



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Agreement Reached to Grow Grovers Creek Preserve**

*Over 1,000 Acres Will Be Protected in North Kitsap*

PORT ORCHARD, January 22, 2015 – Today, Forterra signed a purchase and sale agreement with Pope Resources to protect 175 forested acres as a nature preserve and a link in the Sound to Olympics Trail. The property will be part of the new 270-acre Grovers Creek Preserve and is across the road from the recently expanded 800-acre North Kitsap Heritage Park. This will be the third acquisition in the Kitsap Forest and Bay Project, a community-driven initiative to secure miles of trails connecting to a cross-state trail system and to protect thousands of acres of forests, wetlands and shoreline for public access and wildlife habitat.

“It’s a case where the whole will be greater than the sum of the parts,” said Kitsap County Commissioner Rob Gelder. “Our investments will enhance our economy, ensure our quality of life and protect the habitat we all value.”

The agreement sets the stage for completing the fundraising needed to purchase the full 270-acre Grovers Creek Preserve, as well as for raising philanthropic dollars to secure over 3000 acres of additional forest south of Port Gamble and west of the Preserve. “This is a small but important next step in our larger conservation strategy,” said Michelle Connor, Executive Vice President at Forterra.

Public grants and private donations totaling \$1.775 million have been raised for the Grovers Creek Preserve, with a remaining \$325,000 needed by May 2015. The agreement signed today will purchase the largest portion of the Preserve for \$920,000 from Pope Resources.

Within the Grovers Creek Preserve is a high quality peat bog and a rare grove of 200-year old Sitka spruce, hemlock, cedar, Douglas fir and grand fir. The diverse habitat supports over 60 bird species; hosts threatened steelhead as well as coho and cutthroat trout; and provides a home for black bear, mink, otter, salamander, frog and other wildlife. A mile downstream, Grovers Creek flows into Miller Bay. The expanse of wetlands spreading out from the creek ensures the water entering the bay is clean and flows year round.

“Grovers Creek Preserve is a magical place of big trees, bears and beavers that reminds us of the Kitsap Peninsula of long ago,” commented Sandra Staples-Bortner, Executive Director of Great Peninsula Conservancy. “We are delighted to be working with the many project partners to save this land for all time.”

In 2011, Forterra signed an option agreement with the landowner, Pope Resources, giving the Kitsap Forest and Bay Project partners time to raise funds and complete the due diligence necessary to move toward successful conservation. Forterra has supported the Project on a strategic level as well as through project partner coordination, grant writing and engaging elected leadership at the state and federal level. Forterra will assign the purchase and sale agreement to Great Peninsula Conservancy to complete the purchase later this spring.

“This partnership with the community began in 2007 and has continued to make progress through the strength of the Kitsap Forest and Bay coalition members and a powerful vision for what the North Kitsap community can become,” said Jon Rose, Vice President – Real Estate of Pope Resources. “These efforts and their success will be celebrated by people for generations to come.”

The Kitsap Forest and Bay Project is an effort by Kitsap County, the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, the Suquamish Tribe, Forterra, Great Peninsula Conservancy, Pope Resources and many community partners to conserve 6,700 acres of forest and shoreline owned by Pope Resources around Port Gamble Bay on the western shore of Washington’s Puget Sound. With the pending Grovers Creek Preserve purchase, the Project has protected over 1000 acres in North Kitsap.

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**About Kitsap County**

Kitsap County, located between the Olympic Peninsula and the Greater-Seattle area, has a long history of open space acquisition and stewardship. Currently, over 6,300 acres is held as park and open space land throughout the county. These include multiple large-scale heritage parks as well as several regional parks providing public access, trail systems and use of its beautiful shorelines. Kitsap's Forest Stewardship Program is working to manage these and other public lands for long-term forests, transforming Douglas fir plantations into diverse tree stands with potential as healthy old-growth in the future. For more information, visit [kitsapgov.com](http://kitsapgov.com).

**About Forterra**

Forterra is a visionary and effective leader for regional sustainability with a 100-year vision and action plan for the region. To date, we've permanently conserved 238,000 acres of land and improved the quality of life for people in over 80 communities. With a successful 25 year history of solving enormous regional challenges through a land-focused and big tent approach, today Forterra is taking stock of the rapidly changing conditions in the region's ecosystems, communities and economies and will produce an updated game plan for a healthy and resilient region for all in May 2015. More at [forterra.org](http://forterra.org).

**About Great Peninsula Conservancy**

Great Peninsula Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust working to protect forever the natural habitats, rural landscapes, and open spaces of the Great Peninsula – a region encompassing Kitsap, western Pierce, and north Mason counties, Washington. Great Peninsula Conservancy has protected over 5,800 acres of this spectacular region of west Puget Sound, including magnificent forests, untouched shorelines, salmon streams, and wildlife-rich estuaries. The Conservancy's work is funded by its members and public grants. More at [greatpeninsula.org](http://greatpeninsula.org).

**About Pope Resources**

Pope Resources, a publicly traded limited partnership, and its subsidiaries Olympic Resource Management and Olympic Property Group, own or manage 193,000 acres of timberland and development property in Washington, Oregon, and California. We also manage, co-invest in, and consolidate three private equity timber funds, for which we earn management fees. These funds provide an efficient means of investing our own capital in Pacific Northwest timberland while earning fees from managing the funds for third-party investors. The company and its predecessor companies have owned and managed timberlands and development properties for more than 160 years. Additional information on the company can be found at [poperesources.com](http://poperesources.com).