

Public Access Plan: 2022 - 2026

Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

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CDLT Public Access Plan

2022 – 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

This public access plan is the result of a self-initiated and elective planning process conducted periodically by the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT).

This plan is intended to guide CDLT's efforts on lands for which it possesses a legal interest and for which the property's management plan allows for public access. Not all properties for which CDLT possesses a legal interest are managed in a way that allows for public access. It should be used in conjunction with the Stewardship Plans for individual properties, as well as other CDLT plans, such as the Habitat Plan, to holistically address land, resource, recreation and access management. It will also serve as guidance for work with present and future partners on public access issues.

This plan does the following:

- Identifies existing public access on CDLT-owned or managed properties, or those for which CDLT possesses a legal right allowing for public access.
- Identifies vision, goals, and opportunities for public access.
- Conveys actions to be taken to achieve goals.
- Considers diversity, equity, and inclusion as it relates to public access for all.
- Summarizes the planning process.

2. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The CDLT Board of Directors and staff join in a strategic planning exercise roughly every five years. The resultant Strategic Plan identifies community connection to protected lands and public access as a primary goal, and emphasizes the need for balance between conservation and recreation access.

This plan is meant to be consistent with the mission and guiding principles of the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, and to support the Strategic Plan. This plan spans the same time period as the Strategic Plan. The expectation is that this plan is adaptive and will be updated to reflect the most current organizational strategic plan.

CDLT anticipates that this plan will be referenced by local governments as a way of recognizing current and future public access within their study areas.

3. PUBLIC ACCESS DEFINITION

CDLT defines public access broadly as physical access to a property by the general public for the purpose of recreation, nature observation, or education activities that are compatible with protecting the conservation values of the property. Public access may be further defined for specific properties or projects in terms of mode of access (hiking, biking, boating, etc.) and/or infrastructure (trails, parking, signage, etc.). CDLT's evaluation and selection of public access projects are guided by organizational policies and procedures.

4. PLAN AREA

This public access plan addresses properties where CDLT holds fee title or other legal interest AND the property's management plan includes public access. These geographic areas were selected based on momentum and potentially available opportunities for progress toward protection, as well as community-identified needs. This plan also extends beyond immediately perceived potential opportunities and incorporates geographic areas where future work may be desired and possible. The specific areas contemplated in this plan are:

- Wenatchee Urban Area
- Stemilt Basin
- Wenatchee River Basin
- Nason Creek/White River
- Leavenworth Area
- Entiat River Basin
- Lake Chelan Basin
- Douglas County

The most interactive and current map to accompany this plan is hosted on the CDLT website; this is a far superior tool for assessing the public access opportunities and goals set forth in this plan than static maps that can quickly become outdated. Please use this link to view the map as a reference tool for this plan:

<https://www.cdlandtrust.org/trails-access/trails>

This is not to be construed as a 'limited to' list; this list is consistent with the current organizational priorities. The Land Trust receives countless requests from members, community members, and some recreation organizations to protect public access in Chelan and Douglas Counties. Other opportunities may be considered.

5. PLANNING PROCESS

CDLT's professional staff consulted with the organization's Trails Steering Committee in 2020 and 2021 to update the plan to this most current version. The plan is informed by a Wenatchee Foothills trail user survey conducted in 2018, and an organizational direction community survey conducted in 2019.

Some of the goals in this plan are intended to implement vision or goals expressed in other plans, such as the Foothills Trails Charrette (2005) or those documented in the Wenatchee Foothills Community Strategy (2010).

6. CDLT'S ROLE IN PUBLIC ACCESS

CDLT is viewed as a leader in providing public access in the frontcountry immediately adjacent to Wenatchee and near other communities in our service area, and CDLT also provides and manages public access on preserves in its portfolio that are more remote and primitive. It is also CDLT's responsibility to recognize the diversity of our community and to work toward equitable and inclusive access opportunities in our service area. The Land

Trust recognizes the Washington State Recreational Use Immunity Statute as pertaining to the use of land CDLT owns or manages for public access.

While ensuring public access to natural lands and waters is consistent with CDLT's mission, one of CDLT's Strategic Plan goals is to improve the access we are able to provide by strengthening existing and developing new partnerships to increase our collective capacity to manage this access:

- Develop comprehensive public access plan(s) with partners for Chelan and Douglas counties while continuing our work to maintain existing access and develop expanded public access areas where appropriate
 - Work with partners to develop plans that are coordinated and inclusive of community and stakeholder input
 - Explore and secure additional public access and trail maintenance funding within local jurisdictions
 - Implement equitable public access opportunities for a more diverse user base
 - Explore and develop partnerships locally and regionally to share in the maintenance and management of accessible lands
 - Ensure sufficient resources to meet our workload commitments in balance with sufficient staff capacity.

As part of this Public Access Plan, the Trails Steering Committee has identified additional specific goals that expand upon those in the Strategic Plan to guide our role in public access within the North Central Washington Region.

