

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

Spring 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

The going seems arduous sometimes, but OFCO is still at it—the "it" being all the minutiae of forest protection, including stream typing and fighting to prevent logging too close to waterways and wetlands—while joining the chorus for slowing global climate change.

Poor mapping, out-of-date maps and poor interpretation by agencies are a great hindrance in doing the right thing for forests, water quality and salmon. In this period of straitened circumstances for government agencies, OFCO's volunteer work is more critical than ever.

And climate change looms over all of our other concerns, so we join our sister organizations in fighting off monstrosities like (close to home) the coal export scheme and (country wide) the Keystone XL.

Meanwhile, new concerns compete for our attention. Net pens to raise salmon and industrial shellfish aquaculture make me leery. Recently the state Department of Ecology (DOE) put expanding oyster operations ahead of public environmental concerns again. Too often I recall the article subtitle: "Salmon Take Second Place Again."

Here's a brief rundown of what's keeping us on the alert locally:

**Olympic National Forest:** The Dosewallips River Engineered Log Jam (ELJ) Decision Notice was released to the public on March 8. This revised executive analysis shows little change even after significant public and agency comments. (See Connie Gallant's personal perspective on the subject.) I plan to meet with the District Ranger and ask him to explain just out how "process" was followed, since I see no significant evidence that agency and public concerns were addressed in the revised Environmental Assessment (EA). In effect, I will be striving to make us cooperative partners in ELJ proposals rather than adversarial.

**NEPA Process:** The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process under the National Environmental Protection Act has been significantly revised, to the detriment of citizens with something to say. NEPA requires federal agencies to analyze their proposed actions for significant environmental effects. Now agencies may avoid an EA or EIS under a "categorical exclusion," if they determine that some activities—such as routine facility maintenance—do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. The change is heralded as a way to reduce unnecessary paperwork and delay, but I see it as lowering democracy another notch by eliminating opportunities for public input.

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**Dungeness ELJ Proposal:** The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe in Blyn has included OFCO as a stakeholder in design options. OFCO has attended meetings and submitted comments. The Dungeness River has the second-steepest gradient in North America, along with a dearth of fish habitat. Design options will be considered in FY14, most likely using an EA rather than an EIS. Proposals do include the Gray Wolf River that flows from the park.

Engineered log jams in general are human intrusions in rivers that have lost most of their large woody debris after decades of stupidly removal logs from rivers, for whatever reason, and logging an alarming number of trees along the banks. We know now that an "an ugly river is likely a good salmon river." But also we know now that good science means watching what's happening as we go along and learning from our mistakes.

**Wilderness Stewardship Plan:** Comments are due April 23 to Sarah Creachbaum, new Olympic National Park Superintendent. Ninety-five percent of the park has been a Wilderness candidate. A thorough review is presented by Tim McNulty in the recent [Olympic Park Associates](#) newsletter.

**Supreme Court Decision on Runoff from Logging:** An appellate court decided that pollution from logging runoff is industrial pollution, only to have the state Supreme Court reverse the decision, concluding that logging pollution is in the same category as farm runoff pollution, an exception to the Clean Water Act. DOE can apply more restrictive permitting regarding logging pollution if it so chooses.

**Other Issues:**

- Twin River Mole Removal – Stalled
- Port Angeles Dump – Waiting to fall into the Strait
- Dungeness Watershed Action Plan – Funding for implementation
- Calawah–Bonidu Off-Highway Vehicle Proposal in Pacific District – Ongoing
- Elwha Quarry – (See article, page 7.)
- Streamkeeper turbidity studies for Clallam County – OFCO continues financial support.
- Stumpy's Ride state logging sale – (See article, page 6.)
- Elwha Fish Hatchery – One year more moratorium on introducing nonnative stock
- Marbled Murrelet – (See article, page 7.)

## First, Do No Harm— a Personal Perspective

by Connie Gallant / photos by Gallant unless otherwise noted

The decision to proceed with three Dosewallips Engineered Log Jams (ELJs) has been made, and it is not to my personal liking. As full disclosure, I am not a biologist, engineer, or scientist. I am simply a concerned citizen who has witnessed enough interference with Mother Nature from humans that I cannot help but wonder about the arrogance of our species. Keep in mind that this is a personal perspective from my own "boots on the ground" research.

