

The mission of the Olympic Forest Coalition is to protect and restore forest and aquatic ecosystems on the public lands of the Olympic Peninsula.



**Olympic
Forest
Coalition**

Fall 2009

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We thank all our members and donors for their financial support. If you have not contributed yet, we hope you will become inspired to do so.

We are including a self-addressed envelope for your convenience or, if you prefer, you can donate to OFCO online on our Web site www.olympicforest.org.

With Crisis Comes Opportunity: Your Help Needed to Keep OFCO Strong

To Our Members and Friends:

The Olympic Forest Coalition (OFCO) has not been spared the financial pain this deep recession is spreading across the land. Foundation grant money is hard to come by these days, since the foundations are forced to cut back. Individual donors have the same financial problems we all have. So we've trimmed our budget significantly and are determined that we'll make it through the bad times.

And we have some potential good news. Very recently, just when the situation looked darkest, along came an anonymous donor offering us a **\$10,000 matching grant!**

This is where we need your help. For every new donor dollar we bring in, we will get one dollar from this special donor. Thus your donation of, for example, \$100 will bring us a total of \$200. Membership renewals of \$25 do not count towards this match, but anything over \$25 does—and all new membership dollars count.



We have six months to raise this money. The clock started ticking September 1 and will run through next February. This is going to require a big effort on OFCO's part. Our full board has committed to digging deeply into our own pockets, in accord with how seriously we take this challenge. That's because keeping OFCO robust and active is so important for the forests of the Olympic Peninsula.

You will read about some of our activities and projects in this newsletter and on our Web site, which is regularly updated.

Here's a brief summary of our major efforts at this time:

- Saving the Dosewallips River
- Securing funding for watershed restoration through the Washington Watershed Restoration Initiative coalition, a group OFCO founded
- Monitoring and appealing, if necessary, bad timber sales on the Olympic National Forest
- Working with the Wild Olympics Coalition to win legislative protection for the Olympic National Park and the Olympic National Forest
- Leading the fight to stop, or greatly modify, a land exchange between Pope Resources and Washington State Department of Natural Resources

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- Securing an environmentally sound landscape management plan for the Olympic Experimental State Forest, on the west and northwest end of the Peninsula
- Participating in the conservation caucus for Forests and Fish (a Habitat Conservation Plan for private industrial landowners)
- Stopping or modifying bad timber sale proposals for state land

Since 2002, when OFCO was formally organized as a non-profit group, we have become a household word among the agencies and organizations whose work focuses on the forests of the Olympic Peninsula. (They may not always be happy to see us coming, but that's as it should be!) We have a very active board of directors who provides the backbone and elbow grease for almost everything we do.

Our executive director, Bonnie Phillips, coordinates our efforts. Our part-time administrative assistant, Alex Bradley, handles our bookkeeping and database, produces our newsletter and action alerts, and provides assistance to Bonnie. Jill Silver, Mike Haggerty and Toby Thaler provide periodic help as contractors. We are cutting back significantly on our contractors' time and Bonnie hasn't received a raise since she started with us. We are mean and lean—in fighting trim, you might say— but if we lose out on this matching grant and the \$20,000 it can provide, our work will suffer significantly.

Please help us in any way you can. An envelope for donations is included in this newsletter. You can also donate through PayPal; just check our Web site at www.olympicforest.org for details. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and all donations are fully tax deductible.

Thank you so much for keeping OFCO working for our forests!

Gratefully,

OFCO Board of Directors

President's Column

Olympic Lands Become Part of National Database: Salmon Disappointed

by John Woolley, OFCO President

Olympic Experimental State Forest (OESF) became the largest temperate rainforest area to be added to the nation's Experimental Forest Database on August 25, 2009, at a signing event in Forks.

John Viada, retiring Olympic Region Manager, opened the ceremonies to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The OESF is five times larger than any temperate rainforest currently in the system. The signing also marked the 100th anniversary of our experimental forests.

Representing the Forest Service, PNW Station Director Bov Eav emphasized that collaboration will enable job creation, as well as provide the basis for the continued evolution of sustainable working forests.

DNR Land Management Division Manager Gretchen Nicholas followed with praise for the advantages of data sharing and good research: "This will put the OESF on the national map," enabling income and regard for biodiversity pathways. Nicholas said that such stand research will help coordinate the current Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) with the priority for increased income from public forests and will bring the state closer to implementing landscape planning. Landscape planning is a key OFCO objective.

