

*The mission of the Olympic Forest Coalition is promoting the protection, conservation and restoration of natural forest ecosystems and their processes on the Olympic Peninsula, including fish and wildlife habitat, and surrounding ecosystems.*



**Olympic Forest Coalition**

**Fall 2013**

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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 website [www.olympicforest.org](http://www.olympicforest.org).**



*John Woolley*

## President's Column

As outgoing president of OFCO, I'd like to congratulate and welcome Connie Gallant as president of the Olympic Forest Coalition board. I will now be serving as vice president, and look forward to continuing to scrutinize the actions of our public lands agencies, at both the federal and state levels.

- Dosewallips Engineered Log jam: The pilot project ELJ has been completed by Sea Level Builders. The three-part structure is the first of several proposed river engineering works between the Dose washout (9.7 miles up FS 2610) and the east boundary of the federal Forest Service (FS) land, just a mile into Olympic National Forest (ONF). The projects were promoted by the Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC). An earlier ELJ lies near the mouth of the Dosewallips on state park land. The present project was completed during the exceptional run of pink salmon (humpies) on the north Olympic Peninsula this year. The additional ELJs on the Dose will be considered if this completed project attracts chinook (king) salmon within five years. OFCO is supporting a strong state-of-the-art monitoring program, with underwater cameras.
- Queets Thin: ONF has proposed an extensive thinning project that includes thousands of acres and a number of proposed parcels. Too much of this proposal is in Riparian Reserve, where downed trees are supposed to be left on the ground to enhance ecological integrity. This requirement does make such thinning proposals less profitable for the industry. Many of the FS extended and reclaimed roads should be pulled back or shortened. All should be planned with deconstruction in mind. The Great Old Broads for Wilderness will participate with OFCO in surveying these roads next year.
- Olympic National Forest's revised ATM Plan: This access, travel, and management plan is intended to be completed in 2014. ONF has many roads scheduled for decommission, as funding for continual upkeep will not be available. In fact, funding to decommission identified roads will likely take 20 years, or more. Some roads that will no longer have commercial use will be considered for conversion to trails; both hiking/bike trails and motorized routes are referred to as trails. Public input proposals will be considered during the study.
- Buck Mountain Weather Facility: Road and building improvements are under consideration at the present for this viewpoint of the Rocky Brook watershed.

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- Wilderness Management Plan: Olympic National Park intends a late-December release for public scrutiny of the long-awaited stewardship plan for the 95 percent of the park that has been designated Wilderness. The plan was originally requested in 1994! Funding requirements, as well as calculating the loss of discretionary executive authority, have apparently slowed completion. OFCO and ONF will be directly affected, since proposed FS Wilderness additions are adjacent to national park land.
- A Mountain Goat Study for Olympic National Park will begin in January 2014. Funding for such a study is available now, so planning will begin to take advantage of the opportunity. Goats are not native to the Olympic Peninsula, according to most sources, so their introduction in the 1920s for hunting has not been compatible with preserving the park's ecological integrity. Several endemic species are considered at risk, and human travel has become adventuresome in two heavily populated goat areas.

Again, we greatly appreciate your financial support. It enables us to continue our work and keep a local public voice at the decision-makers' table, and to qualify for the grant monies that fund many of our substantial projects.

In October the OFCO board of directors elected Connie Gallant as president of the board, with former president John Woolley remaining on the board as vice president.

Initially organized as the Quilcene Ancient Forest Coalition in 1989 by Alex Bradley and Bob Crowley, OFCO has been promoting and defending the protection of our forest and wildlife habitat ever since.

Connie Gallant has served as volunteer vice president of OFCO for several years, handling its administrative functions and public relations. She currently serves in another volunteer position, as Chair of the Wild Olympics Campaign, seeking to

add wilderness and "wild and scenic" river designations on the Olympic Peninsula for the protection of our watersheds.

"I look forward to working with the board and our members in the many environmental projects of concern to all residents of the Olympic Peninsula," Connie said. "I hope to build a closer and more interactive relationship with our membership and work to make prosperity and environmental protection go hand in hand."

