershed level
- Habitat for wide-ranging migratory species, especially winter range
- Landscape features or ecosystem services (such as wetlands to reduce flooding, vegetative cover to provide shade and reduce surface temperature, or cover crops to limit erosion) that might alleviate or mitigate natural hazards such as flood, fire, drought, etc.
- Characteristics such as high potential for old-growth habitat, or providing continuity of wildlife corridors
- Watershed protection such as protecting water supply or buffering public drinking water supply
- Describe the parcel's ecological values. Consider factors such as the ecological and biological quality of the habitat and the habitat's role in supporting key species.
- Describe the stewardship or management practices of the receiving agency to perpetuate the ecological values of the parcel. For example, does the agency have the ability to manage, monitor and protect these values once the parcel is transferred? Would the parcel fit within the agency's long-term conservation planning efforts?
- Is the parcel near or adjacent to other protected lands, either public or private?

(Use as much space as needed)

**This 184-acre parcel located on the eastern edge of Blakely Island is entirely forested with conifer trees ranging approximately in age from 132-162 years old. Some older trees may exhibit old growth characteristics which is rare in San Juan County due to historic logging practices and developmental needs within the island chain. The eastern boundary of this property is adjacent to Rosario Strait. The shoreline provides important marine habitat and is seen by passengers riding the ferry between Anacortes and the San Juan Islands. Blakely Island Timberland LLC owns to the west and south of this property, and Seattle Pacific College owns to the north.**

### **CRITERIA: PUBLIC BENEFITS**

Public benefits means a positive effect on the general public or one or more groups of people or community interests.

Examples may include:

- Resource-based outdoor recreation<sup>1</sup>, parks, and/or public use, including accessible opportunities
- Public green space or open space
- Distinctive scenic or aesthetic features
- Archeological, non-tribal cultural, or historical significance that have been previously documented
- Scientific research
- Outdoor education

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<sup>1</sup> Resource-based outdoor recreation is dependent on a particular element or combination of elements in the natural and cultural environments that cannot be easily duplicated by humans. Examples include but are not limited to trail use, camping, boating, swimming, picnicking, nature study.

- Describe the public benefits that are provided by this parcel now, and would continue upon the transfer, or the public benefits that would be provided by the transfer.
- Cite any publicly reviewed or adopted plans that support the need for the public benefits identified.
- Identify the communities that would be served by the parcel.
  - Include any overburdened community<sup>2</sup>, underserved population<sup>3</sup>, or vulnerable population<sup>4</sup> that might receive direct public benefits from this transfer.
  - Describe how proximity to this parcel might increase the stated public benefit.

(Use as much space as needed)

**The parcel is isolated and has no public access, and water access to the east is limited due to the steep slopes and cliffs present. As mentioned in the Ecological Benefits section, this property is bordered by a private working forest company and an experimental forest owned by Seattle Pacific University. This property may be utilized in future scientific analysis, possibly as a control property. However, the Land Bank does not have plans to pursue such studies unless approached by Seattle Pacific University.**

## **CRITERIA: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT**

What is the level of community involvement and support for the proposed transfer?

- To what extent has the community been provided with an opportunity to become informed about the project and provide input?
  - Describe efforts to identify and contact all interested parties.
- Describe the level of involvement and support by the community, including local citizens, local organizations, local elected officials, interest groups, volunteers, public agencies, and others.
- Explain any known opposition to the transfer and any efforts to mitigate or address this opposition. Provide an explanation of why the transfer should be moved forward despite any community opposition.
- Describe any outreach efforts to overburdened communities, underserved populations, or vulnerable populations regarding this proposed transfer and the feedback received.

(Use as much space as needed)

**The county does not foresee opposition to this potential transfer. Ensuring that the property is protected and preserved is a favorable option to stakeholders involved. The San Juan County Land Bank has been very interested in this property for several years. They currently manage approximately 3,800 acres of natural areas and landscapes of cultural significance in San Juan County. They have done so successfully working with different stakeholders and the public and are poised to do so with this 184-acre property. Public and Tribal access would be limited due to the properties isolated location. The shoreline is steep with no good landing area, and the upland access is through private ownership. The county has stated that Tribal access would be dependent on adjacent neighbor's permission to cross their properties.**

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<sup>2</sup> "Overburdened community" means a geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined in RCW 19.405.020 (ESSSB 5141 Sec. 2 (11)). "Highly impacted community" means a community designated by the department of health based on cumulative impact analyses in RCW [19.405.140](#) or a community located in census tracts that are fully or partially on "Indian country" as defined in 18 U.S.C. Sec. 1151.

