

Great Peninsula Conservancy Board of Director Biographies 2016 - 2017

Evan Bauder, Belfair (Term expires: 2018)

Evan was born and raised in Mason County, and recently purchased a property on Hood Canal permanently protected by a conservation easement held by GPC. He earned a B.S. in Environmental Science from Western Washington University's Huxley College of the Environment. After graduating he moved back to his hometown to pursue a career in natural resources. He was first hired by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to conduct habitat surveys and fish passage barrier evaluations. After spending about one year with WDFW he was hired by the Mason Conservation District. Evan has been with the District for more than six years. He is currently managing multiple habitat restoration projects and programs as the District's Habitat Program Lead. Throughout his time with the District he has been responsible for many different types of work including land surveying, GIS analysis, landowner outreach, project management, grant writing, and long range watershed planning. He also represents the District on two regional Technical Advisory Groups for the state's Salmon Recovery Funding Program. Evan's lifelong passion for the outdoors fuels his excitement to work with natural resources throughout the local ecosystems he was raised in.



Peter N. Best, Bainbridge Island (Term expires: 2018)

Peter was born and raised here on the Great Peninsula. He is a graduate of Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University and the Evans School of Public Policy at University of Washington. Peter, an environmental planner with expertise in shoreline management, is currently the Planning Manager for Puget Sound Partnership. Prior to that, he worked for the City of Bainbridge Island as a shoreline planner, salmon recovery coordinator, and shoreline stewardship coordinator. His work has included environmental monitoring, grant writing, grant reviewing, GIS analysis, policy analysis, regulatory/policy development and implementation, capital facilities planning, conservation planning, natural resource management, regional environmental planning, working with volunteer landowners on environmental stewardship projects, and managing shoreline habitat restoration projects. Peter and his wife live on Bainbridge Island with their two young children, who are now the fourth generation of his family to live on the Great Peninsula.



David De Bruyn, Kingston (Term expires: 2017)

Since retiring from a career with the Environmental Protection Agency in 2007, David De Bruyn has become involved with numerous non-profit organizations. Dave currently serves as Board Treasurer for three nonprofits: Ventures, which provides training for lower income individuals to start small businesses, Kitsap County Historical Society and Great Peninsula Conservancy. He also is on the board of Kitsap Community Foundation and Rainier Valley Community Development Fund, and is President of North Kitsap Community Association.



An avid kayaker, Dave enjoys exploring Puget Sound and the Salish Sea (Vancouver Island) as well as far flung places such as Croatia, Indonesia, Norway and Sardinia. Through kayaking he has become aware of the many wonderful estuaries on Puget Sound and is proud of Great Peninsula Conservancy’s work to protect them.

After graduating from the Harvard Business School in 1969, Dave served in the Peace Corps in the Fiji Islands where he established an agricultural marketing enterprise for food crops. Dave and his wife Katherine split their time between Kingston, Seattle, and traveling.

Margaret ‘Kit’ Ellis, Gig Harbor (Term expires: 2017)

Kit grew up on the Gig Harbor Peninsula and recently moved back to the forestland where she was raised. The Conservation Easement on her family’s land was signed in 1990 with Hood Canal Land Trust, one of the land trusts that joined together in 2000 to form Great Peninsula Conservancy. The Gig Harbor area lacked a local land trust at that time and it was very fortunate that the volunteers of Hood Canal Land Trust agreed that the integrity of this 180-acre forestland was worth protecting. Kit spent her professional career at a community college teaching chemistry and helping colleagues throughout the state learn to use computers in their teaching. She has been involved with Girl Scout Camp St. Albans, located between Allyn and Belfair, for many years. Kit coordinates the camp’s instructional native plant garden and was recently appointed a camp trustee. She is an active participant in Pierce County ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) and hopes that all the training will never be needed for a major disaster. Tennis, bird watching, and travel are her other passions.



