

2010 Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program

**Kiket Island Addition to Deception Pass State Park—Phase II**  
**Skagit County, Washington**



SUBMITTED BY: Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

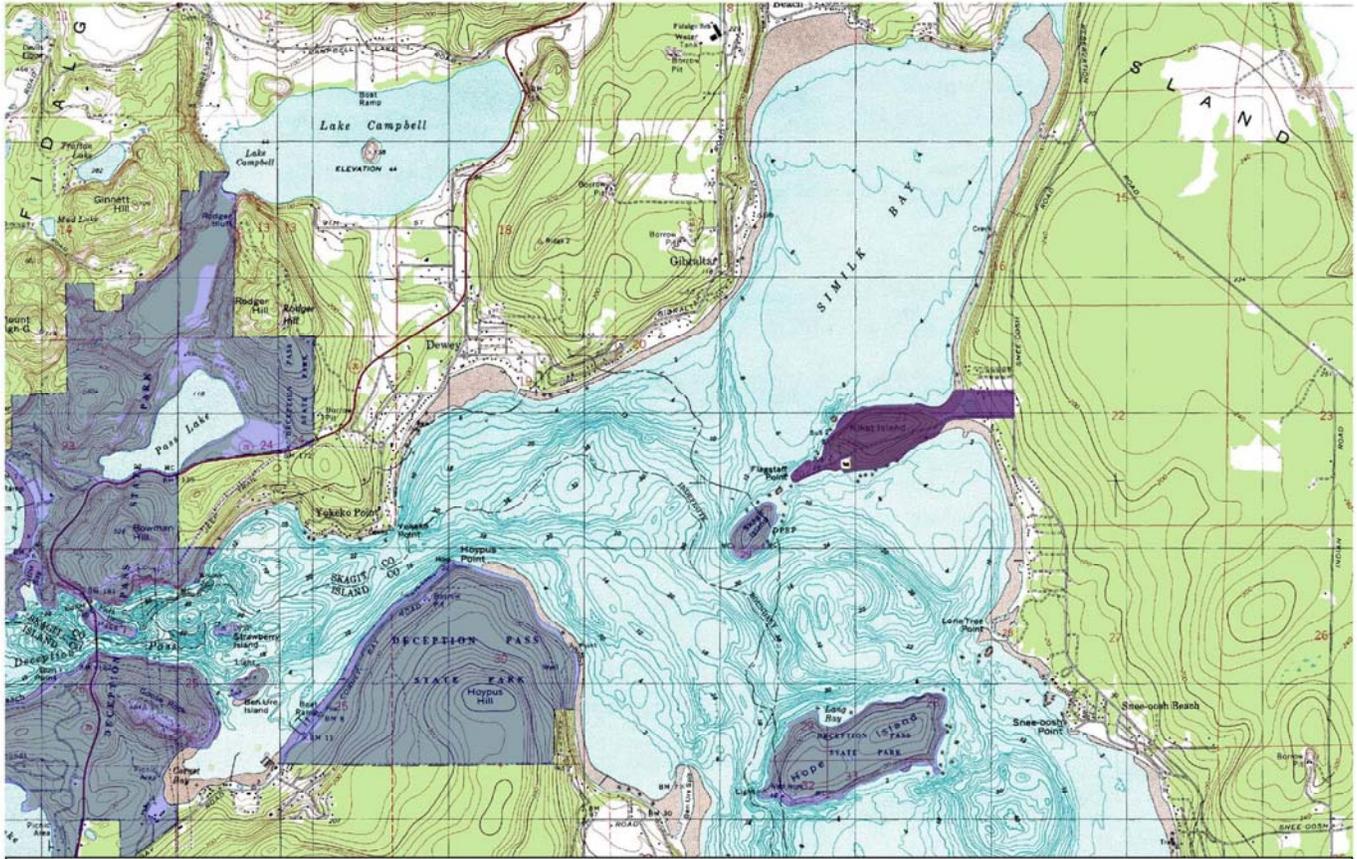
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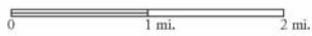
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Kikot Island  
WASHINGTON



- Lands available for acquisition
- State lands



Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only.

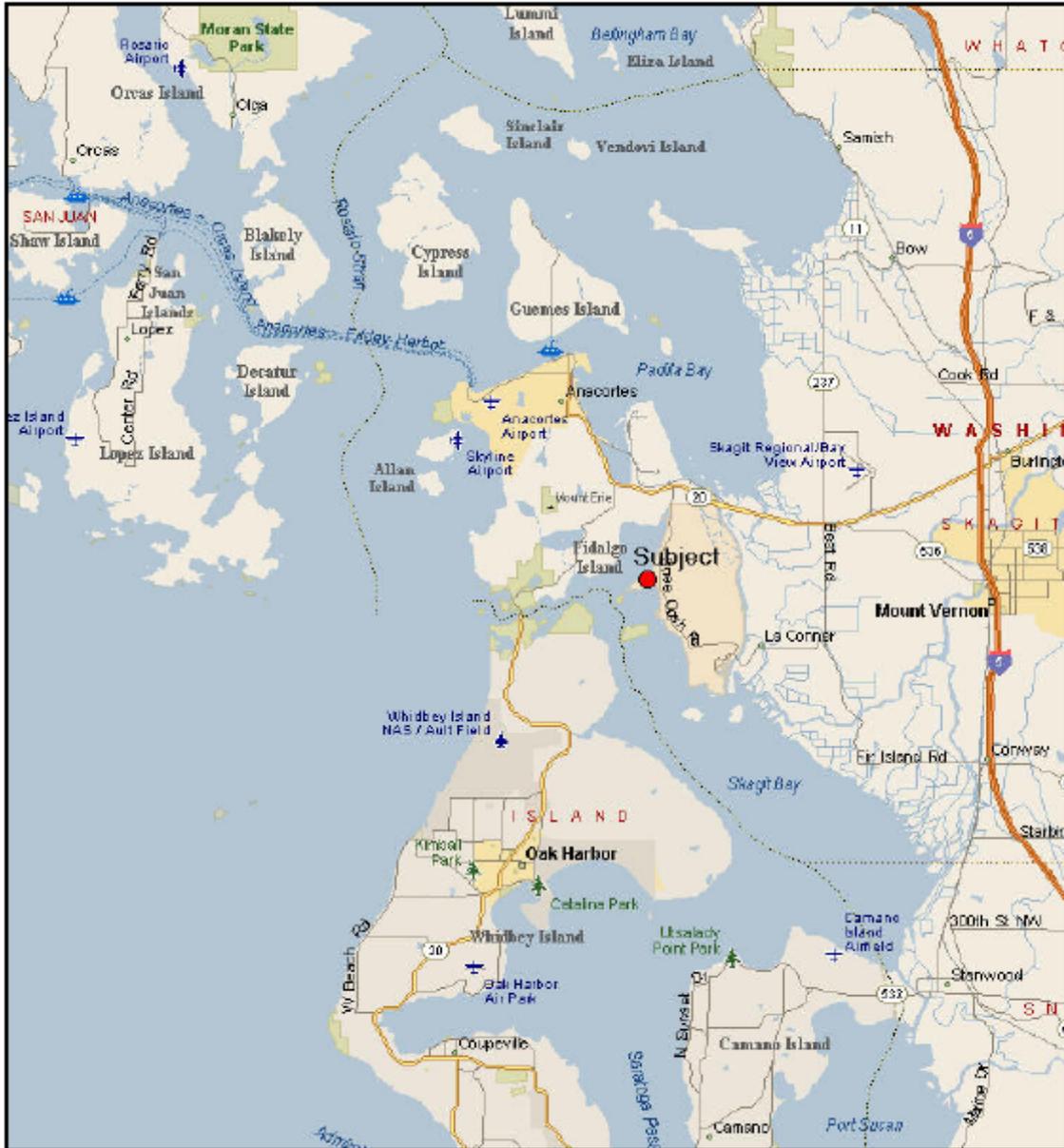
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission  
**Kiket Island Conservation Acquisition – Phase II**  
Addition to Deception Pass State Park  
CECLP FY10

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## 1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION/SCOPE OF WORK

The State of Washington is pleased to submit a request for \$3,000,000 in grant funding from the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP). Funding from CELCP will enable the State to complete the Kiket Island acquisition and purchase in fee approximately 40 acres of the property in the northern reaches of Puget Sound. Kiket Island is the most significant shoreline acquisition opportunity in Skagit County and will protect an area with unique and important ecological, conservation, recreation, historical, and aesthetic values. Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) is working with The Trust for Public Land

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(TPL) and several other non-profit organizations and governmental agencies to secure funding to purchase this property. Near the city of La Conner and Anacortes, Kiket Island is threatened by conversion to rural residential development for exclusive shoreline estates placing its extraordinary natural resources at significant risk. The ultimate goal of the Kiket Island acquisition is to remove the property from private ownership, protect it from development, provide on-going stewardship to preserve the habitat values, and ensure low-impact public access within the Washington State Parks system.

The Kiket Island project area is part of the greater Skagit River Delta, a biologically rich and complex region characterized by tidal marshes and flats, shrub/scrub wetlands, and prolific agricultural areas. The delta's river system sustains viable runs of all eight anadromous Puget Sound fish species, including three federally endangered species: Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. In all, the delta provides habitat for more than 300 species of fish and wildlife, including federally endangered and threatened species such as marbled murrelets, stellar sea lions, and killer whales. Kiket and Flagstaff islands are surrounded by native eelgrass and contain rich and abundant tidelands with some light gravel and sand beaches supporting significant shellfish and salmon populations.

Overall, the Kiket Island project is a two-phase acquisition including 84 acres on Kiket and Flagstaff islands, plus 12 acres just to the east of Kiket Island. Phase I included the two-acre Flagstaff Island and 53 acres of Kiket Island<sup>1</sup>. This Phase II acquisition includes the remaining 28 acres on Kiket and the 12-acre parcel on Fidalgo Island that provides access to Kiket. This upland parcel also includes an intact high-quality barrier lagoon (non-natal pocket estuary) that offers excellent fish habitat for juvenile salmon species. Kiket contains mixed deciduous/conifer forested uplands with significant old-growth trees as well as mature trees interspersed with rocky balds on the southern shoreline.

Kiket's uniqueness goes beyond the unusual land formations and diverse, exemplary habitats. The history of the island and how its legacy persists is distinctive. Kiket Island has been in private ownership since statehood except during a brief period when Seattle City Light owned and evaluated this site as a possible location for a saltwater-cooled nuclear power plant in the 1970s. As a consequence of this proposal, the tidelands and nearshore habitat surrounding Kiket Island are among the most studied in the Puget Sound.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately the city rejected the site, in large part due to fierce opposition from a growing environmental movement. This foundation of knowledge and conservation history creates a unique opportunity for environmental education, and additional research into climate change and the effects on near shore habitats.

Extending into northern Skagit Bay, Kiket and Flagstaff islands provide sweeping views toward Deception Pass and Whidbey Island in the west and form the mouth of Similk Bay to the north. At present, the closest easily accessible public beach is Deception Pass State Park, which is approximately seven miles along the shoreline from Kiket Island. Incorporating this property into the expanded state park would increase the availability of coast-dependent and nature-based recreation for the public to enjoy. The property will also be accessible by water along the

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<sup>1</sup> 1.2 acres surrounding the residence was also a part of Phase 1 acquisition, but is outside the scope of the CELCP budget proposal.

<sup>2</sup> Stober and Salo, 1973

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Cascadia Marine Trail. Washington State Parks plans to convert the existing private residence on Kiket Island into an environmental learning center.

The Kiket Island project supports Washington’s Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) priorities such as salmon recovery, wetlands and shoreline protection, and associated uplands conservation. Additionally, the project complements the ongoing restoration efforts of the Swinomish Tribe. The state’s coastal management plan has identified Kiket Island as a priority conservation area. If not protected, Kiket Island will most likely be sold and developed into an elite estate community with a number of high-end homes. A grant of \$3 million from CELCP, to be matched by nonfederal funds, is needed in order to acquire and protect the second phase of this unique and vital property in the Pacific Northwest.

### **1.1 PROJECT SIZE AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE COAST AND ESTUARY**

*Total Acreage of Phase II Kiket Island Acquisition = approximately 40 acres*

*Total Puget Sound Waterfront Phase II Kiket Island Acquisition = approximately 1.1 miles*

Puget Sound, located in northwestern Washington State, is the second largest estuary system in the United States. More than 10,000 streams and rivers drain into Puget Sound, which is surrounded by over 2,000 miles of shoreline--a mosaic of beaches, bluffs, deltas, mudflats, and wetlands. Much of the promise and potential of this region is based on natural resources and the industries and recreation these resources support. Recent growth and development present significant challenges, including water pollution and sharp declines in populations of salmon, orcas, marine birds and rockfish. A steady loss of habitat and alarming declines in some fish and wildlife populations are signs that the very best of Puget Sound is threatened.

To meet these challenges, all levels of government as well as private organizations and individuals have coalesced in an effort to restore and maintain the health of Puget Sound. The Puget Sound Partnership and the Alliance for Puget Sound Shorelines are examples of this mobilization effort, which includes strategies of land protection along the waterfront. Land acquisition can be a potent tool in preventing pollution from run-off, restoring threatened populations of salmon and other species, and increasing public access to shoreline recreational opportunities.

Kiket Island is located in Skagit Bay and is part of the Skagit River Delta in the northernmost reaches of Puget Sound (see Kiket Island Area Map next page). As part of a biologically rich and complex region, the intact habitats on Kiket Island are vital to the Skagit River’s viable runs of all five species of salmon and three species of anadromous trout (see Table 1). In addition to salmon, the Delta provides habitat for more than 300 species of fish and wildlife.

# Kiket Island - Area Map

## Swinomish Indian Reservation, Skagit County, Washington



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Kiket Island is actually a peninsula attached to the western shoreline of Fidalgo Island by a narrow strip of land called a tombolo. Overall, the Kiket Island acquisition project protects approximately 96-acres of high quality habitat and over two miles of shoreline from

development, armoring, and conversion. The property also includes Flagstaff Island (often referred to as Flagstaff Point) that is connected to the west end of Kiket Island by a second tombolo. Kiket and Flagstaff islands comprise a total of 84-acres and have a combined circumference of more than two miles of intact shoreline supporting a variety of fish, shellfish, and other invertebrate populations. An additional 12-acre parcel on Fidalgo Island provides access to the property, and includes an intact non-natal pocket estuary. The property is located within the boundaries of the Swinomish tribal reservation and offers an opportunity for collaboration between tribal and state government agencies.

**Kiket Island, Washington**  
 Phase II - Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program



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## **1.2 LEGAL RIGHTS TO BE ACQUIRED**

Kiket Island Phases 1 and 2 (see Phase II CELCP Map above) will be acquired and held in fee-simple ownership by State Parks with the intent to protect it through addition to Deception Pass State Park. Tideland ownership at Kiket Island is disputed. The Swinomish Tribe claims ownership of Kiket Island's tidelands, although the current owner presents a legal case to the contrary and has maintained sole access and use of the beaches since acquiring the property in 1982. Nonetheless, Washington State will work to ensure that this acquisition resolves the legal dispute of tideland ownership and access to benefit the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community.

By adding Kiket Island to the existing Deception Pass state park, State Parks will increase public access to the Puget Sound shoreline for low-impact recreation activities. The State Parks-adopted natural resources policies will direct management of public access constrained by seeking excellent stewardship of these sensitive shoreline and intertidal habitats. Full time on-site park staff will monitor to ensure non-adverse activities occur. All conservation benefits of this project will be permanent.

## **1.3 IMPORTANCE AND OR RELEVANCE OF KIKET ISLAND TO THE CELCP PROGRAM GOALS**

Kiket Island Phase II directly addresses the land priorities and values identified for protection in the Washington state CELC plan: salmon habitat, forage fish, shorelines, and species and habitat diversity.<sup>3</sup> Completion of the acquisition at Kiket Island will also address ecoregional threats and issues in Puget Sound such as conserving estuarine areas, preserving shoreline integrity, and maintaining linkages between habitats.<sup>4</sup> Kiket acquisition offsets the broader threats facing Washington like habitat fragmentation, eradication of invasive species, and absorbing global climate change impacts like sea level rise.<sup>5</sup>

If Phase II is awarded, funds for this Kiket Island acquisition will enable State Parks to purchase the last 40 acres of this project and bring it to completion. In FY 2009 State Parks applied to CELCP for \$3 million to purchase approximately 55 acres comprising Kiket Island Acquisition—Phase I. In this FY 2010 application, the Kiket Island Acquisition—Phase II includes the remaining Kiket Island shoreline and the Fidalgo Island parcel. This upland parcel is zoned for higher residential density, provides access to Kiket from Snee-oosh Road and contains a rare pocket estuary, not addressed in the FY 2009 application (see Phase II CELCP Map, pg. 6)

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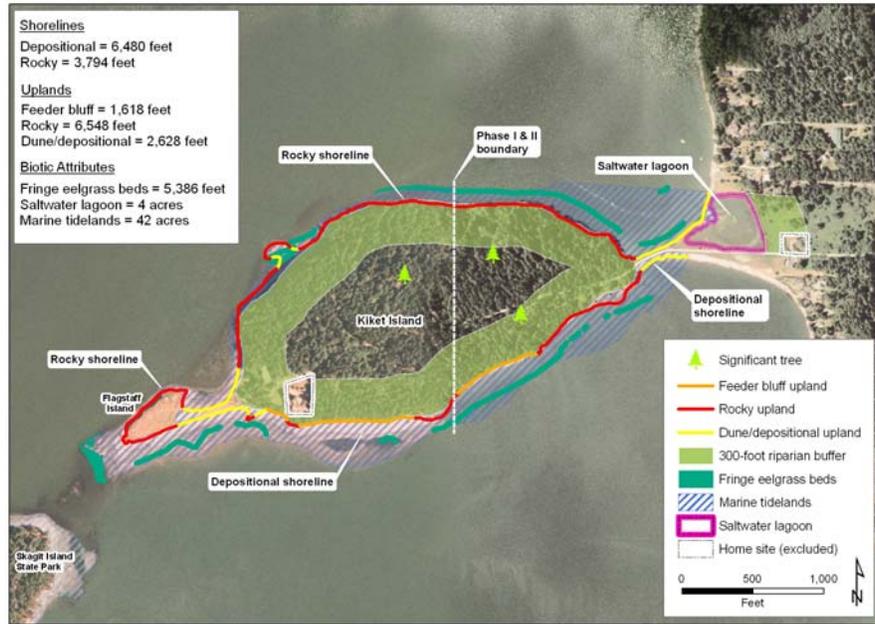
<sup>3</sup> *Washington State's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan*, Washington Department of Ecology, April 2007, p7-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p8

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p10

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**Kiket Island - Shoreline and Aquatic Habitat Linkages**  
 Swinomish Indian Reservation, Skagit County, Washington



**1.3.1 Primary Purpose is ECOLOGICAL.**

This projects exhibits exceptional habitat values. We estimate that 95 percent of the acres are in a natural state and undisturbed. The pristine qualities and minimal invasive species create a haven for species diversity. Kiket is truly unique. The Phase II habitats and ecological values are detailed on the following pages.