Goals:

- ❖ Ensure the organization strikes an adequate balance in its work between recreation and conservation.
- ❖ Strengthen existing partnerships with landowners and managers, and relevant educational or recreation organizations through continued dialogue and coordination to achieve CDLT's strategic goals.
- ❖ Ensure that public-facing information on CDLT properties such as signs are bilingual, and that interpretive signage displays cultural history of the land and contemporary presence of Native American tribes.
- ❖ Consistently and methodically include analysis of existing and future public access through a lens of inclusivity, equity, and accessibility.
- ❖ Develop a culturally-appropriate naming policy for trails/preserves that takes into account user demographics, Native American use of and presence on the land, and conservation or wildlife habitat education opportunities.
Develop relationships with diverse representation of our broad demographics of existing and potential users to provide input on our future planning processes.

7. PUBLIC ACCESS GOALS BY AREA, BY PROPERTY

A. WENATCHEE URBAN AREA

The Wenatchee Urban Area generally includes the areas within the Urban Growth Boundaries for the cities of Wenatchee and East Wenatchee, as well as the foothills adjoining those areas. Located in proximity to the urban population and at the wildland-urban interface, these sites see high pressure for access and recreation.

Over the past decade, development of formalized trailheads with defined parking and amenities such as restrooms have been a priority adjacent to Wenatchee. Documenting trails and creating trails plans, constructing sanctioned trails and decommissioning unsanctioned or unsustainable trails have also been among CDLT's management priorities.

Management goals vary due to the range of ownership of lands. In general, priorities include creating/maintaining sustainable access routes and reducing or preventing habitat fragmentation caused by redundant user-built routes.

System-wide Opportunities:

- Better continuity and wayfinding throughout the system.
- Coordination with Emergency Management Services.
- Fill in continuity gaps in the protected open space and trail systems.

System-wide Goals:

- ❖ **Develop and implement a cohesive identity program for the Foothills trail system.**
- ❖ **Develop and implement a comprehensive wayfinding/directional program for the Foothills trail system that is coordinated with RiverCom.**
- ❖ **Seek opportunities to overcome connectivity gaps in the protected open space of the and trail systems of the Wenatchee Foothills.**
- ❖ **Explore potential for additional year-round recreation access in the Wenatchee urban area.**
- ❖ **Complete a comprehensive area-wide cultural resource analysis and report to guide future decisions about recreation routes and access in a responsible way.**

A.1 SOUTH DISTRICT

The Southern Foothills receive the heaviest use within the Wenatchee Foothills trail system. Sanctioned public access is available on three separate, adjacent preserves or natural areas. The area is extremely popular with families and those new to open space and natural area recreation opportunities.

South District Opportunities:

- Adjacent and/or nearby private open space lands that currently have unsanctioned or unauthorized public use and trails.

South District Goals:

- ❖ **Explore opportunities to permanently protect access and/or additional open space adjoining existing preserves or natural areas.**

A.1.a. Dry Gulch Preserve

Landowner: Dry Gulch LLC

Land Manager: Dry Gulch LLC

CDLT Legal Rights: CDLT holds a conservation easement.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- The terms of the conservation easement guide CDLT’s involvement in the property.
- Open for non-motorized access, managed for equestrian use. Annual seasonal closure of majority of property to recreation access from December 1 – April 1 for wildlife habitat (single gravel road remains open year-round for non-motorized, non-bicycle recreation access).
- Mountain bikes prohibited on property.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Property is well-suited for additional recreation routes beyond current designation (at the discretion of Dry Gulch LLC). The Dry Gulch Board of Directors has expressed an interest in working with CDLT to manage recreation resources in a more involved way.

Goals:

- ❖ **Continue working relationship with Dry Gulch LLC management.**
- ❖ **Share knowledge regarding sustainable recreation routes and offer suggestions as appropriate.**
- ❖ **Facilitate Dry Gulch LLC providing more active management of recreation resources on properties through connections with potential partners to the Dry Gulch Board.**

A.1.b. Saddle Rock Natural Area

Landowner: City of Wenatchee

Land Manager: City of Wenatchee and Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: CDLT is the primary manager of the trail system infrastructure beyond the formal trailhead(s), per the City/CDLT Master Agreement

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- All actions of CDLT are guided by the City/CDLT Master Agreement and the current CDLT Work Schedule for City-owned Natural Areas.
- Ongoing mine waste remediation process, set to complete late 2022.
- High-use/visitation site for experienced and new trail system users, and popular site for environmental education through local institutions.
- Erosion/trail sustainability.
- Unauthorized public access from multiple points of entry continues to present on-site trails management challenges.
- Open for year-round non-motorized access.