"On behalf of the OFCO board, I would like to thank John Woolley for the years he has served as president of the board. John has been instrumental in leading OFCO to many successes and in developing a good working relationship with Forest Service staff—a development critical to our ongoing communications regarding protection of public lands. His dedication and love for the forest have been the driving force behind our programs. I know that I am filling some big shoes as the new board president, but with John remaining as vice president, it's my hope that, together, we can steer the course of OFCO to better and bigger programs. Thank you, John!" - *Connie Gallant*

## A Win-Win for the Counties and the Bird

by Marcy Golde

As we wrote in the last issue of our newsletter, on March 18 Judge Heller of the King County Superior Court heard Olympic Forest Coalition's and Seattle Audubon Society's challenge to the Washington Department of Natural Resources' (DNR's) decision to open more than 12,000 acres of previously protected, higher-quality Marbled Murrelet habitat to logging. Prior to May 2012 DNR was unable to log that habitat because of commitments it made in its Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), a federally approved logging and conservation plan developed pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act. But in May 2012, DNR proposed, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approved, an amendment to the HCP that lifted protective restrictions and opened that habitat up to



logging. OFCO and Seattle Audubon challenged DNR's decision in state court, while OFCO and Sierra Club challenged federal approval of the HCP amendment in federal court.

The plaintiffs in the cases received good news in both cases this past July. In the state court case, Judge Heller agreed with the plaintiffs and ruled that DNR's "determination of non-significance" for the decision violated the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). His ruling protects 12,000 acres of Marbled Murrelet habitat in southwest Washington until DNR adopts the long-term Marbled Murrelet conservation strategies required by the HCP. Also in July, Judge Leighton of the U.S. District Court in Tacoma denied the federal defendants' motion to dismiss the case, meaning that the challenge to their approval of the HCP amendment will go forward.

Judge Heller's ruling in the state court case placed renewed emphasis on having a long-term planning process that considers all viable options to balance important economic considerations with the preservation of Washington's natural heritage. Seattle Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and Olympic Forest Coalition have been actively providing input to DNR as it develops the requisite long-term conservation strategies. The conservation objective is to recover populations of the murrelet, a Pacific Northwest seabird that nests in old forests near marine waters, by protecting what remains of these forests.

Conservation groups hope that, as a result of Judge Heller's decision, DNR will have increased options available as it develops its long-term strategies. Those strategies will shape forestry on DNR-managed lands for decades and should help protect forest habitat for the murrelet, preserve old-growth ecosystems, and provide clean air and water for human consumption, as well as for other species including wild salmon. Well-balanced long-term conservation strategies should also provide long-term and stable benefits to the counties and other trust beneficiaries.

"It's heartening that the court agrees with us on the impacts logging can have on murrelet habitat and the need to require DNR to respect the terms of its Habitat Conservation Plan," said outgoing OFCO President John Woolley.

"It was very surprising to see DNR claim that opening 12,000 acres of a threatened species' habitat to clearcut logging wouldn't have any significant environmental impacts," noted Paul Kampmeier, an OFCO board member and attorney with the Washington Forest Law Center (WFLC).

In addition to working with DNR on long-term planning, conservation groups have successfully lobbied the state legislature for \$1.5 million in funds to protect state lands and compensate counties for potential timber harvest revenue.

The Washington Forest Law Center, a nonprofit law firm that represents public interest groups in forest policy advocacy and litigation regarding state and private lands in the Pacific Northwest, represents OFCO, Sierra Club, and Seattle Audubon Society in the two cases. Wyatt Golding, an attorney with WFLC, argued the state court case in Judge Heller's courtroom.

Reflecting on the broader implications of the murrelet's survival, Woolley observed, "What's good for the Marbled Murrelet is one step toward protecting Washington coastal watersheds in our changing world."

**Book Signing & Presentation  
with *Rare Bird* author Maria Mudd Ruth**

Please join the Olympic Forest Coalition, North Olympic Sierra Club Group, and Admiralty Audubon for an inspiring presentation on the rare and threatened seabird, the Marbled Murrelet.

As one of the few seabirds that traverses both land and sea, the Marbled Murrelet lives a double life, blending the ancient forests with the salty waters. Come learn about a bird that has become as controversial and celebrated as the Northern Spotted Owl. Enjoy Maria's well-crafted story as she explores the biology and politics around one of Washington state's most threatened birds.

**When:** Tuesday, November 12, 7–9 PM  
**Where:** The Cotton Building, 607 Water Street  
Port Townsend

Please RSVP to [connie@olympicforest.org](mailto:connie@olympicforest.org).

## Monitoring Dosewallips River Engineered Log Jams

by *Connie Gallant*

During the last part of July 2013, the Olympic National Forest (ONF) and Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC) began the construction of three engineered log jams on the Dosewallips River.