Habitat Type	Phase I Acres Estimated	Phase II Acres <sup>6</sup> Estimated	Total Acres Estimated
Declining Coastal Wetlands	20	26	46
• Marine Intertidal Unconsolidated Shore	18	21	43
• Marine intertidal rocky shore	2	1	3
• Non-natal pocket estuary & salt marsh	0	4	4
Stable Coastal Wetlands	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL WETLANDS</b>	<b>20 (est)</b>	<b>26 (est)</b>	<b>46 (est)</b>
Riparian Forested Shoreline Buffer (300' wide)	32	20	52
Mixed Deciduous/Conifer mature forested uplands	20	7	28
Rocky balds	3	1	4
Pasture	0	8	8
Land Associated with Buildings (outside CELCP)	1.2	.3	1.5
<b>TOTAL UPLANDS</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>92.5</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECT ACRES</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>96.5<sup>7</sup></b>
<b>TOTAL SHORELINE MILES (ESTIMATED)</b>	<b>1.2 mi</b>	<b>1.1 mi</b>	<b>2.3 mi</b>
• feeder bluffs	1000 lf	600 lf	1600 lf
• Rocky shoreline w/ outcrops and tidepools	--	--	3,750 lf
• Depositional shoreline	--	--	6500 lf

<sup>6</sup> Phase II lands are those proposed for acquisition with the requested CELCP FY10 funds.

<sup>7</sup> Includes 92.5 acre uplands and the 4 acre pocket estuary to match the Skagit County Assessors Parcel Acreages.

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***Kiket Island Habitat Types***

Kiket Island property contains an extraordinary array of habitats seldom found in such limited space. Following is a breakdown of the habitat types found on the project site:

- ***Rich Abundant Intertidal Habitat*** (approximately 22 acres in Phase II)



Protecting Kiket from development will directly benefit 22 acres of intertidal habitat.<sup>8</sup> Kiket Island has intact, high-quality and high-functioning intertidal zones with a wide variety of bottom types and sediments. The tidelands within the project vary—cobble, gravel, sand, broken shell, mudflat. The variety of substrates supports significant invertebrate, fish, shellfish, and crustacean populations. Eelgrass is also present in the intertidal zone. The eastern-most tombolo has some riprap above the intertidal range, that being the only shoreline armoring on site. However, Houghton noted the shoreline is functioning naturally, including healthy accumulations of large woody debris.<sup>9</sup> The intertidal zone appears to have suffered little alteration since the island was originally studied in 1973.<sup>10</sup>

On the north side of the island, there are many places where rocky formations and lack of sediment deposits create an extensive system of tidepools rich with sea life. Here the forested uplands provide deep shade to prevent desiccation at the top of the tidally influenced cliffs and rocky outcrops allowing abundant species diversity and distinctly visible bands throughout the intertidal zone. Numerous large rock crabs were observed during the 2008 site visits, and Dungeness crabs have been catalogued here as a part of the Washington Department of Natural Resources Shorezone Inventory Maps.

Healthy fringe eelgrass beds surround Kiket and occur on the northeast portion of Kiket Island's intertidal zone. Extremely important to intertidal zones, the eelgrass beds surrounding Kiket Island are continuous, dense, and extend from intertidal into the subtidal areas. These eelgrass beds provide the foundation of the food chain for the estuarine ecosystem. In addition to supplying organic material to nearshore areas and stabilizing the sediments with its roots, it provides key habitat for many marine fish and crabs in Puget Sound. Eelgrass beds provide essential connectivity for Skagit River salmon migrating from spawning grounds to the ocean. All eight species<sup>11</sup> of Puget Sound anadromous fish, including endangered Chinook salmon and Bull trout, use eelgrass for cover, refuge, and as a food source during their migration. The intertidal and subtidal eelgrass provides a spawning substrate for Pacific herring, an important prey species for salmonids.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Protection eliminates impacts to tidelands from shoreline armoring, nutrient and pathogen loading, wetland diking, and interruption of fish migration typically associated with waterfront development to protect many important natural shoreline processes in perpetuity. In particular, development of Kiket Island would likely cause degradation of water quality to a currently open and productive shellfish growing area. View cutting of developed lots would reduce riparian function and wood recruitment.

<sup>9</sup> Houghton noted on site visits in 2008

<sup>10</sup> Houghton 1973 and confirmed by 2008 site visits

<sup>11</sup> See Table 1.

<sup>12</sup> Humphreys and Houston 1978

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- ***Intact Forested Shoreline and Marine Riparian Buffer*** (approximately 1.1 miles in Phase II)  
The shoreline and riparian areas significantly impact the adjacent intertidal zone by contributing organic and inorganic materials and contributing to other essential shoreline processes. Above the high tide line the shore is intact and stable with either bedrock cliffs or low bluffs of relatively hard glacial substrate and nearly 600 linear feet of feeder bluffs in the backshore area. Beaches are a mix of sand and small cobble. The diversity of shoreline elements is key in supporting the variety of wildlife that use Kiket Island for a rest, a home, or to feed making it critical to the existence of many species.

Interactions between the uplands of the property and the marine systems that surround it flow through the riparian zone. The riparian vegetation along the entire length of the Kiket Island property is fairly consistent. Marine riparian vegetation is known to contribute important organic material (leaves, twigs, and sticks) to the marine environment, especially when it overhangs the upper intertidal zone like at Kiket Island. Recent study shows that terrestrial insects from this vegetation are an important component in the diet of juvenile salmonids, especially Chinook, during their early marine life history.<sup>13</sup> Shading from marine riparian vegetation has also been shown to be essential for summer spawning surf smelt.<sup>14</sup>

Near the bluffs on the southern shoreline, areas of lower shoreline slumping and erosion caused some trees to fall into the intertidal area. These trees provide cover habitat for fish using the

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<sup>13</sup> Brennan and Culverwell 2004

<sup>14</sup> Penttila 2005

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nearshore, shading areas at high tide, and contributing large woody debris (LWD) to the marine environment, maintaining important natural nearshore marine conditions. The LWD along the Kiket shorelines mostly originates in the Skagit River and floats on the surface current to Kiket Island.



- ***Rare Intact Non-natal Pocket Estuary (Salt-water Lagoon) & Salt Marsh (approx. 4 acres)***

A salt-water lagoon east of the Kiket/Fidalgo tombolo functions like a pocket estuary. Freshwater enters the lagoon from an upland seep. This lagoon is in good condition and provides vital rearing habitat to juvenile salmon species.<sup>15</sup> This is one of very few such habitats in Skagit Bay and is a habitat type that has been shown to be of exceptional importance in early marine life history of juvenile Chinook salmon. Densities of fish rearing in these habitats can be 10 to 100 times greater than in offshore/nearshore habitats.<sup>16</sup> Pocket estuaries serve as a productive refuge resulting in increased growth and survival of juvenile salmon, thus greatly enhancing their chance for survival as they move through the Bay, to Deception Pass, and on to ocean rearing areas.

Fish use of the pond is high. Juvenile cottids, or sculpins, were abundant in April 2008 and most likely flatfish, three-spine sticklebacks rear in the pond year round. Juvenile salmon enter and rear in the pond for periods of days or week in the spring.<sup>17</sup> Samples of similar habitats at Tosi Point to the south and Turner Bay to the north found high use by juvenile pink, chum, and Chinook salmon from February through April with Chinook use peaking in March and the other species peaking in April.<sup>18</sup> Pink salmon fry were captured in the pond on April 2008 and large

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<sup>15</sup> Beamer et al. 2009

<sup>16</sup> Beamer et al. 2003

<sup>17</sup> Pentec 2008

<sup>18</sup> Beamer et al. 2006

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juvenile salmonids, quite possibly Chinook, were seen in deeper waters that could not be sampled by dip net.<sup>19</sup>

Bird use is also high on the water surface and muddy margin of the pond, as well as of the marsh surrounding the pond, with bufflehead, hooded merganser, mallard, green winged teal, killdeer, common snipe, and great blue heron observed during various site visits in spring of 2008.<sup>20</sup>

Small nodes of *Spartina*, an invasive plant species, were noted in the lagoon during spring site visits. Within months of identifying the *Spartina*, TPL worked to secure permission from the owners enabling treatment by the Skagit County Noxious Weed Board in 2008 (see “Manageability of the Project Site” for more information on *Spartina*, pg. 42). Protection and control of invasive plants in the Kiket pocket estuary will supplement those efforts and contribute, in perpetuity, to the sequence of these unique habitats available to migrating juvenile salmon.



- ***Unique Rocky Balds*** (approximately 1 acre in Phase II)

Portions of the upland consist of a native coastal grassland community, dominated by the native red fescue, a diversity of native forbs, and associated low shrubs. This assemblage comprises a unique habitat found on coastal waterways in the Puget Sound that survive with minimal disturbance.

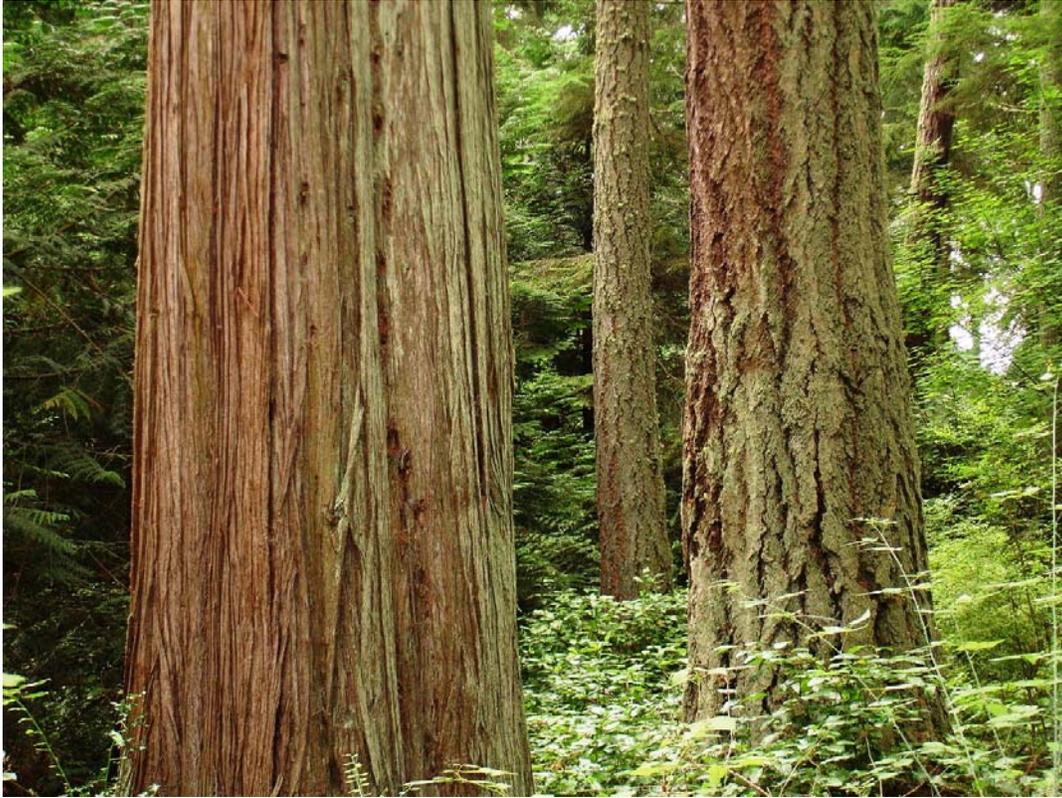
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<sup>19</sup> Pentec 2008

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

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- ***Mature Upland Forest*** (approximately 27 acres<sup>21</sup> in Phase II)

The central portion of Kiket contains a mature forest with old growth characteristics. This area of the forest contains large live trees, standing dead trees, and downed logs. Some of the live trees show scorched bark, exhibiting the evidence of century-old forest fires. Dominant tree species are Douglas-fir, Western hemlock, and Western red cedar. These old growth forests cycle energy, nutrients, and water more slowly and efficiently than a young forest. Many wildlife species, such as the federally threatened marbled murrelet, rely exclusively on old growth habitat similar to that on Kiket Island for nesting, breeding, or feeding. The forest canopy intercepts rainwater, thereby reducing the flow of water down slopes, which helps stabilize the soil and decreases erosion. Native plants including low Oregon grape, salal, red huckleberry, sword fern, and twinflower populate the understory. Western red cedar and Pacific yew saplings are abundant in localized areas within the northern portion of the Island.<sup>22</sup> Pacific madrone are found at the edges of the upland forest and hang over the beaches below.

This forest community provides excellent habitat for birds (including a few species of owls), beetles, invertebrates, fungi, spiders and flies, which provide food for a wide variety of wildlife inhabiting the Island on a permanent and seasonal basis. This area of the Island contains numerous stumps, snags, broken limbs, a reduction of crown expansion, crown collapse and increased hollowing, which reflect the age of the forest.

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<sup>21</sup> Including the riparian buffer acreage

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***Excellent Habitat Quality***

In a stroke of good fortune, TPL was able to contract with Jon Houghton, one of University of Washington graduate students who completed his thesis at Kiket Island in 1972. Houghton ‘s one-of-a-kind perspective of “then and now” attests to the minimal impacts and changes at Kiket over 37 years (see photos in appendix), even finding transect posts he installed during his studies. His biological assessment compares the 1970s data with 2008 observations and concludes that very little has changed. This property has endured and survived years as a vital part of the landscape. State Parks and TPL are honored to have the opportunity to protect Kiket Island in perpetuity as part of Deception Pass State Park.

Overall, the Kiket Island acquisition will protect approximately 96 acres with more than two miles of near-pristine, high quality, nearshore habitats and associated uplands supporting a variety of fish, shellfish, birds and other wildlife populations. The mature forest on the Island has old growth characteristics, and the open habitat (“bald”) support diverse vegetation and wildlife assemblages. Jon Houghton, Senior Marine Biologist with Pentec, recently wrote in support of this acquisition:

*“In my subsequent 35 years of research and consulting around the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, I invariably, upon first encounter with a new intertidal habitat, compare it to the similar habitat type on Kiket Island. The diversity of those habitats, ranging from mud to bedrock, sunny to shaded, and low to moderate energy gave me a great template for future work and will provide great opportunities for further research and education within the State Park system. In our work for TPL, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to walk around the island again (literally, for the first time in 35 years!) and to see that intertidal habitats and assemblages remain in much the same undisturbed state they were in last time I was there.*”

*“Apart from the unique marine scientific opportunities that purchase of the Island would open up, in my years of living intermittently on the property, I gained a deep appreciation for the upland ecology and aesthetics of the Island. It was particularly rewarding to see that those things too, are largely unchanged by time... The open meadow of wildflowers on the Flagstaff “bald”, and the cool of the old growth forest on the island crest ... will make an excellent addition to the Park.”*

***Ecological Importance for Puget Sound Region and Coastal and Estuarine Ecosystems***

Coastal regions continue to experience habitat and natural land loss due to conversions of shoreline property for residential and commercial uses. In 1998, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources reported that over 70% of Washington’s tidally influenced wetlands had been destroyed by human associated impacts (urbanization, port development, industrial use, dredging and filling).<sup>23</sup> The State of the Sound 2007, a Puget Sound Action Team report, stated that much of the habitat and associated wetlands along the shorelines of the Puget Sound have been drastically degraded and connectivity destroyed by the “extensive development” and land conversion (Puget Sound Action Team 2007).

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<sup>23</sup> Washington Department of Natural Resources 1998

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• *Kiket Island Nearshore Provides Critical Habitat for Juvenile and Adult Salmon*

The Skagit River supports substantial runs of all five species of Pacific salmon as well as steelhead, cutthroat, and bull trout. Chinook salmon, steelhead and bull trout are all listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Because of its proximity to the river mouth, the waters around Kiket Island as well as the Island's shorelines themselves provide a habitat link between river and ocean, and are used intensively by out-migrating juvenile salmonids and adults returning to Skagit river spawning grounds.<sup>24</sup> The quality of habitats along Skagit Bay shorelines is of great importance to the success of efforts to rebuild salmon runs that have been sharply depleted in the last several decades.<sup>25</sup> The capacity for rearing juvenile salmon within the Skagit delta becomes limited during periods of high out migration resulting in a greater reliance on adjacent nearshore habitat and pocket estuaries such as those of Kiket Island. The numbers of juvenile salmonids per mile of shoreline was often over 10,000 and may have exceeded a million on one occasion during the peak of the out migration period.<sup>26</sup> Steelhead are seldom taken in marine beach seines, nonetheless, a substantial number (167) juvenile steelhead were captured in surface tow net sampling with greatest catch rates in the area closest to Kiket Island.<sup>27</sup> Beds of eelgrass and kelp ring the Island and enhance the local productivity for salmonids.