The Dosewallips River is a beautiful river that stretches from the Olympic National Park to the Olympic National Forest. Along its way can be seen some of the most magnificent vistas our area offers. The river itself is as pristine as any river can be in today's world. Its frothy "white water runs" delight the eye and camera of many photographers and exhilarate paddlers visiting worldwide.



—Jim Scarborough

The "Dose," as we locals call it, used to be a salmon-run river. The number of salmon here, as in many other rivers and bays, has dwindled over the years.

When we moved to Quilcene in 1982, JD and I would gawk at the Quilcene River, sure that we could "walk" across on top of all the salmon. And that's hardly an exaggeration. JD looked forward to retiring so he could put to use the many fishing poles and dandy lures he'd acquired from swap meets, garage sales, and auctions, and visit many of the nearby rivers, especially the Dose.

Why the demise of the salmon runs? First and foremost, excessive logging too close to river banks, so the silt and sediment runoff damages creeks, streams, estuaries and rivers. Clearing conifers from the rivers' banks has created openings for alders, and alders produce nutrients that feed algae in estuaries, the natural nursery for salmon. Too much algae blocks sunlight, causing a decline in eelgrass. When the eelgrass is lost, the young salmon lack hiding places and feeding grounds to help them on their way to the ocean. The removal of large woody debris several years ago also contributed to that demise.

The reasons for the removal of this large woody debris were because, at the time, the thought was that they impaired the stabilization of the river. So, years ago those same biologists (with money available for projects) convinced everyone that removing large woody debris from the river was good for the river and for salmon.

Large woody debris is a significant ecological and structural component of streams and rivers, and forms essential habitat for aquatic and terrestrial organisms. Natural large woody debris provides:

- Habitat for plants, salmon, and microorganisms; and
- Spawning places and shelter for fish during warmer weather.

Natural log jams come apart over time. This is good for rivers and fish, as it allows a river to change over time at its own speed. A river will naturally adjust to its wood load, and so do its fish. But ELJs built to be permanent with tons of rock, gravel, and river bottom, secured with vertical pilings, are like nothing a river could ever make on its own. They exert tremendous force against the river, and the changes they cause to nearby existing habitat are severe and usually destructive.

The Dose ELJs are of this larger design and have indeed been proposed where they will cause outright harm to existing steelhead habitat. This is why this larger design style is usually reserved for areas with little or no existing habitat—highly modified, degraded, and even polluted rivers. (The Dose does not qualify under these three classifications, and it has existing habitat for steelhead).

The following list includes the type of activities the river will be subjected to:

- Construction of three engineered log jams, including about 40 logs per structure
- Placement of approximately 125 logs (trees) on the floodplain to act as roughness elements during higher-flow events
- Tracked excavators will be used to construct logjams and large wood complexes within stream channels, gravel bars, and floodplains.
- Removal of a 370-foot-long (approximately 650 cubic yards) earth berm from the floodplain. Most construction sites will be accessed along gravel bars, but some forested riparian areas will be disturbed during logjam construction.
- Minimal stream crossings with equipment will also be required to construct some of the log jams.



*This Engineered Log Jam is located at the Dosewallips State Park, at the river's entrance to Hood Canal. It is readily visible from the campground and picnic area of the beach side of the park.*



