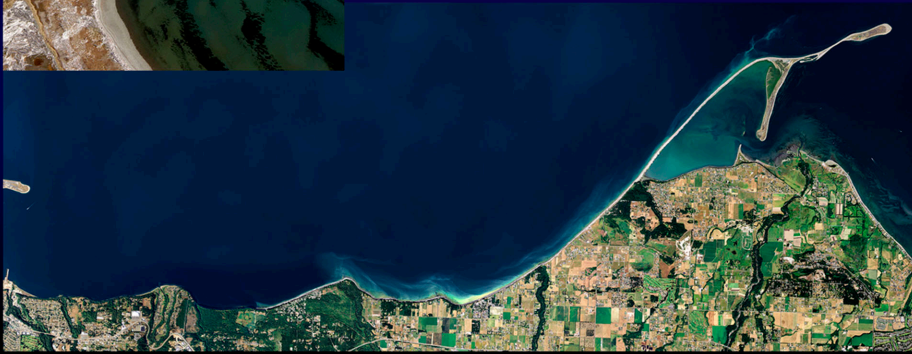


# Dungeness Drift Cell

Parcel Prioritization and Conservation Strategy



Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe  
1033 Old Blyn Highway  
Sequim, WA 98382

July, 2016



## Appendix D

North Olympic Land Trust Action Plan

February 2015

# NORTH OLYMPIC Land Trust



*Farms • Fish • Forests*

## Appendix D: Conservation Tools for the Dungeness Drift Cell and Land Trust Priorities

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*February 18, 2015*

*Prepared by: The North Olympic Land Trust*

### Disclaimer:

The information contained herein was obtained from multiple origins, and the prioritization was generated from GIS data maintained by different sources and agencies. Results are based on best available data, but are not necessarily accurate to all applicable standards. Because of this, The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe and North Olympic Land Trust do not retain any liability for the information contained herein. Additionally, this is a modeling exercise, and efforts have been made to correct any errors in the model, but all modeling exercises are inherently imperfect. Lastly, North Olympic Land Trust only works with willing sellers who voluntarily conserve their land.

### Additional printed copies may be obtained from:

North Olympic Land Trust  
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### Preferred Citation:

North Olympic Land Trust and Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. 2014. Dungeness Drift Cell Conservation Plan. Unpublished report. Port Angeles, WA.

## Why is the Land Trust doing this work?

North Olympic Land Trust received a grant from the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) fund, through their Project Implementation and Development Award (PIDA).

The Land Trust wasn't sure of their role in the drift cell, with so many small parcels, but agreed to take on this work on behalf of the County. Throughout the process, the Land Trust has emphasized that this is not just a plan for the Land Trust and the Tribe. This is a plan for any conservation partner who can play a role in the conservation and restoration of the drift cell.

## Prioritization:

The prioritization is detailed in the "Dungeness Drift Cell: Land Parcel Prioritization and Conservation Strategy", of which this is Appendix D.

## The Tools, and Analysis of Land Trust priorities:

The Land Trust hired Erik Steffens to complete a report of the various tools to protect the sediment source of the Spit. Conservation easements and fee simple ownership are not a good fit for many of these parcels. That work was completed after numerous meetings with partners, including the Dungeness Wildlife Refuge, Trust for Public Lands, Clallam County, Coastal Watershed Institute, the Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network, Department of Natural Resources, Craft 3, Earth Economics, and the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe.

When in quotations below, these are direct quotations from Erik Steffen's plan, a copy of which is at the Land Trust.

The main result is the following statement, taken from Erik's report: "While traditional conservation tools such as acquisition and conservation easements play a role in project implementation, it is important to note that the recommended overarching strategy is providing

the landowners with the tools and resources they need to move structures away from the edge of the bluff.”

*Threatened Structures:*

Using historic aerial photos and other data sources, the Tribe has collected erosion data. The average erosion rate of the bluff was determined to be around 1 ft/yr. Given this rate, all properties within 300 feet of the top of the bluff were included in the study area. This area was expected to be the source of sediment for at least the next 200 years. 282 parcels were part of this analysis after roads were removed, as well as some very small parcels. Roughly 60% of the properties are developed.