<sup>3</sup> Underserved populations ([34 USC § 12291\(a\)\(39\)](#)) means populations who face barriers in accessing victim services, and includes populations underserved because of geographic location or religion, underserved racial or ethnic populations, populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alienage status, or age) and any other population determined to be underserved by the Attorney General or the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as appropriate.

<sup>4</sup> "Vulnerable populations" means population groups that are more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental harms (ESSSB 5141 Sec. 2 (14)). "Vulnerable populations" includes, but is not limited to: (i) Racial or ethnic minorities;11 (ii) Low-income populations;12 13 (iii) Populations disproportionately impacted by environmental harms; and14 15 (iv) Populations of workers experiencing environmental harms.



**CRITERIA: ECONOMIC VALUES**

Examples of economic industries could include the following:

- o Commercial leasing
- o Local Recreation
- o Local Tourism
- o Forest products
- o Non-forest products
- o Local public services
- o Shellfish
- o Agriculture
- o Other

Describe the potential positive or negative economic values associated with this transfer,

(Use as much space as needed)

**There would be no negative economic values associated with this transfer. The DNR has no plans to harvest the timber due to the potential unique ecological stands present, its isolated location, and the guaranteed public push back to any harvest planned there. This transfer will allow the 03 Common School Trust to get financial compensation for the transfer versus no revenue as the property sits now.**

**Applicant’s Comments Section**

Other comments you may wish to add about your Trust Land Transfer proposal or property uniqueness.

**The San Juan Islands are a unique archipelago island chain that offer unique plant and animal associations, and ensuring the long-term protection of a piece of that landscape that has mature timber seen by thousands of visitors and locals annually further shows DNR’s commitment to preserve landscapes and not only focus on timber harvests.**

**Receiving Agency Information Section**

1. Proposed receiving agency: **San Juan County Land Bank**
2. Has the proposed receiving agency been contacted and confirmed interest in this proposed transfer?  
Yes  No

If yes,

Please provide contact information at the proposed receiving agency	Contact name: <b>Lincoln Bormann</b>	Phone Number <b>360-370-7652</b>	Email <b>lincolnb@sjclandbank.org</b>
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3. Is there a comprehensive or landscape management plan that would apply to this property once transferred?  
Yes  No   
If yes, please send a copy with your application
4. Describe how this parcel fits within the context of the receiving agency’s long-term management plans. Please include any information that supports the agency’s capacity for managing the parcel and preserving the



**TLT – Best Interests of the Trust Analysis:  
Blakely Island (184 acres)  
Date: June 22, 2022; Many Contributors**

**Quantitative assessment (Productivity and Operability)**

1. Forest lands productivity	a. Site index score: Site class 4	Potential Harvestable Acres: 0
	b. Tree type: Douglas fir	
	c. Stand condition/Base age: 132 to 162 years old	Net Present Value and Bare Land Value: n/a
	d. Net present value: no apparent timber value due to no potential harvestable acres	Yarding Systems Required: n/a
	e. Topography: Steep, rocky terrain with cliffs adjacent to the Puget Sound	
	f. Climate: ~28 inches of annual rainfall	
	g. Timber Volume: None	
	h. Planned Harvests: None	
2. Non-forest lands productivity	a. Current Use: n/a	N/A, forested parcel
	b. Lease type/revenue: n/a	
	c. Harvest levels/crop, if any: n/a	
	d. Soils (identified farmlands of commercial significance): n/a	
	e. Water rights: n/a	
	f. Infrastructure improvements: n/a	
3. Physical	a. Access/lack of access: See narrative under 3.a.	3.a. - This property lacks legal access from land; access from the water is difficult due to steep slopes and cliffs on the eastside. There are no roads present within or adjacent to the parcels.
	b. Unstable or steep slopes/ <i>acres affected</i> : 0 acres	3.c. - Besides the riparian areas, the largest factor limiting harvestable acres on the parcels is from potential old growth stands.
	c. Unharvestable areas/ <i>acres affected</i> : see 3.c	In addition, there is potential marbled murrelet long-term forest