Shorelines of Kiket Island are in a direct path to Deception Pass for out-migrating juvenile salmonids from the Skagit River. Beach seine and visual surveys on both sides of Kiket Island, around Hope Island, and along adjacent Fidalgo Island shorelines found high use of all shorelines by pink and chum salmon with somewhat lesser use by Chinook and coho.<sup>28</sup> Schools of pink salmon were present along the Island shorelines during both spring 2008 site visits. Bull trout tracking in the Whidbey Basin shows significant species use in the nearshore habitat surrounding Kiket Island.<sup>29 30</sup> During a site visit in February 2009, biologists noted an adult bull trout surfaced 20 feet off the Fidalgo to Kiket tombolo.



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<sup>24</sup> Stober 1973b, Beamer 2005

<sup>25</sup> Beamer et al. 2003

<sup>26</sup> Stober 1973b

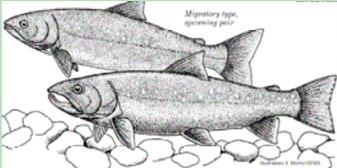
<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Reg Resenbeichler at USGS 2008 publication in process

<sup>30</sup> Beamer et al. 2004

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<b>Table 1: Salmonids in Puget Sound<sup>31</sup></b>	<b>Species name</b>	<b>Description</b>
	Chinook <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i>	Puget Sound’s largest and most recognizable salmon, with six populations that exist in the Skagit Basin. Also known as king salmon, Chinook is a federally threatened species.
	Coho <i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i>	Popular for sport fishing, coho can be found in small neighborhood streams, and even urban environments, across Puget Sound.
	Chum <i>Oncorhynchus keta</i>	Many genetically distinct runs of chum live in Puget Sound. Chum salmon are known to utilize eelgrass beds for food during their migration.
	Sockeye <i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i>	Another easily recognizable species, with their bright red colors in the spawning life stage, sockeye are a popular symbol of the Pacific.
	Pink <i>Oncorhynchus gorbuscha</i>	Pinks use estuaries and nearshore extensively as nursery areas during their out-migration.
	Steelhead <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	Steelhead are an anadromous trout that is listed as a federally threatened species. They can survive spawning unlike other salmonids. Both summer and winter runs exist in the Skagit basin.
	Cutthroat trout <i>Oncorhynchus clarki clarki</i>	Cutthroat use the shallow waters close to shores and in estuaries. It s a native anadromous trout species.
	Bull trout <i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	A native char in the salmonidae family, Bull trout are listed as a federally threatened species.

<sup>31</sup> Images and information from Washington Department of Ecology webpage [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/pugetsound/species/salmon\\_est.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/pugetsound/species/salmon_est.html) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife webpage—except Bull trout image from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Bull Trout Factsheet: <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/news/bulltrout/bultrt2.pdf> (illustration by K. Morris/USFWS).

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***Protects Important Ecological Connections in the Region***

The Kiket Island Acquisition—Phase II will provide perpetual preservation of important shoreline, coastal and marine resources and directly benefit the marine connectivity and support food web of Puget Sound. The coastal wetland system within the project area is an active area for large woody debris recruitment and includes important foraging and spawning areas for surf smelt, sand lance, herring spawn, salmonids, waterfowl, marine mammals, and other Puget Sound estuarine ecosystem species. Healthy eelgrass beds provide substrate for herring spawn, critical rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids and feeding areas for waterfowl, and harbor seals, sea lions, and elephant seals.

• ***Stable Fringe Eelgrass Beds Surround Kiket and Offset Declines in Northern Similk Bay***

Eelgrass is declining in Puget Sound and in the waters around Kiket Island. Protection of Kiket



and its resources will prevent further loss by averting development and providing public education. The Puget Sound Action Team’s 2007 State of the Sound Report prioritizes the preservation of “the smaller beds that support habitat diversity and provide valuable shoreline functions, especially for migrating salmon that travel to and from the ocean and their native streams.” The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) estimates that 33 percent of Puget Sound

eelgrass beds have been lost since they were first inventoried.<sup>32</sup> DNR eelgrass monitoring in Skagit County has found “...a significant declining seven year trend in eelgrass” in Similk Bay, just north of Kiket Island. Eelgrass monitoring surveys in the area show a decrease of approximately 10 hectares from 2000 to 2006<sup>33</sup>. The same monitoring study shows the eelgrass beds along the north side of Kiket Island have been stable during this same period.

Jon Houghton, marine biologist with Pentec Environmental, identified the eelgrass to be predominantly the native species *Zostera marina*, although some *Zostera japonica* is present.<sup>34</sup> Eelgrass is particularly sensitive to sedimentation, and stressors from shoreline development can undermine beds by increasing wave energy and altering substrate creating nearshore areas unsuitable for this habitat. Protecting Kiket from development will prevent eelgrass loss due to effects resulting from land conversion and shoreline armoring or bulkheads.

• ***Forage Fish Spawning Beach Sustains Salmon Prey Base***



Forage fish, such as surf smelt, sandlance, and herring, are an essential component in the Puget Sound food web. These fish feed on plankton and in turn become food for seabirds, marine mammals, and a variety of fish—including salmon. Forage fish spawning beaches are in decline as

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<sup>32</sup> From *Sound Facts*, [http://psarchives.com/publications/our\\_work/misc/Fact\\_sheets/eelgrass.pdf](http://psarchives.com/publications/our_work/misc/Fact_sheets/eelgrass.pdf)

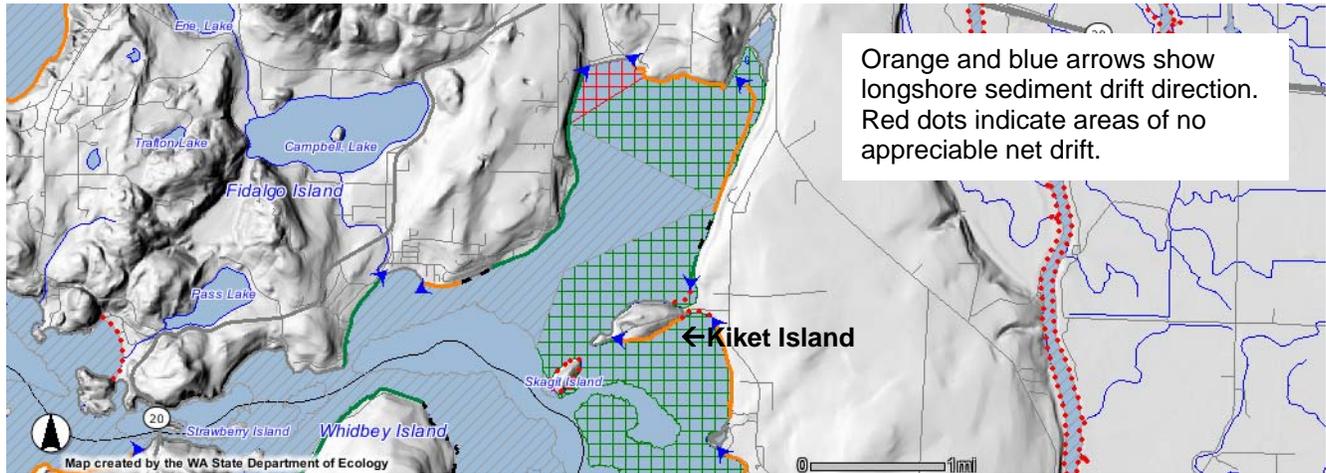
<sup>33</sup> Gaeckle, Jeff 2008. Washington Department of Natural Resources biologist, unpublished data on eelgrass.

<sup>34</sup> Site visit June 2008

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shoreline properties are altered and change the sediment transport in a drift cell.<sup>35</sup> Efforts to restore these beaches have not been successful, making protection of documented spawning beaches, such as those at Kiket Island, even more important. Portions of the Kiket Island beaches are a mix of granules, medium sand, and shell material with limited silt. This substrate is typical for forage fish spawning.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) forage fish spawning surveys documented surf smelt spawning along the south side of the Kiket Island from about the middle of Kiket west to Flagstaff Point, along the entire shoreline of the Flagstaff/Kiket tombolo included in the Phase 1 application. Sandlance could spawn in sandier lower elevation beach areas like those south of the Kiket/Fidalgo tombolo, but no sand lance spawn has been documented in WDFW surveys to date. Preventing shoreline development through State Parks acquisition will preserve the integrity of the beaches in Phase II directly contributing to the overall health and stability of all forage fish spawning areas at Kiket Island.



- ***Naturally Functioning Self Sustaining Feeder Bluffs and Drift Cells***

Beaches and bluffs of the Puget Sound region provide critical nearshore habitat functions and values for the region’s fish and wildlife.<sup>36</sup> Kiket Island Phase II has approximately 600 linear feet of feeder bluffs along its shoreline. Steep till feeder bluffs separate the beach from the Island uplands. Although these deposits generally resist erosion, they are the likely source of much of the cobble and gravel on the south beaches.<sup>37</sup> Otherwise, only limited sediment source areas exist on the Island and it is probable that most material forming the two tombolos on the property comes from adjacent shorelines of Fidalgo Island that has been transported by wave action over long periods of time.

As feeder bluffs naturally erode they support drift cells that replenish the substrate to support eelgrass growth along the fringe of the deep-water edge of Skagit Bay. Gravel/sand beaches provide spawning substrate for surf smelt and sand lance and are dependent on the long shore

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.psparchives.com/publications/our\\_work/misc/Fact\\_sheets/forage.pdf](http://www.psparchives.com/publications/our_work/misc/Fact_sheets/forage.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Johannessen and MacLennan 2007

<sup>37</sup> Pentec 2008

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transport of sediment from feeder bluffs.<sup>38</sup> Skagit Bay drift cells data shows Kiket Island beaches on the north side of the island are nourished from drift cells moving from the northeast, and the beaches on the Southside of the Island are nourished from drift cells moving from the south to the northwest, where currents transport the Island’s eroding feeder bluffs towards the tombolo connecting Kiket Island to Flagstaff point. Critical habitats dependent on functioning coastal bluff systems include coastal forests, spawning beaches for forage fish (such as surf smelt), eelgrass beds, and salt marshes, all of which shape the health of salmon populations.

- ***Important Link in Skagit Bay Pocket Estuary System***

The geographic position of Kiket Island, in north Skagit Bay and east of Deception Pass, is critical in a system of pocket estuaries for juvenile salmon. Turners Bay to the north and Lone Tree Lagoon to the south of Kiket are both significant rearing areas for young salmon and Kiket Island is a link in this chain of pocket estuaries.<sup>39</sup> Pocket estuaries are vital for salmon rearing and for protection of young salmon before migrating along the shoreline to the ocean. These estuaries are non-natal estuaries, meaning that juvenile salmon found here come from other stream systems.<sup>40</sup> As surface currents move juvenile salmon from south Skagit Bay to the north they find refuge in available pocket estuaries like the one at Kiket Island.

***Protects Unique Species Diversity***

The nearshore and upland habitat variation enables rich species diversity at Kiket Island.

- ***Rich Marine Life: Biodiversity Documented in 1970’s Remains Today***

The Skagit is the largest river entering Puget Sound and its waters exert a strong influence on the bay and on Kiket Island. As a result, the average surface water salinity is lower, and the suspended sediment load is higher on the south side of the Island than it is on the north (Similk Bay) side during periods of high river discharge.<sup>41</sup> This characteristic explains the generally higher diversity of intertidal species on Kiket Island compared to Hope Island to the south of Kiket; and on the north side of Kiket Island compared to the south side.<sup>42</sup>

Houghton documented over 250 macroscopic species and types of intertidal animals and 50 species of plants during his intertidal studies at Kiket Island in 1972. He believes the Island’s rich species diversity observed in the 1970s remains today because of the high-quality habitat and presence of plant and animal species observed during site visits in 2008.

Taxon	No. of Species	Taxon	No. of Species
Miscellaneous Invertebrata	11	Mollusca	(55)
Coelenterata	6	Amphineura	9
Nemertinea	14+	Lamellibranchia	20
Annelida	(87)	Gastropoda	26
<i>Polychaeta</i>	84		
<i>Oligochaeta</i>	3	Total Invertebrata	242+
Echinodermata	13		
Crustacea	(56)	Chordata	8
<i>Cirripedia</i>	4		
<i>Chelifera</i>	1	Marine Macrovegetation	51
<i>Isopoda</i>	10		
<i>Amphipoda</i>	18		
<i>Decapoda</i>	23	Total Species	302+

Source: Houghton 1973 00607.001 Kiket Island BE 04-21-2008 Tables Table 1.doc

<sup>38</sup> Clark 1996

<sup>39</sup> Beamer et al. 2007

<sup>40</sup> ibid

<sup>41</sup> Stober et al. 1973a

<sup>42</sup> Houghton 1973

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- *Numerous Populations of Sea and Land Birds*

Kiket Island is within the Deception Pass Important Bird Area, identified by WDFW and Washington Audubon. During winter months, large numbers of diving birds fly in to feed, particularly loons, cormorants, grebes, mergansers, and alcids. Common and Pacific loons regularly forage here, but it's the Red-throated Loons that converge in overwhelming numbers. Although there has not been a systematic study of this seasonal phenomenon according to Bob Kuntz, lead wildlife biologist at North Cascades National Park and compiler of the Padilla Bay Christmas Bird Count for Skagit Audubon, the loons are present in high concentrations from mid-November to early April, with the largest numbers during December, January and February. More than 300-pigeon guillemots gather in the area each spring for pair bonding, and they nest on the cliffs at Deception Pass State Park.

A variety of marine-associated birds use the natural shorelines of Kiket Island. In particular, with other rocky shorelines around Skagit Bay, Kiket Island is one of the few sheltered rocky shorelines in Puget Sound and supports consistent use by rock habitat bird species such as black oystercatchers and black turnstones. Kiket Island shorelines are extremely diverse and on the southwestern edge, there is a stretch of sandy feeder bluff with burrows for nesting kingfishers and pigeon guillemots. The considerable intact and undisturbed upland habitats on the Island are also of high importance to a variety of bird species.

Over forty neo-tropical migratory songbirds as well as coastal-dependent and migratory waterfowl utilize the riparian, forested uplands, freshwater wetlands, and shoreline habitats on the site. The healthy eelgrass meadows and sand gravel beach on-site support healthy populations of forage fish that provide food energy to the many waterfowl and seabirds foraging in Skagit and Similk bays. In addition to the bird species (see list in appendix), numerous other species are likely to benefit from the conservation of the coastal wetland and upland habitats on the site.

- *Exceptional Tree Species*

Two exceptional tree species are found at Kiket Island: Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) and Pacific yew (*Taxus brevifolia*).

The shores of Kiket Island are home to over one hundred Pacific madrone trees. A native of Washington state, the Pacific madrone is an evergreen species often located on rocky sites and associated with Douglas-fir stands. These large specimens are a key component of the island's habitat, providing necessary nesting and perch areas for island birds as well as a great deal of food in the spring and summer when their rich berries come to fruition. Fish also benefit from their presence as their overhanging canopy shades the beach below protecting forage fish eggs such as surf smelt from desiccation. The overall health of the Kiket Island madronas is also noteworthy. While many madronas throughout the Pacific Northwest have been affected by twig and leaf canker disease, these stands have not yet shown any sign of infection and their relative distance from other species is likely to be of benefit. According to Peter Cariss, State Parks arborist,

*“Madrones are in decline all throughout the Pacific Northwest from diseases such as canker fungus and leaf blights. The population growing on Kiket Island is relatively healthy and*

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*shows no signs of being infected by these diseases. Because of their health and the number that exist on the island, these trees are an important specimen.”<sup>43</sup>*

*Overhanging the bluff, Pacific Madrones provide organic material, food, and shade to the shore below.*



Photo: Elizabeth Butler, Kiket Island, April 2008

*This exceptionally large Pacific yew stands along Kiket’s gravel road.*



Photo: Adrienne Fox, Kiket Island 2008



Photo: Christina Khatri, Kiket Island 2009

Further inland, a healthy community of Pacific yew trees flourishes in the shade of the tall Douglas fir and Western hemlock dominated forests, like Kiket Island. Yews, whose bark contains the cancer drug taxol, grow slowly and are fairly rare throughout the forests of Washington state. An exceptionally large Pacific yew, with a two-foot trunk diameter, stands along Kiket’s gravel road. Its size warrants further investigation by State Parks ecologists and arborists. The isolation of the Kiket trees may provide much needed genetic diversity to the over harvested species.<sup>44</sup> Again Cariss states the uniqueness of Kiket Island trees,

*“The yew growing on Kiket is one of the largest I’ve seen and due to its size and the particular qualities of yew trees on Kiket, this is important habitat to protect.”*

### ***Able to Absorb Impacts from Sea Level Rise***

A key issue affecting the nearshore habitat is the rate of sea level rise. The Kiket Island acquisition is expected to be able to accommodate projected sea level rise by allowing the aquatic habitats to migrate inland. As sea level rises, nearshore can be adversely impacted by armored shorelines that preclude the ability of habitats to migrate inland and decrease sediment availability. The tombolos at Kiket Island will likely be sustained by sediment eroding from nearby unarmored banks and the bluffs on the property, as well as sediment from the Skagit River. Upon State Parks acquisition, the property will remain intact and unarmored and be better able to absorb impacts from sea level change.<sup>45</sup>

### ***Conserves Critical Habitat for Endangered, Threatened, and Protected Species***

Kiket Island is extensively used by many, many species as outlined above in the Habitat Type and Ecological Importance sections. Below is a table showing the endangered, threatened, and protected species that will directly and indirectly benefit from protection of Kiket Island.

