



Spaces to Breathe,
Places to Belong

Community Impact Report 2026





An unattributed line in one of Bloedel Reserve’s earliest planning documents captures the essence of this remarkable place: “We are really talking about ecology of a most vital life-support system: the human spirit.” Decades later, that idea continues to serve as the foundation upon which everything else is built.

2025 was a year of growth and evolution for this unique and deeply considered vision. In the pages that follow, you’ll see how our dedicated staff, trustees, donors, volunteers, and broader community came together to steward a place that offers restoration, reflection, and connection. In ways both large and small, this collective effort advances beauty, hope, and a deeper relationship with the natural world.

While much evolves, much endures: a profound love of the land, an ongoing dialogue between humankind and nature, and an unwavering focus on individual experience. Across 140 acres, visitors encounter something quietly transformative, as they have for generations, and will for many more to come.

It is often said that art is a mirror held up to nature. At Bloedel Reserve, nature itself is art, and the mirror is community. Thank you for being part of it.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Evan Meyer
The Richard A. Brown
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nate Thomas".

Nate Thomas
Board Chair



In 2025,
the Bloedel Reserve
Board of Trustees adopted
new foundation statements
for the organization:

Mark your calendar!

Earth Day—April 26

Fun day full of science, stewardship, and the Pacific Northwest

Mother's Day—May 10

Spring festival of flowers, music, and those who nurture us

Summer Solstice—June 20

Celebration of light and creativity

20th Anniversary Garden Party—August 6

You're invited to a bold celebration of philanthropy

Squash Hunt—October

Month of fall themed décor, fun, and games throughout the gardens in October

Fall Harvest—October 3

Festive family celebration of music, pumpkins, and the launch of the Squash Hunt

Winter of Wonder—December

Seasonally themed events and magic in the gardens in December

Solstice Walks—December 11-13 and 18-21

Variety of accessible, family, and silent candlelit walks through the Reserve at night



GARDENS IN THE FOREST

Bloedel Reserve combines landscape design with the ecology of the Pacific Northwest forest on 140 acres of gardens and tended wildlands on Bainbridge Island in Washington.

MISSION STATEMENT

We celebrate beauty by cultivating our environment, building community, and deepening relationships with the natural world.

VISION STATEMENT

Reciprocity with the land contributes to a healthy, sustainable, and inspired future.

NAME & FOUNDING VISION

Bloedel Reserve is named for Prentice and Virginia Bloedel, whose unique vision still guides the Reserve today.