Vision/Opportunities:

- The vision for the Saddle Rock Natural Area has developed and evolved, through multiple iterations of interim and permanent trailheads which have been informed by stakeholders, neighbors, and the community.
- Remediation efforts relating to exploratory mining activity will be completed in 2022, allowing for greater management, improvement and development of the trail system infrastructure.
- Closure/restoration of unsustainable or redundant trails, sustainable trail construction and maintenance are recreation priorities.
- Continued trail user etiquette education.
- The City has secured funding and is actively pursuing acquisition of over 600 acres of adjacent property, which would be managed in the same way and for the same objectives as Saddle Rock.

Goals:

- ❖ **Explore options for continued and long-term funding for trail restoration and construction.**
- ❖ **Develop and begin implementation of a comprehensive trails plan for Saddle Rock that is inclusive of all users.**
- ❖ **Provide regular trail ambassador services during high use seasons.**

A.1.c. Jacobson Preserve

Landowner: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Land Manager: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: Fee-simple property managed for public access and conservation values.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Property receives heavy year-round use from the area neighborhood and the community at large, and is a popular site for environmental education through local institutions.
- Parking spaces at Wenatchee Racquet & Athletic Club are limited and tenuous.
- Open for year-round non-motorized access.

Vision/Opportunities:

- The City has secured funding and is actively pursuing acquisition of over 600 acres of adjacent property, which would be managed in the same way and for the same objectives as the City's adjoining Saddle Rock Natural Area. This acquisition would provide a legal access route connecting Saddle Rock & Jacobson, and potential for other trails and recreation routes as well.
- Jacobson requires a permanent parking/trailhead solution.
- Jacobson has become an education hotspot. Examples include wildfire-resilient demonstration landscaping techniques implemented near the trailhead, and a storybook route along the trail system managed by NCW Libraries.

Goals:

- ❖ Explore options for permanently securing and improving access between Saddle Rock and Jacobson Preserve.
- ❖ Secure permanent access point (trailhead and/or parking) for Jacobson Preserve.

A.2 WEST DISTRICT

Castle Rock Area

The Castle Rock area, featuring the Castle Rock formation, has enjoyed neighborhood use for years, albeit without legal public access until relatively recently. Use has increased steadily since construction of a formal trailhead at the end of Castlerock Avenue in late 2015, but the area remains less-visited than other Foothills destinations due to limited parking, limited trail system, and somewhat limited activities. Another popular destination is the 1:2 Canyon Divide ridgeline to the west, dominated by a high point known locally as Chopper.

Castle Rock Opportunities:

- Connections to public lands to the west using existing and/or new/improved trails along the Number 1:2 Canyon Divide.
- Leverage existing trail system to create formal and authorized connections to existing and planned residential developments.
- Expanded parking opportunities and trail access points.

Castle Rock Goals:

- ❖ Pursue opportunities for other formal access points to Castle Rock area.
- ❖ Plan for sustainable connections from new residential developments to existing trail system.
- ❖ Explore options for trails along 1:2 Divide and connections to public lands to the west.
- ❖ Strive for consistent access guidelines (allowed activities, season of use) across the Castle Rock area.
- ❖ Foster positive relationship with adjacent neighborhoods and respond to concerns where possible and appropriate.

A.2.a. Lower Castle Rock Natural Area

Landowner: City of Wenatchee

Land Manager: City of Wenatchee and Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: CDLT is the primary manager of the trail system infrastructure beyond the formal trailhead(s), per the City/CDLT Master Agreement

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Open year-round, limited to foot traffic (no equestrian or mountain bike use). Dogs permitted on City property.
- Trailhead has ADA-accessible picnic shelter and restroom.
- Notable increase in visitor traffic in early spring; parking at the Castlerock Avenue trailhead becomes limited.

- Unsanctioned access from Jennings Street and Castlerock Heights.
- Formal trailhead located in a residential neighborhood.

Vision/Opportunities:

- May be other options for access points to the Castle Rock area.
- Development in Castle Heights/Queen’s Court neighborhood is planned to include trail connection and small public trail access point.
- Residential development may lead to street connection between Castlerock Avenue and 5th Street. Current trailhead parking may be impacted.

Goals:

- ❖ **Explore potential for the addition of parking and appropriate trail connections.**
- ❖ **Ensure no net loss of parking at Castlerock Avenue trailhead due to through-street development.**
- ❖ **Invite the Castlerock Avenue neighborhood’s involvement in relevant matters related to public access.**
- ❖ **Work with the City to respond to concerns appropriately.**

A.2.b. Beers-Peryea private conservation property

Landowner: Privately owned by the Beers & Peryea family

Land Manager: Beers & Peryea family; Chelan-Douglas Land Trust manages authorized trail(s).

CDLT Legal Rights: CDLT holds trail license on one parcel of property, and has informal agreement for public access on other parcel.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- As part of trail license, CDLT is required to construct, improve, and maintain trails on the private property in accordance with mutual public access goals of CDLT and the landowner.
- Limited to foot traffic (no equestrian or mountain bike use), open year-round. Dogs prohibited on this property.
- Primitive trails continue up the 1:2 Divide to Chopper and beyond, but are extremely steep, creating erosion and safety concerns.

