



## EARTH SANCTUARY®

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## FACT SHEET EARTH SANCTUARY

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**LOCATION:** Near Freeland, Washington, on the south end of Whidbey Island 37 miles north of Seattle (1 ¾ hours by car and ferry). There are two entrances: 2059 Newman Road and 5536 Emil Road, Langley, WA 98260.

**PROPERTY SIZE:** 72 acres

**DESCRIPTION:** Earth Sanctuary is a magical and peaceful sculpture garden, nature reserve, and retreat center that combines ecology, art and spirit to create a unique place for personal renewal and peaceful contemplation. The 72-acre landscape includes two miles of nature trails, a unique peat bog fen complex, streams and three waterfowl ponds. Due to their importance as waterfowl habitat, the ponds and bog fen complex have been designated as a “habitat of local importance” by the Whidbey Audubon Society and Island County Critical Areas program.

**FOUNDED:** 2000

**FOUNDER/OWNER:** Chuck Pettis (Freeland, WA), phone: (360) 331-6667, [cpettis@earthsanctuary.org](mailto:cpettis@earthsanctuary.org)  
Visionary, designer, author, monument-builder.  
Author of *Secrets of Sacred Space: Discover and Create Places of Power* (Llewellyn, 2000).

**ECOLOGICAL GOAL:** To maximize the diversity of birds and wildlife by increasing the diversity of vegetation habitats and restoring the integrity, beauty, and diversity of the old growth forest, wetlands, streams and aquatic ecosystems.

**SPIRITUAL GOAL:** “I don’t know anyone who meditates or prays too much. I’ve tried to

create an environment that motivates and facilitates spiritual practice.”  
--Chuck Pettis

**WETLAND ECOLOGIST:** Kevin Fetherston (Seattle, WA), phone: (206) 300-8745  
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**LANDSCAPE DESIGNER:** Dan Borroff (Seattle, WA), phone: (206) 329-0931,  
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**ARCHITECT:** Matthew Swett, Taproot Design LLC, phone 360-321-4447,  
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**MASTER PLAN:** A 500-year plan has been developed to restore the landscape’s old growth forest, wetlands, and streams and thus provide the optimal habitat for the greatest possible diversity of bird and animal species native to South Whidbey Island.

**PLANTINGS:** Over 15,000 plants have been planted in the first phase of restoration. They are drawn from 80 native species. Over 3,250 trees have been planted.

**DAY VISITORS:** Earth Sanctuary is open 365 days/year during daylight hours. No reservations are required. \$7/visitor fee.

**EARTH SANCTUARY HOUSE FOR SPIRITUAL RETREAT:** The 72-acre Sanctuary may also be accessed by individuals wishing to conduct a spiritual retreat at the Earth Sanctuary Retreat House (a fully equipped single-family dwelling), or by small groups holding non-residential day retreats.

**MEGALITHS:** (Greek for “great stone”) Structures built in Neolithic Europe—the first being built over 6,000 years ago.

**MEGALITHIC ARTWORKS BUILT TO DATE:**  
February 2002 – Labyrinth  
March 2002 – Fen Stone Circle  
March 2002 – Dolmen  
January 2003 – Cottonwood Stone Circle  
September 2004 – Medicine Wheel  
July 2011 –Buddhist Stupa and Tibetan Buddhist prayer wheels  
2012 –Gray Whale Medicine Wheel  
2014 – Veils of Reality sculpture  
2016 – The Infinite Tower sculpture

**LABYRINTH:** Located on a small peninsula that extends into the central pond. Its path is constructed of Pennsylvania Bluestone and its alleys of Salal hedge. The labyrinth’s simple three-circuit plan is drawn from the most ancient of labyrinth designs, thought to date from around 2500 B.C.E. The labyrinth is available for walking meditation, as a metaphor for life’s journey.

**FEN STONE CIRCLE:** This stone circle measures 16 feet in diameter. It is made of eight

standing stones up to seven feet high. The thin shale-dense Llenroc (Cornell spelled backwards) stones range in weight from 600 to 1,000 pounds each, and come from the Finger Lakes Stone Quarry in Ithaca, New York.

**DOLMEN:** A huge table-shaped stone structure topped with two large horizontal cap stones. Built of 20 tons of Autumn Leaf hard sandstone from Montana. To Mr. Pettis' knowledge this dolmen, based on ancient prototypes, is the first to be constructed in the United States in modern times.

**COTTONWOOD STONE CIRCLE:** This impressive stone circle measures 40 feet in diameter and is the tallest stone circle in the world. A ring of Cottonwood trees have been planted around the stone circle that when mature will hopefully attract great blue herons to build a rookery in its branches.

**BUDDHIST STUPA** As the pre-eminent symbol of Buddhism, the stupa represents the fully enlightened mind of the Buddha. Stupas are monuments of peace and harmony in the world and contain sacred scriptures, prayers, and other sacred objects.

**MEDCINE WHEELS** A Native American medicine wheel is located near to the Cottonwood stone circle. A Gray Whale medicine wheel is located on the East side of Earth Sanctuary.

**VEILS OF REALITY:** The "Veils of Reality" minimalist sculpture incorporates a black steel square plate with a multi-layer translucent black fabric. The consecrated steel plate was part of a sacred Tibetan Buddhist fire ceremony conducted by His Holiness Jigdal Dagchen Sakya, head lama of Sakya Monastery of Tibetan Buddhism ([www.sakya.org](http://www.sakya.org)), at the Earth Sanctuary Buddhist Stupa monument. The sculpture juxtaposes opposites to create a balance—the square black ceremonial steel plate with a multi-layer square black fabric.

**THE INFINITE TOWER** A 24-foot column of interlocking equilateral triangles that create a deceptively fluid visual effect. The symbolism includes: creating a connection to earth and sky, the use of white as the color of clarity and purity (which reflects shadows and shapes on the sculpture), the honoring of the nearby trees and snags which join the earth and sky, and the incorporation of the number eight and the number seven, which symbolize harmony and spirituality.

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