



Kitsap Environmental Coalition – Annual Report for 2023

KEC celebrated 5 years of successful environmental education and advocacy in 2023. All of KEC's work is done by volunteers. Last year we logged in over 2,000 hours of volunteer time. We are increasingly engaged in activities that benefit from fundraising. Although KEC is volunteer-operated, KEC uses donations to obtain assistance for media and communications work where we do not have available volunteers. KEC also uses funds for meetings and materials to support events, legal assistance, hiring experts for testimony and advice.

Over the past year, KEC and its members:

- Were key participants in the successful reactivation of the state's Trust Land Transfer program to preserve state lands, including the Eglon Trust Lands.
- Were a major force in the successful effort to transfer Eglon Trust Lands from state-controlled "management for money" to a county-controlled "management for nature".
- Supported the Kitsap Board of County Commissioners' efforts to protect state lands on Green Mountain.
- Supported KEC members as they challenged the County about excessive variances to wetland buffers and other critical areas.
- Extensively commented on proposed changes in the County's Comprehensive Plan; Critical Areas Ordinance; and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan to ensure that these guiding documents reflect alignment with our mission.
- Re-started the monthly KEC Presents!, the monthly film and discussion series at the Village Green in Kingston.

- Received the Kitsap Board of County Commissioners' Earth Day Award.
- Created more alliances with other organizations to support our mission.

In 2024, KEC is taking on a new challenge with our partners: achieving *Net Ecological Gain*. Net ecological gain means that we no longer accept only preventing damage, contamination, and loss to existing natural areas due to human activity. Net ecological gain means that after development, there is an *increase* in biodiversity and/or resilience that *improves* the functioning of ecosystems. KEC also advocates for protections and improvements to more areas than those already preserved.

It's easy to get focused on things we don't want. We are increasingly focused on things that we *do* want to see in Kitsap County. KEC's vision is a county where people, along with wildlife, thrive.