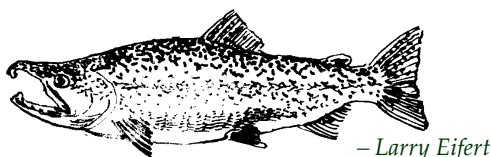
Forest Service Project Manager Doug Ryan spoke to the 30 attendees about worldwide recognition and the expertise that now will become available from the USFS science team. He relayed regrets from higher-ups in the USFS for not attending, while I was wondering who is going to speak for the salmon interests.

Norm Dicks's office was represented by aides Peter Modaff, Sara Crumb and Judith Morris, who had met with Forks Mayor Nedra Reed prior to the meeting about

job creation for the local economy. Modaff spoke to the assembly about efforts to increase logging using environmentally sustainable methods. Dicks intends for 100 million federal dollars to be earmarked for the region, with emphasis on funding USFS legacy roads (access roads). Concerns and questions about climate change and carbon sequestering should be directed to Dicks's office—Tacoma office toll free: 1-800-947-6676; constituents may contact by Webmail: www.house.gov/dicks/email.shtml.

Bov Eav and Gretchen Nicholas then signed the MOU, while I kept wondering about salmon. I did hear regard for wildlife and fisheries, but there was no specific mention for the species that is the prime indicator of ecosystem health on the Olympic Peninsula, no comment like, "You know, if salmon are coming back, then we know we're on the right track."

Yes, job creation is essential and the economy is of paramount importance. But I did feel that Mother Nature was not at the table. We still seem intent on taking more out of our lands than we are giving back. And who really benefits?—certainly not the salmon and, ultimately, not us either.



Groundtruthing at Slab Camp

— JW

On September 4, Ben Greuel and I groundtruthed the steep slopes south of the Slab Camp Trail to set up two cameras, trying to see if the female fisher in the area has a litter. I placed a camera on one tree, while Ben attached the chicken carcass to another tree 10 feet away. A film canister of musk was tied to a nearby tree. (This work is not recommended for those who gag easily.) Some very large Doug-firs thrive on these 60 degree slopes, showing char marks from a fire they survived a very long time ago.

Our restoration work on FS Road #2875 still is looking good, but off-highway vehicle (jeeps, quads, motorcycles and the like) riders have once again moved large boulders or otherwise invaded the old Canyon Creek campground/archaeological area. So far, Slab Camp Creek wetlands have not been re-invaded but the Big Pit once again has become a site for perverted recreation.

This Land Is Your Land, This Land Is My Land ...

by Connie Gallant

And so the song by Woody Guthrie goes. Those were the days when we actually believed that public lands would remain public lands forever—not to be horse-traded, sold or squandered because of budget requirements. Good old days, eh?

If we are to revitalize the belief that public lands still belong to the American people, we must make sure that the government agencies responsible for those lands share this public interest and follow their own guidelines. But this task is becoming ever more problematic in the face of heavy lobbying activity by special interests—interests hell-bent on profiting from our lands rather than preserving them.

For the past year, residents of Jefferson County have been attentive to a land exchange proposal between the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and a private timber and development corporation, Pope Resources. DNR maintains that the exchange would consolidate its holdings, and thus improve public recreation, the forest resource base and habitat conditions.

But, in fact, the land exchange would do the exact opposite. It would be a very sweet deal for Pope Resources, which would receive state lands in prime areas for future development. It would be a very poor deal for the rest of us, who would see public forest land disappear throughout much of the county, accelerating losses of the timber land base, forest habitats, and local tax revenues, while encouraging the urbanization, or sub-urbanization, of our county. (That spells S-P-R-A-W-L.)

In the proposal, DNR would trade Pope Resources more than 3,000 acres of state lands with valuable second-growth trees in the central part of eastern Jefferson County and near Port Ludlow. In return, DNR would receive up to 4,430 acres of less valuable third-growth trees in the mountains west of Quilcene. Once the state lands are traded to Pope Resources, they can be sold as large lot development or they can be rezoned for higher density development over time. In a domino effect, a few rezones make it easier to rezone adjacent parcels, inexorably eroding the forestry land base.

Following an outpouring of disapproval (at meetings, and via e-mails and letters) from county residents, our county commissioners, and public interest organizations, DNR Public Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark has

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agreed, for the time being, to put a hold on the land exchange and to have several public meetings to request more input from all concerned and affected. The first meeting was held on September 2 for local elected officials; the second meeting was held on September 9 for the environmental community. There will be a third meeting for the timber industry later this month.