Debbie Engel, Indianola (Term expires: 2017)

Debbie’s passion for the out of doors began as a child while exploring the creeks and streams near her Midwest home. Debbie has a Human Services Degree from Western Washington University and worked for 20 years as Education and Conservation Manager for Kitsap Public Utility District. Her work for the PUD gave her the opportunity to promote stewardship of the environment. She led field trips to teach children and adults about plants, animals and insects that live in our local streams and wetlands. Each year she worked with community members and like-minded organizations to sponsor a Water Festival for over one thousand students. In 2008, Debbie received Environmental Educator of the Year Award from the Washington State Association of Water and Sewer Districts. Working with customers to conserve water was another professional responsibility for Debbie. Between 2011 and 2013 she helped save over 4 million gallons of water in Kitsap through the PUD’s Water Use Efficiency Program. She served on the board of the regional association Partnership for Water Conservation from 2007 – 2012, serving as Chair in 2012. Debbie raised her three children in Indianola where she lives on five acres with her husband, Jerry. Since her recent retirement, she has more time to pursue activities in the community. She enjoys gardening, boating and hiking in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.



Erin Ewald, Gig Harbor (Term expires 2018)

Originally from Minnesota, Erin Ewald developed an appreciation for natural resources in the Boundary Waters. She and her husband moved to Washington where Erin earned her B.S. in Environmental Science from the University of Washington. After graduation, she worked with the Pierce Conservation District for 10 years as the Key Peninsula, Gig Harbor and Islands (KGI) Watershed program manager. While there, Erin worked with local farms to implement best management practices (BMPs) and improve water quality. She also has served on the KGI Watershed Council, Harbor WildWatch, Greater Gig Harbor Foundation, Pierce County Open Space Task Force and Pierce County Conservation Futures citizen advisory board. She currently is the Environmental Compliance Manager at Taylor Shellfish Farms where she continues to work with farmers as they implement BMPs. Erin lives with her husband, young daughter, dogs and horses in Gig Harbor and enjoys planting trees, gardening and exploring Washington’s many parks and open spaces.



Russell Hartman, Bremerton (Term expires: 2019)

Russell Hartman has lived in Bremerton since 1976. He is a retired attorney and superior court judge. Russ was born and raised in Renton, Washington, and is a graduate of Harvard University and the University of Oregon Law School. Over his decades in Kitsap County, Russ has served on a variety of nonprofit boards including Kitsap Volunteer Attorney Services, Leadership Kitsap Foundation, and Bremerton Schools and Alumni Foundation. He also is a past member of the Bremerton School Board. Russ looks forward to his work on the GPC board to help preserve the Great Peninsula’s amazing outdoor environment. His outdoor passions include bicycle riding, hiking, backpacking, and Mariner’s baseball.



Katrina Knutson, Gig Harbor (Term expires: 2019)

Katrina Knutson grew up in unincorporated Pierce County, then moved to Seattle to attend the University of Washington. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Community and Environmental Planning with an emphasis in regional planning, and a minor in Urban Design. Katrina began working for the City of Gig Harbor in early 2016, as the City’s first Parks Project Administrator. She previously worked for Kitsap County as a Senior Long Range Planner for ten years. During her tenure at Kitsap County, Katrina managed many projects, two of which received Washington State Governor’s Awards.



In 2013, Katrina became a Certified Planner through the American Planning Association. She plans to complete her Masters of Public Administration in late 2018. Her primary areas of expertise include project management, facilitation, public outreach, zoning, land use, long range planning, demographics, capital facilities, critical areas, urban design and GIS. Katrina moved to Gig Harbor in 2005, and lives with her husband Lars and son. She enjoys gardening, camping, photography, kayaking, hiking and cooking.

Arthur Wesley “Wes” Larson, Bremerton (Term expires: 2019)

Born and raised in Silverdale, Wes is president of Sound West Group and an attorney with over 25 years experience in international banking, asset management, and real estate acquisition and development. Wes has lived and worked in Seattle, New York City, Tokyo and Vienna. He has taught environmental law as an adjunct professor at Seattle University and has been published in the Washington State Bar News on the subject of securitized real estate investments.



Wes and his wife, Daphne, now live next to GPC’s 10-acre Big Beef Creek Salmon Sanctuary near Seabeck. Wes is an avid hiker with a great passion for the preservation of natural lands. He’s been known to hike from his property down Big Beef Creek to Hood Canal.

David Morris, Gig Harbor (Term expires: 2019)

David Morris is a graduate of Peninsula High School and University of Washington in business administration. After serving in the Army as an officer, he entered the real estate business in Gig Harbor. Dave has been a real estate broker for over 40 years, and has vast experience in land sales, land development, and associated permitting processes. He currently manages 80 acres of forestland in northern Pierce County, and manages a variety of raw land and income producing properties. Dave is excited to put his real estate experience to work helping Great Peninsula Conservancy.



