



# 5-Year Plan (FY2018 to FY2023) San Juan Islands Conservation District

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## Organization of the San Juan Islands Conservation District (SJICD)

SJICD is a political subdivision of the State of Washington with authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08. SJICD was established in 1947 in the San Juans. In 1964, three districts from San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez Islands consolidated into one that now serves all of San Juan County. SJICD is comprised of a five member volunteer board of supervisors, associate supervisors who serve as advisors, and a staff of professionals with diverse skills and expertise necessary to accomplish the District's goals.

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## Function of the San Juan Islands Conservation District

- To provide natural resource conservation services for the local community by providing technical expertise, financial support, and educational opportunities.
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## Who We Serve & Why

- The San Juan Islands Conservation District serves residents of San Juan County through direct and voluntary programs. We promote on the ground conservation of natural resources to help maintain a healthy and functional environment and economy for current and future generations.
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## Mission of the San Juan Islands Conservation District

- To promote stewardship of the natural environment by implementing natural resource conservation practices. To work with landowners and residents to achieve their conservation goals through developing sustainable practices that protect and conserve soil, water, air, and other natural resources.
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## Vision of the San Juan Islands Conservation District

- Our vision is an economically vital community that preserves the natural resources and rural character of the San Juan Islands through stewardship.
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## Values of the San Juan Islands Conservation District

- Promote natural resource conservation through local voluntary efforts.
  - Recognize importance of productive working lands to societal sustainability
  - Collaborate with partners to provide conservation programs that benefit our local community.
  - Protect wildlife habitat and a healthy environment for current and future generations.
  - Support our local community in taking action to address climate change.
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## Natural Resource Data & Information:

- Land Area and Cover: 174 square miles on 428 islands. Mostly private lands with some state and federal holdings. Dominated by second-growth conifer and hardwood forests, with some scrub and shrub plant communities, open prairies, grasslands, rock outcrops and beaches.
- Major Watersheds include False Bay, East Sound, Blind Bay, Deer Harbor, Friday Harbor, Hunter/Mud Bays, Roche Harbor, West Sound, Westcott/Garrison/Mitchell Bays, and Fisherman Bay.
- Shoreline: 408 miles, more than any county in contiguous U.S., 5,700 shoreline parcels, 50% developed.
- Population: The year-round resident population is approximately 16,000, which doubles in the summer. Over 750,000 visitors during the summer months. Population growth in the islands increased at a rate of 3.1 percent from 2010 to 2015.

## **Natural Resource Conservation Priorities and Goals**

### *Criteria for Selecting Conservation Priorities*

Local natural resource concerns and community needs drive the prioritization of work in this long range plan. The over-arching concern is ecosystem recovery, including addressing climate change and the impacts it has locally. Major concerns include water quality, water quantity, soil health, forest health, and protection and restoration of wildlife habitat. Community needs include promoting local resiliency, which includes renewable energy, locally sourced food, and local economy.

### **Contribute to Ecosystem Recovery**

- Promote protection of environmentally sensitive areas.
- Collaborate with local and regional partners to develop and implement a coordinated, strategic ecosystem recovery plan.
- Promote renewable energy use, energy efficiency, and energy conservation.
- Promote native plant and wildlife habitat preservation and restoration.
- Become the repository for reliable soil, water, and air quality data in the San Juan Islands

### **Preserve Working Lands and Sustainable, Locally Based Agriculture and Forestry**

- Promote sustainable forest management by providing forest planning and technical assistance for implementation of conservation best management practices.
- Promote sustainable farm management and soil conservation by providing comprehensive farm planning, education and technical assistance to land managers of agricultural operations.
- Promote voluntary stewardship to increase agricultural viability and protection of environmentally sensitive areas.
- Promote soil health through research, community outreach, and BMP implementation.

### **Promote Water Quality and Water Conservation**

- Conduct stormwater outreach, monitoring, and implementation of Best Management Practices.
- Provide Low Impact Development education and technical assistance.
- Promote continuity and function of natural hydrological systems. Develop and share hydrologic models for the purposes of furthering restoration and conservation.

### **Foster a Stewardship Ethic**

- Encourage youth to participate in conservation and stewardship activities.
- Provide education and outreach to promote sustainable practices. Engage individuals, businesses, and the community in active resource conservation efforts and practices.
- Create tools that will educate citizens, public institutions, and organizations on how resources are connected and about resource conservation opportunities.
- Gain wide acceptance of conservation and stewardship as primary community values.

## Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals

Strategic Priority	Measures	Goal
<b>Contribute to Ecosystem Recovery</b>	# of landowners # of BMPs implemented	Protect environmentally sensitive areas. Implement BMPs throughout the County.
	Development and implementation of the PSCD Caucus Strategic Plan.	Collaborate with local and regional partners to develop and implement coordinated and strategic plans for ecosystem recovery and resource conservation, with focus on priority watersheds and habitats.
	Energy saved. # of electric vehicles utilized in islands. # of Community Solar program participants.	Promote renewable energy use and energy conservation throughout San Juan County through focused outreach and collaboration with local partners. Promote electric vehicle use through incentives, enhancing infrastructure, and outreach and education.

Strategic Priority	Measures	Goal
<b>Preserve Working Lands</b>	# of forest plans.	Implement conservation best management practices on forest land throughout San Juan County.
	Approved VSP plan.	Facilitate development and implement Voluntary Stewardship Plan.
	# of farm plans	Implement conservation best management practices on farm land throughout San Juan County.
	% of organic matter, moisture retention	Promote soil health through research, outreach, and BMP implementation.