At the first of these meetings, DNR explained that the lines have been "redrawn" slightly to exclude a couple of parcels around Center Road and Highway 104; all other parcels remain in the proposal. The underlying message is that this is still a good deal, because "master blocks" would be a more efficient method of producing revenue, and residents would not be so negative and complain about trees being cut near their "backyards."

So, does this sound like our public lands are going to be protected ... ?

We learned nothing new at the September 9 meeting, except that DNR appears anxious to 'git on outta Dodge.' In his presentation, DNR's Stephen Saunders said the agency cannot afford to retain such scattered parcels, and that's why they prefer a land exchange to consolidate their holdings. Land exchanges, according to Saunders, are easier to handle than land purchases. When questioned why DNR does not use the available and designated funds to purchase forest lands at risk of conversion, he cited staff cutbacks; apparently a large staff is required for the process of purchasing additional lands.

With \$45 million in the account to purchase lands state wide, plus the 2009 allocation by the legislature of an additional \$75 million, we see a good opportunity in the present economic downturn for DNR to purchase the lands from Pope Resources instead of doing the trade. Saunders admitted they have not approached Pope yet about such a possibility. Suggestions were made to acquire new forest lands in eastern Jefferson County but, again, staff cutbacks were cited.

So, does this sound like our public lands are going to be protected and remain public lands, or does it sound like DNR is looking for an easy way out by retreating from the eastern part of our county and scurrying to a larger area where the eyes and ears of the public will not

interfere—while trading away valuable public lands which ultimately will be developed?

If a large staff is indeed required for this process, it may not be unreasonable for DNR to request special authorization from the legislature to use funds from the lands account to cover the staffpower needed for such transactions. Where there's a will, there's always a legislative way.

Fast forward 40 years, and what will our children and their children have for forest land and recreational areas if such land exchanges establish precedents? I am certain that New Yorkers are now grateful for the vision folks had for Central Park back in the 1840s; without the park, their city would look totally different. It was their land then, and it is their land now.

Woody Guthrie would have been proud of them. If we all work together to maintain and protect the vision of our forest lands, I am certain that Woody would be singing with us: (all together now) "This Land Is Your Land, This Land Is My Land ... "

To find out how you can make a difference in this land exchange, please contact Connie at connie@olympicforest.org.

OESF Landscape Plan Restarted ... on Crutches

by Marcy Golde

Public Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark has restarted development of the Olympic Experimental State Forest (OESF) Landscape Plan for 265,000 state-owned acres on the western side of the Olympic Peninsula. Goldmark acted in response to urgent requests from the beneficiaries of income from the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR)-managed lands on the Olympic Peninsula and the Olympic Forest Coalition (OFCO).

The beneficiaries want to maximize income from timber sales, and OFCO is trying to ensure conservation of public resources. While our aims differ, we agree with the beneficiaries that certainty on both ends of that spectrum would be a benefit for all.

The framework for DNR planning the OESF is the 1997 Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), overlaid with the 2004 sustainable harvest calculation (SHC). In the DATE settlement agreement following litigation on the SHC (WEC et al. v. DNR), DNR recommitted to planning for the OESF as set out in the HCP: "DNR will seek to understand the complexity of forest ecosystems

within a commercial forest. This emphasis is what is unique about the [OESF] ... Planning from a landscape perspective will be the initial basis for integrating production and conservation in the Experimental Forest ... consistent with the emphasis on cumulative effects that landscape planning allows."

But the current budget crisis has laid its heavy hand on DNR, so the OESF Plan will be stripped down to implementing only currently established policies. No new management ideas will be included. In the words of DNR's SEPA Scoping Document, the plan "will inform forest management decisions implementing the agency's policies, including the sustainable harvest level for the planning unit, and the 1997 Habitat Conservation Plan" (SEPA Notification, 8/28/2009, Summary of Scoping). The OESF Plan is now scheduled to be completed in just over one year. The Draft EIS is due early next May, with the minimum 30-day review period, and the Final EIS would be released December 11.

DNR's decision to proceed with a stripped-down planning process for the OESF means that OFCO's requests to consider our conservative alternative, with its reduced public resource impacts and reduced timber harvests—at least in the short term—will not be considered in the EIS. DNR's decision also means that none of the beneficiaries' requests for significantly increased harvest will be included for analysis in the EIS.