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<sup>43</sup> Peter Cariss, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, personal communication, February 3, 2009

<sup>44</sup> Houghton 2008 site visit

<sup>45</sup> *Preparing for the Impacts of Climate Change in Washington*, Draft Recommendations, December 2007.

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<b>Table 2.Species</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Protection Benefits</b>
<b>Bull Trout</b> <i>Oncorhynchus keta</i>	FT	Protects habitat for juveniles and sub adults that utilize nearshore waters for foraging. Protects forage fish spawning areas that help support prey base.
<b>Chinook Salmon</b> <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i>	FT	Protects critical habitat such as eelgrass, kelp beds, marshes, and a pocket estuary for juvenile and adult Chinook. Protects forage fish spawning areas to support prey base.
<b>Puget Sound Steelhead</b> <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	FT	Benefits summer and winter runs. Protects habitat for juveniles and sub adults that utilize nearshore waters for foraging.
<b>Bald Eagle</b> <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	SS, FSC	One bald eagle nest is located on the south central portion of the island. Several other nests are documented in the surrounding area indicating the area as prime eagle habitat.
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b> <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	SS, FSC	Project provides winter and migratory foraging habitat for several birds. One falcon nest is found on the southeastern corner of Hope Island, neighboring Kiket.
<b>Marbled Murrelet</b> <i>Brachramphus marmoratus</i>	FT	Kiket hosts nearshore foraging habitat ideal for species and protects important forage fish habitat. Old growth forest provides excellent nesting habitat.
<b>Killer Whale</b> <i>Orcinus orca</i>	FE	Protects habitat and forage area for estuarine associated species that play key role in Southern Residents diet. Helps preserve an adequate prey base by promoting preservation.
<b>Stellar Sea Lion</b> <i>Eumetopias jubatus</i>	FE	A documented sea lion haul-out site is located in Similk Bay, approximately one and a half miles north of Kiket Island. Protects habitat and forage area as well as prey base.
<b>Osprey</b> <i>Pandion haliaetu</i>	SM	Three osprey nests are documented in Deception Pass State Park. These birds likely forage into the waters of Similk and Skagit Bays, including the shorelines of Kiket Island.
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b> <i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	SM	Skagit Audubon lists species as a common year round resident. Project protects important winter foraging habitat for adult and sub adult grebes.
<b>Western Grebe</b> <i>Aechmophorus occidentali</i>	SC	Common year round resident; project protects the near-shore, a preferred winter foraging habitat. Population decline makes preservation a priority for this species.
<b>Horned Grebe</b> <i>Podiceps auritus</i>	SM	Audubon lists as a common resident in fall, winter and spring. Protects important foraging habitat.
<b>Caspian Tern</b> <i>Sterna capia</i>	SM	Audubon lists this species as usually present in the summer. Protects preferred foraging habitats in near shore coastal waters.
<b>Pileated Woodpecker</b> <i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>	SC	Mixed stand coniferous forest provides both nesting and foraging habitat. Snags on uplands have characteristically large oval foraging holes indicative of this species.

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<b>Table 2.Species</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Protection Benefits</b>
<b>Common Loon</b> <i>Gavia immer</i>	SS	Skagit Audubon lists as a common resident in fall, winter and spring. Project protects near-shore marine waters used for winter foraging for adult birds.
<b>Brandt's Cormorant</b> <i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>	SM	Kiket Island protects nearshore marine habitat used for 10-20 non-breeding birds at the project site and hundreds of birds in the project area.
<b>Harbor Seal</b> <i>Phoca vitulina</i>	SSC	Project protects nearshore marine habitat used for foraging, as well as undisturbed terrestrial shoreline used for haul out. Harbor seals were seen on the north side of the island.
<b>Grey Whale</b> <i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>	SS	Adult and juvenile gray whales are known visitors to Skagit Bay. This project protects nearshore habitats that support the food web this species depends on.
<b>California Sea Lion</b> <i>Zalophus californianus</i>	SSP, FP	A documented sea lion haul out site is located in Similk Bay approximately one and a half miles north of Kiket Island. Protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act.
<b>Northern Elephant Seal</b> <i>Mirounga angustirostris</i>	FP	A documented seal haul out site is located in Similk Bay approximately one and a half miles north of Kiket Island. Protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

FE: Federally Endangered  
 FT: Federally Threatened Species

FSC: Federal Species of Concern  
 FP: Federally Protected

SSP: State Species of Priority  
 SM: State Monitored  
 SS: State Sensitive

**1.3.2 Other Values Achieving CELCP Goals: Conservation**

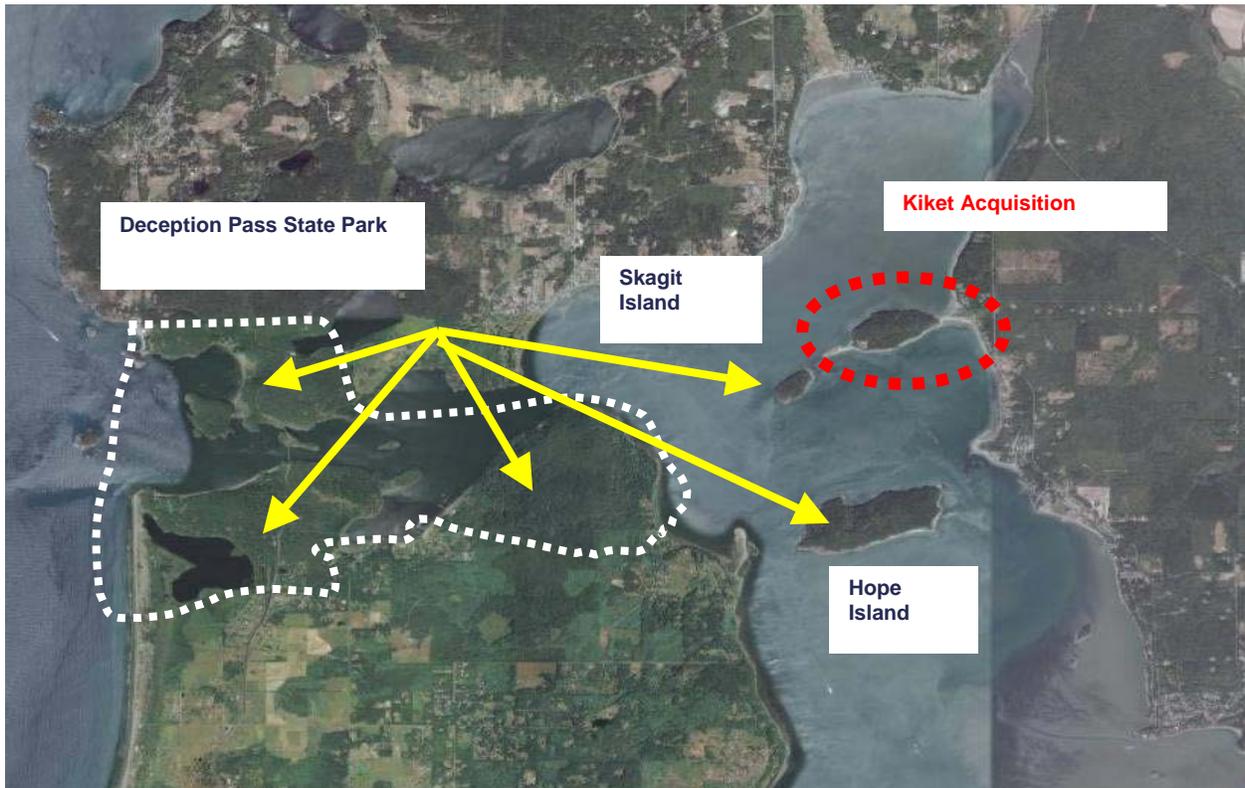
The Kiket Island opportunity offers great conservation values of the CELC program. It will be a keystone acquisition within the larger Skagit Bay area and adds to an established pattern of conservation including Deception Pass State Park and Swinomish Indian Tribal Community conservation work. By protecting Kiket Island State Parks will:

- Conserve critical links in salmon migration;
- Maintain water quality;
- Create new and expand current educational opportunities;
- Add more opportunity for nature-based recreation in Skagit Bay;
- Protect a place of cultural significance to the Swinomish Tribe and of historical significance to the greater Puget Sound community;
- Preserve undisturbed shoreline that needs little restoration;
- Maintain scenic views in the larger Skagit Delta and Deception Pass; and
- Save a mix of values unique to Puget Sound.

The multiple funding sources being assembling for the Kiket Island acquisition include federal and state conservation grants designed for habitat protection. Each funding source will require deed restrictions that protect the property in perpetuity from adverse development.

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***Habitat Connectivity and Linkages to Protected Wildlife Corridors***

Kiket Island acquisition will connect existing protected areas at Deception Pass State Park, including three satellite parks: Hope Island, Skagit Island and Dugualla property. Skagit Island contains a mature forest managed as a Natural Area Preserve. The 580-acre Dugualla property, an undeveloped site, contains one of the largest wetland complexes in the state park system.

***Salmon Migration Corridors***

Kiket Island and its intact, healthy shoreline and pocket estuary are key to salmon rearing and migration. Young salmon are often carried from the Skagit River Delta to North Skagit Bay by the surface current. By preserving the small pocket estuary at Kiket Island, State Parks can protect important rearing habitat that is greatly needed for Skagit system. The shaded shoreline and extensive eelgrass beds provide a system of refuge and safe travel for juvenile salmon after rearing in the pocket estuary.

***Maintaining Water Quality***

Protecting Kiket Island from development can preserve ecosystem process both at the local scale and throughout the landscape that would be affected by such stressors should they be allowed to occur. By preventing shoreline armoring, nutrient and pathogen loading, wetland diking, and interruption of fish migration typically associated with waterfront development, this project protects many important natural processes in perpetuity. In particular, development of Kiket Island would likely cause degradation of water quality to a currently open and productive

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shellfish growing area. View cutting of developed lots would reduce riparian function and wood recruitment.

***Conservation Context***

The acquisition of the Kiket Island property provides a critical link in nature-based recreation along the Skagit Bay shoreline; protects sites of cultural significance to the Swinomish Tribe and of historical significance to the great Puget Sound community; and contributes to the preservation of undisturbed shoreline and scenic views in the larger Skagit Delta. Together, the values protected by the acquisition of the subject area will significantly benefit the coastal and estuarine environment. The Swinomish Tribe is working diligently through the Skagit River System Cooperative to restore tidelands and shorelands within its reservation. This project complements the tribal restoration efforts.

***Ongoing Restoration Opportunities***

Importantly, great care has been taken on the property to prevent invasive species infestations. Due to the efforts of the current owner, there are few problems with invasives in the forested uplands, which has kept the property very close to its natural state. Currently there is little restoration needed aside from minor invasive plant removal in the lagoon and beach debris clean-ups, described below. State Parks staff will assess other restoration opportunities as they evaluate the recreation and habitat needs on Kiket Island. These efforts may consist of some planting of native species to enhance the current communities.

The Phase II acres included within this proposal encompass high quality native plant communities and habitats with very small number of invasive plants. Nonetheless, acquisition and management will include removal of non-native and invasive species as they become introduced at Kiket Island, and in compliance with State Parks' adopted Natural Resource Policy. Ongoing marine debris and garbage inevitably accumulates on the shore from wind and water currents and will be regularly collected and disposed of by park staff and volunteer groups.

***Foundation for Additional Scientific Research***

During the 1970's the University of Washington undertook a series of studies of the area's marine biology that provide a detailed historical data base for the Kiket Island's shoreline marine resources and those of surrounding Skagit and Similk Bays. Consequently, the tidelands and nearshore habitat surrounding Kiket Island are the most studied in the Puget Sound. This foundation of knowledge creates a unique opportunity for additional research.

*“In public ownership, and with the wealth of quantitative data from the 1970s University of Washington studies, the Island offers a unique opportunity to examine change that may have occurred over the last three decades on the beaches and nearshore waters of Puget Sound, in the absence of local stressors. Going forward, the period of record begun in 1970 could be continued indefinitely to document future effects of changing watershed conditions, climate change, and sea level rise.” (letter from Jon Houghton, 2008)*

During a recent site visit in February 2009, Eric Beamer, Fish Biologist and Research Director at the Skagit River Systems Cooperative expressed interest in studying fish use and function of the saltwater lagoon habitat at Kiket, particularly because this pocket estuary is fed from a fresh

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water seep rather than a creek, stream, or spring. With permission from the landowners in place, this research will commence in March 2009 and proceed through June 2009.<sup>46</sup>

### ***Habitat Stewardship***

State Parks staff and signage will direct people away from the sensitive areas to well-maintained trails and activity appropriate areas to prevent habitat degradation. By using established photo points, State Parks will monitor impacts to habitat and manage human impacts before there is a need for restoration.

In addition to protecting natural processes, species and functions survival into the future, the preservation of the island provides an educational platform for modeling shoreline stewardship to adjacent property owners and the public at large who will now be allowed to visit this site. The relevance of the action becomes clear when one considers the temporal expression of the action in a future context of more intensive shoreline development throughout the Whidbey basin.

### **1.3.3 Other Values Achieving CELCP Goals: Recreation**

Kiket Island provides a significant boost to public access and coastal resources. Deception Pass is Washington’s premier state park, with more than 3,200 acres and nearly 15 miles of shoreline. Among the most visited state parks, it offers varied topography, variety of marine and upland habitats and dramatic views and relatively close to population centers. Adding Kiket Island to the Deception Pass management unit would add a new dimension to the already exemplary natural resource education and interpretation opportunities. The intact natural resources at Kiket Island provide an opportunity to expose the public to a site only minimally impacted by human activities. Public ownership of Kiket would also protect the natural resources on Kiket and Flagstaff Islands from development.

### ***Enhances Coast-dependent and Nature-based Recreation***



Washington CELCP encourages the integrating “low-impact non-consumptive human activities with natural settings, consistent with the state comprehensive outdoor recreation planning (SCORP) process.”<sup>47</sup> Kiket Island is uniquely positioned to provide more coast-dependent and nature based recreation in accordance with Washington CELCP recommendations.

The Skagit Delta is already a popular recreation area and Kiket Island will contribute to the area’s continued success by enhancing an established state park and adding a public access point for kayakers, naturalists, and hikers. Kiket Island is an ideal place for bird watching and other passive nature-based recreation and education

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<sup>46</sup> See Pocket Estuary Research scope in the CELCP Grant Attachments.

<sup>47</sup> Washington State’s Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan, 2007 and The Role of State Government in Outdoor Recreation, 2002.

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opportunities due to its incredible bird diversity (see above Ecological Section). The spit and undeveloped shoreline along the bay provide a unique natural environment—sandy shores, prolific tidelands, and rich wetlands—for the public to explore and enjoy. The most abundant edible shellfish species reported are the native littleneck, followed by the butter clam. Horse clams, geoduck, and soft-shelled clams are also present.

***Provides Opportunities for Kayaking and Non-motorized Boating***



Of most importance to kayakers and other paddlers is Kiket Island's location along the Cascadia Marine Trail and that it provides access to a number of shoreline parks for travelers using small, beachable, human- or wind-powered boats. Washington Water Trails Association developed the Cascadia Marine Trail, a 140-mile water trail that stretches from the Canadian border to the southern-most points in Puget Sound near Olympia, Washington. It is one of only 16 trails designated a National

Millennium Trail by the White House.<sup>48</sup> Kiket Island can provide an additional location for kayak haul out and short excursions from nearby Skagit and Hope Islands that has an overnight camping location for the water trail users.

***Expands Needed Shoreline Access Proximate to Seattle Metropolitan Area***

The Washington Department of Ecology Publication, *Washington State Coastal Zone Management Program* (Section 309 Assessment and Strategy) found that the relative amount of public shoreline in Washington state is not keeping pace with population growth and recreational or other user needs of the state. Creating more public space on the shoreline relieves pressure on current access points and increases the opportunities for low impact recreation activities. Puget Sound groups, like the Alliance for Puget Sound Shorelines, through its MudUp! campaign, are working to connect people with the shoreline (and the greater Puget Sound) to inspire future stewards of our inland sea. Partners strongly believe it is imperative to improve public shoreline access and incorporate positive environmental education opportunities in order to cultivate respect and appreciation for the Puget Sound.

Many of the beaches in Puget Sound are privately owned and off-limits for public use. A recent inventory of the shoreline shows that only 19% of the shoreline is accessible to the public, approximately 425 miles of the 2,300 miles of shoreline in Puget Sound.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, only half of those publicly available beaches are accessible from uplands (approximately 212 miles).<sup>50</sup> In recent years, the desire for more publicly owned tidelands, beaches, and access points has increased because of population growth and growth in outdoor enthusiasts. More and more people want to experience Puget Sound by kayaking, beach walks, and wildlife viewing. There is a need for public beach, but also for relatively easy access to those beaches.<sup>51</sup> State Parks provides approximately 18.7 miles of public access to the Puget Sound shoreline. Adding Kiket's

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<sup>48</sup> Washington Water Trails Association website. <http://www.wwta.org/trails/CMT/index.asp>

<sup>49</sup> The Trust for Public Land, *Puget Sound Shoreline Strategy: A Conservation Vision for Puget Sound*, The Trust for Public Land, Updated November 2005

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

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shoreline miles would increase State Parks’ accessible shoreline by more than ten percent (10%). Kiket Island would provide additional important public access to the Puget Sound shoreline, increasing the availability of coast-dependent and nature-based recreation in Skagit County.