OFCO has been monitoring the construction process weekly with photos and video clips (can be seen on our extended blog [www.doseroad.org](http://www.doseroad.org)). Our objective is not only to observe the construction methods and any damages done to the natural contours of the river, silt and sediment discharge, and so forth, but also to continue monitoring for the next five years by checking the data gathered by ONF and WFC to see if numbers of redds (spawning sites) on the river are increasing, as predicted by the agency and WFC.

A monitoring process we strongly advocate is the use of underwater video cameras so that we can have visual proof and count of any progress done by a fish biologist. The "look, see, and count" methods that have been used in the past do not provide sufficient evidence.

The remaining engineered log jams are planned for 2018—but only if considerable success in the increase of redds can be demonstrated

OFCO will remain very vigilant throughout this five-year period. We are not yet convinced that this intervention will be of actual help to the salmon runs. One thing is apparent: the section of this beautiful, free-flowing river where the present jams are being constructed is esthetically damaged permanently, barring natural catastrophe, by these large and very unappealing structures.

In any case, OFCO remains objective on the ELJ question and eager to assure that monitoring is done by an independent party, with no stake in the outcome, and with underwater cameras that will supply reliable documentation of results.

## Update on Stream Typing

by *Marcy Golde*

In our last newsletter, we described how our voicing our concerns about prospective logging on the Stumpy's Ride Sale in the Clallam and Hoko drainages led to reducing the sale by 29 acres and eliminating 960 feet of planned road. We also felt our outreach in this case had enhanced OFCO's

ability to communicate with the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

And indeed it did. We held a joint field trip with DNR in March which highlighted areas of disagreement on how streams are typed, and thus how much protection the streams will receive. That meeting led to a major all-day presentation by OFCO and discussion between OFCO with DNR's executive and field staff.

The DNR folks took our concerns seriously and have been working ever since to change and, presumably, improve stream typing. So far they have added DNR field staff from around Western Washington and entered into intensive work with the Department of Ecology on how to define the Ordinary High Water Mark on small streams, which is a key measurement determining whether or not buffers are added. DNR has recognized issues with their current methodology and has asked OFCO to review a draft product sometime in the fall.

We congratulate DNR management for their willingness to listen and respond to our concerns. We hope this effort will lead to more such cooperation in the future.

## Congressional Field Panel on Collaborative Harvest Agreements

by *Peggy Bruton*

In mid-August, as part of the Healthy Forest Caucus he co-chairs, freshman Rep. Derek Kilmer convened a congressional Field Panel on Collaborative Harvest Agreements. The panel consisted of Olympic National Forest Supervisor Reta Laford; Conservation Northwest's Mitch Friedman; The Nature Conservancy's Lloyd McGee; The Wilderness Society's Mike Anderson; Yakima Indian Nation DNR Deputy Director Phil Rigdon; and American Forest Resource Council's state manager Matt Comisky.

The purpose of this panel was for these folks, all experienced community activists, to provide input and comments on the effectiveness of such collaborative efforts between the USFS, environmental organizations and private timber companies. All the panelists did a very good job in

giving details from their experiences with very positive information.

Congressman Kilmer is trying to find ways in which both economic and recreation sectors can benefit from the Wild Olympics' protection of wilderness and rivers.

## The Impact of Federal Closures Hits Home

### Olympic National Park and Peninsula Can Benefit from Wild Olympics

by Peter Guerrero, North Olympic Group, Sierra Club

The recent federal government closure, resulting from Congress's inability to bridge sharp partisan differences on federal budget priorities, has hit communities surrounding our national parks particularly hard. It comes on top of years of deferred spending at our national parks and cuts that have forced park officials to focus on their "core" mission. Often that means resources that might have been used for the restoration of popular, heavily used areas are directed, instead, to law enforcement and park administration.

Communities that are gateways to our parks, like Sequim, Port Townsend, Port Angeles, and Forks, have been particularly hard hit. The *Peninsula Daily News* reported that: "The closure has cost [Olympic National Park] an estimated 77,808 visitors and an estimated \$2.9 million in lost visitor dollars in the first 10 days [alone] ..." The *New York Times* reported: "It has gotten so bad [at other parks] that four counties in Utah have declared a state of emergency. The closing of Zion has cost about \$3.5 million in visitor spending ..."