Community at the Heart

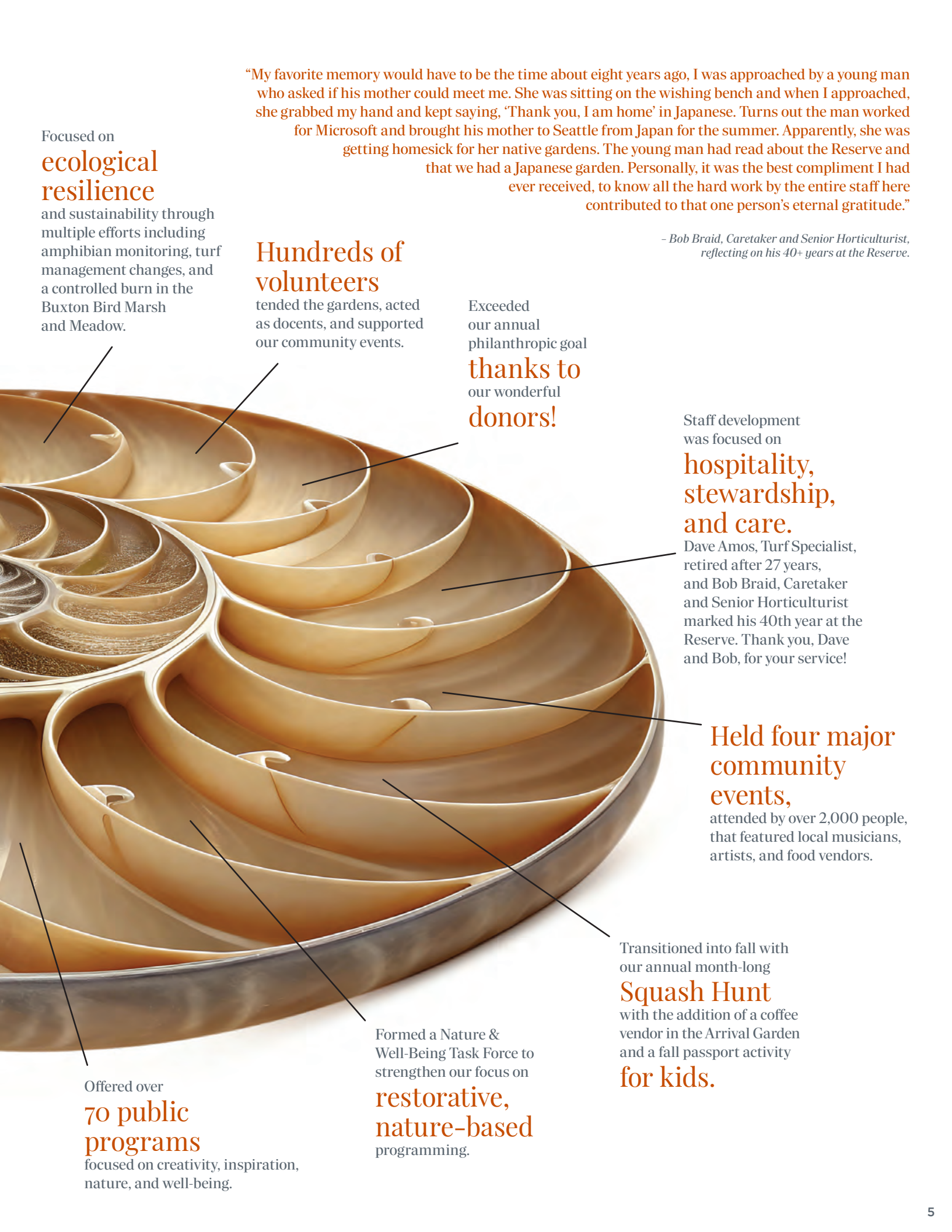
Bloedel Reserve thrived from a connected community of volunteers, partners, artists, educators, donors, and staff whose care and collaboration shaped meaningful visitor experiences in 2025. As visitation increased, reflecting a growing need for connection and restoration, the Reserve welcomed this growth with thoughtful stewardship, preserving the tranquility and balance that define the gardens. Together, these reaffirm both the value of quiet, restorative places and our shared responsibility to sustain them.

Nearly **93,000 visitors** joined us, many of whom were international and non-local visitors.

Implemented ongoing measures to manage capacity and **protect tranquility** with continued emphasis on respectful, low-impact experiences.

2025 Highlights:





“My favorite memory would have to be the time about eight years ago, I was approached by a young man who asked if his mother could meet me. She was sitting on the wishing bench and when I approached, she grabbed my hand and kept saying, ‘Thank you, I am home’ in Japanese. Turns out the man worked for Microsoft and brought his mother to Seattle from Japan for the summer. Apparently, she was getting homesick for her native gardens. The young man had read about the Reserve and that we had a Japanese garden. Personally, it was the best compliment I had ever received, to know all the hard work by the entire staff here contributed to that one person’s eternal gratitude.”

– Bob Braid, Caretaker and Senior Horticulturist, reflecting on his 40+ years at the Reserve.

Focused on
**ecological
resilience**

and sustainability through multiple efforts including amphibian monitoring, turf management changes, and a controlled burn in the Buxton Bird Marsh and Meadow.

**Hundreds of
volunteers**

tended the gardens, acted as docents, and supported our community events.

Exceeded our annual philanthropic goal

**thanks to
our wonderful
donors!**

Staff development was focused on
**hospitality,
stewardship,
and care.**

Dave Amos, Turf Specialist, retired after 27 years, and Bob Braid, Caretaker and Senior Horticulturist marked his 40th year at the Reserve. Thank you, Dave and Bob, for your service!

**Held four major
community
events,**

attended by over 2,000 people, that featured local musicians, artists, and food vendors.

Transitioned into fall with our annual month-long
Squash Hunt
with the addition of a coffee vendor in the Arrival Garden and a fall passport activity
for kids.

Formed a Nature & Well-Being Task Force to strengthen our focus on
**restorative,
nature-based
programming.**

Offered over
**70 public
programs**
focused on creativity, inspiration, nature, and well-being.