At present, the closest easily accessible public beaches are at Cornet Bay and Deception Pass State Park, which are approximately seven miles along the shoreline from Kiket Island. The current public beaches offer only remote access to other publicly owned properties. Kiket Island is close to Skagit Island and Hope Island (Deception Pass State Park properties); both are true islands accessible only by private watercraft. Skagit Island has an established Washington Water Trails campsite for boaters. Both islands also share some of the ecological conditions typical of Kiket Island shorelines and uplands but neither offers the combination of ecology and accessibility, as Kiket does.

### ***Access and Use***

Access and use restrictions will apply to less than ten percent (10%) of the overall project area in order to protect sensitive habitats and species from human impacts. Restrictions will be focused on the pristine rocky balds and the pocket estuary. State Parks adopted natural resources policies will direct management of public access and stewardship of these sensitive shoreline and intertidal habitats. Interpretive and directive signs will direct visitors to established trails and away from protected areas. On-site park staff will monitor to ensure non-adverse activities occur.

### **1.3.4 Other Values Achieving CELCP Goals: Historical**

#### ***Culturally Significant Archaeological Sites***

Kiket Island is located within the Swinomish Reservation and has significant cultural and historical importance for the tribe. Phase II acquisition contains documented shell midden sites. These sites are common around the region; comprised mostly of mollusk shells remaining from indigenous communities that once fished and lived along these shorelines. Historic use of the Kiket shorelines and beaches by humans included clam harvest and family picnicking by Swinomish tribal members and by Island residents. State Parks’ acquisition of Kiket Island will provide opportunities for Swinomish cultural resource site investigations, identification, protection and management to avoid negative impacts to these resources.

#### ***Roots of Pacific Northwest Discovery***

Kiket Island was documented in records of the early explorers of the Pacific Northwest. In the spring of 1792, Joseph Whidbey, master of the HMS Discovery and Captain George Vancouver’s chief navigator, sailed through the narrow passage that is now called Deception Pass towards Kiket Island. Some historians consider the spit in Turner’s Bay, immediately north of Kiket Island, to be a landing site of Captain Vancouver’s Puget Sound Exploration party because it fits the description and approximate location of one of their reported survey sites. The Wilkes Expedition named Kiket Island in 1841.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> <http://www.skagithistory.com/placenames.html>

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*History of Galvanizing a Statewide Environmental Movement*



The history of Kiket Island and how its legacy persists is distinctive. As mentioned earlier, this site was evaluated as a possible location for a saltwater-cooled nuclear power plant in the 1970s.<sup>53</sup> Ultimately the site was rejected, in the face of a growing and well-organized environmental movement.

*WA Public Power Supply System had nuclear plans for Kiket*

As this Kiket Island acquisition opportunity has

become public, project staff are hearing from State Parks Commissioners, Executive Directors, and other leaders of Washington’s environmental organizations and agencies who speak of how the Kiket Island nuclear power proposal galvanized a statewide environmental movement. If the Kiket Island acquisition is successful, state historians will work to document this history.

**1.3.5 Other Values Achieving CELCP Goals: Aesthetic**

*Preserves Views to and from Historic Deception Pass Bridge and State Park*



The abundant scenic vistas experienced from Kiket Island are truly spectacular. From the western tip of Flagstaff Island one holds a territorial view of Skagit Bay including: Deception Pass, Coronet Bay, Whidbey Island, and Fidalgo Island. Views toward Deception Pass and the Deception Pass Bridge from Flagstaff Island are similar to those only obtainable from a boat on the water. Home site development at Kiket is set back from the shore preserving the views of Kiket Island from passing

boats and nearby viewpoints. Undeveloped, undisturbed waterfront property is an increasingly threatened commodity in Puget Sound, as second homeowners and retirees discover the beauty of the Puget Sound shoreline. Acquisition of the subject area is a unique opportunity to preserve an enclave of pleasing and natural views amidst a growing sea of suburban development. Public

<sup>53</sup> From Seattle Municipal Archives, brochure circa 1969 <http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/2508537177/>

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ownership will open this unique and breathtaking experience to the general public. (See attached photos.)

***Preserves Scenic Byways and Waterways***

The Cascadia Marine Trail is one of only 16 trails designated a National Millennium Trail. It is a well-traveled route for many non-motorized boaters exploring Puget Sound or heading farther north to the San Juan Islands and maintaining the natural shoreline aesthetic and remote feel is vital to the outdoor experience. This water-route has a haul out and campsites at nearby Skagit Island.<sup>54</sup> Skagit Island is only accessible by watercraft, and preserving the views and scenery on Kiket Island will benefit campers and paddlers on Skagit and Hope Islands.

Whidbey Island Scenic Isle Way, a designated Washington state Scenic Byway, is a north-south route the length of Whidbey Island.<sup>55</sup> Kiket Island lies just to the east of the Isle Way's northern terminus at Deception Pass. It is essential to preserve the unspoiled, maritime essence of Puget Sound along this state-recognized scenic drive.

***Connects to Skagit Wild and Scenic River***

The Skagit River system is a designated Wild & Scenic River System managed by the U.S. Forest Service: 58.5 miles of the Skagit River are classified as Recreational and One hundred miles of the Sauk, Suiattle and Cascade rivers are classified as Scenic.<sup>56</sup> Although Kiket Island is not located in the upstream freshwater sections of the Skagit river system, the island has a role in supporting the wildlife that live in the river system and contribute to and sustain the wild and scenic values upstream.

***Sum is Greater than its Parts***

The mix of ecological, conservation, recreation, historic and aesthetic values at Kiket Island together contribute important benefits to the coastal and estuarine environment that are not provided by those values individually. Kiket Island has been in private ownership since statehood except for a brief period in the late 1960s and early 1970s when Snohomish County Public Utilities District and Seattle City Light purchased it as a possible site for a saltwater-cooled nuclear power plant. During that period, the University of Washington undertook a series of studies of the area's marine biology that provide a detailed historic data base for the marine resources of the Island's shorelines and surrounding waters of Skagit and Similk Bays.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, the tidelands and nearshore habitat surrounding Kiket Island are among the most studied in the Puget Sound. This foundation of knowledge creates a unique environmental education opportunity for Washington State Parks to build upon.

Kiket's unique history, landforms, location, and habitats are not found anywhere else in Puget Sound. Protecting Kiket Island is protecting land not only for plants and animals or for public access, but also for part of the region's heritage. Because of the mix of values at Kiket, it is a priority acquisition for State Parks and all of the project partners.

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<sup>54</sup> [http://www.wvta.org/trails/cmt/campsites/north\\_sound/site.asp?site=Skagit\\_Island](http://www.wvta.org/trails/cmt/campsites/north_sound/site.asp?site=Skagit_Island)

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.experiencewa.com/scenic-byways/Whidbey-Island-Scenic-Isle-Way.aspx>

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/mbs/skagit-wsr/>

<sup>57</sup> Stober and Salo 1973

## 1.4 RELEVANCE TO CELCP AND OTHER STATE AND LOCAL PLANS

### 1.4.1 Kiket Island Acquisition Implements CELCP Recommendations

The Kiket Island acquisition will further the implementation of Washington CELCP in multiple ways. Washington CELCP emphasizes protecting sustainable biodiversity of coastal and estuarine resources with a focus on preservation of watershed/shoreline processes, functions, and connectivity of natural systems, identifying project areas based on the presence of target ecological features and other attributes—recreation/public access, historical/cultural, and aesthetic. This acquisition advances multiple Washington CELCP priorities in the following CELCP criteria:

- **Salmon Recovery**<sup>58</sup>

Protection and restoration of salmon habitat is essential to the recovery of this Pacific Northwest icon. The Kiket Island acquisition will protect important habitat benefiting endangered salmon, and preserves the ecological integrity of the landscape as stated in the Washington CELCP.

- **Wetlands Protection**<sup>59</sup>

The lagoon/pocket estuary offers pristine estuarine wetlands on the parcel east of Kiket Island. Forage fish spawning beaches and ribbons of fringe eelgrass beds in Kiket Island's intertidal zones are regionally important habitat fueling the estuarine ecosystem of Skagit Bay and Puget Sound.

- **Forage Fish and Shorelines Protection**<sup>60</sup>

Overall, this acquisition will permanently protect more than 2 miles of natural shoreline providing critical habitat for forage fish, salmon, and other species in the food web. In Phase II, 1.1 miles of shoreline will be protected. The sand and gravel beaches support abundant shellfish populations and are spawning grounds for forage fish. The naturally eroding feeder bluffs supply sediment to the drift cells that nourish beaches to the north and south of the Island. The predominately intact, undisturbed natural shoreline at Kiket Island is an important healthy link for migrating salmon using the nearshore habitat of the Skagit Delta.

- **Species and Habitat Biodiversity**<sup>61</sup>

The mature forested uplands adjacent to the Kiket Island tidelands contribute to the health of the water environment and water-dependent wildlife. The uplands, shoreline, and intertidal area are intact at Kiket and provide a diverse system of habitats (see description in Ecological Value section above) that sustain in great number of species food and refuge needs.

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<sup>58</sup> *Washington State's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan*, Washington Department of Ecology, April 2007, p7-8.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* p 8.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p 8.

<sup>61</sup> *Washington State's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan*, Washington Department of Ecology, April 2007, p 8.

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- **Ecoregional Issues and Threats for Puget Sound**<sup>62</sup>

The Kiket acquisition will offset ecoregional threats facing Puget Sound like rapid shoreline development and land conversion, preservation of estuaries and marshes, preserving large segments of the shoreline, and maintaining linkages.

- **Broader threat of Habitat Fragmentation**<sup>63</sup>

The remaining naturally functioning mosaic of Puget Sound beaches, bluffs, deltas, mudflats, and wetlands are being stressed by development. A steady loss of habitat, alarming declines in some fish and wildlife populations, and closures of shellfish beds are signs that the very best of the Puget Sound is threatened. These issues are also threats to the economic sustainability of the region. The Kiket Island acquisition will protect important habitat connectivity, decreasing fragmentation in northern Skagit Bay, while preserving rich biodiversity, and ecological processes and functions that support healthy estuarine ecosystems (described in Ecological section above).

- **Integrates Recreation with Habitat Protection**

Washington CELCP encourages, where possible, the integration of low-impact nonconsumptive human activities with natural settings, consistent with the state comprehensive outdoor recreation planning process. (See description in Recreational Value section above.)

#### **1.4.2 Relevance to Other State/Local Plans**

Puget Sound is a unique and ecologically sensitive area, and because of growing development pressure there are a number of watershed and coastal management initiatives that have been instituted to protect Puget Sound's coastal resources. The efforts include federal and state programs that cover the entire Puget Sound region, such as the Puget Sound Initiative;<sup>64</sup> programs that target specific groups of plants and animals such as the North American Waterfowl Management Plan;<sup>65</sup> and state and local programs that target limited areas, such as the Skagit County Code.<sup>66</sup>

To summarize, acquisition of the property would help meet state and local salmon recovery goals, natural resource conservation objectives, increase public access opportunities to shoreline and upland areas, and preserve coastal resources and habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species. The acquisition of the subject property helps to accomplish the overarching natural resources goals and objectives in the management plans and conservation efforts across Puget Sound; their relationship to Kiket Island are described below.

#### ***Washington State Programs and Plans Prioritize Kiket Island Acquisition***

##### ***Washington Department of Ecology: Washington State Coastal Zone Management Program***

The Washington State Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP) plan, *Managing Washington's Coasts*, identifies the area surrounding Kiket Island as a priority conservation

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. p. 9-10.

<sup>64</sup> [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/puget\\_sound/2007actionagenda.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/puget_sound/2007actionagenda.htm)

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/NAWMP/index.shtm>

<sup>66</sup> [http://www.skagitcounty.net/Common/asp/default.asp?d=PlanningAndPermit&c=General&p=shoreline\\_toc.htm](http://www.skagitcounty.net/Common/asp/default.asp?d=PlanningAndPermit&c=General&p=shoreline_toc.htm)

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location. Kiket Island is located within Skagit Bay, an Area of Particular Concern according to Washington’s CZMP. The acquisition of Kiket Island and long-term ecological management of Kiket Island tidelands, nearshore, and associated uplands by Washington State Parks will greatly add to the protection and conservation of the larger Skagit Bay ecosystem as prescribed by the CZMP.

***Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitat and Species Program***

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Priority Habitat and Species Program “identifies habitats and species determined to be priorities based on defensible criteria” for management and conservation recommendations. Kiket Island acquisition will protect and preserve the following Priority Habitat and species: bald eagle nesting habitat; significant forage fish habitat; crab; clam harvest areas; migration, nursery, and forage habitat for all of the protected salmonids species; and forage habitat for a variety estuarine fish and bird species.

***Washington’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy***

Washington’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy describes a plan to protect and restore habitats throughout the state. Habitats of Concern include many of those at Kiket Island. Highest priority (“priority one”) habitats for statewide conservation include: marine nearshore, bays and estuaries, and Westside lowland conifer-hardwood (mature) forest. Acquisition of the property aligns with the “priority one” habitats for statewide conservation actions.

The plan also identifies habitat loss through conversion, fragmentation, and degradation, as major influences on the quality of Washington’s fish, wildlife, and habitat. Conservation strategies such as species conservation, coordinated salmon recovery, habitat conservation on public lands and waterways, habitat acquisition, and environmental education are prioritized. Kiket Island provides an opportunity to address all the issues listed above through land acquisition and plan to provide educational opportunities to the public.

***Puget Sound Programs and Plans Prioritize Kiket Island Acquisition***

***U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Coastal Program: The Coastal Program in Puget Sound***

The goal of the Coastal Program in Puget Sound is to protect and restore unique Puget Sound habitats including productive nearshore areas of beaches, mudflats, bluffs, kelp and eelgrass beds, salt marshes, large and small river deltas, estuaries, and deepwater habitat. Protecting Kiket Island secures diverse and high quality habitat for the many fish, marine mammals, seabirds, marine invertebrates and plants occupying the uplands and nearshore areas. Habitats present at Kiket are: beaches, nearshore, bluffs, kelp, eelgrass, marsh, and estuary (see above for detailed descriptions).

***Final Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan, 2007<sup>67</sup>***

The Puget Sound Salmon Recovery plan emphasizes salmon recovery through habitat restoration and protection at individual sites as well as at an ecosystem scale. The protection of existing functioning habitats in urban and rural areas is an immediate short-term need in order to preserve options for the future and increase the likelihood of success in salmon recovery. In addition, educational and incentive-based programs are also necessary.

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<sup>67</sup> Reference to the NOAA approved plan prepared and coordinated by Shared Strategy for Puget Sound

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The Skagit Watershed Profile in the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan identifies the limiting factors facing Chinook production including: loss of delta habitat, loss of pocket estuaries and connectivity, and availability of prey species. Acquisition at Kiket Island will address each of these limiting factors for Skagit Chinook by preserving these habitats in the project area: location in Skagit River Delta and preservation of pocket estuary/lagoon and forage fish spawning beaches. The plan identifies a recovery goal of providing sufficient harvestable salmon to the tribes and the State, providing meaningful directed harvests at levels consistent with treaty reserved fishing rights, and meeting treaty/non-treaty allocation objects while protecting and enhancing the diversity, abundance and productivity of wild Skagit Chinook and their ecosystems.

*Puget Sound Partnership Conservation and Recovery Plan, 2007-9 and Action Agenda, 2008*<sup>68</sup>

The Puget Sound Partnership Recovery Plan describes the significance of preserving functioning habitats through a variety of conservation tools including the purchase of land and easements. The long-term goal of the plan is to manage Puget Sound to protect the full range of its biological diversity. The plan discusses the listing of salmon and orca whales in the Puget Sound and their correlation to the disappearance of nearshore habitats. In addition, the document cites marine bird population declines (56 percent to 95 percent depending on species) and a 27 percent overall decline of marine birds in our region. Two key priorities that apply to the Kiket Island property include: Priority #5-Protect functioning marine and freshwater habitats, and Priority #7-Protect species diversity.

In the recently released Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda, the Skagit River system and delta is included in the Whidbey Basin Action Area. Threats facing this region include: land conversion, habitat fragmentation, shoreline modification, and invasive species. The Action Agenda outlines key strategies for this basin: acquire important areas in nearshore areas and providing education. State Parks acquisition at Kiket will address the threats and implement the recommended strategies for recovery action.

*Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership*<sup>69</sup>

The Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership is undertaking a sound wide view of the Puget Sound toward improving the health of nearshore ecosystems and the biological, cultural, and economic resources they support. The group's science team produces many guides for the recovery of the Sound's nearshore. Conservation efforts at Kiket Island meet and exceed many of their recommendations through this opportunity to protect the relatively undisturbed existing habitat on Kiket Island and the marine and terrestrial connectivity to these adjacent habitats. *Guidance for Protection and Restoration of the Nearshore Ecosystems of the Puget Sound* document outlines key principles and concepts such as the re-establishment or improvement of ecosystem processes in order to achieve the recovery of nearshore ecosystems. This document stresses the importance of an integrated landscape approach that links freshwater-nearshore-marine habitats that Kiket Island provides.

