



Feedback wanted on proposed expansions for Devils Lake and Dabob Bay Conservation Areas

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposes to expand the boundaries of Devils Lake Natural Resources Conservation Area and Dabob Bay Natural Area.

Devils Lake Conservation Area is located south of Quilcene between Highway 101 and Quilcene Bay. Dabob Bay Natural Area, which surrounds Dabob Bay, is proposed to extend across northern Toandos Peninsula and into Thorndyke Bay on Hood Canal.

If the Commissioner of Public Lands approves the boundary expansions, other state-owned lands within the boundary can be transferred into the conservation areas while private properties may be purchased from willing sellers at market value.

Devils Lake Conservation Area

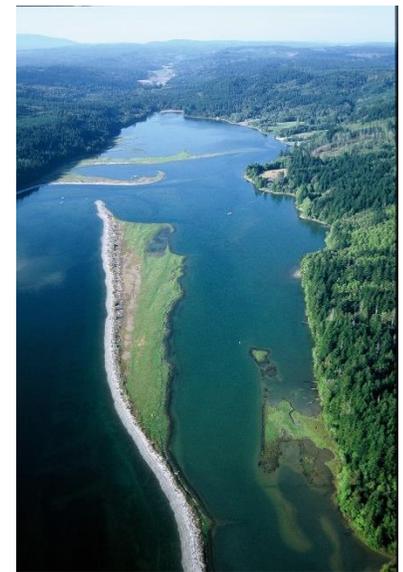
The 80-acre Devils Lake Conservation Area contains a lake and bog system that includes areas of open water and marsh. The forested area surrounding the lake has survived numerous fires and developed old-growth characteristics, with a diversity of tree age and species, a layered canopy, abundant snags and large, downed logs.

Features protected in the conservation area, which was designated in 2002, include a sphagnum bog, a freshwater wetland, and a Douglas fir-western hemlock/Pacific rhododendron-evergreen huckleberry plant community.

Expansion of the conservation area boundary will include approximately 415 acres of adjacent DNR-managed forested trust lands east of Highway 101 on the slope above Quilcene Bay.

Dabob Bay Natural Area

The Dabob Bay Natural Area was established in 1984 to protect rare examples of high-quality salt marsh and sand-spit plant communities within one of Washington's least altered coastal spit and tidal wetland systems. Initially created as a natural area preserve, the site was enlarged in 2009, with adjacent lands designated as a natural resources conservation area. This combination of designations provides opportunities for the development of low-impact public uses as the site is assembled through future acquisitions.



CONTACT:

Curt Pavola | Natural Areas Manager | 360-902-1032 | curt.pavola@dnr.wa.gov
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
FS 16-003 PRINTED 09/13/2016

Dabob Bay Natural Area includes mature coastal forests, coastal streams, feeder bluffs, forage fish-spawning areas, eelgrass beds, native Olympia oyster beds, nearshore tidelands and mudflats used by juvenile salmon and shorebirds, plus open marine waters used by salmon, marine birds, harbor seals and orcas. The combined preserve and conservation area currently includes 2,771 acres of shoreline, marsh and forestland in the Dabob Bay watershed, protecting coastal sand dunes, brackish tidal ecosystems, maritime forests, eelgrass and mudflats rich in marine life.

Expansion of the conservation area boundary would include state trust lands (940 acres) and privately owned lands (2,700 acres) that would add lowland forest and riparian areas, wetlands including an estuary, and ecologically significant shoreline along Dabob Bay and Hood Canal.

If the transfer of trust lands is approved by the legislature, an inter-grant exchange will be conducted by DNR; the Common School Trust will receive the timber value from the site for school construction while the land value will be reinvested in new trust lands with greater long-term income potential for trust beneficiaries. For private lands, DNR will seek grant funds to acquire property from willing sellers only, and at market value based on third-party appraisals.

Impacts of natural area boundaries on private landowners

DNR designates potential "boundaries" of natural areas for one purpose: to delineate an area within which DNR staff may discuss with landowners the potential purchase of their property. DNR works with willing sellers, pays market value as determined by a third-party appraisal, and has no regulatory or other land use authority over private landowners. A natural area boundary represents an opportunity for sale, not the expectation of a sale. No lands are considered to be part of the natural area unless they are either acquired by DNR or are otherwise registered as such by the landowner (such as by conservation landowners or other agencies).

DNR's Natural Areas Program

DNR manages 56 natural area preserves and 36 natural resources conservation areas on nearly 158,000 acres statewide. Preserves offer protection for high-quality examples of native ecosystems and rare plant and animal species. They serve as genetic reserves for Washington's native species and as reference sites for comparing natural and altered environments. Conservation areas protect lands having high conservation values for ecological systems, scenic qualities, wildlife habitat, and low-impact recreational opportunities. In addition to resource conservation, both preserves and conservation areas are host to research and environmental education. Details about each conservation designation and the DNR Natural Areas Program, including maps of the two proposed boundaries, can be found at www.dnr.wa.gov/managed-lands/natural-areas

CONTACT:

Curt Pavola | Natural Areas Manager | 360-902-1032 | curt.pavola@dnr.wa.gov
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
FS 16-003 PRINTED 09/13/2016