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New name and face, same mission



Preserving open space is a major undertaking, and for a local land conservancy, its name wasn't making the effort any easier.

"'Clark Fork-Pend Oreille Conservancy' is a mouthful, hard for people to remember, even harder to remember correctly," said its new director, Eric Grace.

That's why the name was changed in September to Kaniksu Land Trust, a simpler moniker that supporters hope will bolster the organization's ongoing mission of conserving undeveloped land in Bonner County, Idaho, and Sanders County, Montana.

The trust seeks to make its resources available to landowners who want to protect their land but don't know how



The new Kaniksu Land Trust director, Eric Grace, enjoys the outdoors, which ties into his group's mission to conserve land. COURTESY PHOTO

or don't want to give up use of it. "We use a number of different tools to partner with private landowners to make sure that their property stays

undeveloped in perpetuity," said Grace, who arrived a year ago to take over as director after 13 years with the Genesee Valley Conservancy in western New York state.

Kaniksu Land Trust may buy land, but a more common approach is a conservation easement, in which a landowner sells or donates development rights to the organization. This type of conservation doesn't mean not using the land; it can be protected from development while allowing for sustainable timber harvest, ranching or recreation.

Since its founding as Clark Fork-Pend Oreille Conservancy in 2002, the land trust has protected seven properties, including the Wood family's working forest property and cattle ranch on Grouse and Gold creeks. It currently holds easements for and monitors the use of 1,764 acres in Idaho and Montana. Another half dozen are in the works. www.kaniksu.org, 263-9471

—Cate Huisman

Buying locally has its rewards

Buy locally. It's a creed that carries extra weight during the winter season, when dollars spent within the city limits of Sandpoint have a tremendous impact on local businesses' bottom line throughout the entire year. And this year, shoppers will have a great new reason to shop local: the Genuine Sandpoint gift card.

The card will launch in time for holiday shopping and is good at more than 20 downtown Sandpoint businesses. And just like a rewards credit card, this one has a perk as well: 1 percent of the value will help fund local arts programs in Sandpoint.

The gift card program was launched by the Downtown Sandpoint Business Association as part of its Sandpoint Forward economic revitalization initiative. Consultant Mark Rivers of Brix and Company is helping

spearhead the initiative, which includes the Genuine Sandpoint campaign to promote buying local. He's excited about the launch of the gift card, and even more pleased about the benefits.

"It's as good as cash," Rivers said about the card, which is pre-loaded with money from the gift-giver and works just like a VISA or MasterCard when shoppers pay for purchases. "And it's perfect for gift giving: for Christmas, birthdays, graduation, plus it encourages local businesses and contributes to the arts."

Genuine Sandpoint is DSBA's campaign for buying locally, and the group came up with the title through firsthand experiences.

"When people would visit Sandpoint from out of town, we would hear people say that folks here are so genuine," said Marcy Timblin, DSBA's manager. "We thought



'Genuine Sandpoint' would be a great way to market that."

While the Genuine Sandpoint gift card will only be honored at participating downtown merchants, Rivers expects that the program will help boost spending at local businesses – year-round. And that would be a merry thing, indeed.

To find out more about the Genuine Sandpoint gift card and where it's available for purchase, visit the DSBA website at www.DowntownSandpoint.com.

—Beth Hawkins

Ernie concluded his new son-in-law had the makings of a real chowderhead....



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