



West Sound Wildlife Shelter Frequently Asked Questions about the Shelter property located at the Bloedel Reserve

Q: What is the West Sound Wildlife Shelter (“WSWS”)?

A: The West Sound Wildlife Shelter (Shelter) is Western Puget Sound’s only wildlife hospital and education center. The mission of WSWS is to provide injured, orphaned, and sick wild animals a second chance at life and promote the well-being of wildlife and their habitats through public outreach, education, and involvement.

Q: How long has the West Sound Wildlife Shelter been serving the community?

A: The vision for wildlife rehabilitation started in the late 1980’s with founders Gil and Jan Bailey, who began caring for injured wildlife from their Bainbridge Island home. In 1993, changing state regulations required them to close the home-based shelter, but their vision lived on. In 1996 with financial assistance from the estate of Prentice Bloedel, the Shelter opened on the current 5-acre parcel. The old Bloedel Timber Company offices were renovated into what now serves as the Shelter’s wildlife hospital.

Q: How long has WSWS been leasing property from the Bloedel Reserve?

A: For 17 years, since 1996

Q: Was WSWS required to get approval from the Bloedel Reserve prior to undertaking new construction projects or making improvements to the property?

A: Yes, it was. The Shelter sought and obtained approval from Richard Brown, then Executive Director of the Bloedel Reserve, to construct our flight cage (used to rehab injured birds) and the waterfowl enclosure. The signed documents for those projects are on file and available for public review.

Q: Why is WSWS moving?

A: Our longtime landlord and neighbor, the Bloedel Reserve, is working on a long term master facilities plan to help the organization meet its changing needs. The plan includes repurposing the acreage that WSWS currently occupies.

Q: When did WSWS become aware of the Bloedel Reserve’s plans?

A: The WSWS Board of Directors began discussions with the Bloedel Reserve in early 2012. Those discussions focused on the changing needs of both organizations. Included was the Shelter’s goal to rebuild the current hospital on its existing footprint in order to meet the Shelter’s ever increasing patient load. WSWS was notified in April 2013 that the Bloedel Reserve would be unable to accommodate the future needs of WSWS given the requirements of its Master Plan.

Q: When does the WSWS lease end?

A: The current WSWS lease expires on December 31, 2016. The Bloedel Reserve Trustees have provided a letter to WSWS expressing the intent to extend our lease to December 31, 2021. The lease extension is likely to include some modifications to the footprint of the Shelter property in order to meet the needs of the Bloedel Master Plan. The Shelter expects to receive approval of the five year lease extension in late summer of 2014.

Q: Did WSWS explore any other property options with Bloedel?

A: Yes. The Shelter did look at one piece of property recommended by Bloedel and situated adjacent to the Reserve. Unfortunately, the property did not meet the list of criteria the WSWS Board and staff developed to ensure the Shelter's future home will accommodate our needs and the needs of the community for years to come.

In this instance, the primary issues were the property was too small and too closely situated to a housing development, which we feared would negatively impact the recovery of our wild animals; the terrain was unsuitable for relocating our current buildings; and, the price beyond our reach at the time.

Q: When does WSWS need to move?

A: If the lease extension is approved the Shelter will need to move off of the property no later than December 31, 2021. If the lease extension is not approved our current lease expires on December 31, 2016.

Q: What will happen to the recently constructed flight cage, water fowl enclosure and other structures?

A: The flight cage and waterfowl enclosure can be moved to a new location along with many of our other existing structures.

Q: Will WSWS Shelter remain on Bainbridge Island?

A: The Shelter is looking at available land both on Bainbridge Island and within Kitsap County. Approximately 25 percent of the patients served at the Shelter come from Bainbridge Island with the remaining 75 percent coming from all of Kitsap County and beyond. We are dedicated to finding a property that will allow us to properly care for the increasing numbers of wild life brought to us for years to come.

Q: How much will the move cost?

A: We have not yet located a suitable property so we don't know at this time what the cost of the property or the move will be. When we have all the facts, WSWS will take bids from interested contractors to help us determine moving costs.

Q: How much will the new Shelter cost?

A: Once we have identified and acquired the right location, we will work with an architect to design the new WSWS. We will know the hard costs and have a solid idea of the soft costs (F,F & E) of development at that time and will initiate a capital campaign to raise funds for the project. We expect the capital campaign to launch in mid-2014.

Q: Has an architect been selected to design the new facility?

A: WSWS has chosen local architect Coates Design to serve as the designer for this important project. Coates Design has a reputation for designing culturally relevant projects and their staff has experience in zoo projects, educational facilities, healthcare design, feasibility studies and long term cost/benefit strategies. They also have a great deal of experience working with financially-challenged non-profits and are able to subsidize their fees accordingly. As WSWS progresses through the feasibility study and facility design, other local consultants and team members will be brought on to assist with the project.

Q: Have you found a new location?

A: The land search is still underway. Many different sites are being considered on Bainbridge Island and throughout Kitsap County.

Q: How much space do you need for the new WSWS property?

A: Through staff input, studying development trends of Kitsap County and our increasing wildlife intake numbers, we have determined WSWS will need 15-20 acres or more. This size property will ensure we can provide expert care for increasing numbers of sick and injured wildlife and provide important wildlife intervention and education services to the community, without interruption, for years to come.

Q: What will be included at the new WSWS?

A: The new WSWS will include our existing structures including the flight cage and waterfowl enclosure, and also a new hospital building. Our goal is to also include an interactive educational center to allow the public up-close and personal experiences with the live education animals at the Shelter. Additionally, WSWS hopes to expand our ability to care for species that are under increasing threat and which we cannot accommodate in our current location such as deer, bear and wild cat.

Q: How should the community feel about WSWS having to relocate?

A: Thankful and excited. Thankful to the Bloedel Reserve for the 17 years of support. Excited about the future of WSWS.

Q: How can I help?

A: There are many ways you can help with this exciting project!

1. Please help us to spread the word about the Shelter's project to your friends, family, and acquaintances!
2. Consider volunteering for the Shelter. There are numerous opportunities available to suit your tastes and availability.
3. Finally, please consider donations to the Shelter as we move forward with this important project and for future sustainability as well. This year the Shelter will serve more than 1,100 wild animals – more animals than we have served in a year since opening our doors in 1999. Your support is essential to fulfilling our mission and to serving the wildlife and the community.

If you have specific questions about the Bloedel Reserve Master Plan please visit

<http://www.bloedelreserve.org/about-us/25-year-master-plan>

If you have any other questions regarding the Shelter's move or future plans, please contact Lisa Horn, Executive Director, at lisah@westsoundwildlife.org, or (206) 855.9057 x201.