Strategic Priority	Measures	Goal
<b>Promote Water Quality and Conservation</b>	Monitoring and testing results for stormwater, surface water, and groundwater.	Conduct monitoring, educational outreach, and implement best management practices for stormwater management, water conservation, and water quality protection.
	Hydrologic assessment of False Bay Watershed and restoration plan.	Promote continuity and function of natural hydrological systems through research, resource planning, and implementation of BMPs.

Strategic Priority	Measures	Goal
<b>Promote a Stewardship Ethic</b>	# of individuals # of events	Provide education and outreach to promote sustainable practices. Engage individuals, businesses, and the community in active conservation efforts and practices.
	Tools created	Create tools that will educate citizens, public institutions, and organizations on how resources are connected and about resource conservation opportunities.
	# of youth engaged	Engage youth through Youth Conservation Corps and school agricultural and energy programs, and the Coast Salish Youth Stewardship Corps.

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## Key Decision Makers

- The Board of Supervisors is the key decision maker for the San Juan Islands Conservation District. As of May 2017, the board consists of Ron Zee (Chair), Henning Sehmsdorf (Vice-chair), Vicki Heater (Auditor), Lynn Bahrych (At-large), and Robert Gamble (At-large).
- Current Associate Supervisors serving in an advisory capacity are:
  - Jerry Rasmussen, San Juan Island
  - Thor Hanson, Biologist, San Juan Island
  - Bob Levinson, San Juan Island
  - Kyle Loring, San Juan Island
  - Thom Pence, Forester, San Juan Island
- The Board works in collaboration with San Juan County, Town of Friday Harbor, WSU Extension, San Juan Preservation Trust, San Juan Nature Institute, Lopez Community Land Trust, Friends of the San Juans, UW Friday Harbor Labs, the San Juan Local Integrating Organization, Washington State Conservation Commission, Department of Ecology, Department of Health, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Agriculture, USDA, NRCS, Tribes, and many other partner organizations.

## San Juan Islands Conservation District Board of Supervisors

### **Lynn Bahrych, Board Member, Appointed 2017**

- *Lynn was appointed to the Washington State Conservation Commission by Governor Gary Locke in January of 2004, and for two further terms by Governor Chris Gregoire in 2007 and 2011. Lynn resides on Shaw Island. She graduated with Honors in Humanities from Stanford University and received a Masters Degree in English Education from the University of Texas. Lynn received a Ph.D. in Medieval and Renaissance Literature and a law degree from the University of Washington Law School. Lynn practiced Maritime and Admiralty law in Seattle for ten years before focusing exclusively on land use and environmental law. She currently works independently as a certified permaculturalist.*

### **Robert Gamble – Resource Conservation and Policy, Re-Elected 2017**

- *Bob has a decades long interest in San Juan County planning. He served on the County committee that helped draft the Comprehensive Plan, and the following year on the group that worked on the County Unified Development Code. Over the years he has been a member of several other County advisory boards, including the SJC Housing Advisory Board, the SJC Economic Development Council, and the San Juan County Planning Commission. He was a founding board member of Homes for Islanders and was on the committee that wrote the bylaws for the Island Grown Farmer's Cooperative. He and his wife Winnie Adams divide their time between Orcas and Waldron islands, with their garden firmly planted in Waldron soil.*

### **Vicki Heater, Board Member, Re-Appointed 2015**

#### **Background – Water Quality**

- *Vicki has been associated with the San Juan Islands Conservation District since 1994. She was an environmental health specialist with the SJC health department and was lead staff for the county's drinking water program. She was also watershed lead for WRIA 2 and developed the San Juan County Watershed Action Plan under the Non-Point Rule (400-12 WAC) and is currently working on water resource planning under RCW 90.82 as a member of the Water Resource Advisory Committee. She has been actively involved with the San Juan County Pony Club since 1986 and teaches riding and horse management. She and her husband live on 24 acres, which includes a small farm and forestland.*

## **Henning Sehmsdorf, Board Member, Re-Elected 2016**

### **Background – Sustainable Farming**

- *Henning and his wife, Elizabeth have owned and operated S&S Homestead, a sustainable, organic meat and produce farm on Lopez Island for over 48 years. Their mission is to develop and maintain an environmentally and economically sustainable farm that will: 1) grow organic soils and pastures; 2) produce high quality organic foods for both family and the community and improve local food security and control; 3) recycle farm wastes to produce farm fertility inputs; 4) train apprentices and interns in sustainable and organic farm practices; and 5) promote the growth of small-scale, community-based farming in San Juan County and beyond.*

## **Ron Zee, Board Member, Re-Elected 2015**

### **Background – Renewable Resources**

- *Ron is a former San Juan Islands Conservation District Manager (2006-2008) and seventeen-year resident of San Juan Island. He owns and operates Sweet Earth Farm, with his wife Elaine and daughters Amanda and Amara, selling produce at the San Juan Farmers Market and to local Friday Harbor restaurants. He is active with the Stewardship Network of the San Juans, and served on the San Juan County Agricultural Resources Committee for seven years. He is CEO of the Madrona Institute, a nonprofit organization that sponsors the San Juan Island Youth Conservation Corps and the Orcas Island Youth Conservation Corps in cooperation with the Stewardship Network.*