

Our Vision

We are driven by our understanding of the intrinsic value of all creatures in our ecosystem. We are united in our value of biodiversity and believe that our human community is enriched and defined by our relationship to the wilderness in our midst.

We are a volunteer-run, community-based urban land trust and advocacy group in Olympia, WA. Our focus is the urban shoreline and associated watersheds in Olympia.

We recognize that the health of this ecosystem must be restored in order to reverse the very real decline in water quality and habitat quality in Budd Inlet. This decline dramatically impacts salmon and many other species including the human community.

Our current focus, the West Bay Woods, serves critical ecological functions, is a refuge for urban wildlife, and is integral to the community's sense of place. In addition to providing heron habitat, West Bay Woods' stormwater filtration role is of heightened importance, as the Woods is located just upland of some of the most contaminated shoreline in Thurston County.

OlyEcosystems is unique among land trusts in this region, in that we focus exclusively on protecting, preserving, and restoring important habitat in Olympia's urban growth area.

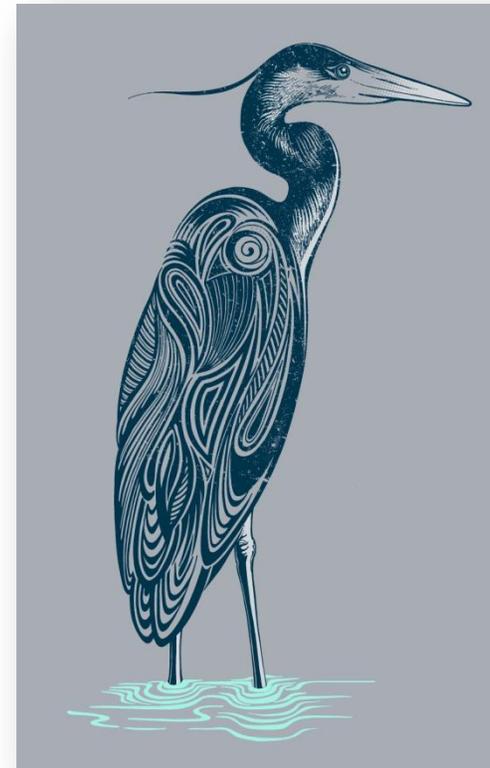


www.olyecosystems.org

OlyEcosystems

Olympia Coalition for Ecosystems Preservation

Protect Preserve Restore



Annual Report

2016

Our Mission

The Olympia Coalition for Ecosystems Preservation was established to protect, preserve, and restore the diverse ecosystems of Olympia, Washington that include the freshwater, shoreline, tidal waters, and upland forests that are home to the Pacific Great Blue Heron, cutthroat trout, salmon, and companion species. In coordination with community members, local agencies, and other non-profit groups, we work to ensure that these ecosystems remain vital in perpetuity. OCEP is organized exclusively for the above purpose under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code or any corresponding section of any future tax code.



Major Contributors

The Rose Foundation, the Charlotte-Martin Foundation, the Community Sustaining Fund of Thurston County, and Thurston County's Conservation Futures Program.

Major Collaborators

City of Olympia, Thurston County Conservation District, Native Plant Salvage, Stream Team, Puget Sound Partnership, The Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team, Squaxin Island Tribe, Conservation Corps of Washington, Sound Native Plants, and the Black Hills Chapter of the Audubon Society.

2016 Award Recipients

Thank you to all of our volunteers for the invaluable hours you have spent supporting OlyEcosystems' mission. This year we recognize the following people for their extraordinary service.

Barry Troutman

For his artistry and generosity in donating photography.

Cathy Visser

For her inspiration, organization, and implementation of the delicious catering for the 2016 and 2017 Galas.

Rick Peters

For his ingenuity and reliability in providing sustenance at work parties.



Board of Directors

Daniel Einstein

President

Katherine Himes

Vice President, Development Chair,
Partnership Chair, Science Policy Coordinator

Jennifer Shafer

Secretary

Marijean Holland

Treasurer

Meghan Hopkins

Communications Chair, Board Development Chair

Cynthia Taylor

Community Outreach Chair, Restoration Chair,
Volunteer Coordinator

Thomas Gruner

Board Member

Sarah Hamman

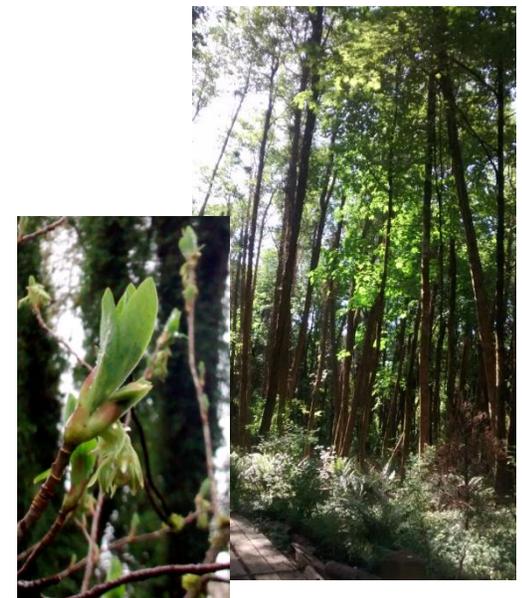
Board Member

Alicia Elliot

Guiding Board Member

Heather Burns

Guiding Board Member



Our Work

Brief History

Established in August 2014 as a 501(c)3, OlyEcosystems has worked to protect, preserve, and restore the upland forest of Budd Inlet through civic engagement, land acquisition, community education, and forest restoration. In just over two and a half years, OlyEcosystems has engaged the community and protected five acres in the West Bay Woods.

2016 Accomplishments

Through the collaboration between OlyEcosystems and the City of Olympia, the City acquired three acres adjoining the OlyEcosystems' parcels in the West Bay Woods conservation area. This expanded the total protected area to a just over eight acres in the urban core.

OlyEcosystems successfully lobbied the City to add a habitat component to the Parks Plan - a first in the City's history. This new designation enabled the City to apply for a grant from the State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) under the category of urban wildlife – also a first in the City's history. The RCO grant process made the City's three acre acquisition possible. The RCO application is now under consideration for funding by the Washington State Legislature.

In the West Bay Woods, OlyEcosystems has organized over 4000 volunteer hours focused on restoration. Where before ivy destroyed the forest understory there are now over 5000 native plants. This effort is part of our philosophy of advocacy through restoration, because we firmly believe that to understand the value of the land, you must touch the ground.



This past year, because we understand the intimate connection between stormwater and water quality in Budd Inlet, we constructed a 2000 square foot rain garden at one entrance to West Bay Woods. This is the first community-scale rain garden in the Northwest Olympia Neighborhood.

We worked with other advocates of open space in Olympia and passed the ordinance for a Metropolitan Parks District in Olympia. This ordinance will come online this year. Against the backdrop of thousands of acres of habitat lost in Olympia over the past twenty-five years, the Metropolitan Parks District is both critical and timely.

This past year we advocated for an update to Olympia's Critical Areas Ordinance, which would add a mechanism for priority species that currently have no protection under municipal code. The first species to be considered for protection under this new ordinance is the Pacific Great Blue Heron, whose habitat is protected in the West Bay Woods.