Vision/Opportunities:

- CDLT is actively seeking funding to purchase this property from the willing landowners for fee-simple ownership. If successful, this would allow for more holistic and uniform management of all the current public access open space in the Castle Rock area.
- 1:2 Divide trails need vast improvement or a re-route that lessens the grade.
- Any future connections further west to public lands have potential to change use patterns of Castle Rock area and may increase pressure to allow bicycles.

Goals:

- ❖ **Successfully acquire Beers-Peryea private conservation property from willing landowners.**
- ❖ **Develop a formal public access plan for Castle Rock/1:2 Divide property, taking into account the management and access to and from adjacent public lands, property stewardship considerations, and visitor use and enjoyment.**

Sage Hills Area

The Sage Hills area is the most complex to manage due to multiple property owners with different management objectives. The area has high historical recreation use, and there are multiple unsanctioned routes that connect with several sanctioned trails.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Annual seasonal closure December 1 – April 1: trail system and surrounding open-space properties owned by CDLT, Chelan County PUD (Chelan PUD), and City north of 5th street closed to public access annually to protect migratory mule deer utilizing winter habitat.
- Chelan PUD’s Home Water Preserve is held as a wildlife mitigation parcel as required under the Rock Island license administered by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC); seasonal closure stems from this mandate.
- City holds conditional use permit from Chelan PUD for a single trail through Home Water Preserve to connect Sage Hills Trail to Horse Lake Reserve in the north. Recreational use permit is secondary to wildlife mitigation.

Sage Hills Opportunities:

- CDLT plays an important role in facilitating communication and cooperation between user groups and land managers to address the seasonal closure, trail maintenance, trail use violations, and recreation planning.
- CDLT, City, and Chelan PUD are actively coordinating to authorize additional routes in the area.
- Trail wayfinding signage is a community-identified need.
- Necessary to address Chelan PUD management requirements for Home Water Preserve under FERC license to move forward with planning for long-term public access in the Sage Hills.
- Development of new, formal trail access points with improved parking and amenities will reduce friction between an increasing number of trail users and residents in the many neighborhoods adjacent to the Sage Hills.

Sage Hills Goals:

- ❖ **Fulfill requirements of FERC-approved proposal to authorize additional routes on the Home Water Preserve, including mitigation efforts to close and restore mutually agreed-upon routes.**
- ❖ **Secure Conditional Use Permit from Chelan PUD for final trail alignments and signage on Home Water Preserve.**
- ❖ **Identify and construct new route in north Sage Hills that provides another recreation connection between lower-elevation residential areas and higher-**

elevation Horse Lake Reserve and public lands. Work with BLM to assess feasibility of this route on BLM property.

- ❖ Continue public outreach and education efforts related to the seasonal closure in the Sage Hills area.

A.2.c. Sage Hills Gateway

Landowner: City of Wenatchee

Land Manager: City of Wenatchee and Chelan-Douglas Land Trust.

CDLT Legal Rights: CDLT is the primary manager of the trail system infrastructure beyond the formal trailhead(s), per the City/CDLT Master Agreement

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- There are two trail access points to Sage Hills Gateway. Both are in residential neighborhoods and have sensitivities related to this, which are exacerbated by ever-increasing seasonal popularity of these access points.
- Parking at both the Day Drive Trailhead and near the trail access point at Sage Hills Drive and at 5th Street is limited and requires more and better coordination between relevant law enforcement, land managers, and recreation advocates to improve the situation.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Coordination between Chelan County, City of Wenatchee, CDLT and others to provide for additional parking and other trail access amenities will improve the situation for both residents and trail users.

Goals:

- ❖ Continue interaction with neighborhoods at each trail access point and look for opportunities to improve the situation for users and neighbors.
- ❖ Facilitate coordination between City and County governments and other partners to work toward a larger formal trail access point for Sage Hills Gateway.

A.2.d. Kenzie's Landing

Landowner: City of Wenatchee

Land Manager: City of Wenatchee and Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: CDLT is the primary manager of the trail system infrastructure beyond the formal trailhead(s), per the City/CDLT Master Agreement

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Managed to restore and preserve natural ecosystem function and provide appropriate public access.
- Kenzie's Landing trailhead (development in 2022) will facilitate formal access to the Foothills Trail System. Trailhead access road will also eventually serve as connection to Maple Street.

- Users can connect to either the Sage Hills Trail or the Balsamroot Trail directly from this property.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Adjacent property developments will likely lead to an increase in use of these trails, and could yield public benefit projects, such as more access points to or amenities for the Foothills Trail System as they are implemented.

