

**BEFORE THE SKAGIT COUNTY HEARING EXAMINER**

**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION**

**Applicant:** Skagit Land Trust

**Address:** P. O. Box 1017  
Mount Vernon, WA 98274

**File No:** CU Open Space Land App#5-2018

**Request:** To transfer 22.34 acres from Current Use Farm and Agriculture to Current Use Open Space Land

**Location:** Portion of SW1/4SW1/4 Sec. 14, T35N, R5E, W.M. and Gov't Lot 5 in Sec 23, T35N, R5E. WM.

**Assessor's No:** P39088 and P40116

**Public Hearing:** After reviewing the report of the Assessor's Office, the Hearing Examiner conducted a public hearing on March 14, 2018.


**Recommendation:** Approval

## **FINDINGS**

1. The Skagit Land Trust seeks to transfer 22.34 acres of land from Current Use Farm and Agriculture to Current Use Open Space Land. The land trust owns the property.
2. The northerly parcel is along SR 20 and the southerly parcel borders the Skagit River. The legal descriptions are: portion of SW1/4SW1/4 Sec. 14, T35N, R5E, W.M. and Gov't Lot 5, Sec 23, T35N, R5E, W.M. The Assessor's Account numbers are P39088 and P40116.
3. The parcels, part of the Utopia Conservation Area, have been used for grazing but do not now meet the income requirements for farm land. Now the land trust is planting the parcels to improve the riparian zone along Wiseman Creek and the Skagit River.
4. The subject property is a mosaic of mature woodland, riparian forest, and functioning wetlands, dominated by native plant species. It provides wildlife habitat and, when flooded, provide a connection to salmon and other aquatic species to habitats above and below the property. It is open to low impact public access.
5. The new classification will conserve natural and scenic resources, protect streams and wetlands, protect soil resources and critical habitat, and at the same time preserve the visual quality along highways.
6. The land is the subject of a Salmon Recovery Funding Board Deed of Right to use the land for salmon recovery purposes.
7. The hearing was held after due notice. There was no public testimony and there were no written comments.
8. The Examiner admitted the exhibits submitted by Staff.
9. The Examiner finds that the property meets the definition of the classification sought.
10. The Staff recommends approval. The Examiner concurs with Staff.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Examiner recommends approval of the application.

  
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Wick Dufford, Hearing Examiner

Date: March 26, 2018

Copies transmitted to Applicant, Assessor's Office and County Commissioners: March 26, 2018

Attachment: Staff Report and Exhibits