But the loss of visitor spending at restaurants, hotels, and stores is just part of the impact. Olympic National Park furloughed over 100 employees who buy gas at local gas stations, shop in local supermarkets, bank at local banks, and support neighborhood businesses. The income from these federal jobs, in turn, supports still more local jobs and businesses and the tax base of our communities.

In fact, the economic consulting firm Headwater Economics estimated that fully 24% of Jefferson County's total per capita income is attributable to the presence of protected public lands like Olympic

National Park and the Olympic Wilderness. In Clallam County, it is 14%. These numbers demonstrate that the economy of the Olympic Peninsula has changed dramatically from one that was dominated by the timber industry in the last century. Headwater Economics went on to find that additional wilderness protections could "provide significant economic benefits by building on the Peninsula's current competitive strengths centered on its spectacular public lands that give it an edge over other rural counties in attracting the new residents, entrepreneurs and skilled workers driving [the] economy today."

Although the federal government has reopened, we're not out of the woods yet (no pun intended). Recently, Park Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum told local park supporters that she expected an 8% cut in the Park's 2014 budget. Reducing visitor center hours and the continued deferral of park maintenance and repairs to heavily used areas are possible consequences. Unfortunately these are also the types of cuts that discourage visitors.

We need to tell our elected officials—from the local level to Congress—that these budget priorities are heading in the wrong direction. The economic well-being of our communities and our quality of life depend on a well-funded Olympic National Park and Olympic Wilderness.

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## FROM OUR MEMBERS

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### Destroying a River to Save It?

Besides poor logging practices that add tons and tons of harmful sediments to our mountain rivers, another cause of poor salmon and other fish reproduction has been the full-scale removal of natural in-river large woody debris. This was promoted in the 1970s and '80s as a way to "increase fish passage."

We now recognize that in-river woody debris—especially conifer wood—adds nutrients, provides shelter for all ages of fish, helps produce deep pools which adult fish enjoy, and helps create side channels and diversity in water flow. With diversity we also see more areas of gravel beds for spawning.

In addition to these concerns, all wild anadromous ("returning from the sea") fish species are doing poorly, for a variety of reasons: continued overfishing, rising

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*Destroying a River.....continued from page 5*

ocean pH due to human-caused increase in CO2 uptake, competition from hatchery fish, algae overgrowth, eelgrass declines, and pollution in all of our common waterways.

So far, however, the remedy of choice has been to try to replace large woody debris (LWD) in various forms in rivers, at great public expense and effort. The stratagems for doing this are still hotly debated.

Interfering with a river's natural flow and flood patterns by installing very large permanent Engineered Log Jams (ELJs) is more risky than building a modest log structure that imitates a naturally occurring log jam. Track records of previous ELJ projects are mixed; some have accomplished nothing at all, or caused some serious harm. ELJ structures have become larger and more permanent over the years, and are now designed to withstand a "100-year" flood.

There have been no long-term studies of ELJs. Yet they are already built in, or proposed, for most river areas on the Peninsula; even for those as pristine as the mid and upper Dosewallips, which has no hatcheries or dams, and which has 90 percent of its river course surrounded in forest, undeveloped, and under National Forest or National Park protection. The Dose also has a rare and ESA-listed species, wild steelhead trout, still spawning in its mid-river area every year.

Rivers naturally are changing, all the time. Fish are continually adapting to this change if it is not radical. So rivers need the freedom to move naturally in response to flood events and other circumstances. Interrupting this natural progression by building large and permanent structures that resist the river's forces is one way to stop change: forcing it to do as we wish.

Do we know better than Nature? We do not. We learned this painfully with the Elwha dams. So we are now removing its dams, at tremendous expense, and allowing that river, and the fish using it, to once again run free and wild.

There is no overall agreement in the scientific community about how ELJ structures should be designed for maximum benefit, nor where they could best be sited. More questions arise when structures are large-profile, and thus invasively installed. Large trees must be removed from river banks and side channels; the riverbed is excavated and natural flow patterns changed. Large wooden pilings are embedded vertically in the tons and tons of freely dug river bottom. Logs are placed in this pile. It is nothing a river could possibly make on its own, and does not function as a natural log jam would—that is, to allow water to pass through, and perhaps to disintegrate over time. The ELJ method of

river "restoration" work is still described, and justified, as "experimental."