A few of the major items in our alternative that will not be considered for inclusion as part of the DNR's OESF Plan are:

- A comprehensive alternative aimed at much better conservation, which would probably result in a substantially reduced harvest in the first couple of decades. The DNR plan will be limited to the current silvicultural policies, guidelines and practices and will be designed to meet the current harvest level of 576 million board feet in a decade established in the SHC.
- Timber harvest levels calculations based on actual conditions in each of the 11 Landscape Units in the OESF as described in the HCP; the final number for the forest would be a summation of the individual calculations. This is a bottom-up approach. The DNR plan for modeling the harvest level is difficult to understand, but it does not appear to meet the HCP description of 11 separate plans. Most importantly, the Sustainable Harvest Number for the OESF was determined in DNR's 2004–2007 process

under Commissioner Sutherland, and the new OESF plan will be designed to meet that number. This is a top-down approach, much less sensitive to the diverse conditions in the 11 Landscape Units.

- Research and monitoring as integral parts of the Landscape Plan, including a scientifically valid Adaptive Management system using Best Available Science. The DNR plan will include some form of Adaptive Management, but will not necessarily use the concept of Best Available Science. In OFCO's view, this approach is not really adaptive management, which requires certainty that changes needed to conserve public resources will, in fact, be made. The Research and Monitoring Strategy will be completed after the plan is done and will have no public review. DNR's budget for research and monitoring over the next five years will depend primarily on the co-managers of the University of Washington Olympic Natural Resources Center and the U.S. Forest Service Experimental Forest & Range Network.

- Adherence to the riparian buffer widths spelled out in the HCP, until Adaptive Management can show that reduced buffers satisfy the full conservation objectives in the HCP. The DNR plan will continue to use much smaller Interior Core Buffers, which are well below those specified in the HCP.

OFCO's state forest team will continue to monitor and participate in DNR's OESF planning over the next year. Because of the limited scope of the process, however, we are not hopeful that an innovative "experimental" forest will result. And we are especially concerned that the plan will not properly evaluate the cumulative effects of timber harvesting, or provide a mechanism to change the harvest level ("adaptive management") as needed to ensure conservation of fish, water, and wildlife resources.

Great Old Broads Walk the Dosewallips

by Shelley Spalding

The newly established Great Old Broads for Wilderness local Washington chapter (Polly Dyer Cascadia Broadband) chose the magnificent Dosewallips watershed for their first "Broadwalk" in late June.

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Dosewallips Broadwalk.....Continued from Page 5

A Broadwalk is a combination camping, hiking and advocacy trip where "Broads" meet other amazing activists and learn about a specific wilderness area through on-the-ground exploration and discussion with folks who know the area and the issues. And Broadwalks are a whole lot of fun!

Every Broadwalk takes on its own unique character. The Dosewallips was chosen because the Olympic National Forest plans to build a road through the old-growth Polly Dyer Grove, which abuts the Buckhorn Wilderness. The old road, adjacent to the river and sandwiched between two wilderness areas (Buckhorn and Brothers), was blocked by a slide in 2002. Now there's an opportunity to convert it to a permanent trail. Washington Trails Association volunteers already have put in the "Up and Over Trail" that takes hikers, backpackers and bicyclers above the washout and back to the now-abandoned road leading to Elkhorn Campground and the Dosewallips Campground in Olympic National Park. But the Forest Service continues to push for motorized access.

Home base for the Broadwalk was Dosewallips State Park. Fourteen women and one man gathered for wine, conversation and dinner on Friday night, with participants coming from as far north as Orcas Island and as far south as Ashland, Oregon.

On Saturday morning, after breakfast, Dean Yoshina, Hood Canal District Ranger with the U.S. Forest Service, made a presentation on land management activities and projects on the Olympic Peninsula, including the Dosewallips Road. Broads were well versed on Dosewallips Road project history and were aware that the June 2008 draft Environmental Impact Statement drew a large public response in favor of converting the abandoned road to a trail, with other agencies and local tribes in agreement. When asked why the Forest Service was so intent on proceeding with the road project, Yoshina referred to a memorandum with the Olympic National Park in 2005 that identified the shared responsibilities and interests of the two agencies (National Park Service and National Forest Service) in the restoration of motorized access to the Elkhorn and Dosewallips Campgrounds. We also learned that the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) is no longer a co-lead agency in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the proposed road replacement. Apparently the FHA has no funding to contribute to the project, nor are any such funds seen as becoming available.

This information led to our next question: Who will pay for the project? At this time, Yoshina did not have an answer.

Yoshina was a great speaker and we appreciated his making the trip on a Saturday morning to help us understand further the convoluted history of plans for the Dosewallips Road washout.