Caring for a Living Landscape



2025
PROJECTS OF NOTE

Propagation Plateau & Spring Meadow Planting

- Over 1,000 square feet of growing area established for in-house meadow plant production with tens of thousands of perennial plants grown in the first year.
- A 3,000 square foot area of the Buxton Bird Marsh and Meadow was planted.

Amphibian Monitoring

- In 2025, the scope of our amphibian monitoring project expanded to include the Bainbridge Island Land Trust and IslandWood, who worked alongside Bloedel to increase the number of sites on Bainbridge that are collecting population data for native species of frogs and salamanders.
- Three ponds were monitored including the Reflection Pool, Mid Pond, and Bird Marsh, with over 960 egg masses observed in total.



Stewarding 140 acres requires daily care and long-term vision.

In 2025, our teams advanced sustainable land management and habitat protection, supporting the resilience of forests, meadows, and gardens. This work sustains the living systems that allow the Reserve to thrive for generations to come.





Cadets from the Washington Youth Challenge Academy pulled about 120 cubic yards of ivy.



Volunteers from the Weed Warriors pulled nearly 30 cubic yards of ivy.

Multiple partnerships which support individuals with disabilities allowed us to increase care for the gardens.

- Adult Living Program with Bainbridge Island School District
- Stephens House
- Trillium Employment Services

“Working at Bloedel over the summer provided me with countless opportunities to learn and get hands-on experience with every aspect of the functioning of a large-scale public garden. I could not think of a more comprehensive education of a public garden in 11 weeks.”

- Kate Kalcic, Horticulture Intern 2025

Four amazing Horticulture Interns joined the Horticulture & Design team from June to August.



Expanding Programs for a Changing World

In 2025, our educational programming expanded to invite reflection, creativity, and connection. Over 70 public programs were offered, including new programming such as Propagation from Cuttings with Philip Bloomquist, Fungi Walks with Joseph Zapatosky, Phone Photography with Baqi Kopelman, and Botanical Illustration with Zebith Thalden.



All of the following programs were provided free or at a low cost:

- **30 nature inspired** creativity workshops and events including two choir performances in the Residence, two art talks, and one poetry reading at the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art (BIMA), reaching approximately 600 people.
- **23 garden classes** reached approximately 300 people.
- **Four exhibitions** were held in the Residence including Nature and the Book (Puget Sound Book Artists), Historical Artifacts from the Bloedel Family (curated by Jane Carlin), 10 Years of Creative Residencies (in collaboration with BIMA), and the Community Creatives/ Bloedel Reserve Staff show.
- 2025 marked **10 years** of the Creative Residency program. Eleven Creative Residents from all over the United States were on-site for three weeks each. In addition, five Community Creatives, selected local members of the community utilized the Reserve as a place of inspiration for their work throughout the year.
- In 2024-2025, over **9,000 people engaged** with the work of Creative Residents and Community Creatives.



More than
600 visitors
came for
**workshops &
educational
programs.**



Excerpt from Esther Quansah's composition created while in Residence



Nature as a Safety Net

The Reserve continues to serve as a place of refuge as visitors consistently share that time here helped them slow down, breathe deeply, and reconnect.

Bloedel Reserve has significant potential to expand health and well-being initiatives, building on the founding vision of Prentice and Virginia Bloedel and our strong track record of restorative, nature-based programming. In 2025, a Nature and Well-Being Task Force met for six months and recommended centering well-being in strategic planning, grounding programs in community needs and evidence, committing to ongoing evaluation, and deepening engagement with research.

Nearly **600 visitors** participated in **Nature & Well-Being Programs.**

Nature & Well-Being Program Highlights:

127 participants joined our **Strolls for Well-Being program.**

287 people joined one or more of the **Mindfulness Meditation** sessions offered.



88 individuals followed the sun in our **Forest Bathing sessions.**

32 people joined our **Grief Groups,** in partnership with Island Volunteer Caregivers.



Sacred Ancestress Trees: *Songs and Stories*

Legend has it, if you look closely at the full moon, you won't just see craters. You'll see a tree, its branches spread wide like a crown, and a man forever tending it. The Japanese call him Katsura-otoko—the "Man of the Katsura" (Katsura means "tree of the moon"). With his pruning shears, he cuts the branches so the moon shrinks to a sliver... but the tree grows back, and the moon grows full again. That's why the moon waxes and wanes, not by clocks, but by the hands of a gardener.