Dave’s community involvement includes service on the Gig Harbor School Board, Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Harbor History Museum, and Gig Harbor Rotary. An active real estate investor and counselor, Dave is a former manager and current stockholder of Keller Williams Realty in Gig Harbor and Silverdale. One of Dave’s activities involves his role as manager of The Morris Foundation, which makes real estate loans and investments, and uses the proceeds to make charitable contributions to many local non-profit organizations. Dave and his wife Mame have a son, daughter, and young granddaughter. He enjoys tennis, golf, boating, snow skiing, and travel.

Kathleen Peters, Bainbridge Island (Term expires: 2017)

Kathleen grew up in Seattle, and her great-grandparents were early settlers on the Gig Harbor Peninsula at Rosedale. She received her B.S. in Fisheries Science from the University of Washington, and attended the Fisheries Academy in Leetown, West Virginia. Her primary areas of expertise are fish pathology and hatchery management. Kathy worked for the Washington Department of Fisheries (now Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) from 1978 to 2000, and for Long Live the Kings from 2000-2004. She is currently the natural resources coordinator for Kitsap County. Kathleen lives with her family on Bainbridge Island, and likes to spend time in the garden and around the waters of Puget Sound.



Arthur Schick, Brownsville (Term expires: 2016)

Art has lived in Brownsville since 1941. A graduate of Central Kitsap High School and Olympic College, he received a B.S. in Forest Management at University of Washington. Art worked in forestry for The State of Washington, U.S. Forest Service and Northern Pacific Railway before taking the Base Forester position at Naval Sub Base Bangor. He has also taught forestry and plant subjects at North Idaho Community College and at Olympic College. During 30+ years at Bangor the forest responsibility enlarged to Natural and Cultural Resources Management, including groundwater resources. When Art retired from Federal Service in 2000 he joined the Natural Resources staff of the Suquamish Tribe as Water Resources Manager until his 2007 retirement. Art's wife Barbara Reasons and his daughters and grandkids share his outdoor interests and have joined him in hiking, backpacking, boating and bird watching. A long time interest in historical subjects has led Art through restoration of two Model T Fords. His current project is restoration of a 1911 Baker Electric horseless carriage.



Justin Stiefel, Gig Harbor (Term expires: 2019)

Justin Stiefel is founder and CEO of Gig Harbor’s Heritage Distilling Co, one of the premier craft distilleries in the United States. Justin spent 13 years in Washington, D.C., eight of them working for the U.S. Senators from Alaska as Deputy Press Secretary, Legislative Aid, Legislative Counsel and Chief of Staff. He focused on legislation and regulations concerning oil and gas, energy, taxation, trade and small business. He earned his B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Idaho and his Juris Doctor from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He also has completed course work at the U.S. Naval War College focused on strategy and national security decision making.



Justin was born in Renton and grew up in Spokane and Anchorage, Alaska. He is a member of the bar in Alaska, Washington and Washington, D.C. Justin serves as a founding board member of Jermaine Kearsse’s “15-to1” Foundation. He is a board member for Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Gig Harbor Kayak and Canoe Racing Team, and World Trade Center-Tacoma. He was named Honorary Commander for the Western Area Defense Sector at JBLM. Justin lives in Gig Harbor with his wife and three school-aged children.

Mark Walsh, Poulsbo (Term expires: 2019)

Mark Walsh has called the Puget Sound area his home for the past 26 years. He was born in the Boston area and grew up near San Francisco. Mark earned an MBA in Finance from the University of Southern California and a BA in Economics from UCLA. Currently, Mark is Vice President of Real Estate Investments with Olympic Property Group, a Pope Resources company, located in Poulsbo. He has been involved in the development and management of over \$2 billion of real estate over his career including Seattle’s first LEED Silver condominium project, Mosler Lofts, and Seattle’s first Green Globes certified project-Joseph Arnold Lofts.



Mark previously served on the State Board of Washington Conservation Voters as its Treasurer and currently is a board member with the Kitsap Economic Development Alliance. Mark and his wife have been married for 30 years and raised their two children here.