	<p>d. Other: Riparian, 38.2 acres. Indefinite Policy Deferrals, 145.6 acres.</p>	<p>cover. While not confirmed aerial imagery from 1930 to present does not indicate any harvest activity occurring within the property.</p> <p>3.e. – The entire property was deemed unharvestable for timber harvest.</p>
	<p>e. Percent of parcel unharvestable: 100%</p>	
4. Ecological	<p>a. Water resources/<i>acres affected</i>: Riparian, 38.2 acres</p>	<p>4.b. - The parcel has steep slopes and cliffs along the eastern boundary adjacent to Rosario Strait and has undisturbed intact aquatic habitat.</p>
	<p>b. Unique site features (bogs, cliffs, landscape features, etc. /<i>acres affected</i>): Older forest (120+ years old)</p>	<p>4.d. - Seattle Pacific College owns property to the north utilized as an experimental forest.</p>
	<p>c. Endangered or protected species/<i>acres affected</i>:</p>	<p>4.d. - There are three natural forest ecosystems on the property that are in the Natural Heritage Database. These are Douglas-fir - (Grand Fir, Western Red-cedar) / Dwarf Oregon-grape - Salal Forest, Douglas-fir - Western Hemlock / Salal / Western Swordfern Forest, and Douglas-fir / Salal – Oceanspray Forest with global rankings of imperiled (G2), apparently secure to secure (G4/G5), and imperiled to vulnerable (G2/G3), respectively. The state rankings of these terrestrial ecosystems are critically imperiled (S1), apparently secure (S4), and imperiled (S2), respectively These natural forest ecosystems cover approximately 64% of the property.</p>
	<p>d. Protected plant species/<i>acres affected</i>: Natural forest ecosystems, see additional information to the right.</p>	
	<p>e. Known cultural resources/<i>number of sites</i>: 1</p>	
	<p>f. Proximity to other conserved or scenic lands: Most of Blakely Island is in conservation. Cypress Island across Rosario Strait is a large NRCA.</p>	
	<p>g. Other: none</p>	
<b>Qualitative Assessment</b>		
5. Social Pressure	<p>a. Public use/trails: None</p>	<p>5.a. - The parcel’s lack of access and surrounding non-residential use limits foot traffic and public use to minimal except for limited occasional use from neighboring properties. No urban areas exist on the island and residential use is very sparse.</p>
	<p>b. Proximity to urban areas: n/a</p>	
	<p>c. Proximity to residential land: n/a</p>	
	<p>d. Other: none</p>	

6. Environmental Pressure	<p>a. Public concerns with natural resource management pertaining to perceived/real environmental conditions on the property:</p> <p>b. Other: none</p>	1.a. - The parcel has not had any timber sales or removal in DNR's period of ownership.
7. Policy Risk and Governance	<p>a. Resource Management challenges:</p> <p>b. Impacts to Harvest levels:</p> <p>c. Impacts to Current Use:</p> <p>d. Proximity to other DNR managed land (or)</p> <p>e. Isolation from other trust lands:</p> <p>f. Other: none</p>	<p>Lack of access and difficulty at removing timber from the island (costly) has impeded DNR from active resource management. There is no current use on site. It is an isolated parcel on the eastern edge of Blakely Island which is highly visible along Rosario Strait to ferry passengers from Anacortes and the San Juan Islands. It also contains intact aquatic habitat.</p> <p>The receiving entity is San Juan County land bank. They successfully manage 3,800 acres of natural areas and culturally significant land within San Juan County and are better poised to manage this property.</p>
8. Land Use Analysis	<p>Current zoning: Conservancy</p> <p>Comprehensive Plan designation: Conservancy</p> <p>Existing development trends:</p> <p>Other: none</p>	8.a. - The parcel is currently zoned Conservancy and is established to protect, conserve, and manage existing natural conditions, resources, and valuable historic, cultural, educational, or scientific research areas and to preserve indigenous plant and animal species and ecosystems in a natural state for the benefit of existing and future generations without precluding compatible human uses. Only one dwelling unit is allowed on publicly owned parcels zoned conservancy.
9. Other DNR program opportunity	<p>Other disposal strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public auction</li> <li>• Direct Transfer to public agency</li> <li>• Exchange</li> <li>• Lease for alternative land use</li> <li>• Hold as transition land for future development or transition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Public auction</u>: Rejected to preserve unique character of site and widespread public support for open space, visual impact, recreation or conservation.</li> <li>• <u>Direct transfer</u>: Rejected due to insufficient funding from receiving agency.</li> <li>• <u>Exchange</u>: Rejected due to unlikely suitable exchange parcel due to lack of legal access and the isolated location.</li> <li>• <u>Land use lease</u>: Rejected due to lack of demand or non-competitive viable return on potential lease opportunity. This parcel is not suitable for alternative energy generation because it</li> </ul>

