

STANWOOD AREA ECHOES

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A Historic Natural Treasure to be Preserved

Resorts are a part of the history of Camano Island. The CAMA BEACH RESORT, Camano Island's largest, is currently in the process of being acquired by Washington State Parks allowing most of its 430 acres of forest and beach to remain intact and keep some of its original character. This valuable acquisition takes place as a result of the efforts of the owners, Karen Hamalainen and Sandra Worthington, daughters of Lee and Muriel Risk who operated the resort from 1934 to 1989.

In 1991, the family wished to sell it but wanted to see it remain undeveloped and accessible to the public. They approached Washington State Parks and their intentions were made known to the community. The community responded by communicating to the legislature that they would like to see the preservation of this unusual and unspoiled property. State Parks and the Legislature recognized the value of the offer and will purchase the property over a period of years.

Since State Parks will not have the money to develop the Park for several years, the family is going to be investing some of the funds from the purchase to upgrade the facilities. Volunteers from the Friends of Camano Parks, Stanwood Rotary, Center for Wooden Boats, Washington Water Trails, Camano Island Beach Watchers and many others are beginning to reroof the boathouse and some of the cabins. With the commitment of these and more groups in the future, and with the endorsement of State Parks, the park will be developed more on a Environmental Learning Center model rather than a traditional camping park.

A historical note: The community involvement in this project continues a tradition started in 1949 when the Camano Island Grange requested that the State Parks Commission develop some publicly-owned school lands as a state park. The Commission allotted \$5,000 for basic supplies and a few Park Commission workers. Then, *in one day*, 500 local volunteers used their bulldozers, trucks, tractors, and horses, to clear roads, parking areas and a scenic trail; they also prepared picnic areas, built picnic tables, cleaned and tiled a spring and planted shrubs and trees to make Camano Island State Park.