Esther Quansah

"My involvement in the Strolls for Well-Being program has reawakened in me creative energies that I had thought I had left in the desert of Southern California. I come away from my visits to Bloedel with calm mind, full heart, body vibrant and soul soothed, my whole self creatively attuned. As a result, a strong artistic urge has motivated me to create a number of pen and ink drawings and to write about my experiences."

- Ed Frodel

Celebrating More Than Five Decades of Service



At the conclusion of 2025, four long-standing members of our Board of Trustees completed their terms and were invited to join the Senior Advisory Council. A heartfelt thank you to these individuals who represent more than 50 years of dedicated service to Bloedel Reserve.

Steve Davis



brought a deep connection to Bainbridge Island and a distinguished record of nonprofit leadership across the island and the greater Seattle region. Over many

years of service, Steve supported the Reserve through periods of growth and transition, building relationships that will continue to benefit the organization well into the future.

Mark Levine



brought extensive philanthropic experience, a broad network, and a deep commitment to community to his work as a trustee.

His leadership in shaping development strategy helped drive the organization forward and contributed to sustained growth in contributed income year after year.

Andy Maron



served in numerous leadership roles during his tenure on the Board of Trustees, contributing extensive legal expertise and strong community connections. His

willingness to ask tough questions and engage in thoughtful dialogue has been a cornerstone of the Reserve's progress over the past two decades.





The Garden Party is a vital fundraiser that raises essential support for Bloedel Reserve's mission-driven work and helps keep the grounds accessible to all. In 2025, Katie Strong was honored for her steadfast advocacy during COVID and her deep appreciation for the healing tranquility of the landscapes. The Reserve is grateful for our donors and supporters, whose generosity makes this work possible.



Justine Milberg



and her attention to detail strengthened financial systems and brought greater clarity, even during challenging periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Her professionalism, intelligence, and passion for Bloedel Reserve were evident throughout her service, including her tenure as Board Treasurer.

Special thanks to our speakers, Sue Nevler, Dan Hinkley, and Evan Meyer, for sharing their insight and inspiration. Finally, a special thank you to the leadership of our co-chairs, Erin Banasik and Jane Carlin, whose dedication and guidance was essential.



A Place for All

Accessibility remains central to our mission. In 2025, Bloedel Reserve continued expanding initiatives that welcome more people into restorative experience in nature.



- Nearly 3,200 visitors enjoyed our pay-what-you-wish Welcome Wednesdays, and more than 650 people accessed the Reserve for just a dollar through the Museums for All* program.
- Each year, a Suquamish Tribal Member is offered the Suquamish Tribal Residency as part of our Creative Residency program. The resident is selected in collaboration with the Suquamish Museum and Suquamish Cultural Coop.

- Suquamish Tribal Members continue to enjoy free access to the Reserve during public hours, without the need for timed tickets.
- 50% of the Mindfulness Meditation sessions were offered on Welcome Wednesdays to lower the cost of attendance for non-members.
- Nearly 15,000 Seniors enjoyed reduced admission prices, as well as more than 700 Military members and more than 3,300 College Students.
- An ADA-accessible golf cart was purchased to more easily transport guests.

- Four additional benches were placed in areas of the gardens that didn't have enough places of respite.
- Infant changing tables were added to make the Reserve more accessible to families.

**Museums for All is a national program, of which Bloedel Reserve is one of 1,400 participants. Anyone receiving food assistance can gain reduced admission to participating cultural organizations (museums, gardens, zoos, etc.) throughout the United States simply by presenting their EBT card and a photo ID.*

More than
4,300 visitors
came for
Accessible Initiatives

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS*
Abby Wyatt Images
Alaska Airlines
Alderbrook Resort & Spa
Amelia Wynn Winery Bistro
American Horticulture Society

American Public Gardens Association
Arboretum Foundation
Bainbridge Artisan Resource Network
Bainbridge Arts and Crafts
Bainbridge Community Foundation
Bainbridge Dance Center

Bainbridge Family Photography
Bainbridge Island Chamber
of Commerce
Bainbridge Island Cooperative Weed
Management Area
Bainbridge Island Fire Department

Bainbridge Island Land Trust
Bainbridge Island Metro Park &
Recreation District
Bainbridge Island Museum of Art
Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails
Foundation

**Partial list
For full list visit:*





Gratitude in Action

Volunteers are essential to the life of Bloedel Reserve. Their time and care support the gardens, welcome visitors, and sustain our programs. Their dedication and strength brought to this community is much appreciated.