		<p>is too small and heavily forested, and because it is located on a largely undeveloped island.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Designate as transition land</u>: This property is not a good candidate for transition lands due to legal access issues and limited proximity to other urban development areas.</li> </ul>
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**Summary of Property Assessment:**

This property has features that do not work well for long term trust management which include:

- Lower rainfall area in the shadow of the Olympic mountains limits forest growth
- Higher risk wildfire area due to access limitations by ferry system and lower population
- Lack of legal access
- Community resistance to timber harvest
- Forest Practice law limiting VDH harvest size on islands
- Natural Heritage designations of plant communities in conjunction with DNR policies limit timber harvest options
- Little potential for trust lease revenue
- Potential old growth or mature timber may limit timber harvest options under existing DNR policies
- Parcel very visible from all ferries departing Anacortes and heading northwesterly towards San Juan Islands
- Conservancy zoning may limit market options

This property has some features that are beneficial:

- Strong market demand for Puget Sound frontage properties
- Strong market demand for San Juan Island properties with unique estate features

**Best Interests of the Trust DNR Recommendation:**

Recommend keeping this parcel on the TLT parcel list for the pilot project.

**Internal staff administrative valuation of entire parcel:**

Based on fair market value | For internal use only; does not constitute an appraisal

Date: 7/6/22	Provisional estimate:	Summary: 1) Inclusion of location, asset class, trust, acres, land and improvement value, and projected cash flow
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	<p>\$555,000 (based on lack of public road access and lack of waterfront access (all high cliff); in addition, not served by ferry.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) Identify industry standards for fair market value (FMV)</li> <li>3) Obstacles/encumbrances/assumptions that might affect FMV</li> </ol>
<p><b>Formal appraisal summary:</b> Formal appraisal will be completed if transfer is funded for TLT funding by the Legislature.</p>		
<p>Date:</p>	<p>Appraisal:</p>	<p>Summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Inclusion of location, asset class, trust, acres, land and improvement value, and projected cash flow</li> <li>2) Identify industry standards for fair market value (FMV)</li> <li>3) Obstacles/encumbrances/assumptions that might affect FMV</li> </ol>

# **Additional Information**

**NOTE: The San Juan County Land Bank is part of San Juan County.**





SAN JUAN COUNTY

# LAND BANK

April 8, 2022

Robert Winslow  
Washington State Department of Natural Resources  
919 N. Township Street  
Sedro Woolley WA 98284

Dear Robert,

San Juan County is very interested in acquiring the 185-acre School Trust Land on Blakely Island via the Trust Land Transfer Program (TLTP). We view the permanent protection of this parcel as essential on several levels.

The property is prominently located along ferry routes to the San Juans and generations of residents and visitors have come to regard it as a classic pristine maritime forest demarking the entry point to the County. Losing this parcel to development or having it logged extensively would cause considerable consternation among both those who live here and those coming to recreate.

Though we have not had an opportunity to thoroughly assess the ecological attributes of the site, it seems clear that the forests on the property exhibit many old-growth characteristics such as mature trees, standing snags and significant downed woody debris. This is a rare attribute for the County where most forests have been heavily manipulated. We are eager to gain access to learn more about what the property holds.

Lastly, the property is adjacent both to working private forestlands and experimental forest areas owned by Seattle Pacific University. As such it has great potential to serve as a control in scientific analyses.

The San Juan County Land Bank, which currently manages over 5,100 acres of natural areas and important cultural landscapes, is poised to assume management of the property to maintain its essential character. The Land Bank has staff on three islands, including nine stewardship positions and is well-suited to assume management of this important parcel.

As Director of the Land Bank, I would be more than happy to be the point of contact between DNR and the County as we proceed through this process. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any further questions or needs going forward.

We are deeply appreciative of the opportunity to preserve this land!

Sincerely,

Lincoln Bormann  
Director