Total Parcels within 300’ of Bluff Edge	282
<i>Undeveloped</i>	116
<i>Developed</i>	166

The analysis also identified immediate threat to existing houses by measuring its distance away from the edge of the bluff. Properties less than 15 feet from the bluff top are highly threatened and possibly could be undermined with one erosion event. Houses within 50 feet will be endangered within several decades. The analysis also looked at whether a property was large enough to allow existing structures to move back and relocate over 100’ from the top of the bluff. The following table summarizes the results.

Highly Threatened Structures (15’ of bluff edge)	~25
Threatened (within 50’)	45
No Potential to Move Structures	47
Potential to Move Structures	52

*Gradual Retreat Strategy:* “Given the reality of continuing private ownership of the bluff, it’s important to develop a conservation strategy which addresses how landowners can “retreat”

away from the edge of the bluff, rather than try to stop erosion by armoring. This “gradual retreat” strategy requires a multi-dimensional approach to ensure that there are enough incentives to move back, as well as dis-incentives to armor. And, when the property is no longer safe, landowners have alternatives other than abandoning and letting the house fall over the bluff.”

*County Recreation Area Expansion:* “Expansion of the Recreational Area has multiple conservation and recreation benefits and would likely rank well in several State and Federal grants. If this initial phase is accomplished the Recreation Area could continue to buy private land and expand further into the drift cell.”

One landowner owns 19.66 acres, shown on the maps on the following pages. It is currently undeveloped, and includes ~ 1,200 feet of bluff frontage. Two maps below show the property. The first is a 2013 NAIP aerial image, and the second is a location map.

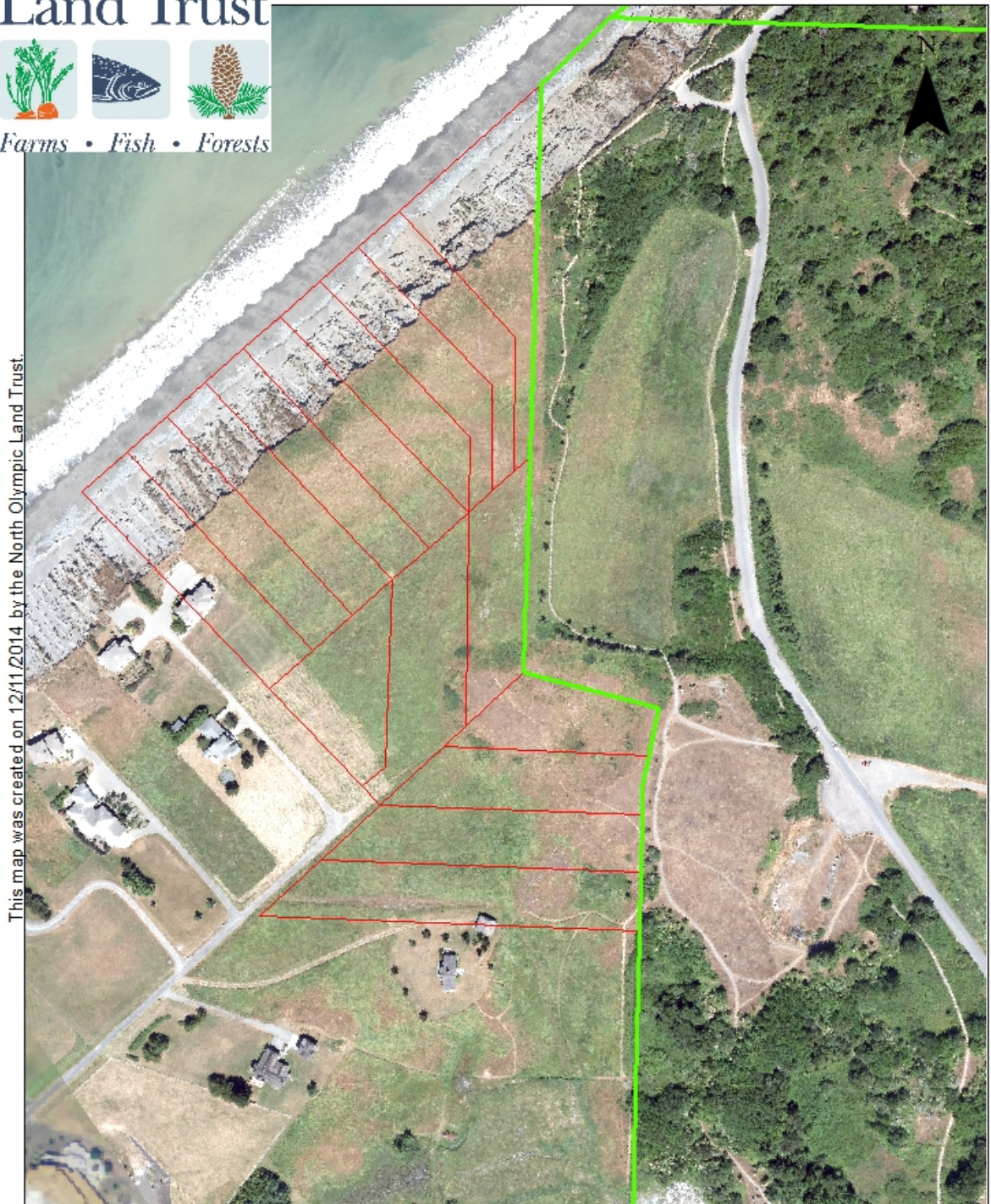
*If this score’s well with the Land Trust’s current project selection criteria, this would likely be the Land Trust’s highest priority project within this plan.*