Another publication *Coastal Habitats in Puget Sound: A Research Plan in Support of the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership*<sup>70</sup> highlights the need to better understand (1) ecosystem processes

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<sup>68</sup> Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda <http://www.psp.wa.gov/documents.php>

<sup>69</sup> Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership [http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/technical\\_reports.htm](http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/technical_reports.htm)

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and linkages to watershed and marine systems, (2) the effects of human activities on nearshore ecosystem processes, (3) the effects of restoration and preservation activities, (4) the effects of social, cultural and economic values on nearshore ecosystem restoration and protection, (5) relations of nearshore processes to important ecosystem functions, and (6) the roles of information in restoring nearshore processes. The considerable baseline of information from the 1970s studies reported by Stober and Salo provide an excellent quantitative baseline of data for comparison with current conditions in an area that has not been subject to any local stressors for the past 40 years. In addition, the property provides an opportunity to better understand the effects of social, cultural and economic values on nearshore protection through preservation of the property with public use and access.

***Puget Sound Water Quality Protection RCW 90.71***

Kiket Island is consistent with Puget Sound Water Quality Protection. Per RCW 90.71, “Puget Sound and related inland marine waterways of Washington State represent a unique and unparalleled resource.” A rich and varied range of marine organisms resides in these sheltered waters, comprising an interdependent, sensitive communal ecosystem. Residents of this region enjoy a way of life centered around the waters of Puget Sound, featuring accessible recreational opportunities, world-class port facilities and water transportation systems, harvest of marine food resources, shoreline-oriented life styles, water-dependent industries, tourism, irreplaceable aesthetics, and other activities, all of which to some degree depend upon a clean and healthy marine resource.”

***Puget Sound Shoreline Strategy: A Conservation Vision for Puget Sound, 2005<sup>71</sup>***

The Trust for Public Land’s Puget Sound Shoreline Strategy identifies the amount and location of public shoreline along the 2,300 miles of Puget Sound. In total, less than ten percent of the Puget Sound shoreline is accessible from upland parcels. Acquisition of Kiket Island by Washington State Parks would contribute a critical recreational link along the Puget Sound shoreline.

***Local Programs and Plans Prioritize Kiket Island Acquisition***

***Skagit Watershed Council – Habitat Protection and Restoration Strategy (Habitat Restoration and Protection Committee of the Skagit Watershed Council 1998) and Watershed Planning Act of 1998***

The Watershed Management Act of 1998 (RCW 90.82) was designed to set a framework for addressing the State's water resource issues for people and for salmon habitat. The planning and research of the Skagit River System Cooperative<sup>72</sup> has driven the Skagit Watershed Council Habitat Protection and Restoration Strategy. The Strategy identifies key habitats throughout the Skagit watershed including –high-value salmon-rearing areas such as side channels, sloughs, and floodplains. The WRIA 3 Watershed Plan identifies the need for protection and restoration of riparian vegetation within the watershed through acquisition.

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<sup>70</sup> PSNERP Report No. 2006-1

<sup>71</sup> The Trust for Public Land [http://www.tpl.org/tier3\\_cd.cfm?content\\_item\\_id=19979&folder\\_id=262](http://www.tpl.org/tier3_cd.cfm?content_item_id=19979&folder_id=262)

<sup>72</sup> Skagit River System Cooperative is a consortium of the Swinomish and Sauk-Suiattle Tribes.

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*Skagit Basin 3-Year Work Plan, 2006*<sup>73</sup>

Skagit Basin Three-Year Work Plan prioritizes the marine nearshore areas near Skagit Bay for conservation; the location of Kiket Island. The plan discusses the need for pocket estuaries as an alternative estuarine rearing area when there is not room available in the estuary. It also discusses the need for brackish estuaries and nearshore areas due to their productive nature and Chinook salmon's ocean-type life history. Nearshore projects, like Kiket Island, that restore and retain pocket estuary habitat and preserve natural geological beach process that create and maintain nearshore forage fish habitats are important habitats that will aid in salmon recovery. The Kiket Island property provides known high use habitat for salmon populations. Acquisition of the property would maintain coastal processes including forage fish spawning and the functioning pocket estuary in the area thus aiding the overall goal of salmon habitat and population recovery.

*Skagit County Shoreline Master Plan and Washington Shorelines Management Act, chapter RCW 90.8 and Washington State Shoreline Master Program – Chapter RCW 90.58*

The Washington State Shoreline Master Program (SMP) guidelines state “the shorelines of the state are the most valuable and fragile of its natural resources and that there is great concern throughout the state relating to their utilization, protection, restoration and preservation.” Goals associated with the SMP include: (1) recognizing and protecting the state-wide interest over local interest; (2) preserving the natural character of the shoreline, (3) resulting in long-term over short-term benefit; (4) protecting the resources and ecology of the shoreline, (5) increasing public access to publicly owned areas of the shoreline, (6) increasing recreational opportunities of the public in the shoreline, and (7) providing of any other element deemed appropriate or necessary.

The Skagit County Shoreline Master Plan lists the area around Skagit Bay and Fidalgo Island as a shoreline of statewide significance. Kiket Island and its surrounding aquatic habitat are designated as natural shoreline and aquatic shoreline environments. Acquisition of the property will meet all of the goals identified in the State and local SMP: protect statewide interests for long-term protection; maintain undeveloped nature; preserve the natural character of the shoreline; and protect the resources and ecology of the shoreline.

*Swinomish Comprehensive Plan, 1996*

Kiket Island is designated as Open Space and as a scenic landmark area in the Swinomish Comprehensive Plan. The waters surrounding Kiket Island are identified as fish schooling areas, and juvenile and adult salmon migration routes, with important kelp and eelgrass beds. The Plan states the following priorities that support the State Parks' Kiket Island Acquisition:

- ◆ Kelp and eelgrass beds and other marine plants surrounding the reservation shall be protected and enhanced;
- ◆ Natural habitat should be protected to the greatest extent possible from development and other interferences;
- ◆ Critical habitat of threatened, rare and endangered wildlife species shall be preserved and protected;
- ◆ The scenic visual amenities of the Reservation land base shall be protected, maintained, and enhanced;

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<sup>73</sup> <http://www.sharedsalmonstrategy.org/watersheds/3-year/Skagit3yrWorkProgram.pdf>

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- ◆ Access to scenic vistas should be protected and encouraged; and
- ◆ Designated or established sites of cultural value should be protected, maintained and enhanced.

***Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, 2005***

The purpose of this plan is to address these principles within the framework mandates by the state Growth Management Act and to provide goals, policies, and strategies for managing growth over the next 20 years. This plan recognizes that the environment is an important public resource. Protecting and conserving the environment and ecologically sensitive areas is in the community's best interest. The Environmental Chapter of the SCCP supports the Kiket Acquisition with the following statement: “*Protect, restore where practical, and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their associated habitats.*”

***Deception Pass: Important Bird Area<sup>74</sup>***

Important Bird Areas, or **IBAs** are sites identified by the Audubon Society, provide essential habitat for one or more species of bird. IBAs include sites for breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds that are vulnerable because they occur at high densities due to their congregatory behavior. Kiket Island is part of the Deception Pass IBA as identified by Washington Audubon.

***Other Plans Prioritize Kiket Island Acquisition***

Kiket Island acquisition will have a role beyond Washington. Below is a list of international efforts, regional, and multi-state plans where the Kiket Island project meets or exceeds the conservation and planning goals.

***North American Waterfowl Management Plan<sup>75</sup>***

The main goal of this national strategy is the long-term protection, restoration, and management of waterfowl populations and their habitats. Through the use of sound science and in collaboration with other conservation and community efforts, the plan will help sustain and improve the ecological health of landscapes that are vital to waterfowl of North America. The plan's habitat objective on the Pacific Coast is to protect or secure 249,000 acres of waterfowl habitat, and restore or enhance 108,000 acres of habitat.

The Kiket Island acquisition will help achieve the protection objective of the plan by securing approximately two miles of shoreline habitat used by a variety of shorebirds, seabirds, and other marine-associated birds. The island also provides habitat for a wide variety of avian species including, but not limited to, owls, woodpeckers, eagles, hummingbirds, juncos, sparrows, and chickadees.

***Conservation Strategy for Land birds in Lowlands and Valleys of Western Oregon and Washington<sup>76</sup>***

This conservation strategy includes four components to help meet the goal of ensuring long-term maintenance of healthy populations and habitats for native land birds. It provides a conservation strategy that identifies habitats and habitat attributes important to land birds; describes the desired habitat conditions based on habitat relationships of priority species; provides interim

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<sup>74</sup> <http://iba.audubon.org/iba/viewSiteProfile.do?siteId=3289&navSite=state>

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/NAWMP/index.shtml>

<sup>76</sup> [http://www.orwapif.org/pdf/western\\_lowlands.pdf](http://www.orwapif.org/pdf/western_lowlands.pdf)

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management targets to achieve the desired conditions; and recommends management actions that can be implemented by various entities at multiple scales.

The Kiket Island property contains a considerable amount of riparian habitat, which is listed in the plan as one of four priority habitats. The shorelines of Kiket are also undeveloped and its inland forest is hosts a number of snags that currently provide habitat for a variety of terrestrial avian species. Acquisition of the property will preserve the existing land bird habitat and provide a connection to adjacent islands with riparian and open water habitats.

***Pacific Coast Joint Venture (PCJV) Implementation Plan***<sup>77</sup>

The PCJV's overall goal is to ensure the long-term maintenance of habitat values and natural ecological processes within coastal wetland ecosystems. A wide range of conservation strategies are being employed to accomplish these goals, including fee title acquisition that provides long-term protection, such as the acquisition proposed at Kiket Island.

***North Pacific Coast Regional Shorebird Conservation Plan***<sup>78</sup>

The goals of the Northern Pacific Coast Regional Shorebird Conservation Plan include: protecting, restoring, and enhancing the quantity and quality of shorebird nesting, roosting, and foraging habitats to stabilize, maintain, or increase breeding, wintering, or migrating populations of shorebird species within the region. The Kiket Island project contributes to these goals by acquiring and protecting in perpetuity the entire property with its highly functional marine nearshore, estuarine, riparian, and forested marine upland habitat.

***Willamette Valley – Puget Trough – Georgia Basin Ecoregional Assessment***<sup>79</sup>

The Nature Conservancy's Ecoregional Assessment identifies a portfolio of sites for conservation action with a goal of protecting representative biodiversity and ecologically significant populations. These assessments are the result of rigorous scientific analyses, which incorporate expert review, and are the most comprehensive and current efforts to set conservation priorities at an ecoregional scale. Biodiversity conservation in an ecoregion will attain its fullest potential if all conservation organizations coordinate their strategies to protect and restore biodiversity according to the priorities identified in this process. The Kiket Island conservation acquisition is supported by the Puget Trough Ecoregional Assessment and is included in the Deception Pass Terrestrial Marine portfolio.

***Improving Methods for Regional Marine Conservation Assessments: Examples from the Pacific Northwest***<sup>80</sup>

The overall goal of The Nature Conservancy's Improving Methods for Regional Marine Conservation Assessments is to “identify the suite of conservation areas that promote the long-term survival of all native plant and animal species and natural communities in the Pacific Northwest Coast ecoregion.” The assessment identified coastal ecosystems and habitats that are recognized as ecologically important, highly productive or sensitive to human impacts.

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<sup>77</sup> <http://www.pcvj.org/strategies.html>

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.fws.gov/shorebirdplan/RegionalShorebird/RegionalPlans.htm>

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.waconservation.org/ecoWillamette.shtml>

<sup>80</sup> A report completed by The Nature Conservancy, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Coastal Services Center in 2006.

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The Kiket Island property contains a variety of priority habitats identified in the plan including eelgrass beds, kelp beds, a pocket estuary, rocky intertidal areas and tide pools, spawning areas, shorebird and terrestrial nesting sites, and undisturbed shoreline/riparian areas. The property is an example of the interaction between upland and shoreline environments and the plant and animal species that utilize the area for feeding, breeding, migrating, shelter, and other life cycle needs. Long-term preservation of the property would allow these processes and interactions to continue, and serve as a reference site for nearby restoration activities.

## 2 TECHNICAL SCIENTIFIC MERIT

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### 2.1 MANAGEABILITY OF THE PROJECT SITE



State Parks is committed to effectively stewarding Kiket Island ecology. Using the agency’s existing resources, and partnering with other conservation groups, State Parks will develop a detailed management plan to guide conservation at Kiket Island.

As an addition to Deception Pass State Park, Kiket will have on-site staff living in the existing cottage<sup>81</sup> (pictured to left) located on the upland parcel and supporting staff nearby at other state park locations. In addition, the proximity of Kiket Island to a vibrant volunteer community will aid State Parks in beach clean-up events and other similar functions. There are no contaminated areas and no remediation is required.

#### 2.1.1 Current uses of project site and surrounding area

Kiket Island is currently an exclusive private estate. One gravel road runs down the southern boundary of the Fidalgo Island portion of the property, crosses the tombolo to Kiket Island and runs the length of Kiket to a primary residence on the western portion of the island. A driveway, parking area, lawn, abandoned small swimming pool, and tennis court surround the residence. An abandoned laboratory and marine railway remain from University of Washington studies in the early 1970’s and portions of two additional abandoned marine railways are present, all on the beach on the northwest shore on Kiket Island. In addition to the main access road, several abandoned roads or trails branch off from the main road.

The Phase II acquisition includes approximately 12 acres on the western shore of Fidalgo Island that provides access to the Island from Snee-oosh Road. This parcel has a gravel driveway, a modest house with lawn and parking area, and an approximately 4-acre salt-water lagoon with fringing marsh. The area was logged and settled during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>81</sup> This building and other improvements on the Kiket Island property are not a part of the CELCP project budget. TPL is funding the acquisition of these buildings and the underlying land with private philanthropy, and it is not included in the match calculations for CELCP FY10.

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The surrounding area is a mix of residential development, tribal lands, and undeveloped islands in the state park system.

- To the north and south of the site on Fidalgo Island, dense single-family residential development has transformed the shoreline and steep slopes that overlook Skagit Bay. Skagit County zoning designation is Rural Village Residential just north of Kiket Island and stretching south along the Swinomish Channel. A small area of shoreline farther north of Kiket Island is zoned Agricultural and is in forest classification. Swinomish Tribal Community zoning along the shoreline is Urban Residential.



- Snee-Oosh Road forms the easternmost boundary of the property, and is the arterial leading to La Conner (closest town) and the Swinomish Tribal Community Center. The property east of Snee-Oosh Road is primarily zoned Rural Resource by Skagit County. Swinomish Tribal Community zoning concurs with the county zoning: rural residential east off Snee-Oosh road, and predominantly Forestry Open Space further east to the Swinomish Channel.
- Undeveloped and protected Skagit Island and Deception Pass State Park lie west of Kiket Island across Skagit Bay. To the southwest is undeveloped and protected Hope Island. Northwest of Kiket across Similk Bay is densely developed with single-family shoreline residences, and is zoned Rural Intermediate by Skagit County.

## 2.2 LONG-TERM USE

***State Park Compatible with Ecological Goals.*** The proposed long-term use of the site—as a State Park—is compatible with the primary goal of protecting and conserving the high quality ecological functions of the property. The public uses on the islands will be consistent with avoiding substantive changes to the property. The native vegetation on Flagstaff Island beckons the public, yet excess visitation or unconstrained visitation could severely impact the site. Staff will manage the property to retain the natural attributes as the first priority. These uses will be balanced as concurrent priorities by on-site staff following management guidelines set forth by State Parks Commissioners. Retaining intact resources is far more efficient than spending funds to restore them later.

The general management objective for the property will emphasize environmental education that incorporates public access to the site. State Parks anticipates day use only activities at Kiket Island, alleviating the need for overnight facilities and their associated impacts. In addition to the on-site manager, staff will be present dawn to dusk to meet with visitors, inform them of the site attributes, provide for visitor safety, and protect resources. To protect the intact native bald vegetation on Flagstaff Island and other sensitive habitats, staff will explore using educational guides, constructing boardwalks or walkways, and enforcing seasonal exclusions. On Kiket

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public uses will feature pedestrian activities; trails will guide visitors through the forests and along the shoreline and direct people away from the most sensitive areas. State Parks will work with partners to monitor sensitive habitats and provide enhanced interpretive and educational materials to inspire visitors' stewardship. All site development will use Best Management Practices to protect Puget Sound and the uplands. No public-use dock or pier is anticipated. Power and water are available on Kiket Island; no additional utilities are required, nor is utility expansion needed on the island.

State Parks foresees few vehicles on the island by providing one access point at a parking lot adjacent to Snee-Oosh Road and using an electric shuttle and footpath to the rest of the property.<sup>82</sup> The easternmost portion of the property abutting Snee-Oosh Road has been significantly altered as a home site<sup>83</sup> and is suitable for parking purposes. State Parks plans to use this area for active public uses and amenities, including parking, staff residence, and public buildings.

State Parks staff assessed the natural resources on Kiket and Flagstaff Islands and found they are generally self sustaining and able to accommodate low-impact recreational use. As a state agency State Parks will preserve the habitat values as well as use its resources outlined below to enhance Kiket for public access:

### *Environmental Stewardship*

As a land steward, State Parks has a Stewardship Program with scientific staff in each region with full-time professional biological support available from headquarters. State Parks is committed to protect sensitive natural areas on Kiket Island to support shellfish, juvenile salmon, and other aquatic resources. In addition to protecting natural processes, species and functions survival into the future, the preservation of the island uplands provides an educational platform for State Parks to model shoreline stewardship to adjacent property owners and the public at large who will now be allowed to visit this site.