Goals:

- ❖ **Coordination with City of Wenatchee and adjacent property developments to ensure public access for both neighborhood residents and the greater community is included in long term.**
- ❖ **Foster positive relationship with adjacent neighborhoods and respond to concerns where possible and appropriate.**

A.2.e. Foothills North Natural Area

Landowner: City of Wenatchee

Land Manager: City of Wenatchee and Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: CDLT is the primary manager of the trail system infrastructure beyond the formal trailhead(s), per the City/CDLT Master Agreement

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Managed to restore and preserve natural ecosystem function and provide appropriate public access.
- Burned in a 2015 wildfire; ongoing ecological restoration efforts on the property.
- The Land Trust, City, and Chelan PUD have access to a two-track route known as the Blue Sage Road for administrative purposes.
- One authorized recreation route on property (Balsamroot Trail).
- Unofficial parking for public access is at the end of the pavement on Horse Lake Road, with space for roughly ten to fifteen vehicles in the County road right-of-way.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Potential for formal access point at the end of pavement on Horse Lake Road. It would need significant improvements and a change in culture to become a good option for a formal trailhead.
- Property's connection to Horse Lake Reserve also has unrealized potential; there may be an option to construct recreation trails on Foothills North that alleviate pressure on the Home Water Preserve by providing alternatives to the some of the unauthorized trails.

Goals:

- ❖ **Work with City, County, and other relevant stakeholders to formalize trail access point at end of pavement on Horse Lake Road.**

- ❖ **Work with City and public lands partners to identify recreation route corridors on Foothills North property and potentially on adjacent properties, focusing on routes that connect lower Foothills to Horse Lake Reserve.**

A.2.f. Horse Lake Reserve

Landowner: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Land Manager: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: Hold property in fee simple title.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Managed to restore and preserve natural ecosystem function and provide appropriate public access.
- Trail system is at or near maximum allowable density to remain compatible with conservation goals of property.
- Visitor amenities include trailhead with ADA-accessible trail and vault toilet, eight miles of single-track trails, and seven miles of two-track roads.
- Open for non-motorized recreation; subject to annual seasonal closure (Dec. 1 – Apr. 1). CDLT can accelerate or delay seasonal closure based on management objectives, but has never differed from coordinated seasonal closure with other land managers in the area.
- Property serves as northern terminus of the Foothills trail system.
- Trailhead located at 3 miles along Horse Lake Road, a county primitive road which terminates at gated ranch road continuing onto the Reserve.
- Road can become very rough after a season of use, and is a safety concern for drivers when wet due to the clay composition of the roadbed. It can be gated shut at the bottom just past the end of the pavement when necessary for safety or seasonal closures.
- CDLT has developed a Horse Lake Trails Management Plan that details the recreation and access objectives for this property, and this plan is reevaluated for updates every three years.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Additional work on the property should be considered when it enhances ecological function, improves user experiences, or complements existing access points.
- Concurrent with any new work, closure and restoration of any unsustainable routes need to be completed.

Goals:

- ❖ **Work with public land managers to connect to Number Two Canyon.**
- ❖ **Ensure correlation and continuity with trail planning for Home Water Preserve for those routes that exist on both properties.**
- ❖ **Continue to reevaluate the Horse Lake Trails Management Plan every three years, and update based on changes in use of adjacent properties, development of recreation resources on adjacent properties, or changes in recreation user trends that impact the conservation values of the Reserve.**

A.3 NORTH DISTRICT

The North District encompasses the area north of the Wenatchee River, including the Sunnyslope area and Burch Mountain. Burch Mountain sees significant, relatively unmanaged recreation use on a wide variety of state and federal public lands. Residential development in the Sunnyslope area is quickly limiting remaining open space protection opportunities. Opportunities in this area could be pursued as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan allow.

North District Opportunities

- While there are various publicly owned lands in the Burch Mountain area, no comprehensive recreation plan exists across property boundaries.
- There is currently no formal recreation access point in the area.

North District Goals

- ❖ **Pursue feasible land protection opportunities that allow connectivity to a plethora of public lands on upper Burch Mountain.**
- ❖ **Facilitate development of a formal public access point in this area as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan allow.**

A.4 EAST DISTRICT

This geographic area includes land east of the Columbia River and in close proximity to East Wenatchee. Development pressure on remaining open space continues to increase. There are unrealized possibilities to provide public access to East Wenatchee residents, but most of the land is in private ownership. Opportunities in this area could be pursued as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan allow.

East District Opportunities

- There are currently informal access points and trails in an area of open space known as the East Wenatchee Bench, all of which is in private ownership.
- CDLT has opened communication with several landowners in the East Wenatchee Bench area and with relevant local governments to initiate conversation about the potential for protecting some or all of this area for conservation and public benefit.

East District Goals

- ❖ **Work with private landowners and Eastmont Metropolitan Parks District to explore viable opportunities for protection of all or part of the East Wenatchee Bench area for public access**

B. STEMILT BASIN

The Land Trust participates in the Stemilt Partnership, which is a coalition of landowners and stakeholders in an area known as the Stemilt Basin south of Wenatchee (*Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision*, 2008). Under Chelan County leadership, this Partnership developed a vision for land management in the area that is based on identified community values. Opportunities in this area could be pursued as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan allow.