*Tons of gravel were used to form this island.*

First, Do No Harm.....continued from page 3



A close-up of the stumps mounds

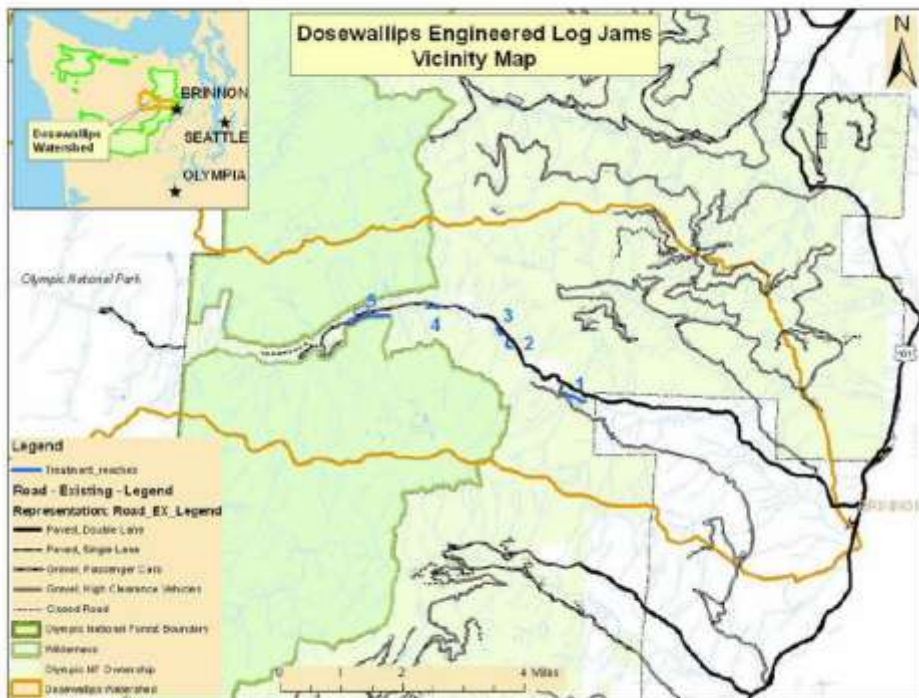


This ELJ is in the middle of the river. Since I took this photo in March, I can't figure how the salmon can make redds when the water level is much lower later in the year.

Each phase of the plan has worksites set in five different areas (or "reaches") of the middle Dose, from River Mile (RM) 6 to 10. Plans are set for 16 log jams.

Simply forcing a river to move and rearrange its features is not a guaranteed way to help fish. We do not know what features will shake out after this much alteration, and if the fish will even like and use the features that result. It is a big, expensive gamble, and an inappropriate one for the Dose River at these chosen locations.

Figure 1. Project vicinity map, numbers denote proposed treatment reaches



-U.S. Forest Service

The engineered log jams are supposed to provide shade and debris at the edge of the river, but this can be more easily, less expensively, and less invasively accomplished by planting conifers within 50 to 100 feet of the river's edge, thus rebuilding Nature's riparian forest that provides shade and debris naturally. It is argued that this is too slow a process that will take many years to have a good effect; true enough, but it is a more natural process in helping Nature recover what we have destroyed.

With the influx of funding for many salmon restoration projects, however, not many proponents seem to be listening to reason, or willing to try more natural solutions first without risking more damage to our rivers.

Designs for engineering for fish in rivers for fish have continue. Not all ELJs are the same, nor do all exert the same action on their settings within the watercourse.

The ELJs planned for the Dose will be an aesthetic eyesore to that beautiful and relatively pristine river. Bulldozers, big trucks, and plenty of dirt and gravel will attack the Dose with fury. This invasive process will undoubtedly do more harm than good; it reminds me of the ancient admonition by Hippocrates' "First, do no harm," and I believe this admonition applies just as well in wilderness conservation.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), in a long document, made recommendations to the U.S Forest Service (USFS). The first two recommendations follow:

- 1. We recommend that the USFS remove other anthropogenic structures from the floodplain, including segments of FS Road 2610 and any riprap, that are also preventing the river from accessing its channel migration zone and floodplain.**
- 2. We recommend that the USFS construct future ELJ projects in a Dosewallips reach that has more degraded habitat and less potential for affecting existing spawning habitat than in the proposed reach.**

The Forest Service has chosen to ignore those recommendations. In their response to NMFS' first recommendation, the USFS stated that, " **... Because we intend to maintain FSR 2610 for vehicle access, it would not be prudent to remove the existing riprap erosion protection along the portions of road within the floodplain unless another suitable erosion control method was put in place first ...** "

For NMFS' second recommendation, the USFS responded, " **... We also select projects that align with the current principles of conservation biology, including protecting the best habitat first rather than trying to fix the most degraded habitat.**"

Forest Service Road 2610 is the road that washed out during 2002. The USFS admits there is no funding to repair or reconstruct it, but still apparently is not willing to give up hope of constructing a bypass at a higher altitude and cutting the old growth grove we call The Polly Dyer Grove.

On March 8, the Hood Canal District Ranger published the decision to proceed with the project. Unless you submitted a comment during the Environmental Assessment period last year, you cannot appeal this decision.

Still, it is your river. What do you think?

## Net Pens: Asking for Trouble?

by Josey Paul

Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) officials jarred environmental sensibilities last month when they teamed with industry lobbyists to stuff Jefferson County's attempt to keep salmon farms out of local waters. The county wanted the legislature to amend the Shoreline Management Act so that it could ban fish farms. Under DOE pressure, the proposed legislation died in committee.

