



*The Nature Conservancy is committed to prairie conservation within the South Sound region and the Willamette Valley /Puget Trough/Georgia Basin ecoregion. The Conservancy will continue to perform outstanding stewardship, protect key conservation parcels and promote a conservation community of cooperative partners.*

### ***Prairie Appreciation Day***

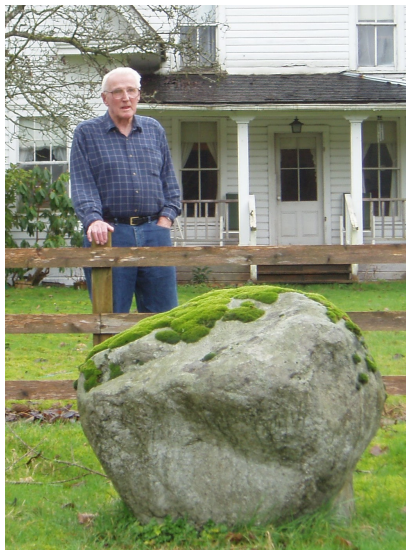
The 11th Annual Prairie Appreciation Day celebration was an enormous success. Over 700 people attended this year's event at the Glacial Heritage Preserve, where conservation minded organizations from all over the South Puget Sound region came together to show support for prairie conservation. The event is organized by volunteers in Friends of Puget Prairies with assistance from The Nature Conservancy and other groups. If you didn't visit this year you really missed a great day. Read more about this year's celebration in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer:

[http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/getaways/270398\\_prairies18.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/getaways/270398_prairies18.html)



*Two-year-old Thea Byrne looks at a camas through a magnifying glass as mom Gabby looks on.*

### ***Voices of the Prairie***



*Dale Rutledge, one of the 'Voices of the Prairie', stands next to the original 'Littlerock rock'.*

Prairies in the South Sound are special places that are enjoyed from a variety of perspectives. 'Voices of the Prairie' is a short booklet that relates how old-timers to newcomers on the Mima Prairie think about the natural area they live in. 'Voices of the Prairie' has been distributed to all landowners within the greater Mima Prairie area. We hope it will increase awareness, support and participation in the Mima Corridor Conservation Project and prairie conservation in general. You can find 'Voices of the Prairie' on the south sound prairies website.

[www.southsoundprairies.org/documents/voicesofthepraire.pdf](http://www.southsoundprairies.org/documents/voicesofthepraire.pdf)

### ***Mazama Pocket Gopher Conference***

Mazama pocket gophers are one of the rarest conservation targets in the region. Recently, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and The Conservancy organized a one-day conference on conservation strategies for the gopher. About 20 conservationists attended and discussions were productive. Look to the south sound prairies website for a summary of conclusions, including consensus recommendations for short-term conservation actions.

## ***Ft. Lewis and McChord Project***

**Ponderosa Pine** – Restoration of ponderosa pine habitat is very satisfying. Not only is this habitat a rare conservation target for the region, and a key habitat for the western gray squirrel, but ponderosa pine habitat is just plain beautiful. The Conservancy has been assisting Ft. Lewis with pine restoration for several years. This quarter the Ft. Lewis crew restored another 50 acres of pine habitat by controlling Scotch broom and removing impinging Douglas-fir. The steady progress we have made over the years is now becoming evident on a larger-scale, with good quality ponderosa habitat occurring over a broad band in the center of Ft. Lewis.

**McChord Bats** - The bat surveys, part of the comprehensive mammal survey of McChord Air Force Base, have been very successful. Last year, 7 of 8 probable bat species had been located. Only the long-legged myotis, *Myotis volans*, had to be found. Of course, Greg Falxa of Cascadia Research and Sanders Freed of The Conservancy were up to the challenge, locating the elusive bat species quickly this spring. Now if they can only find the rare Townsend's big-eared bat they will have located all possible species and completed not just the probable, but the improbable too.



*This long-legged myotis was captured at McChord Air Force Base as part of a comprehensive mammal survey scheduled for completion this year.*

## ***Thurston County Project***

**Mima Corridor Project** – Restoration within the Mima Corridor included Scotch broom control and invasive grass control on over 50 acres this quarter. In addition, more than 25 volunteers braved a cold and rainy April Saturday to install a demonstration prairie landscape at a home in the Mima Corridor. The installation was the culmination of a two-day workshop conducted by The Nature Conservancy and the Native Plant Salvage Foundation. More than 10,000 native plants were planted. The installation will be open to the public and will provide an example for other landowners that would like to landscape using native species that benefit prairie wildlife.



*Volunteers from The Nature Conservancy and the Native Plant Salvage Foundation install native plants at the prairie landscaping demonstration in the Mima Corridor.*

**Knotweed Control Project** – Knotweed control season is in full swing this quarter. This spring the crew retreated all of the known sites of infestation on Scatter Creek, the Black and Elk Rivers, and south fork of the Newaukum River. More than 150 miles of stream have been re-surveyed and treated. Additional funding was received this quarter to continue the control project, which will expand into the remaining forks of the Newaukum River and the mainstem of the Chehalis.