C. WENATCHEE RIVER BASIN

The Land Trust's involvement in the Wenatchee River valley is varied; there are fee lands in the Leavenworth area, Nason Creek area, White River valley, and lower Wenatchee River corridor, as well as various conservation easements and other management responsibilities on additional properties. The area continues to develop rapidly, with agricultural lands or open space lands converting to smaller residential properties. Land use and transportation planning processes throughout the Wenatchee River Corridor are a high priority for local governments and other stakeholders.

Wenatchee River Basin Opportunities

- Due to a landscape-scale land acquisition project undertaken by Trust for Public Land, there will be significant opportunities to implement the Upper Wenatchee Community Lands Plan (UWCLP) over the coming decade.
- There seems to be refreshed momentum in the communities along the Wenatchee River corridor to undertake a non-motorized transportation route between Leavenworth and Wenatchee, and there is more interest in proactively planning for this among local governments, as evidenced by the development of the Chelan County Pathways Plan.

Wenatchee River Basin Goals

- ❖ **Keep apprised of opportunities and efforts related to the Leavenworth-Wenatchee non-motorized transportation route, and assess most appropriate form of involvement when necessary.**
- ❖ **Facilitate implementation of UWCLP for conservation and public access values where appropriate.**

C.5 CASHMERE CANYONS PRESERVE

Landowner: Hay Canyon Ranch, LLC

Recreation Manager: Hay Canyon Ranch, LLC, in conjunction with Chelan-Douglas Land Trust.

CDLT Legal Rights: Authority per Recreation Management Plan for recreation management. CDLT holds two separate conservation easements: Hay Canyon CE and Nahahum CE, the combined CE property makes up the Cashmere Canyons Preserve, which allows for public access.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Presents complex situation with both traditional conservation easements and separate recreation management responsibilities shared with landowner. CDLT has no ownership interest in the property, but is responsible for the trailhead, constructed with state funding.
- Public access limited to foot traffic only: no dogs, horses, bikes, or motorized recreation. May also include a seasonal closure for mule deer winter range.

- One authorized access point off Nahahum Canyon Road with formal trailhead. Trailhead will be managed and maintained by CDLT.
- Heavy recreation use of informal access points and trail systems on adjacent public land.
- Initial Phase I of access includes nearly 10 miles of trail, mostly along existing old roadbed, with some newly constructed trail segments.

Vision/Opportunities

- Unique opportunity to provide access to foothills of the Cascades with the freedom of management that comes from working with a private landowner.
- Potential for Phase II expansion of trail system to include more routes to the northwest of Phase I.

Goals:

- ❖ **Introduce the public to and educate users about proper stewardship of recreation resources at Cashmere Canyons Preserve.**
- ❖ **Periodically reevaluate the Cashmere Canyons Preserve Recreation Management Plan to ensure appropriate management of recreation and conservation resources.**
- ❖ **Continue conversation with landowner around the benefits, costs, and practicalities of expanding the current recreation opportunities to other parts of Cashmere Canyons Preserve.**

C.6 LOWER WENATCHEE RIVER

C.6.a. Lower Sleepy Hollow

Landowner: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Land Manager: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: Hold property in fee simple title

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Access/parking for the Preserve is located in immediate proximity to two neighbors. Unmanaged access to the Preserve for the general public will take careful consideration of impacts to neighbors.
- Access can be gated closed if necessary.
- Preserve requires intensive restoration to control invasives.
- Significant portion of property is flooded during high water seasons. Side channels of Wenatchee River carry water through property, so access routes need to be sustainable to water flow or constructed to be above high water mark.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Flat or low angle of property could more easily enable access for visitors with disabilities by supporting wide trails with limited elevation gain.
- Riparian properties with river access have value for recreation and educational experiences.

Goals:

- ❖ **Provide educational signage and access/recreation route at Lower Sleepy Hollow that highlights natural floodplain process, healthy fish habitat, and historical Indigenous use of riparian areas along the Wenatchee River.**
- ❖ **Maintain good relationships with immediate neighbors by inviting input on access issues where appropriate, and keeping neighbors apprised of plans and projects.**
- ❖ **Encourage and facilitate educational use of the property as appropriate.**
- ❖ **Encourage and facilitate use of the property by Indigenous People as appropriate.**

C.7 LEAVENWORTH AREA

The Land Trust was involved in the development of the Upper Wenatchee Community Lands Plan (UWCLP), a community planning process for some 850,000 acres between Cashmere and Stevens Pass. Implementation efforts are focused on considering community values associated with these lands in the context of their surroundings. Opportunities in this area could be pursued as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan

Leavenworth has a high concentration of outdoor recreation enthusiasts in its small population, and due to the caliber of recreation opportunities available on federal lands in the immediate area, it receives a high percentage of recreation-oriented tourism each year.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Increasing pressure from dispersed camping/recreation-seekers in the area

Vision/Opportunities:

- CDLT needs to be proactive in managing recreation on existing fee lands and assessing opportunities to protect public access and conservation values in the area as they arise.

