



**FORMER GIRL SCOUT PROPERTY CAMP KLAHANEЕ TO BE CONSERVED BY
FORTERRA AND DONATED TO POLSON MUSEUM**

The three-way partnership will preserve the legacy of Grays Harbor and the Girl Scouts.

GRAYS HARBOR, Wash. – Camp Klahanee, an 80-acre property formerly operated by Girl Scouts of Western Washington (GSWW), will be acquired by nonprofit Polson Park and Museum Historical Society (Polson Museum).

Forterra will purchase a conservation easement to protect the surrounding forestland with Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Forestland Preservation funding from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. The three-way partnership preserves the legacy of Grays Harbor, Girl Scouts and the Polson Logging Company for generations to come.

Forterra facilitated the WWRP Forestland grant application and management, funding strategy, forest management plan and two-part transaction to purchase the conservation easement and transfer the land. The easement establishes a voluntary legal agreement between the landowner and Forterra, permanently limiting uses of the land to protect its conservation values – regardless of ownership changes.

The site is located 20 minutes north of Hoquiam on the southern Olympic Peninsula and features forests, streams, trails, and meadows. The Polson Museum will steward the site according to the conservation easement.

Girl Scouts of Western Washington temporarily closed Camp Klahanee due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the camp has since remained closed due to continuing maintenance needs. The Polson Museum plans to reopen the camp for everyone to enjoy, including Grays Harbor residents, Girl Scouts and local Tribes. Plans include creating historical and environmental education opportunities, as well as overnight accommodations for visitors. This includes restoration of lodging facilities and a caretaker's home, new campsites and an exhibit about the history of Girl Scouts' connection to the property, with the potential for more collaboration in the future.

Polson Museum will locate a mobile sawmill on site, along with exhibits and signage at the lodge and along the trails, educating visitors about forest history on Grays Harbor. The Polson Logging Company owned the property from the early 1900s through 1926 before it changed hands.

“As the Polson Museum nears its 50th anniversary as a community history museum for all of Grays Harbor, we are honored to partner with Girl Scouts and Forterra to reinvent and reinvigorate Camp Klahanee as a forestland sanctuary that will offer outdoor education, history and recreation to the broader public,” said John Larson, the Polson Museum’s Director since 1997. “When museum founders in 1976 formally named our institution the Polson Park & Museum Historical Society, they presciently included ‘park’ in the name without knowing just how appropriate that broader identity would one day become. With the nearly 80-acre Camp Klahanee becoming part of the Polson Park & Museum’s operations in 2023, we are excited to celebrate the property’s legacy with the Polson Logging Company, Girl Scouts of Western Washington and now the museum.”

Camp Klahanee is a special place for Girl Scouts, both current members and alums, in the surrounding community. GSWW purchased Camp Klahanee in 1957, and the name was adopted in 1959. “Klahanee” translates to “friendship” in the Chinook language.

Between 1959 and 1964, Camp Klahanee was transformed into a Girl Scout Camp thanks to tremendous efforts from property site staff, Girl Scouts and members of the community, in addition to donated materials by many local businesses and organizations. The camp was fully operational until the COVID-19 pandemic.

“In the 60s, I led Girl Scout camp for three days at Camp Klahanee. The youth always really enjoyed it, and the lodge is just beautiful,” said Joyce Thomasson, Girl Scout Alum and Polson Museum Board Member. “Camp Klahanee has more opportunity to teach youth something. I think young people need to get their fingers into saving things and preserving history. We’re so excited there’s such an importance laid on preserving this camp and property.”

WWRP Forestland Preservation program funds conservation easements to support working forests and the shared benefits of habitat, the environment and public access. The easement excludes the existing lodging areas and promotes conservation thinning to improve forest health, wildlife habitat and recreational access, while ensuring key harvest limits for thinning and gap cuts to keep the property largely forested while improving old-growth characteristics. The easement and forest plan will cover approximately 68 acres of the property and represents a win-win for Girl Scouts and Polson Museum alike. Future harvests will be reviewed by Forterra and help Polson Museum re-invest into operations and management of the property.

“The purchase of Camp Klahanee is a perfect example of how our work is about both people and place,” said David Leon, vice president of real estate transactions at Forterra. “This effort will conserve forest habitat and wildlife forever, while also providing education and recreational opportunities for those who live nearby.”

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ABOUT GIRL SCOUTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON

Girl Scouts of Western Washington is consistently and unapologetically committed to providing safe spaces for all girls and gender-expansive youth to belong. Girl Scouting builds youth of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Founded in 1912, our organization has been committed to meeting the needs of our youth members for over a century. We uplift all Girl Scouts in a supportive environment where they can discover their strengths, rise to meet new challenges, and become the changemakers our world needs. They are the future leaders paving the way toward a brighter tomorrow. Visit girlscoutsww.org to learn more.

ABOUT FORTERRA

Forterra is an unconventional land trust that works across Washington's communities and landscapes, from the ranches and shrub-steppe of the Yakima basin, to the estuaries, farms and forests of Washington's coast, reaching more than 100 counties, cities, towns and rural communities. Working cooperatively with people and nature, Forterra drives land stewardship, management and planning; innovative programs and policies; farming and forestry approaches; community ownership opportunities; and development solutions. Visit Forterra.org.

ABOUT POLSON PARK & MUSEUM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Polson Museum is a nonprofit corporation with a mission to preserve, promote, and present the material, written, and photographic history of Grays Harbor County, Washington. Founded in 1976 and sited on the Hoquiam riverfront estate of two generations of Polson Logging Company family, the Polson maintains a community-cherished campus of historic and modern structures that include exhibits, workshops and archives. Through its programs, publications and properties, the Polson invites the public to celebrate, explore and experience Grays Harbor history. Visit Polsonmuseum.org.