- Alexa Allen
- Becky Allen
- Kiara Andrich
- Julie Armitage
- Kathryn Arnold
- Mary Arul
- Ella Arvish
- Henry Arvish
- Kianna Bair
- Emily Barnett
- Emily Barrows
- Susan Beecham
- Larry Betsch
- Maya Bilbo
- Arni Blomquist
- Gail Bohnhoff-Hlavacek
- Lawrence Bouma
- Aline Bradley
- Rachel Brandt
- Marcus Bray
- Janet Brookes
- Christine Bruner
- Eric Bruner
- Jessica Bruner
- John Bullivant
- Kathleen Bullivant
- Luyao Cai
- Jane Carlin
- Christiane Carman
- Aalyiah Carrier
- Tatiana Carter
- Kristina Case
- Charlotte Caskey
- Johanna Caslander
- Joan Chandler
- Ken Christopher
- Jim Clune
- Kathy Cordaro-Brunke
- Joshua Corry
- Oliver Cuellar
- Dianne Curtin
- John Cutler
- Marsha Cutting
- Jody DeLay
- Caleb Delecki
- Marilyn Dickson
- Claudia Dixon
- Rachael Donham
- Mohan Duggal
- Bree Dwyer
- David Dwyer
- Christianna Edwards
- Ann Eklund
- Jazz Epstein
- Eric Erickson
- Riley Evad
- Anna Farrell
- Laurel Fisher
- Jeannette Franks
- Jacob Freimark
- Ursula Funari
- Deborah Furlan
- Connor Gage
- Vincent Garcia

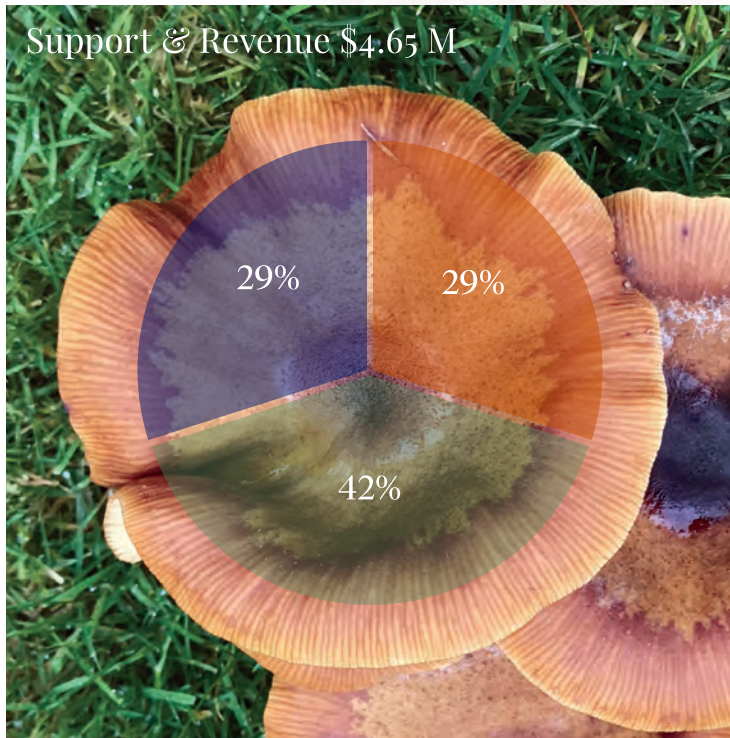
- Stefan Gaschott
- Kimberly Gawlik
- Masuko Giesecke
- William Giesecke
- Carolyn Gillick
- Maia Golinska
- Joe Gondar
- Donna Gonder
- Claudia Gorbman
- Lucy Gorlitz
- Tricia Grace
- Bridgette Grey
- Dorothy Guzzwell
- Elaine Hall
- David Handel
- Heather Harris
- Tiffany Hays
- Anne-Marie Heckt
- Carol Hendry
- Mary Hendry
- Teresa Hermosillo
- Charleen Hern
- Jeremy Hitchcock
- Amy Howard
- Tracy Hudson
- Lori Hurley
- Ariana Hurtado
- Myrt Ipema
- Karen Irish
- Sina Irving
- Anty Ishak
- Joshua Jacobson
- Stephanie Jensen
- Andrew Jobs
- Kirsten Jones
- Matilda Jurdal Thulin
- Johann Kalb
- Evan Karr
- Lilian Kelley
- William Kelley
- Monica Khaouly
- Julianne Kidder
- Dennis Kirkpatrick
- Amy Kuhl
- Grace Larsen
- Christine Laub
- Carolyn Leigh
- Stephanie Lewis-Sandy
- Phoenix Lin
- Amber Little
- Sue Lukins
- Gunda Lunde
- Susan Lundman
- Sandra Mackie
- Kathy Maher
- Kyle Mahoney
- Richard Mander
- Christopher Marten
- Megan McCafferty
- Joy McCallister
- Denise McCormack
- Andrea Mercado
- Debra Merkel
- Sofia Metcalf
- Meg Milligan
- Stephanie Milne-Lane
- Henry Molendijk
- Susan Morss
- Charlotte Moss
- Patrick Moulds