Goals:

- ❖ **Evaluate viable land protection opportunities based on conservation and public access values in light of increasing recreation need and decreasing recreation access.**

C.7.a. *Mountain Home Ridge*

Landowner: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Land Manager: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: Fee-simple property

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Managed to restore and preserve natural ecosystem function and provide appropriate public access.
- Open for non-motorized recreation year-round; closure of Mountain Home Road makes winter access difficult. Camping/fires prohibited.

- Recreation management/infrastructure is minimal at this site; established trail system expands beyond property boundary and is maintained by stewards from nearby Mountain Home Lodge.
- Parking is available informally in the County road right-of-way.
- Residents in the Mountain Home Ridge neighborhood are sensitive to an increase in recreation use of the CDLT property and public lands accessible via Mountain Home Road, largely due to an increased wildfire risk.

Vision/Opportunities:

- There is an increasing demand for recreation opportunities with a longer seasonal window and in close proximity to the growing population of Leavenworth.
- There is potential for further trail connections from CDLT’s Mountain Home Ridge Preserve to both public and private lands in close proximity, if supported by the landowners and managers.

Goals:

- ❖ **Foster positive relationship with Mountain Home Ridge neighborhood residents and respond to concerns where possible and appropriate.**
- ❖ **Explore opportunities to increase the footprint of land protected for open space and public benefit when they arise and as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan allow.**

C.8 NASON CREEK/WHITE RIVER

The headwaters of the Wenatchee River are the site of a collection of fee properties and conservation easements the Land Trust holds on Nason Creek and the White River.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- No conservation easements in this area currently allow public access.
- Most fee lands managed primarily for conservation values related to salmon habitat due to acquisition funding; several may be suitable for limited development of public access.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Riparian protection properties offer a unique public access opportunity with little to no elevation gain, a wholly different ecosystem and protection focus than upland preserves, and a somewhat different season of use.
- No significant current public use ensures CDLT is able to better define the parameters of public access on these preserves.

Goals:

- ❖ **Assess public access opportunities in the Nason Creek and White River area as they arise, and provide for appropriate access as capacity allows.**

C.8.a. Lower White River

The Lower White River area is a group of adjoining fee title properties downstream of the Little Wenatchee Road. These properties have frontage on both the Little Wenatchee and White Rivers.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Properties acquired to protect fish habitat and an unconstrained functional floodplain, and to provide opportunities for low-impact, non-motorized public recreation.
- Access roads to former structures (since removed) or for previous timber harvest work serve as template for public access routes.
- Properties are seasonally inaccessible due to elevated water levels.
- Public access to these properties is intentionally primitive and does not provide all-season access when water levels are elevated.
- There is a small and informal access point/parking area on the Little Wenatchee River Road, but it is limited and not managed as a trailhead.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Recreation route connections to both the Little Wenatchee River and White River are in progress and have potential to be appealing for non-motorized river access and snow travel.

Goals:

- ❖ **Develop a plan for a public access point for the Lower White River that is informed by evaluation of use of the properties by the public.**

D. ENTIAT RIVER BASIN

The Entiat River valley is a showcase of CDLT's riparian protection efforts; the organization holds one conservation easement, and also owns twelve properties in fee simple in the middle to upper reaches of the valley.

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Most fee lands managed primarily for conservation values related to salmon habitat due to acquisition funding; several may be suitable for limited development of public access.
- Kiosks with informational and interpretive signage were developed at four separate Entiat-area properties in 2021: Enlow, Stormy, Bremer, and Troy.

Vision/Opportunities:

- A few properties lend themselves to public access for recreation related to the Entiat River, or for educational purposes related to aquatic habitats.

Goals:

- ❖ **Assess public access opportunities in the Entiat River area as they arise.**

- ❖ **Monitor public access use of properties and adapt management to protect conservation values and enhance access opportunities where appropriate.**

D.9 STORMY PRESERVE

Landowner: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Land Manager: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: held in fee-simple

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Managed primarily for riparian habitat due to acquisition funding.
- Property is easily accessible and has a designated parking area. A trail exists along the riverbank in a large meadow, but is not signed or maintained beyond foot traffic.
- Limited access infrastructure currently exists on the site: a seasonal portable toilet, a memorial bench overlooking the Entiat River, and a formal kiosk with property information and interpretive signage related to salmon habitat and recovery projects.
- The Land Trust has allowed and somewhat encouraged public access on this property since taking ownership in 2001.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Stormy Creek Preserve plays an important part in CDLT’s mission to provide educational opportunities about our conservation work to our members and the public. It is also a candidate for increased access opportunities around equity, inclusivity, and accessibility that help meet CDLT’s DEI objectives. Public access will continue to be a priority at the property.
- In the long term, improvement of current infrastructure might include a more formal vault toilet and additional educational interpretive signage. The trails on the property seem to be well-maintained by foot traffic, but opportunities to make accessible routes should be explored.