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission understands that Kiket is a jewel exactly because of its intact habitats, and they are keenly aware of the ownership requirements and stewardship needs. State Parks have begun working with stakeholders to develop a habitat protection plan, and after acquisition, they will have onsite personnel working with biologists to monitor sensitive areas on a regular basis. Staff will be on-site and available to react quickly to address any issues that arise. State Parks' will apply best conservation practices and be accountable to multiple stakeholders (such as acquisition funding agencies, Swinomish Tribe, park visitors, neighbors, and other environmental conservation groups) that value ecological conservation of Kiket Island. After Kiket is acquired, State Parks will be working with partners to design educational materials and develop volunteer docent programs to inform visitors' about Puget Sound habitat and wildlife, and inspire stewardship.

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<sup>82</sup> State Parks utilizes electric shuttles at other parks in Puget Sound like Cama Beach State Park.

<sup>83</sup> Alterations to the eastern part of the Kiket Island property do not affect the pocket estuary/marsh habitat.

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### ***Restoration***

The island's overall intact natural setting requires little improvement—yet a few small patches of non-native species do exist there. State Parks has a management plan and qualified staff to implement necessary restoration. Working with the community, staff will work to eradicate small patches of *Spartina*, and the few upland invasive plants such as Himalayan blackberry, and holly.<sup>84</sup>

The Swinomish Tribe and other conservation partners, including People For Puget Sound, are managing the removal of *Spartina* in the area around Kiket Island. *Spartina* has occurred in the lagoon at Kiket and was treated in 2008 for eradication. State Parks will monitor the presence of *Spartina* and work to restore the lagoon as necessary. State Parks landscaping plans will generally limit areas of monoculture, and add natives to develop into the climax communities.

### ***Interpretive Trails***



Areas suitable for low-impact nature-based recreation activities, like bird watching and beach walking, will be developed with clearly marked trails. Kiket has an existing one-lane gravel road from Snee-Oosh Road to Kiket Island (road does not extend to Flagstaff) and other remnant paths for small vehicles. State Parks can easily add trail miles by converting these roads and paths (overgrown in several locations) to fully ADA-compliant trails.

Upon acquisition, State Parks staff will work with the community stakeholder and partners to design educational materials and develop volunteer docent programs to inform visitors' about Puget Sound habitat and wildlife, and inspire stewardship. Community groups (Boy Scouts, etc) regularly seek park projects and will often construct new trail miles by converting the roads. Funding for trail development is not part of the CELCP grant.

State Parks has an internal sign shop and expects to create interpretive signs along the new trails explaining the distinctions between habitats. Signage highlighting the sensitive nearshore habitat and warning visitors to take care as they walk on the beach has proven an effective tool at other state parks.

### ***Environmental Education***

Cornet Bay Environmental Learning Center (ELC) at Deception Pass State Park currently hosts a number of events for school-age youth. These youth attend overnight and daylong events at the ELC. The Kiket Island setting provides a distinctly different teaching opportunity from those found at Deception Pass State Park with the lagoon and marine ecosystem (included in the Phase II acquisition). Kiket's relatively compact size and easier access make it possible to explore a variety of ecosystems in one day than at the larger Deception Pass Park.

The site is suitable for teaching portions of the agency-sponsored Westside Ecosystems curriculum: a weeklong field-based curriculum for agency staff regarding Western Washington ecological principles. It is currently taught at Deception Pass. Washington State Parks Foundation is providing support for interpretive materials and development of the environmental education program at Kiket.

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<sup>84</sup> The few upland non-native plants are young and appear to be recently introduced to the island.

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### 2.3 THREAT OF CONVERSION

The subject property is highly desirable for residential development. Although the landowners do not currently have development plans in place, sale to another private owner could see those plans take shape quickly. If the conservation efforts of State Parks and TPL fail then Kiket Island will be sold for highest and best use. Such a sale will likely lead to development similar what one can see on adjacent properties —and allowed under current zoning.

A conservative assessment of development potential concluded that 19 homes could be constructed on the island and the adjoining upland property.<sup>85</sup> Hundreds of single-family homes line the nearby shoreline and demonstrate the Kiket Island development potential.

Kiket is located within the boundaries of the Swinomish Reservation and subject to Skagit County and Swinomish Tribe land use and planning. The Kiket Island parcels are non-Indian fee land, and therefore Skagit County would be the permitting agency for residential development. Kiket Island proper is designated as a Rural Reserve that allows:

- Maximum height: 30 feet or shall conform to the Skagit County Building Code.
- Minimum lot size: 10 acres.
- Minimum lot width: 150 feet.
- Maximum lot coverage: 35 percent
- Development Potential: 8+ additional homes

Kiket Island is surrounded by Rural Village Residential zoning, which does present a precedent to support a potential upzone of the island itself. The upland parcel with the pocket estuary is zoned Rural Village Residential and while smaller in size, would allow an additional 11 home sites. Although the County and the Tribe work to coordinate zoning within the reservation boundary, Skagit County’s weak protective regulatory land use environment makes this shoreline property significantly vulnerable to development. While the Tribe has designated a portion of the Kiket Island property as Open Space and the restrictive shoreline ordinance provide some protection, there is concern that these land use regulations could be challenged in court due to the non-Indian fee status of the subject parcels (as they have been in the past).

The WA State Employment Security Department reports that population growth in Skagit County is nearly 10% and greater than the statewide average of 8%.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, their report states, “With the cost of living growing, Skagit County has been an attractive respite from high prices and the crowded environs of King and Snohomish counties. This will continue to be the case with residential construction expanding and commercial real estate more affordable.”

The relative seclusion of Kiket Island and the easy access from metropolitan Seattle make the property extremely desirable for development. New luxury homes with private shorelines are in limited supply, and the local economy continues to generate a growing demand for second homes. Dense single-family residential development and shoreline armoring has transformed the shorelines surrounding Kiket Island to the north along Similk Bay and to the south along Skagit Bay.

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<sup>85</sup> Anthony Gibbons, Kiket Island Appraisal, September 16, 2008. p. 77.

<sup>86</sup> Skagit County Labor Market Statistics 2006

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## **2.4 PROJECT READINESS**

The Kiket Island project has high probability of success. Kiket Island is the number one priority acquisition for State Parks, and the project is well positioned for state and federal funding. Significant progress has been made toward the ultimate acquisition of Kiket Island.

### ***Option To Purchase Agreement Signed***

The landowners are keenly aware of the natural beauty and easy access to the shoreline. They contacted WSPRC offering an exclusive opportunity to buy it before they list it for sale on the open market. State Parks asked TPL to assist with the Kiket Island acquisition because it needs to purchase by the end of 2009, and millions of dollars must be assembled to do so. TPL secured site control in May 2008 with a time sensitive option to purchase the property for \$15 million dollars by the end of 2009.

### ***Past Funding Commitments Indicate High Likelihood of Success***

Kiket Island is high value real estate, and project partners have applied for more than \$10.5 million dollars in acquisition funding in the past 10 months. Kiket Island was ranked number one in the Riparian category of Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program and also ranked high enough for funding in the State Parks category. We therefore expect \$4.3 million in state funding will be awarded from in 2009. Federal grant of \$1 million was awarded from USFWS National Coastal Wetlands Grant FY09, and an application for CELCP FY 09 (\$3 million) is pending. (See Budget Section for complete funding breakdown.)

### ***Due Diligence is Substantially Complete***

The Kiket Island project can be executed well within the 18 month CELCP timeframe. Due diligence is complete. The appraisal was completed in September 2008 in accordance with state and federal agency guidelines and supports acquisition. It will be updated and reviewed in 2009 before closing. TPL Western Division Legal Director has reviewed title to the property and found no major issues hindering the acquisition. The property is not subject to litigation, liens, judgments or other situations that may postpone closing. Herrera Environmental Consultants conducted a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment in October 2008 and found no contamination or other environmental hazards.

State Parks is working with TPL to bring this project to completion by the end of 2010. If full funding for the Kiket Phase I is secured by October 2009, TPL is prepared to purchase the entire property and convey Phase I to State Parks in December 2009. TPL will hold the balance of the property to convey to WSPRC the following year when the remaining funding is secured. TPL will work with permitting agencies to reconfigure parcels and enable the phased disposition to State Parks.

The following supporting documentation is attached:

- Letter from Tom Tyner, TPL Western Division counsel, regarding option agreement, appraisal, and title dated March 6, 2009.
- Complete reports (appraisal, Phase I EA) are available upon request.

### 3 OVERALL APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

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#### 3.1 ABILITY TO ACQUIRE LAND

Washington State law (RCW 79A.05.030(7)) authorizes the State Parks and Recreation Commission to acquire land. The applicant, State Parks, has a strong record in land acquisitions, purchasing more than 8,150 acres of property with a value of nearly \$27 million since January 2000 in more than 50 transactions. State Parks has real estate experts on staff and is prepared and authorized to own the fee interest in Kiket Island as well as manage state and federal grant contracts.

TPL is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come. Since the founding 35 years ago, TPL has acquired more than 2.5 million acres nationwide valued at nearly \$5.6 billion dollars. TPL has been preserving Puget Sound shorelines since 1993, having added 22 new parks and natural areas totaling more than 10,000 acres. In addition to the \$18,000 of in-kind consultant contracts for this Phase II CELCP FY10 application, TPL is contributing significant staff time towards project management, fundraising, and legal expertise to successfully complete this transaction. TPL is committed to facilitating the acquisition of this property to ensure it is protected and held in public ownership by State Parks.

TPL is working in conjunction with State Parks to complete this acquisition by assisting in negotiations and fundraising. TPL Project Manager, Elizabeth Butler, brings with her 15 years of experience in community development real estate and finance. Since joining TPL, Ms. Butler has helped raise \$12 million for a portfolio of five shoreline acquisitions around the Puget Sound. She is working closely with the State Parks Planning and Program Manager, Bill Koss, to acquire this property.

#### **Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Mission Statement**

“The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission acquires, operates, enhances, and protects a diverse system of recreational, cultural, historical and natural sites. The Commission fosters outdoor recreation and education statewide to provide enjoyment and enrichment for all, and a valued legacy to future generations.

“In 2013, Washington’s state parks will be premier destinations of uncommon quality, including state and regionally significant natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources that are outstanding for public experience, health, enjoyment and learning.”

#### 3.2 ABILITY TO MANAGE LAND

##### *State Parks Track Record of Excellence*

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission operates a statewide system of 121 parks. In total the park system contains more than 120,000 acres of land in 37 counties across the state. Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, a seven-member board, administers the state agency. The Commission provides policy guidance to the agency, including the recently adopted Natural Resource and Cultural Resources Policies, which will guide management of this

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property (see below). The policies place great weight on retaining natural and cultural attributes of park sites.

State Parks employs more than 500 staff with most staff located in the parks and region offices. There is an established Stewardship Program with scientific staff in each region and full-time professional biological support available from headquarters in Olympia, Washington. Park Rangers are the on site staff and have law enforcement capability.

Once the state acquires Kiket Island it will develop a comprehensive plan for the property using extensive public outreach program. State Parks has committed to create comprehensive plans for all of the state parks, including Kiket once the transaction is complete. The planning process includes at least three community meeting leading to a management and development recommendation presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission in a public meeting.

State Parks is implementing the 2013 Vision for the future of state parks in Washington. The 2013 Vision identifies the agency's desire to acquire regionally significant lands with natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources. Kiket Island contributes to the 2013 Vision statement by acquiring lands of state and regional significance with important natural resources including eelgrass beds, rocky balds, and old growth forested shoreline habitat.

The current economic down turn is requiring state government budget reductions, and State Parks is not immune. Budget savings are being achieved by balancing reductions between headquarters and regions, commensurate with park service reductions. The Commission is also embarking on an asset management strategy to identify those parks that are inconsistent with the 2013 Vision, and work to transfer these to local jurisdictions for operation. In managing State Parks assets, it is the Commissioners' intent that parks remaining open and in State Parks portfolio (including Deception Pass) will continue to receive funding to afford full staffing.

### *Puget Sound Friendly Parks Design*

Also in line for implementation is the State Park's "green strategies" to create Puget Sound friendly parks and resources. As part of the Governor's Puget Sound Initiative, State Parks is working to make each marine park as environmentally benign as is possible, through re-designing facilities and working to inform the public of the consequences of their actions. State Parks developed five goals common to all state parks and would apply to Kiket Island:

- ***Healthy Water Quality***: Reduce water and sediment pollution into the Puget Sound
- ***Healthy Water Quantity***: Manage water quantity (e.g., flooding, sea level rise)
- ***Healthy Habitat***: Create and sustain healthy habitat and populations of fish and wildlife species
- ***Healthy People***: Promote diverse community and recreational opportunities that enhance Puget Sound health while informing them about their environment
- ***Healthy Structures***: Sustainable design and low-impact design

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Kiket Island will provide an excellent opportunity to apply State Parks “green strategies” solutions, reducing the impact of the built environment on the natural environment while ensuring State Parks’ guiding principles:

- Balance between natural resources, cultural resources, and recreational resources;
- Strong financial capacity by lowering operating impacts and increasing revenue capabilities;
- A bold and measurable benefit to the Puget Sound and park landscape that can be easily communicated to inspire stewardship;
- Partnerships with neighboring communities and conservation organizations; and
- Maintain large areas of the park for recreational purposes, and unencumbered by no-recreational purpose areas.

***Partnerships Supplement State Parks Expertise***

The project has two main partners: Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and The Trust for Public Land, a national non-profit organization dedicated to conserving land for people for more than 30 years. TPL is providing project management expertise, funding due diligence expenses and acquisition financing, and structuring a phased sale to State Parks who will own and steward the property in perpetuity.

Because Kiket Island lies entirely within the reservation of the Swinomish Tribe, State Parks initiated government-to-government relations with the tribe shortly after securing site control. In the spring of 2008 the Chair of the Tribal Senate (Chairman Brian Cladoosby) and the Director of State Parks (Rex Derr) met to review the proposed acquisition. In their meeting they agreed that the acquisition should proceed and that staff should continue the dialog over suitable site management. State Parks and the Swinomish Tribal staff are now actively engaged in planning for the success of this acquisition. Recognizing the Tribe’s role in resource management, and the formal intergovernmental agreement between Washington State government and federally recognized treaty tribes, State Parks welcomes the Tribe’s involvement in this project. Together over the next year, State Parks and tribal staff will develop strategies for cultural resources protection, interpretation and programming, protecting upland natural resources, facility development, shellfish management, public access, and collaborative management of the property.<sup>87</sup>

State Parks plans to convene a multidisciplinary conservation committee to provide guidance on resource management at Kiket Island and Deception Pass State Park.

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<sup>87</sup> In October 2009, the Swinomish Tribe awarded TPL a grant to fund a report on Best Practices in Tribal and Non-Tribal collaborative parks management strategies in order to inform a collaborative management plan for Kiket Island State Park. TPL’s Tribal Lands Program has commenced the research and the report is scheduled for completion in June-09.

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Aiding in State Parks' ability to manage the land, the following network of partners are supportive of the acquisition:

- Skagit County Marine Resource Committee
- Alliance for Puget Sound Shorelines
- Jura Beach Access Association
- Skagit Audubon
- Pentec Environmental
- People For Puget Sound
- The Nature Conservancy
- WA State Parks Foundation
- Washington State University Skagit County Beach Watchers

Letters of support are available upon request.

Additionally, The Trust for Public Land and State Parks are working closely with the following groups:

- Skagit Land Trust
- Skagit Watershed Council
- Whatcom Land Trust
- Whidbey-Camano Land Trust
- Washington Native Plant Society, Salal Chapter

In the coming months we anticipate receiving additional letters of support from the partners listed above.

### **Other Pertinent Information**

See CELCP FY10 Attachments for additional maps, photographs, and supporting information that documents the values of Kiket Island Acquisition Phase II.

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#### 4 PROJECT TIMELINE

If awarded the 2010 CELCP grant, State Parks and TPL anticipate completion of the Kiket Island project with all fee interest transferred to State Parks. We anticipate drawing down the CELCP funds within months of contracting, well before the 18 months financial assistance period ends.

<b>TABLE 3. PROJECT TIMELINE</b>	
<b>DATES</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>
<b><i>Winter 2007/2008</i></b>	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission prioritizes Kiket Island acquisition to expand Deception Pass State Park.
<b>April 2008</b>	Complete Negotiations with landowners. Option Agreement signed between owners and TPL
<b>Spring 2008</b>	Washington State Parks, The Trust for Public Land, and Pentec Environmental work to complete biological inventory and site assessment for grant applications.
<b>May 2008</b>	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Grant Application submitted by Washington State Parks.
<b>July 2008</b>	FY 2009 Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program proposal submitted by Washington State Parks
<b>May – October 2008</b>	Appraisal and due diligence work for acquisition underway. Other state and federal grant applications submitted.
<b>July – December 2008</b>	Work with partners to secure acquisition funding for Phase I Kiket Island acquisition and develop a stewardship plan.
<b>Spring - Summer 2009</b>	Washington State Parks contract with funding agencies for acquisition dollars awarded. FY 2010 Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program proposal submitted by Washington State Parks for Phase II.
<b>December, 2009</b>	The Trust for Public Land purchases property, and conveys Phase I to Washington State Parks.
<b>January 2010-December 2011</b>	Washington State Parks, The Trust for Public Land, and partners seek balance of funding needed to complete the State Park acquisition by the end of 2011.

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## **5 PROJECT BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION OF PROPOSED COSTS**

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### ***BUDGET NARRATIVE***

#### ***Federal share:***

Washington State Parks seeks \$3,000,000 in CELCP FY10 funding to acquire 40 acres in fee simple property to be held in perpetuity and to expand Deception Pass State Park. The total budget for Kiket Island Phase II exceeds the CELCP 1:1 match requirement, and CELCP dollars will be used exclusively for the land purchase.