- Nancy Mumm
- Helen Muterspaugh
- Mike Nance
- Carole Nelson
- Rebecca Nickel
- Jill Nielsen
- Debbie Nyberg
- Susan Oblak
- Nathan Oestreich
- Laura Olesen-Berge
- Grace Oliver
- Ollie Oliver
- Rosalie Ott
- Matthew Overman
- Rhonda Patrick
- Lori Pederson
- Steffi Pencovic
- Michele Perras
- Candace Peters
- Betty Petersen
- Lynette Peterson
- Jody Piper
- Anne Pratt Jacoboski
- Shannon Ramos
- Jennifer Recker
- Carol Reid
- Brenda Ritchie
- Melissa Rockefeller
- Martha Rogers
- Donald Rooks
- McKenna Roots
- Jonathan Ross
- Judy Ruliffson
- Judy Rutberg
- Iwona Sakrejda
- Joe Salter
- Mark Salvadalena
- Kerrie Sanson
- Janet Sargent
- Takako Satoh
- Linda Scadron-Wattles
- Charles Schafer
- Stephan Scheller
- Pamela Schied
- Jonnie Schmidt
- Marianne Schovsbo
- Ernestina Schwartzman
- Wendy Seanor
- Ethan Searer
- John Seidler
- Stephanie Seigh
- Zoey Seigh
- Stephen Shapro
- Vicki Shapro
- Julia Shin
- Kari Sicheloff
- Ann Slichter
- Pontea Smithson
- Araya Sol
- Carolyn Standridge
- Joseph Stanko
- Stephanie Steele
- Willow Stewart
- Susan Strawn
- Tom Strid
- Scott Sullivan
- Jeanie Sundquist
- Ying Ying Tan
- Alice Tawressey
- Ruth Thomas
- Teresa Thorpe
- Necie Toohey
- Brianna Torres
- Bridgit Towle
- Heather Unwin
- John van den Meerendonk
- Jack Van Derrick
- Brandy Van Sickle
- Nicole Vani
- Roeliena Vanzanten
- Maia Vigneron
- Trento von Lindenbergh
- Andrea Voulgaropoulos
- Pamela Wachtler
- Kelley Walters
- Washington Youth Challenge Academy
- Ellen Weaver
- Bob Webb
- Weed Warriors
- Juliana Weis
- Teri Weldy
- Joe Wells
- Robert Weschler
- Beth Wheeler
- Marge Widmeyer
- Barb Wills
- Angela Winks
- Adrienne Wolfe
- Traci Woody
- Fatima Young
- Julie Zalikowski

