

Shamana Kathryn Hutsell – MEMORIES (JULY 2, 2014)

It is 44 years today since we came to live at Trails End Lake.

Dale Hutsell, my husband's father, purchased property at Trails End Lake in 1962 and he and Henry McCord, who lived next door at the property across from Friendship Beach, helped establish Trails End Community Club. The road coming up from South Shore was dusty gravel then. It had been paved by the time we moved here July 2, 1975.

That first year we were surprised when, after Labor Day, everyone disappeared. At that time there were fewer than 10 places at the lake occupied year-round. Deep woods extended all the way around and down to Hood Canal. There was a pretty little park with big maples and an old stone fireplace across from the salt-water beach (where the community club parking lot is now). We have offspring of those maples growing in our yard. I dug up saplings when I was waiting for the school bus. For the first few years there was no school bus going to the lake and we had to drive our children (one year 5 times each day) to rendezvous with a bus.

The swimming area at Friendship Beach was a mud hole you sank into your knees if you tried to wade in. How things have changed! The Community Club voted to haul in two dump truck loads of gravel for the beach and many days were spent raking and spreading a mound of rocks that rose up higher than the dock. When we finished there was a safer place to swim. We have school buses now and cable internet and street-lights and garbage collection. The woods are mostly gone and there are probably a hundred people with full time residences. We have seen many people come and go over the years. Some were nice....some were mean....some were just downright strange. Oh the stories we could tell! Now some of the children (two of whom were born here at the lake) that rode school buses are grandparents and our great grandchildren come to play on this family land. I do miss the woods....so much wildlife habitat gone now. There are birds we used to see that no longer come here because there are no deep woods for them. We are keeping our elder trees and treasure each one. There is a lot more noise now, more traffic (that doesn't always obey posted speed limits). This is definitely different than the environment we chose to live in. We came here when we were young and now we are old....our roots here have grown deep. Things change....but I hope to be here, caring for this land and its creatures, until it is time for my body to return to earth.