TPL negotiated the total Kiket Island property purchase price with the owners. The appraisal was completed in accordance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) and also the federal Yellow Book standard and established a Fair Market Value of \$15,500,000.00 for the entire 96-acre property. The appraisal was completed by Anthony Gibbons of ReSolve, in September of 2008, and contains detailed discussions of the data, reasoning and analysis used in the appraisal process. The appraisal will be updated at the end of 2009, and reviewed per federal requirements prior to closing on the acquisition. The owners are willing to sell below fair market value for \$15 million dollars, and have signed an option agreement with TPL that expires in December 2009. Kiket Island is an extremely valuable property, and the purchase price for Phase II is \$6.5 million dollars. The modest home on the upland property is not included in the CELCP FY10 budget and will be paid for with private philanthropy funding raised by TPL.

The Kiket Island acquisition is the number one priority acquisition for Washington State Parks, and the grant applications to afford Kiket Island Phase I appear well positioned for funding. Working together, the Trust for Public Land and Washington State Parks are pursuing every funding source available and TPL is initiating a Puget Sound shorelines capital campaign to help supplement the acquisition budget, afford the Phase II bridge financing, and fill additional gaps if all grants are not secured. The phasing of the Kiket Island acquisition can be adjusted depending on the amount of acquisition funding that becomes available.

#### ***Non-Federal Matching Funds:***

CELCP Match commitments are \$3,431,000.00, exceeding the 1:1 requirement, and have not been used previously for any other project or Federal fund source.

#### ***Washington State Parks will match the CELCP FY10 grant with \$3,413,000 in cash towards the purchase price:***

- \$1,902,000.00 State grant from the Estuarine Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP). The application was submitted in October 2008, and Kiket is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the state for funding and would be fully funded if ESRP receives a \$12 million dollar appropriation. Funding decisions will be made as a part of the state budget process, which will be completed by the end May 2009. If awarded, funds would be available as early as October 2009.
- \$361,000 from the WA Wildlife and Recreation Program grant. This grant was submitted in 2008 and was ranked to receive funding at a \$40,000,000 WWRP appropriation level. This grant program is funded through the state budget, which will be finalized in May 2009, and is projected to receive \$50,000,000.

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- \$150,000 awarded to the project by The Nature Conservancy's NW Wildlife Conservation Initiative.
- \$1 million from Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant (SRFB) will be submitted in the fall of 2009. The Skagit Watershed Council is the lead entity for SRFB funding, and is working closely with TPL to support this acquisition. Applications are due in September with funding decisions made by the end of 2009.

Both the ESRP and SRFB grants are a cornerstone of the State's endangered salmon recovery strategy. The Governor has made a strong commitment to Puget Sound preserving funding in her proposed budget to further regional protection and restoration efforts.

*TPL will contribute more than \$18,000 of in-kind services for acquisition-related expenses.* These include the appraisal update (\$5,000) appraisal review (\$5,000), and Cultural Resources Survey (\$8,000). These costs are reasonable and necessary for the successful completion of the project, as they are required by federal and state granting agencies prior to release of funds. Additionally, TPL is providing staff time for project management, fundraising, and legal expertise to ensure project success.

### ***Cost-effectiveness***

It is more cost effective to purchase naturally functioning intact habitat such as that found on Kiket Island to support a healthy future in Skagit and Similk Bays than it is to purchase and restore degraded shoreline habitat. Kiket Island is high value real estate that will only become more expensive in the future if we miss this opportunity to purchase it now. As unique as this site is for its biological and ecological values, it is one-of-a-kind piece of real estate. Kiket Island offers all of the attributes of an island (360° views, privacy, high water-frontage to land ratio) with mainland access (just minutes off I-5). It also has many attributes of San Juan Island properties including low rainfall, varied unspoiled shoreline, rocky outcrops, and sandy coves, and, as it is close to 100 acres in size, it is one of only a handful of waterfront properties available for sale.

### ***Other***

TPL is contributing \$97,000 to cover the cost of the house and underlying .3 acres on the upland parcel. This acquisition is outside of the CELCP grant budget, but needed to complete the \$6.5 million Phase II purchase price.

Will the property be leased or rented? (for example, if already subject to a term lease). If so, please explain how revenues will be used in support of the project. No.

Will the public be charged a user fee for access to or activities on the proposed property? No.

If so, please explain how revenues will be used in support of the project.

Has the proposed project been submitted to or is it currently under consideration by other programs for funding?  Yes  No. Washington State Parks received:

- A \$1,000,000.00 grant from United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) FY2009 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program towards the Phase I acquisition, but this funding is not used to meet state/local CELCP match requirements.
- None of the funding requested from other programs duplicates the funding requested under CELCP.

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***Budget Overview Table***

*The total cost of the project is greater than the requested CELCP funding (plus required matching funds). This table identifies the costs associated with the full project, including funding from other sources.*

PROJECT COST	SCOPE	SOURCE	FUNDS EXPENDED?	KIKET PHASE I	KIKET PHASE II	TOTAL COST
Land Acquisition		See funding source table	No. Dec-2009	\$7,990,000	\$6,403,368	\$14,393,368
Improvements Acquisition <sup>88</sup> (incl. land under bldg.)	(\$155,440/ acre + bldg value)	TPL	No. Dec-2009	\$510,000	\$96,632	\$606,632
Total Acquisition Price				\$8,500,000	\$6,500,000	\$15,000,000
WA DOE Grant Admin		CELCP	No. Upon Contracting.	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
Appraisal	USPAP & Yellow Book	TPL (in-kind)	Yes. Sept-2008	\$21,500		\$21,500
Appraisal Update	USPAP & Yellow Book	TPL (in-kind)	No. Expect to complete Fall 2009		\$5,000	\$5,000
Appraisal Review	USPAP & Yellow Book	TPL (in-kind)	No. Expect to contract with McKee & Schalka Fall-2009.		\$5,000	\$5,000
Biological Assessment	Habitat and Species Benefits	In-kind TPL (\$10,000) and Pentec (\$9,400)	Yes. May-2008	\$19,400		\$19,400
Phase I Env. Site Assmnt.	ASTM Standard E 1527-05	TPL (in-kind)	Yes. Fall-2008	\$5,000		\$5,000
Cultural Resrcs Survey	State and Federal Requirements	TPL (in-kind)	No. July-2009		\$8,000	\$8,000
Boundary Line Adjustment	Survey and Permit	TPL (in-kind)	No. If needed for phased sale TPL to State Parks.	\$3,000		\$3,000
Total Contract Costs				\$58,900	\$28,000	\$86,900
Grand Total Project				\$8,558,900	\$6,528,000	15,086,900

<sup>88</sup> Outside the CELCP FY10 Budget, but a part of the overall acquisition.

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***Proposed Land Acquisition Funding Sources:***

LAND ACQUISITION FUNDING SOURCE	STATUS	KIKET PH. I	KIKET PH. II	TOTAL
WA Wildlife and Recreation Program – Riparian (WWRP-R)	Ranked No.1 in State – Expected to be fully funded if Governor’s budget of \$50 mil WWRP appropriation is approved.	\$2,000,000	--	\$2,000,000
WA Wildlife and Recreation Program – State Parks (WWRP-SP)	Applied for \$2.5 mil. Expected to be funded at lower level (as listed) if Governor’s budget of \$40 mil WWRP appropriation is approved.	\$2,000,000	\$361,000	\$2,361,000
USFWS National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant (NCWCG)	Awarded January 2009. Award letter attached.	\$1,000,000	--	\$1,000,000
NOAA: CELCP FY09 and FY10	Expect FY09 to be fully funded with a \$12 mil appropriation for CELCP. Current budget projects \$15 mil.	\$2,990,000	\$2,990,000	\$5,980,000
Puget Sound Partnership: Estuarine Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP)	Ranked 7 <sup>th</sup> – Will be funded with a \$12 mil appropriation. Decision in May – 2009 when State Budget is complete.	--	\$1,902,000	\$1,902,000
WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)	Application due Summer 2009, with decision by Dec-2009. Strong likelihood for success based on other state grant rankings.	--	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
The Nature Conservancy: NW Wildlife Conservation Initiative (TNC)	Awarded February 2009. Award letter attached.	--	\$150,000	\$150,000
TPL	Private philanthropy to cover value of improvements and underlying land (not a part of CELCP acquisition budget)	\$510,000	\$97,000	\$607,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$8,500,000</b>	<b>\$6,500,000</b>	<b>\$15,000,000</b>

***CELCP FY10 Budget Table:***

*The costs associated only with requested CELCP FY10 funding and required matching funds.*

Category	Federal Share from CELCP	State/Local Matching Share	Total	Funding Source (for Non-Federal share)	Funds Expended? When?
Land Acquisition	\$2,990,000	\$3,413,000	\$6,403,000	Cash – WWRP, ESRP, SRFB, TNC,	No, December 2009
Appraisal Update and Review		\$10,000	\$10,000	In-Kind -- TPL	Yes, May 2008
Cultural Resources Survey		\$8,000	\$8,000	In-Kind -- TPL	No, December 2008
WA DOE Grant Admin.	\$10,000	0	\$10,000		No.
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$3,431,000</b>	<b>\$6,431,000</b>		

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**6. Project Eligibility:** (Check all that apply)

The proposed project:

- is located in a coastal or estuarine area (that has been designated as part of a state's approved coastal and estuarine land conservation (CELC) plan or within a state's coastal watershed boundary);
- matches federal funds with non-federal funds at a ratio of at least 1:1;
- will be held in public ownership and provide conservation in perpetuity;
- will provide for access to the general public, or other public benefit, as appropriate and consistent with resource protection.
- protects important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, ecological, historical, aesthetic, or recreation values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses;
- can be effectively managed and protected;
- directly advances the goals, objectives or implementation of state coastal management plan or program or NERR management plan approved under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), national objectives of the CZMA, or a local, regional or state watershed protection plan involving coastal states with approved coastal management programs
- is consistent with the state's approved coastal management program.

**Land Acquisition**

**7. Location and Site Maps:** Site location maps are attached.  Yes \_\_\_ No

The applicant should attach a map of the state or coastal county showing the general location of the project, and a map of the project site, which shows the location and extent of the proposed acquisition, as well as relationship to significant natural features (slope, wetlands, dunes, floodplains, access, etc.).

**8. Title Opinion and Appraisal:**

- a.** Documentation of the current owner's intent or willingness to sell at a mutually agreeable price is attached. (This documentation may be in the form of a letter of intent, option letter, contract, or similar form.)  Yes \_\_\_ No
- b.** The applicant has obtained and attached an independent appraisal performed by a state certified appraiser.  Yes \_\_\_ No
- c.** A title opinion or title insurance report is attached.  Yes \_\_\_ No

**9. Public Benefit:**

a. The acquisition will be publicly held or under publicly-controlled easement and is for public benefit. The project does not improve private property for private or commercial gain.

Yes \_\_\_ No

b. The property will be accessible to the general public.  Yes \_\_\_ No

c. If the answer to the question above (9.b) is No, check any of the following reasons that apply and explain why access to the property will be limited.

\_\_\_ Public Safety \_\_\_ Resource Protection \_\_\_ Geographically Isolated/Inaccessible

\_\_\_ School Outings Only \_\_\_ Scientific Research \_\_\_ Other (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_

d. The property will be leased or rented. \_\_\_ Yes  No If yes, please explain.

e. The public will be charged a user fee for access to or activities on the proposed property.

\_\_\_ Yes  No

If Yes, provide a description of the user fee which includes: how much, differential fees (if any), the need for the fees, and proposed use of the revenue.

**Compliance with Other Federal Authorities**

**10. State Historic Preservation Officer's (SHPO's) Clearance and National Historic Preservation Act:**

a. The project will affect properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places ([www.cr.nps.gov/nr/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/)), eligible to be listed, or otherwise protected by section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act ([www2.cr.nps.gov/laws/NHPA1966.htm](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/laws/NHPA1966.htm)) or a similar State Preservation Act. \_\_\_ Yes  No

b. The Recipient has on file the SHPO's clearance. \_\_\_ Yes  No (If No, the Recipient certifies, by signing this checklist, that the SHPO clearance is being sought and that work will not begin and land will not be purchased until SHPO clearance is received by the Recipient.)

**11. National Flood Insurance Program:**

a. Is the project located in a designated special flood hazard area, floodway or "V" zone on a National Flood Insurance Program Floodway Map ([www.fema.gov/maps/](http://www.fema.gov/maps/))? \_\_\_ Yes  No (If No, go to 11)

b. Is the community in which the project is located in special flood hazard areas shown on an FIA map is participating in the Flood Insurance Program ([www.fema.gov/nfip](http://www.fema.gov/nfip)). \_\_\_ Yes  No

**12. Coastal Barriers Resource Act:** The project is located on an undeveloped coastal barrier designated by the Coastal Barriers Resources Act ([www.fws.gov/cep/cbrunits.html](http://www.fws.gov/cep/cbrunits.html)).

\_\_\_ Yes  No

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If the answer is Yes, provide a brief statement below or attach to this checklist a brief analysis as to how the proposed project is consistent with the three CBRA purposes: to minimize (1) the loss of human life, (2) wasteful federal expenditures, and (3) damage to fish, wildlife and other natural resources.

- 13. Endangered Species Act:** May the proposed project adversely affect threatened or endangered species or critical habitat under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as defined by the Endangered Species Act? (www.fws.gov/endangered) or ([www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species)). \_\_\_ Yes  No

If the answer is **No**, provide a brief statement below explaining the basis for the conclusion. If the answer to 12 is Yes, provide a description of the adverse effects (minor and significant effects), the species or habitat affected, and any coordination between the state and the USFWS or NMFS. OCRM will not approve a project that USFWS or NMFS has determined will significantly adversely affect threatened or endangered species or critical habitat.

*Kiket Island acquisition will protect land and associated nearshore areas that are important for salmon recovery. Washington State Parks is committed to developing sites using the least impacting means. The Natural Resources and Cultural Resources Policies provide guidance, as does the state's Sound Friendly program. Examples of this approach include using state-of-the art sewage disposal systems near aquatic settings. These systems produce far cleaner wastewater than conventional systems. Storm water management uses the highest standards in Puget Sound. Facilities build meet at least the LEED Silver standard.*

**14. Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.**

Does the proposed project include essential fish habitat for federally managed fish?  
 Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Not yet determined (please explain).

Could the proposed project have significant adverse impacts on essential fish habitat for federally managed fish? \_\_\_ Yes  No

**15. National Environmental Policy Act:**

- a. The proposed project may significantly affect the human environment. \_\_\_ Yes  No
- b. The proposed project involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. \_\_\_ Yes  No
- c. This action would have significant adverse effects on public health and safety. \_\_\_ Yes  No
- d. This action will have highly controversial environmental effects. \_\_\_ Yes  No
- e. This action will have highly uncertain environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental impacts. \_\_\_ Yes  No
- f. The project will have significant adverse impacts on other natural resources not covered elsewhere in this checklist, e.g., beaches and dunes, wetlands, estuarine areas, wildlife habitat, wild or scenic rivers, reefs, or other coastal resources. \_\_\_ Yes  No

- g. The project will have insignificant effects when performed separately, but will have significant cumulative effects. \_\_\_ Yes  No

If the answer to any one subpart of 13. is Yes, then an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may be required. For items answered Yes, please attach a description of the resource(s) affected and the nature and scope of the effects.

- 16. Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970.** If the proposed project involves the acquisition and/or modernization of real property, will the proposed project cause the displacement of:

Persons, \_\_\_ Yes  No  
Businesses, or \_\_\_ Yes  No  
Farm Operations? \_\_\_ Yes  No

If yes to any of the above, please explain: the number of displaced persons, including businesses and farm operations; what fair and reasonable relocation payments and advisory services will be provided to any displaced persons; and what provisions will be made to ensure that safe, decent, and sanitary replacement dwellings will be available to such persons within a reasonable period of time prior to displacement.

- 17. Handicapped accessibility:** Will the proposed project be handicapped accessible?  
 Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/A

If No or N/A, provide a brief explanation below (or attach separately) as to why the project does is not required to meet ADA handicapped accessibility requirements.

- 18. Environmental Justice.** Will the project have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations? \_\_\_ Yes  No
- 19. State, Local and Tribal Laws.** The project is consistent with state, local and tribal laws to protect the environment.  Yes \_\_\_ No

**20. Contamination/Environmental Hazards (CERCLA/RCRA)**

- a. Are there any known or suspected contaminants on the project site? \_\_\_ Yes  No

If yes, please discuss what type of contamination is on the site, or suspected to be on the site, and the status of clean-up activities.

- b. Has the site been investigated, identified and/or designated as having hazardous waste contamination issues by a federal, state, or local agency (for example superfund site)?  
\_\_\_ Yes  No

If yes, please explain the basis for the designation, the status of clean-up activities, and whether there are any legal liens or judgments affecting the property.

**21. Public Coordination**

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Has the project for which you propose to use CELCP funds been subject to public scrutiny and coordination through a public notice or other public review process?  Yes \_\_\_ No

If **yes**, please describe the results of that process and note when the coordination occurred.

If **no**, please explain.

*The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission must approve any acquisition in advance. Prior to seeking Commission approval, staff prepares a decision document containing a recommendation. At least two weeks in advance of the Commission action, the public is notified via a mailing that the action has been proposed. The public then has a chance to speak with the Commission at its meeting or send written comments. Considering all public testimony, the Commission then makes its decision. The Commission approved acquisition of the Kiket Island property in November 2007.*

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NOAA is requesting this information in order to adequately assess the eligibility of proposed projects. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Elaine Vaudreuil, OCRM, 1305 East-West Hwy (N/ORM7), Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. This reporting is authorized under P.L. 107-77 and has been approved under OMB #0648-0459. Information submitted will be treated as public record. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.