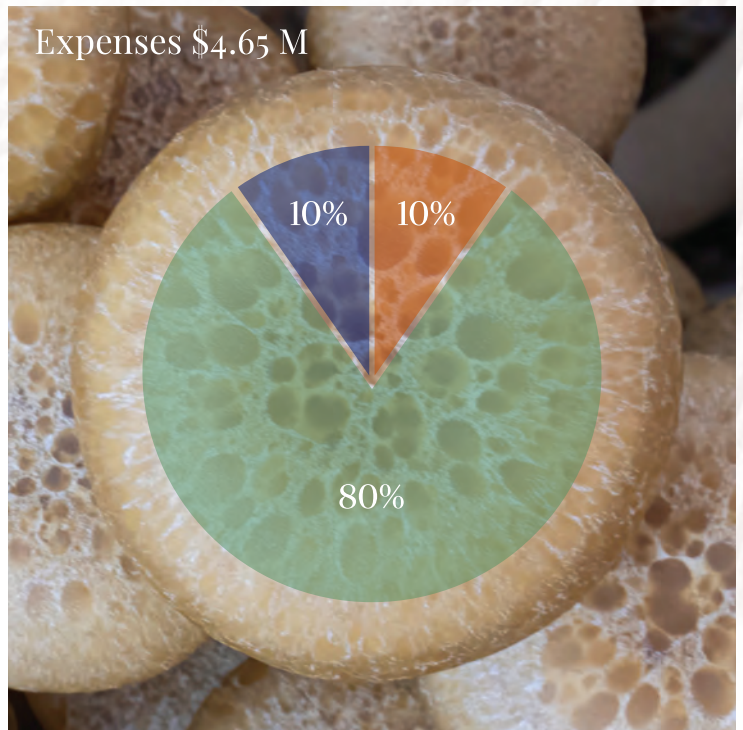
Facts & Figures

In 2025, our expenses were \$4.65 million. The funds that sustain our programs are a balanced blend of contributed, earned, and investment income. Nearly \$1.5 million was earned through admissions and memberships.

Thank you to all the supporters of the Reserve who provided \$1.36 million in new gifts. Community support infused \$155,000 in program funding for Creativity & Inspiration and Nature & Well-Being offerings.



● Contributions ● Endowments ● Ticket/Membership/Other



● Fundraising ● Management ● Programs & Gardens

Bloedel Reserve is maintained and nurtured through the generous support of donors, members, and volunteers. We are a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, Federal Tax ID# 91-6182786. Donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.

Making an Imprint on Tomorrow

MEMORIAL GIFTS

David Brastad, Janice & Ridge Cooper, Margaret Duncan & Bill Baird, Claire Hicks, Robin Judd, and Phyllis & Duane Rimel, in memory of Susannah Arntson

Justine & John Milberg, in memory of Vincent J. Arone

Alice Oliver, in memory of John Books

Marthajo Dalton, in memory of Becky Freeman

Richard Monkman, in memory of Forest & Marilyn Monkman

Todd Adams, in memory of Nelli Pashkova

Denise Thomson, in memory of Bonnie Powers

*We have done our utmost to ensure the accuracy of these lists. Should you find any omissions or errors, please contact the Development Team so that we may correct our records.
Email giving@bloedelreserve.org or call 206-842-7631, x30.*

HONORARY GIFTS

Richie Steffen, in honor of Richard A. Brown

Linda & Philip Hunter, in honor of Brynn Chivers

Emily Cooper, in honor of Susan Cooper Barron

Janet Gray, in honor of Stephen Davis

Tom Strid, in honor of Sally Doss

Jim Kelly, in honor of Karen Jensen-Kelly

Nenita Matney, in honor of Renee Kok

Amanda Brown, Richard Kruckeberg, and Stacy Marchesano, in honor of Kurt Kruckeberg & Dan Flores

Lainie Gordon & David Minberg, in honor of Kindy & John Lay

Naomi Gary & Thomas Fenwick, in honor of Andy Maron

Caren & Dave Anderson, in recognition of Evan Meyer

Anonymous, in honor of Ann Nolan

Debra & Arlen Prentice, in honor of Stephen Prentice

Ann Nolan, in honor of the Read Boys

Ann Nolan, in honor of Madeline Read

Jason Strid, in honor of Tom & Paula Strid

Bainbridge Library Staff, in honor of Wendy Westerlund



Looking Ahead

Bloedel Reserve marked meaningful progress and deepened connections in 2025. The Reserve's key strategic initiatives were advanced, including stewarding the land, delivering exceptional public programming, and strengthening our hospitality standards. We looked forward with significant work on a new Comprehensive Site Plan, completed in early 2026.

In the year ahead, our commitment to the land, expanding access, and building community will remain at the heart of our work.

Photos: Jen Layne, Abby Wyatt Images, Martina Machickova, Tammy Fujihara, Megan Karson, and Bloedel Reserve Staff Members (current and former)