# NORTH OLYMPIC Land Trust



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## Possible County Park Expansion

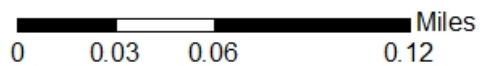


This map was created on 12/11/2014 by the North Olympic Land Trust.

### Legend

- Voice of America - County Park
- Possible County Park Expansion (19.66 acres)

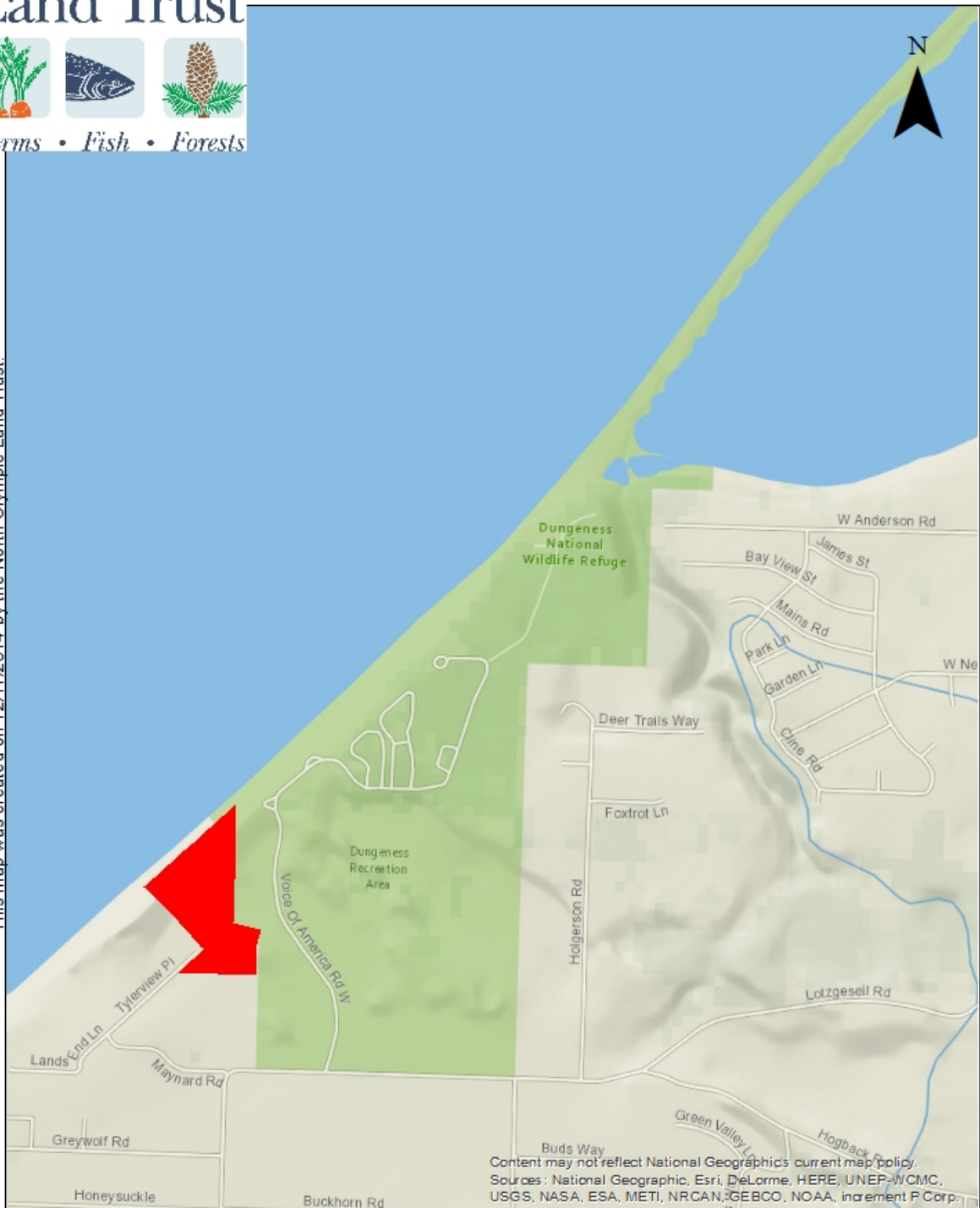
2014 Aerial Imagery from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe





