



Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision

A PLAN TO CONSERVE WATER, WILDLIFE, AND RECREATION

“ . . . saving the whole watershed system was the primary priority for every activity, whether it be growing cherries, habitat for big game, or fishing in the reservoirs. Without the water, we would have a desert.”

Don Bolstad
Wenatchee Valley Fly Fishers

“I see local people who want to enjoy the outdoors, but do not have the means to travel 50 miles or more to do so. I have seen men hunting with their children in a pickup not long for the junk yard and fishermen who got off work only a half an hour ago . . . I know of no other local area that has such abundant wildlife and is as accessible as the Stemilt Basin.”

Greg Berdan
Watermaster for the Wenatchee Heights Reclamation District

The Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision is a plan to help shape a better future for the Stemilt-Squilchuck watershed, by balancing urban growth with the conservation of water, wildlife, and recreational resources.

With the help of people who live, work, and play in the watershed, we have developed key recommendations that honor the spirit of the community, and support their goals of protecting water resources, conserving wildlife habitat, and maintaining recreational access to this beautiful landscape.



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The Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision, which is included in its entirety on the attached CD, has been produced by Chelan County and The Trust for Public Land on behalf of the Stemilt Partnership— a broad coalition of agriculture, wildlife, recreation, development, and conservation interests.

The Partnership was formed to create an alternative to the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposed plan to sell four parcels (2,500 acres) of public land in the Stemilt basin to a private investment company.

The Vision team has created a plan for the entire Stemilt-Squilchuck watershed based on months of community meetings, research, and analysis.

Three central goals: protect water resources; conserve critical habitat for fish and wildlife; and maintain recreational access to public lands.

The team believes that the Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision succeeds in honoring the wishes of the community by focusing on three central goals: protecting water resources, conserving critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and maintaining recreational access to public lands.

Here, in summary, are the critical findings and recommendations included in the report.

Underlying Facts

THE upper watershed cannot support urban-level development;

CAREFUL land and water management in such an arid landscape is essential to sustain the local agricultural economy, conserve wildlife resources, and support the way of life in the community;

NEW development can be supported in the watershed with careful planning and consideration of local interests; and

THE watershed can be a model in the region for a balanced landscape, meeting agricultural, wildlife, and recreational needs while continuing to grow and prosper.

Key Recommendations

THE Stemilt Partnership should continue its work with DNR to keep the four threatened sections in public ownership, using the Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision to demonstrate the many benefits the lands provide to the community;

CHELAN County and the Stemilt Partnership should seek opportunities for further public land ownership in areas important to the community;

CHELAN County should direct housing growth to areas most appropriate for development, considering the location

of existing housing and critical water, wildlife, and recreational areas; and

CHELAN County and land-management agencies should continue to support the efforts of the Stemilt Partnership to raise and discuss major issues with the community, develop innovative solutions to problems or conflicts in the watershed, and implement the actions and ideas presented in the Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision.

Next Steps

IDENTIFYING alternative ownership and management options in the upper watershed, particularly for the four DNR sections and lands owned by Longview Fibre;

INVESTING in technical surveys to overcome issues with public and private easements and road management in the upper watershed;

ALIGNING political support at the state and federal levels for conservation efforts supported by the Stemilt Partnership and Chelan County;

RAISING public awareness of the Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision and what it means for the future of the community; and

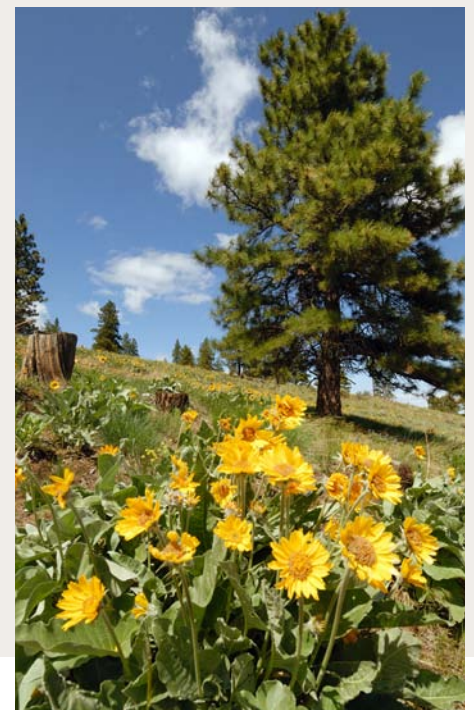
ESTABLISHING a specific action plan to drive the activities of the Stemilt Partnership over the next two years.

AND, in the long term:

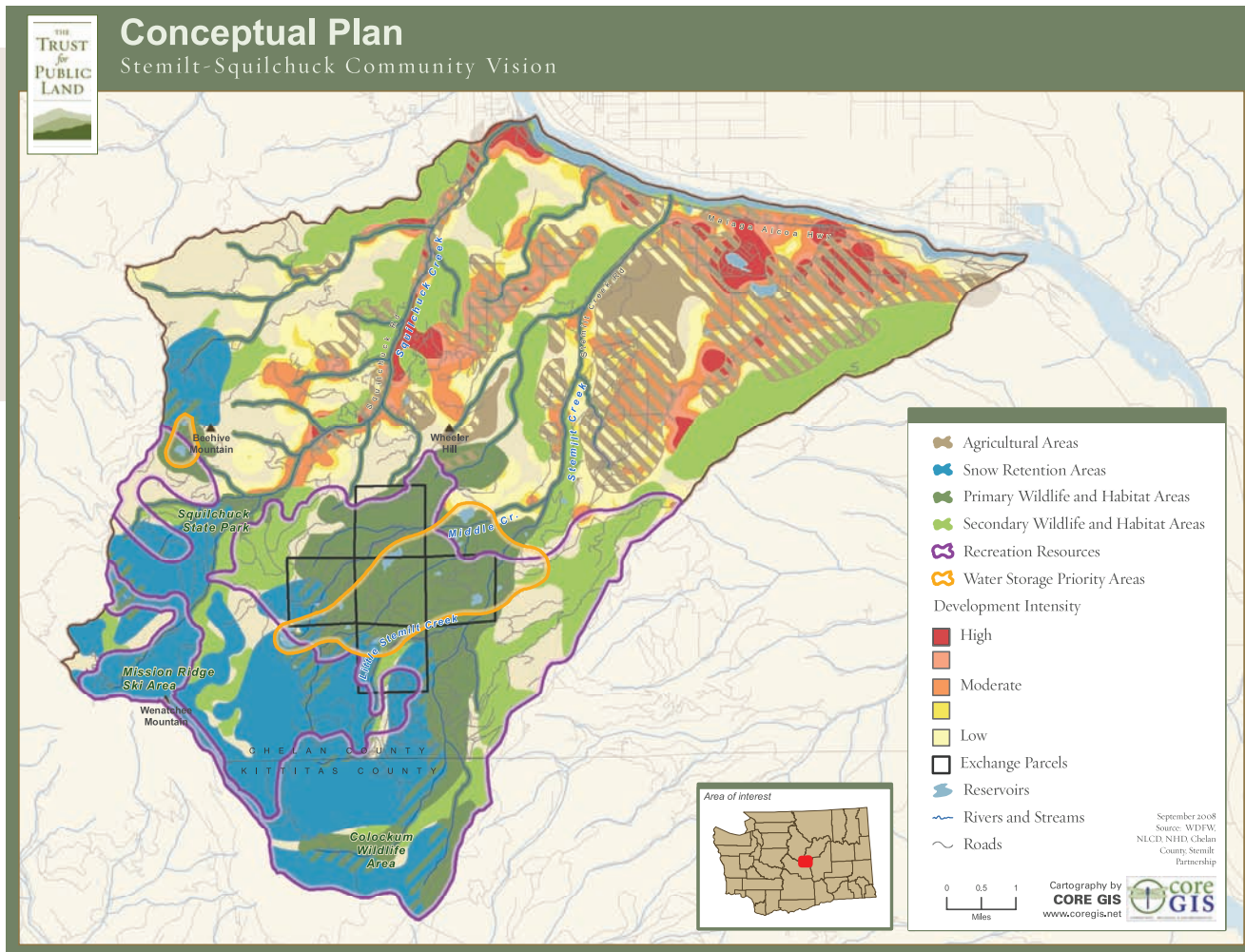
ESTABLISHING strong political support at the state and federal levels for conservation efforts supported by the Stemilt Partnership and Chelan County;

COORDINATING with current government-funded planning efforts such as the implementation of the Stemilt-Squilchuck Watershed Plan (WRIA 40A); and

SECURING funds and political support to ensure the Stemilt Partnership continues to be a viable, effective coalition.



The community vision analyzes multiple factors to determine key land-use recommendations for the watershed.



Below: Greg Berdan at work at Upper Wheeler Reservoir.



“A community vision for the watershed is important for two reasons: It provides an opportunity for objective dialogue and education among diverse interest groups; and, once developed, it provides a common picture of what the area will look like and what the priorities for management are.”

Jerry Gutzwiler
Resident and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

Chelan County, the Stemilt Partnership, The Trust for Public Land, and several other agencies and organizations stand ready to work together to make the Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision a reality.

If you would like more information, or to find out how you can help, please contact Kitty Rasmussen-Craig with The Trust for Public Land or Mike Kaputa with the Chelan County Natural Resources Department.
(contact information on back page).



Above: Laurence McCracken tries his luck at Spring Hill Reservoir.

Below: Gar Racus stands proud at his family orchard.

All photos: Darcy Kiefel

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION

Senator Linda Evans Parlette
 Chelan County Commission
 Commissioner Ron Walter
 Chelan Natural Resources Director Mike Kaputa
 The Icicle Fund
 The Burning Foundation

MEMBERS OF THE STEMILT PARTNERSHIP:

Apple Country Snowmobile Club	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Beehive Irrigation District	Squilchuck Water Users Association
Chelan County	Stemilt Irrigation District
Chelan County Public Utility District	The Trust for Public Land
Chelan-Douglas Land Trust	Three Lakes Maintenance Corporation
Citizens and Growers of the Stemilt and Squilchuck Basins	U.S. Forest Service
Highline Ditch Company	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Lake Cortez Water Association	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Lockwood-Canady Irrigation Company	Washington State Parks
Lower Stemilt Irrigation District	Wenatchee Heights Reclamation District
Malaga-Colockum Community Council	Wenatchee Sportsmen's Association
Malaga Water District	Wenatchee Valley Fly Fishers
Mission Ridge Ski and Snowboard Resort	WRIA 40A Watershed Planning Unit



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