

Friends of Lopez Hill Steering Committee Members:

Adrienne Adams
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Website:

<http://www.lopezhill.org>

Yahoo Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lopezhill>

Public Access: Available from the east side of Lopez Hill, at the end of Lopez Sound Rd. (after it heads east from where it intersects with School Rd. and turns right past the power sub-station.) Go past the end of the paved road. Look for an access road on the right with sign "Trail closed to motorized vehicles." Trails are primitive and not marked, so please use with caution.

July 7, 2006

Friends of Lopez Hill



Community Gathering at Lookout Point on top of Lopez Hill – July 4, 1897

Lopez Hill is often referred to as “The Heart of Lopez.” The forest encloses its visitors so intimately that they are often struck by a sense of being far from civilization, despite the fact that the land is only minutes from nearby homes and roads. This sense of isolation makes Lopez Hill unique to public lands on Lopez Island. Its intact inland forest affords a place where we can forget the limits imposed by the surrounding water. In summer’s heat, we can retreat to its cool, quiet glades. On dispiriting winter days, we can revel in the magnificence of a true Pacific Northwest rainforest—dark and dripping, green and mysterious. Lopez Hill offers us a chance to retreat and renew our spirits.

Lopez Hill is also the point of origin for important island watersheds, and is home to diverse and relatively pristine plant and animal communities. It affords feeding and nesting grounds for many varieties of birds and small mammals, and browse and shelter for deer. A broad spectrum of island

flora—from fungi and saprophytes, lichens, and mosses, to ferns and tender broadleaf plants including delicate chocolate and calypso lilies, to a full range of island shrubs and trees—thrive on the hill’s rocky knolls, shady slopes and moist canyons. In all these ways, the hill represents a diverse and undisturbed inland sanctuary, a source of ecological strength and regeneration.

The varied topography and dense forest on the hill support an intricate network of trails, and consequently seems much larger than other open or coastal preserves of similar size. These trails currently accommodate hikers, mountain bikers, runners, students, equestrians, birdwatchers, and hunters.

The Friends of Lopez Hill

The Friends of Lopez Hill is a community group created in 2005 by a group of local citizens who love and respect Lopez Hill, and who share the following mission and vision:

Mission

The mission of the Friends of Lopez Hill is to protect the 400 acres on Lopez Island known as Lopez Hill, and to preserve and keep it in the public ownership and use for present and future generations.

Vision

The Friends of Lopez Hill envision a future in which:

- Lopez Hill remains in public ownership;
- All current legal recreational users can continue to access the land;

- A designated road, adequate parking, and low-impact amenities are provided to support that access;
- Future planning favors environmental preservation over demands for increased human use;
- Public use will not severely damage or impact those pristine qualities that make the Hill a valuable preserve for its ecological community and a sanctuary for its human visitors.

In working with the San Juan County Council, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the San Juan County Land Bank, BLM, Lopez School, and other agencies and user groups, The Friends of Lopez Hill seek to:

- EDUCATE the public about the ecology, history, uses, and assets of Lopez Hill.
- FOSTER a management plan which will maintain the present character of Lopez Hill by providing low-impact public access, preserving its natural resources, and encouraging sustainable, non-motorized recreation.
- PROTECT the environmental integrity of Lopez Hill by sponsoring baseline ecological studies, developing an invasive species strategy, and identifying sensitive areas for protection.
- ENCOURAGE public participation in the management and stewardship of Lopez Hill.