Possible County Park Expansion

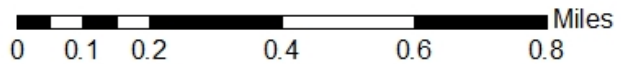
This map was created on 12/11/2014 by the North Olympic Land Trust.



Content may not reflect National Geographic's current map policy.  
Sources: National Geographic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, increment P Corp.

**Legend**

Possible County Park Expansion



*Forested Parcels:* “The Drift Cell contains several larger areas of undeveloped forested lots. These hold potential multiple shoreline recreation and conservation benefits and are potential candidates for acquisition funding sources. The Green Point area, the mouth of MacDonald Creek, and the forested block East of Morse Creek are all potential candidates for acquisition if the landowners are willing sellers.”

These are all projects that fit better with what we currently do than moving structures back. *If projects score well with the Land Trust’s current project selection criteria, this would also be a high priority.*

There are a number of maps below of these possible projects.





*Visual from Erik Steffen’s presentation 9/11/14:*



Green Point



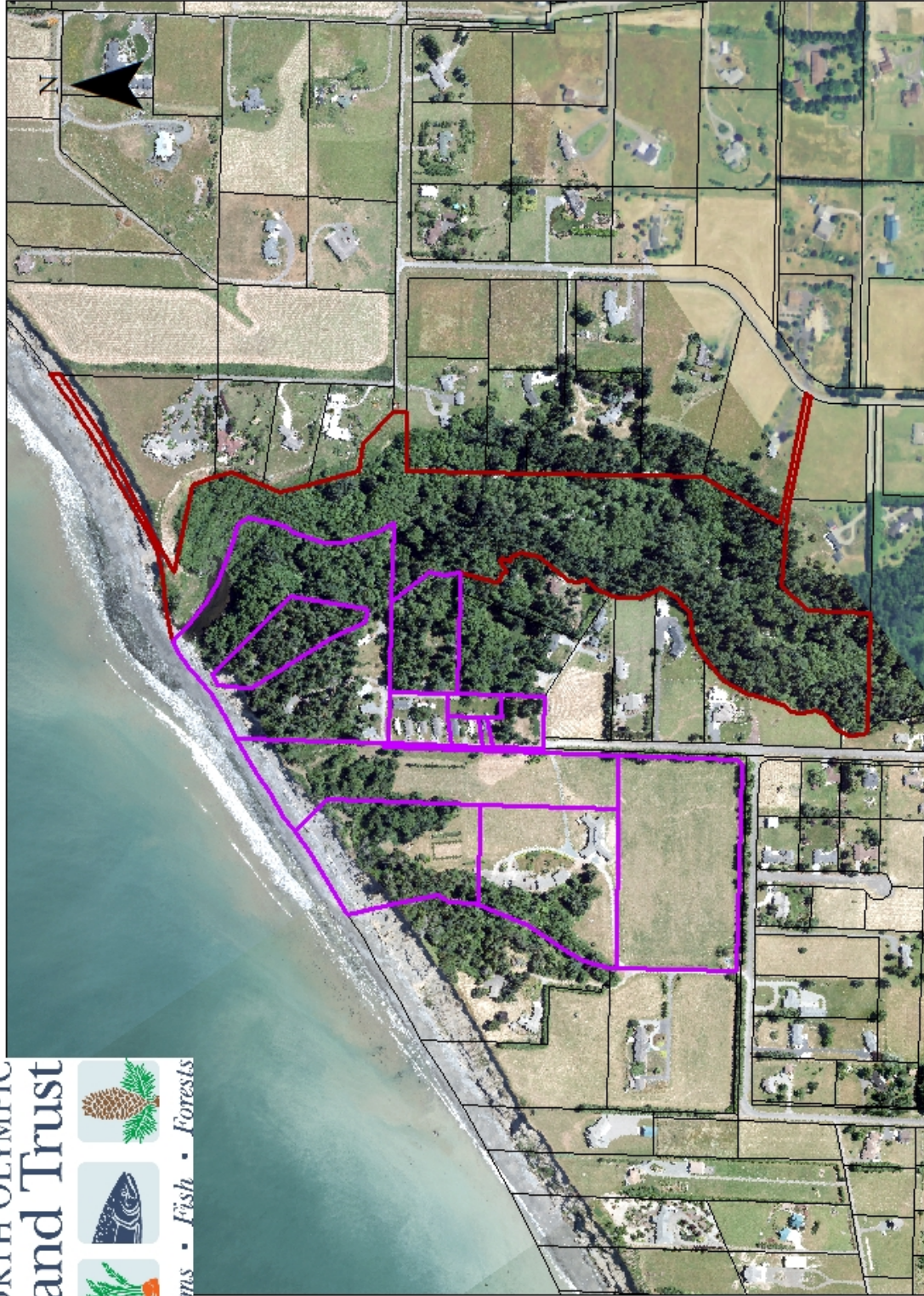
Legend

-  Clallam Parcels 20110810
-  NOLT/NCED easements

2014 Aerial Imagery from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe



McDonald Creek



**Legend**

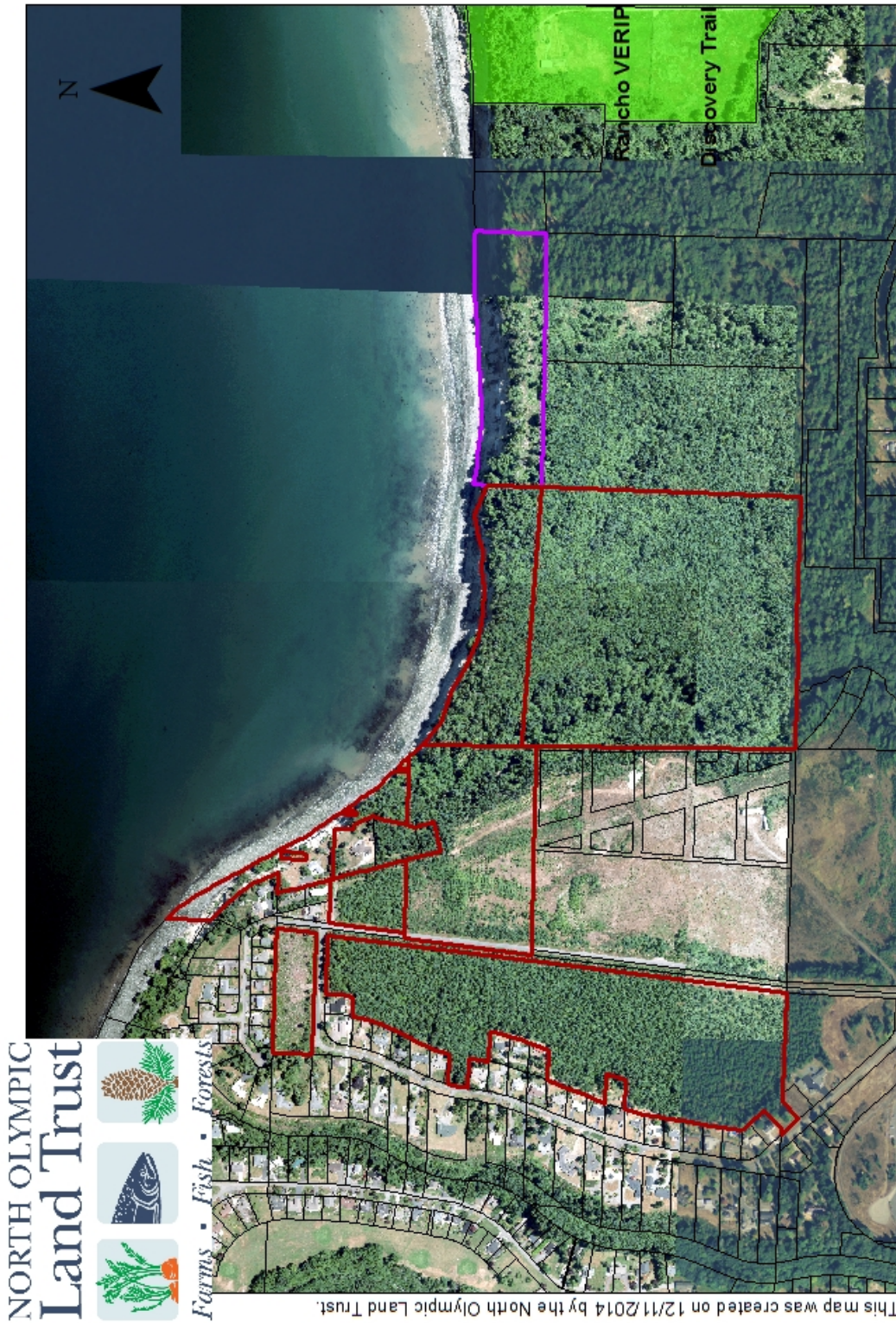
40.69 acres, Marjory Bartee

