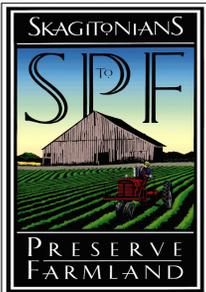


SKAGITONIAN

Fall 2008



www.skagitonians.org

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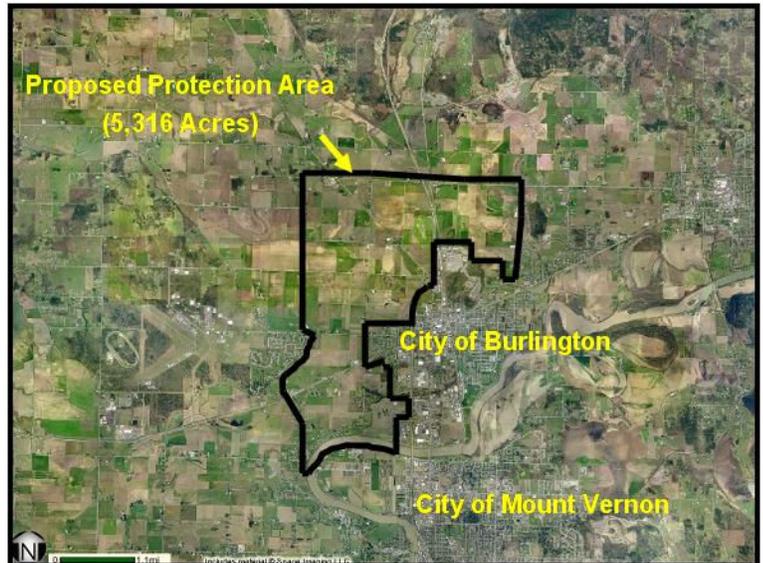
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Burlington Agricultural Heritage Credit Program Takes Shape

The City of Burlington is moving forward to complete its Agricultural Heritage Credit Program (AHCP). The innovative program aims to protect approximately 5,316 acres of farmland surrounding the City. Lack of funding to complete the economic analysis had delayed the project. SPF worked to find the additional funding needed, and thanks to two economists who generously contributed a portion of their services to reduce the overall cost of the study, it is now underway and scheduled for completion in January.



The Burlington Agricultural Heritage Credit Program is designed to revitalize downtown Burlington while preserving the City's agricultural heritage by protecting farmland surrounding the city. The AHCP is designed to work in concert with Burlington's new Downtown Plan which will create the potential for developers to achieve significantly higher densities than are permitted under the existing zoning and land use codes. The AHCP would provide the mechanism for developers to build higher density projects by allowing them to buy density credits (known as "Heritage Credits") from the city. The city would use the money it receives from the sale of the Heritage Credits to contract with Skagit County's Farmland Legacy Program (which has successfully protected over 6,000 acres of Skagit County farmland) to purchase development rights from farmers in specific areas identified by the City Council as priorities for protection. Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland would like to thank Ted Lane of Thomas/Lane & Associates, Bill Mundy from Mundy & Associates, the Skagit Conservation District, Washington State Conservation Commission and the Lucky Seven Foundation for their assistance in moving forward this important project.

Hearings Completed on Proposed Wetland Mitigation Bank

After nine days of hearings that began in August, the appeal of a proposed 396-acre wetland mitigation project on prime agricultural land concluded Friday, Oct. 16. SPF, Skagit Farm Bureau and Friends of Skagit County joined together to appeal Skagit County's decision not to require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. This has been one of the longest land use appeal hearings in the County with hundreds of exhibits introduced and discussed.

"We are confident that we have been able to demonstrate the County's failure to consider a number of factors that have a strong likelihood of probable significant impact," said SPF Executive Director Allen Rozema. Once closing arguments have been submitted by Dec. 8, the Skagit County Hearing Examiner has 30-days to render his decision.

Join SPF's Volunteer InFARmation Radio Team!



InFARmation Radio is a small remote-controlled highway advisory radio transmitter accessible by motorists and travelers along I-5 in Skagit County. It features programmed messages about local agricultural activities and seasonal events in Skagit Valley. The project's success is due to the generous support of community volunteers who write and record messages and operate the remote transmitter. Join our dedicated group of volunteers who are having fun learning about this great Valley and sharing what they learn with traveling motorists every day.

Volunteer opportunities are posted on the "Publications" page at www.skagitonians.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Receive & Read SPF's News Online!

SPF will launch "Skagitonian" as an e-mail news bulletin this winter. Our goal is to communicate with you in a more timely, cost effective way.

We invite you to sign up for the new online version by e-mailing info@skagitonians.org. Just indicate "SPF E-mail News" in the subject line and we'll add you to the list! Please let us know by Friday, Dec. 5.

If you prefer to receive the hard copy of the bulletin, there's no need to contact us; we will be happy to send it to you.

Thank you for your support!

10th Annual Harvest Dinner & Auction Raises Record \$147,000!

More than 300 Skagitonians from all over Skagit Valley, Puget Sound and from as far away as California came to SPF's Diamonds & Denim-themed 10th Annual Celebrate Skagit Harvest Dinner & Auction on Sept. 27 to help raise more than \$147,000 to protect one of the greatest food producing valleys in the world. Guests enjoyed a four-course dinner featuring fresh local foods prepared by guest chefs Thomas Palmer, Nicole Holbert, Martin Hahn and Robert Zutter. The SPF Board thanks all of our members, sponsors, supporters and volunteers for your generosity and contributions. Together we will keep Skagit Valley, a regional and national treasure, farming for generations to come.

Top right: Live Auction Emcee Skye Richendrfer describes the John Deere bed made by SPF Board Member Brian Waltner.

Bottom right: Mount Vernon High School Varsity Cheer serves dinners with smiles.

Right: Skagit Valley College Culinary Arts students and local chefs plate salads featuring beets, mixed greens, mozzarella and hazelnuts.



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Save the Date! Saturday, September 26, 2009
Celebrate SPF's 20th Anniversary at next year's Harvest Dinner & Auction!