The Dosewallips ELJ project has been very controversial for its proposed size and location. The construction falls literally on top of a specific customary wild steelhead spawning site, one of only an estimated 10 to 12 such sites remaining on the Dose. It disrupts coho rearing habitat, and NOAA expects over a thousand juvenile fish to die as areas are dewatered and dug up. Many will certainly be shocked and may not be found or recover. Ironically, for a project meant to benefit fish, much fish reproduction here may be set back for years to come. We are destroying good habitat as we seek to "create" more habitat. Yet there are no guarantees this will even happen—and I have had federal officials tell me this directly. It is an expensive and risky gamble every time.

The Dosewallips ELJ project's first phase has received permits to be built as a five year trial only. It will be monitored by the USFS, and its success (or lack thereof) is to be reported to the NOAA habitat office in Olympia, with improvements mandated if it does not "work" to enhance habitat and spawning as guaranteed to do. This is a good thing. The actual construction, however, especially in this case, literally will cause more harm than good for as long as it takes the river to right itself when work is finished. Certain best practices must be followed as this project proceeds, and thus this site will assist the public and others to make sure damage is minimal. For minimizing damage is, sadly, the best we can hope for.

Please peruse the photos under Dose River/Monitoring at OFCO's website each week as the work progresses, and comment as you wish. Dialogue about this issue is very important to improving our understanding of how rivers actually work, and its species thrive. Above all, we do not want to "destroy the river to save it."

*Sallie Harrison*  
Dosewallips Land Owner and OFCO member

*Editor's note: OFCO News welcomes articles from members relevant to forest/aquatic issues.*



- Larry Eifert

## The Bigger Picture: It's Not Just the Forest

Even as we continue our efforts to protect the forests of the Olympic Peninsula for Marbled Murrelets and other species at risk, there's no way we can ignore threats to murrelets at sea from potential degradation and pollution of marine waters, if plans to make the Pacific NW a major fossil fuel entrepôt [trading post] come to fruition.

Of course, it's not just murrelets and our forests; global climate change and ocean acidification imperil all of us, and the problem is so vast that action points are hard to identify. Much of the voting public seems tuned out, clueless or overwhelmed.

But proposals for greatly expanded shipping of coal, oil and gas in our region are waking people up. Hearings on EIS scoping for the proposed coal terminals have brought out thousands in opposition over the past months. In fact, coal exports have been characterized as at least as consequential in the global carbon footprint as the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Many OFCO readers share the concern of many Peninsula residents over proposed oil shipments—from the fracked Bakken shale fields of North Dakota—that could foul our streams and marine waters. (The State has recently announced it would withdraw its finding of environmental nonsignificance for proposed oil shipments by train to Gray's Harbor, a welcome development, though the proposal is still very much alive, and the level of environmental scrutiny that will be required is anyone's guess.)

An excellent overview of oil shipment proposals by Eric de Place of the Sightline Institute is found at [http://www.sightline.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/10/crude-oil-by-rail\\_October-2013-Update.pdf](http://www.sightline.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/10/crude-oil-by-rail_October-2013-Update.pdf).

These issues will not be soon resolved, but we should stay involved in the dialog. The coal transport question has been characterized equal (if not greater) in importance to the Keystone XL pipeline.

Several local groups are dealing with these threats:

<http://fogh.org> (Friends of Gray's Harbor)

<http://olyclimate.org> (Olympic Climate Action)  
Information on local and global issues.

On a wider geographical scale:

<http://portlandrisingtide.org> (Rising Tide)

<http://www.powerpastcoal.org>

PowerPastCoal.com carries up-to-date news of coal transport proposals, including information about how to comment (the comment period for scoping on the Longview proposal is open through Nov. 7) and other avenues of action.

<http://350.org>

There are more information and activist sites. Please keep in touch with us and share your concerns, information you've received, and activist alerts. Contact Peggy Bruton, [gimleteye@comcast.net](mailto:gimleteye@comcast.net).

## An OFCO Member and a Friend Honored for Historical Work

OFCO member **Karolyn Hamerquist Burdick** published her new book, *The Last Pysht Valley Pioneer: Gertrude Stange Fernandes*, last spring.

The German-born Fernandes, locally known as "Gertie," was the longest-surviving Pysht Valley homestead settler (1880–1987). Her recollections include contacts with Native Americans and the logging culture of the region.

A presentation at the Clallam Bay Library in mid-April featured Burdick, who donates all her profits to Friends of the Library.

Westside OFCO friend **Margaret Owens** was among three recipients of Heritage Awards from Clallam County Historical Society last May. Owens, manager of the Joyce Depot Museum, was recognized for her museum work and for researching the history of Joyce.

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