24.65 acres, McDonnell Crk Rch Owners Assn






2014 Aerial Imagery from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe



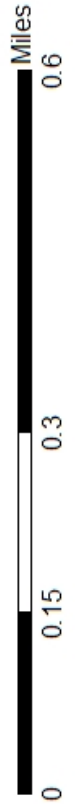
East of Morse Creek



**Legend**

-  Morse Creek
-  NOLT NCED easements
-  Rains, 104.8 acres
-  Reid, 10.04 acres
-  Clallam\_Parcels\_20110810

2014 Aerial Imagery from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe



*Donation, Life Estate and Lease back:* “Many of the landowners along the bluff are of retirement age and purchased their properties to enjoy for their lifetime. There is likely a subset of landowners who would consider some sort of donation of their property, recognizing that the bluff is eroding and their investment is diminishing in value. ... The simplest approach would be a donation of property during the landowner’s lifetime or as a bequest in a landowner’s will. There is also the potential for the landowner to set up a Life Estate where the property transfers to the Land Trust upon the death of the landowner (or earlier). ...Another approach is for the Land Trust to purchase the property and lease the land back to the original landowner for a certain period of time.”

*Conservation Easement:* “An easement could restrict some or all of the following rights to:

- 1) Armor the shoreline
- 2) Alter the bluff face
- 3) Build or maintain structures within a certain distance of the top of the bluff
- 4) Harvest trees and other vegetation within a certain distance of the top of the bluff.”

“An easement can also be worded to move with the erosion of bluff. For example, The Nature Conservancy purchased an easement on a bluff on Camano Island.”

“Using similar language, a possible scenario is purchasing an easement restricting any structures and armoring within 35 feet of the top of the bluff as it erodes.”

**What is the value of an easement that limits development of the property within 200 feet of the bluff, the time period of the Tribe’s prioritization?** “An easement which prevented any development on the property within 200 feet of the bluff top would force a landowner to build away from the amenities of an ocean front property (decreased views, sound of the waves, etc.) and closer to detracting qualities (proximity to road traffic, less privacy, etc.). Along the same lines, an easement that restricts housing to moveable structures such as RVs or Park Models would also greatly decrease the value of a property. In instances where a house already exists in a desired buffer and the property is large enough that the house could be relocated further back, there is the possibility of purchasing an easement, (e.g. 200’ from the bluff) and providing the homeowner a limited time to move structures back. Such an easement is of considerable value, as described above, and is perhaps enough to cover the cost of moving the house back.”

