



## Nooksack Tribal Council

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July 10, 2025

Whatcom County Council  
311 Grand St. Bellingham, WA

Dear Honorable Whatcom County Council Members,

This letter represents support for Whatcom Land Trust to create a subsidiary nonprofit to own and manage Phase 1 & 2 of Stewart Mountain Community Forest (SMCF) with board seats reserved for project partners: Nooksack Indian Tribe, Whatcom County, Whatcom Land Trust, and Evergreen Land Trust. Funding for the Phase 2 acquisition would come from DOE Streamflow Restoration Grant, awarded to Whatcom County in 2022, with Whatcom Land Trust facilitating the purchase and then transferring to the subsidiary nonprofit.

As the original stewards of this land, Nooksack Indian Tribe holds a special relationship with the territory proposed for Stewart Mountain Community Forest. While we support the creation of a subsidiary nonprofit owner and Nooksack participation on the management board, we also remind project partners of our unique role as a sovereign nation whose treaty resources are routinely impaired by landscape management. In other words, participation on the management board does not preclude the option for formal consultations on decisions that threaten those treaty-reserved rights. We also encourage the SMCF management board to adopt the forthcoming access provisions as a means to protect SMCF for all users, including tribal members.

We look forward to continuing to play an active role in this important project.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "RoseMary LaClair". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "RoseMary" and last name "LaClair" clearly distinguishable.

RoseMary LaClair  
Chairwoman  
Nooksack Indian Tribe