Goals:

- ❖ **Continue to develop and implement the components of the *Entiat Stillwaters Preserves Public Access Plan* that are relevant to Stormy Creek Preserve, with a focus on providing accessible routes that improve equity and inclusivity of a wide variety of potential users.**
- ❖ **Explore funding opportunities for added infrastructure in the form of a vault toilet, interpretive signage, and/or development of accessible routes at the Preserve**

D.10 BREMER

Landowner: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Land Manager: Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

CDLT Legal Rights: Held in fee-simple

Management Considerations/Limitations:

- Managed primarily for riparian habitat due to acquisition funding.
- Property has specific stewardship objectives related to habitat restoration in the meadows and at the site of the old levee.
- An informal parking area was constructed and is open to the public. A kiosk with informational and interpretive signage was installed in 2021. However, CDLT does not actively promote public access or recreation at the Bremer property at this time.

Vision/Opportunities:

- Over half of the property is easily accessible.
- The parking area could be improved to include designated parking stalls and other amenities to support public access.
- The Bremer preserve is also a candidate for increased access opportunities around equity, inclusivity, and accessibility that help meet CDLT’s DEI objectives. Appropriate public access will be a priority at the property.

Goals:

- ❖ **Continue to develop and implement the components of the *Entiat Stillwaters Preserves Public Access Plan* that are relevant to the Bremer Preserve, with a focus on providing accessible routes that improve equity and inclusivity of a wide variety of potential users.**
- ❖ **Explore funding opportunities for added infrastructure in the form of a developed, sustainable parking area, vault toilet, interpretive signage, and/or development of accessible routes at the Preserve.**

E. LAKE CHELAN BASIN

The Chelan area is relatively new for specific Land Trust involvement, precipitated by the organization of the Lake Chelan Trails Alliance (LCTA) in 2015, and the Lake Chelan Community Open Space Vision process in 2017. The Chelan community has a similar opportunity as Wenatchee to permanently protect its immediate surrounding landscape, long used for informal recreation, for public benefit. Opportunities in this area could be pursued as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan allow.

The Land Trust acquired a fee title property of significant size in 2021, and it is not currently considered for public access due to ongoing stewardship activities and capacity of the organization. However, its proximity to the Chelan community and adjacent public lands may lead to public access pressure on the property, so continual monitoring will allow for proactive planning if necessary.

F. DOUGLAS COUNTY

CDLT has several large-scale conservation easements on working agricultural lands in Douglas County, but these do not allow for public access. There is currently one sizable fee title property that was acquired and is managed to protect sage grouse habitat. Due to this sensitive and important habitat, and the fact that the property is accessed by crossing other privately-owned agricultural lands, it is not an immediate candidate for public access beyond

CDLT-approved educational or scientific outings. Outside of the aforementioned East District of the Wenatchee Urban Area, other opportunities to provide for public access in Douglas County could be pursued as capacity and relevance in relation to the organizational strategic plan allow.

IN CONCLUSION, the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust has ambitious strategic goals to achieve over the next five years, and providing and planning for public access plays an increasing role in the organization. This Public Access Plan will serve to guide and focus our work in areas where we can truly make a difference and achieve our mission of engaging communities in conserving, caring for, and accessing the natural lands and waters that sustain North Central Washington. Building on our continuing success in the immediate Wenatchee Foothills area, we can use our talents and strengths to ensure protection of and public access to lands that are important to our communities.

8. REFERENCES

References

1. *Cashmere Canyons Preserve Recreation Management Plan*. CDLT, Hay Canyon Ranch, LLC; 2021.
2. *Chateau Rocher Trail License Agreement*. CDLT, Chateau Rocher; 2014.
3. *Chelan-Douglas Land Trust 2022 - 2026 Strategic Plan*. CDLT; 2021.
4. *Entiat Stillwaters DRAFT Public Access Plan*. CDLT; 2021.
5. *Dry Gulch Conservation Easement*. CDLT, Asamera Minerals Inc., and Dry Gulch LLC; 2007.
6. *Horse Lake Reserve Trail Plan*. CDLT; 2015, updated 2018.
7. *Master Agreement*. CDLT, City of Wenatchee; 2021.
8. *Saddle Rock Natural Area Conservation Easement*. CDLT, City of Wenatchee; 2010.
9. *Saddle Rock Natural Area Status and the Remediation Process*. CDLT; 2014.
10. *Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision Report*. Trust for Public Land, Stemilt Partnership; 2008.
11. *Wenatchee Foothills Trail Network, 2001 – 2015*. Chester Marler (amendments by CDLT); 2015.

Additional Resources:

1. *HOLD for CDLT Interactive Public Access Map, CDLT website*
2. *CDLT Trail Standards and Guidelines*. CDLT; 2011.

3. Trailhead Design Elements & Standards

9. ANNUAL REPORTS