OFCO Board Member Shelley Spalding and District Ranger Dean Yoshina – photo submitted by Shelley Spalding

Following Yoshina's presentation, the Broads headed for the Dosewallips River. At the trailhead of the washout area, we found more than 30 cars parked; apparently lots of folks were enjoying the Dosewallips without motorized access. Hiking the abandoned road, we were heartened to see how quickly a road will close in and become people-friendly once the cars are gone. Notable sights included a substantial bridge to nowhere, the Elkhorn and Dosewallips Campgrounds being enjoyed by backpackers of all ages, and the Dosewallips Falls.

Wildflowers were in glorious profusion along the river that constantly changes from roaring cascades to still pools. In the words of CarrieAnn Thunell following her visit to the Dosewallips, "There is quiet here, solitude, serenity, and the longer one stays, the more this unique community of living things stirs the heart."

That evening, back at camp, OFCO Executive Director Bonnie Phillips told us about the history of the conservation movement in Washington state. She emphasized the importance of small, active

environmental groups in effecting change, especially during the Spotted Owl controversy and the Northwest Forest Plan. The next morning, after breakfast, OFCO Board Member Kevin Geraghty presented information on citizen monitoring of Forest Service road conditions and restoration activities, and the monitoring protocol being developed by OFCO.

During our closing circle, as we prepared to pack up and head for home, several Broads expressed interest in joining the citizen monitoring effort once the protocol is finalized, and in planning a fundraising social event this coming fall or winter.

We had become such good friends, thanks to our shared passion and activism for preserving and protecting wild places, that it was hard to go our separate ways. Besides the warm friendships, we took with us a commitment to write letters in support of the Dosewallips being freed of a road that impedes its ability to function as a wild salmon and steelhead river and as a place for respite, quiet and genuine interaction with the natural world.

For information on Great Old Broads for Wilderness, contact saschar44@gmail.com. For more history and information on the Dosewallips Road, check our Web site: www.olympicforest.org/news.htm.



Roadless Rule Update

Roadless Area protection has been much in the news of late. Following is a summary of its current status, prepared by Mike Anderson of The Wilderness Society.

Beyond what's discussed in Mike's summary, the Obama Administration has stepped into the Wyoming case and said it may intervene on the side of the environmental community. Although Obama still has not made clear whether his administration will protect all Inventoried Roadless Areas (5,000 acres and more) on national forests, it appears to be heading in that direction. Alaska and Idaho remain the major areas of concern.

On the Olympic National Forest, all Roadless Areas are now protected, but this national forest has not attempted to plan timber sales in these areas for at least a decade.
– Bonnie Phillips

Legal Status of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule

Summary: The Roadless Area Conservation Rule was adopted by the U.S. Forest Service on January 12, 2001, after the most extensive public involvement in the history of federal rulemaking. The Roadless Rule generally prohibited road construction and timber cutting in 58.5 million acres of inventoried roadless areas, covering about 30 percent of the National Forest system. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the Rule's legality in 2002, but a Wyoming district court ruled otherwise a year later. In December 2003, the Bush Administration amended the Rule by temporarily exempting Alaska's Tongass National Forest pursuant to a settlement with the state of Alaska.

In May 2005, the Bush Administration repealed the Roadless Rule and replaced it with a state petition process. In September 2006, however, a federal district court in California invalidated the Bush Administration's action and reinstated the 2001 Roadless Rule nationwide, except in the Tongass. In August 2008, the Wyoming district court again invalidated the Roadless Rule and issued a nationwide injunction, which has been appealed to the Tenth Circuit. In October 2008, the Administration adopted a separate roadless rule for the state of Idaho. On May 28, 2009, the Obama Administration issued a one-year interim directive prohibiting the Forest Service from authorizing any road-building or logging projects in roadless areas without approval of the Secretary of Agriculture, except in Idaho. On August 5, 2009, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the California district court decision invalidating the Bush Administration's rule and reinstating the 2001 Roadless Rule.

Currently, the 2001 Roadless Rule is in effect nationwide except in Idaho and in Alaska's Tongass National Forest. Thus, the Forest Service may not undertake activities that violate the Roadless Rule on 40 out of the 58.5 million total acres of Inventoried Roadless Areas. Roadless area projects in the Tongass National Forest are subject to approval by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Key unresolved issues:

- Will the Tenth Circuit reverse or affirm the Wyoming court decision?
- Will the Obama Administration continue the temporary exemption of the Tongass?
- Will the administration finalize a Colorado rule?
- Will the Idaho rule stand up in court?

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