



WHIDBEY CAMANO

LAND TRUST

May 23, 2013

Mike Ramsey, Project Manager
Recreation and Conservation Office
PO Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

RE: Livingston Bay SRFB grant #05-1479 -- Land Exchange Proposal

Dear Elyse,

I am writing to request that you initiate the review and approval process for a land exchange transaction between the Whidbey Camano Land Trust (Land Trust) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The Land Trust Livingston Bay property was purchased with a \$400,000 grant from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) (Project 05-1479). The \$75,000 match for the SRFB grant was from the Port Susan Bay National Coastal Wetland Conservation (NCWS) grant that the Land Trust submitted through WDFW. The Land Trust's Livingston Bay property is covered by a Deed of Right and therefore the proposed land exchange requires the approval of the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

The proposed exchange will enable WSDOT to acquire an easement on a tiny portion of the Land Trust Livingston Bay property adjacent to State Route 532 for a highway improvement project. In exchange for this property, the Land Trust will acquire a replacement property owned by WSDOT in its Livingston Bay North project area. The locations of the trade properties are shown on the attached map.

The portion of the Land Trust property needed by WSDOT is approximately 3,627 square feet (0.08 acres) and is a maintained dike and an upland field, with grasses and some shrub vegetation. Due to the presence of the dike and location next to the highway, the property does not function as fish habitat. WSDOT appraised the value of the easement on our Livingston Bay property and determined the value to be \$100 (which is below the \$500 minimum offer amount set by WSDOT policy).

The WSDOT replacement property that the Land Trust would acquire is approximately 100,349 square feet (2.30 acres) and is an existing wetland enhanced by WSDOT more than 10 years ago. The property is in conservation status and currently provides wildlife habitat. The property is a key part of the Land Trust's Livingston Bay North project. The

(360) 222-3310 phone
(360) 222-3510 fax
765 Wonn Road
Barn C-201
Greenbank, WA 98253
www.wclt.org

main objective of this project is to restore juvenile salmonid estuarine habitat. The Land Trust has secured a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant from the USFWS to acquire properties in Phases 1 and 2, a SRFB grant from RCO to acquire Phase 1, and in application stage, another SRFB grant in process to acquire Phase 2 lands.

The Land Trust owns over 3,100 acres of tidelands in Livingston Bay. Securing the WSDOT property will enable the Land Trust to incorporate it into our larger scale salmon restoration project for Livingston Bay. WSDOT appraised this property and determined the value to be \$8,000 (the access easement on our Livingston Bay property was valued at \$100). As you will note, the proposed land exchange will significantly benefit fish and wildlife habitat; the Land Trust property has little to no conservation value while the WSDOT project will be restored as part of a larger salmon restoration project.

As part of the proposed highway project, WSDOT is partnering with the Land Trust on a WSDOT mitigation project on the Land Trust's Dugualla Bay Preserve which will also restore estuarine habitat for juvenile salmon.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Patricia Powell
Executive Director

Enclosures

cc: Alan Soicher