### *County-Wide Approaches*

- 1) **Shoreline Management Program:** “The new plan would increase the level of protection of the feeder bluffs and strengthen the regulatory framework to base land use decisions upon throughout the County. The existing SMP allows bulkheading for single family residences in the project area under shoreline “Conservancy” designation.”
- 2) **Conservation Futures:** The Conservation Futures Program consists of county-run acquisition programs that are empowered by the state government to raise funds for the conservation and maintenance of farmland, working forests, and open spaces through the purchase of easements, development rights, or acquisition of appropriate properties. A Conservation Futures Program is funded using a property tax levy of up to 6.25 cents per \$1000 of assessed property value, or \$12.50 per year for a \$200,000 property.
- 3) **Transfer of Development Rights Program:** Transfer of Development Rights is a voluntary, incentive-based, and market-driven approach to preserve land and steer development growth away from rural and resource lands into urban areas. Clallam County has the legal framework in place to initiate a Transfer of Development (TDR) program.
- 4) **Current Use Taxation System:** “There is the possibility of reforming the open space classification to include lowered assessed rates for property owners who maintain a naturally vegetated shoreline. If enrolled a property owner would receive a lower property tax bill and would need to repay seven years of back taxes plus interest to remove the property from the program.”
- 5) **Other Financing Mechanisms:** “Several other funding mechanisms worth considering are ones that could allow the County to set up funds specifically for buying distressed properties, or open space, moving endangered houses, and paying for continued management of bought properties. Funds could be collected from additional taxes on property owners or real estate transactions and could then be used to issue and sell tax exempt bonds. These included creation of a County Land Bank, Municipal or County bond measures and Special Assessment Districts or Lake Improvement Districts (LID). All of these require public support and are likely to face steep opposition over additional taxes and Government reach. Nevertheless, a small Lake Improvement District covering the project area could provide considerable benefit to homeowners along the bluff. The LID would first need to be designated by the County with the purpose of open space acquisition and management (e.g. buying and tearing down

condemned houses) and landowner assistance in securing low interest loans to move structures or tear downs. The LID would be a public entity with the ability to impose a special assessment on properties and issue public bonds, and also may be able to collectively bargain for lower rates for loans for house relocation or tear down. The pros and cons of creation of a LID would need to be discussed by the landowners in the project area and pursuing a LID would need to be fully supported by them.”

### *Other Financing Incentives*

- 1) **House Relocation Assistance:** “Financing is a key component and access to a low or no interest loan would be a significant incentive to move structures back, and to do so sooner than before they are endangered.”
- 2) **Teardown Assistance:** “There may be opportunities to work with non-conventional financing groups such as Craft3 especially if there are buyout programs in place.”
- 3) “There are areas within the project area, particularly in the western portion, where there may be opportunities to buy several properties inexpensively and consolidate into larger lots with an easement preventing armoring and houses that are set back from the bluff. Selling these larger lots could generate profit, or at least break even, and ensure no future bulkheads”

*Ecosystem services:* “The revenue generated by tourism, private and commercial fishing is dependent on a functional spit. So there may be ways to generate income to insure that the system stays functional. Earth Economics and other partners have started researching this approach and may be able to develop ways to monetize the value of the continued function of the feeder bluffs.”

*Role of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge:* “The current role for the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge is minimal given that the existing Refuge Boundary only includes the parcels currently owned by the Refuge. Refuge Staff and USFWS have no authority or mandate to operate outside of their borders. Nevertheless there is significant long-term potential to expand the refuge footprint and capacity to partner with organization and private landowners on work in the project area. The Refuge is a key player and could, in the future, have the ability to provide the stability and long-range vision for the entire drift cell, on which it depends. An

example of a National Refuge which has such a plan is Turnbull Refuge in Eastern Washington. A special 44,000 acre “Stewardship Area” has been designated surrounding the Refuge.”

*Appropriate Tools for Property Types:*

Property Types	Recommended Approaches
House on Small Lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquisition</li> <li>Easement (If viable armoring threat)</li> <li>Financial incentives (loans, etc.)</li> <li>Donation</li> <li>Life Estate or Lease Back</li> </ul>
Endangered House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquisition</li> <li>Financial incentives (relocation or tear down)</li> <li>Donation</li> <li>TDR</li> </ul>
House on Large Lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easement</li> <li>Financial Incentives (house relocation)</li> <li>Acquisition</li> <li>Donation</li> <li>Life Estate or Lease Back</li> </ul>
Vacant Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easement</li> <li>Acquisition</li> <li>Donation</li> <li>TDR</li> </ul>