In DOE's eyes, offshore salmon farms can be operated responsibly, so counties cannot use the Shoreline Master Program to prohibit them. NOAA's Office of Aquaculture provides Ecology's authority on net-pen safety. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has a dual role to promote aquaculture and to protect wild salmon. Its Office of Aquaculture is run by officials recruited from the aquaculture industry.

A similar situation exists in Canada, where the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) struggles with the same dual responsibility. Canada's Cohen Commission, which was set up to explain the collapse of the Fraser River's sockeye runs, just published findings that pinned much of the blame for the sockeye collapse on DFO's dual role. The Fraser River once produced sockeye runs of 100 million fish. Until recently recreational fishermen alone caught between 4.5 and 15 million sockeye annually. But in 2009, after a long decline, the river's total sockeye return fell to 1.5 million fish.

British Columbia's sprawling net-pen industry was an early suspect. Net pens off Vancouver Island suffered disease outbreaks that reached wild salmon. Scientists linked parasites from net pens to the collapse of pink salmon runs in the Broughton Archipelago. Fraser sockeye that run a gauntlet of fish pens suffered, while sockeye that don't encounter net pens thrived.

Judge Bruce Cohen quickly found that politics and salmon don't mix. Scientific testimony was split between industry and government regulators on one side, and environmentalists and independent scientists on the other. The government blocked its own research if it linked net pens to the Fraser collapse, and lobbied to decertify labs that found viruses spreading from farmed fish to wild fish.

Cohen could not winnow the truth from the conflicting testimony, but he did find that the DFO could not honestly act in its dual role. He recommended a moratorium on new net pens in a key area of the Inside

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Net Pens.....continued from page 5

Passage until researchers could prove that net pens are not a serious problem.

In British Columbia, net pens are big business, supporting 6,000 or so jobs and generating \$320–\$410 million, dwarfing the \$20–\$60 million generated by wild harvests.

Washington state has only a handful of pens in the Puget Sound area, but NOAA and industry officials hope to change that reality. The industry wants to build a large net-pen operation in the Strait a few miles west of the Lyre River. Grand plans envision sprawling net-pen operations in the open ocean.

NOAA scientists says net pens can be safe, largely because regulations are tighter south of the border. Few environmentalists share that belief. Meanwhile, Jefferson County can regulate net pens through its conditional-use permit process.

### Why Do We Care?

Wild salmon and forests are one and the same — literally the same, body and soul. As you walk up any healthy salmon stream, steal a look at the heavy vegetation. One in every four leaves that you see was hung there by a salmon.

Salmon built our great forests with their bodies. When Lewis and Clark clambered up a bluff overlooking the confluence of the Columbia and Snake Rivers in 1805, they saw salmon—dead and alive—in numbers their eyes and noses could scarcely believe. Probably 16 million salmon used to race up the Columbia. Their bodies were food for forests and the creatures that lived in them.

The great "conveyor belt" of spawning salmon brings staggering amounts of marine-derived nutrients to young, steep, oligotrophic rivers on the Olympic Peninsula that are typically starved for nutrients. The *Atlas of Pacific Salmon* says the salmon runs that Lewis and Clark saw represented more than 110,000 tons of marine-derived nutrients, including nitrogen, phosphorus, calcium and carbon.

The bodies of salmon feed young salmon, as well as soil microbiota and microinvertebrates such as caddisflies, stoneflies and midges. Birds, bears and other predators gorge themselves on carcasses, and the nutrients are recycled to feed trees and shrubs (because you know where bears poop). Salmonberry flourish

alongside streams, where they are browsed on by elk, which poop in the same place as bears.

On the Olympic Peninsula, the ecology is shaped by mountains, forests and salmon. The mountains wring drenching rains out of the moist Pacific air. The forests tame the heavy runoff and create healthy rivers where salmon can live. Salmon in turn feed the forests. Ecologists examining the width of tree rings can look into the past and tell good salmon years from bad.

Most salmon carcasses don't flush more than 600 meters down a healthy stream. Where trees have toppled into streams, the branches trap carcasses and retain the nutrients for the trees that didn't fall. The trees grow larger and improve the salmon habitat. The thicker vegetation filters runoff and leads to cleaner water where salmon thrive. Bugs multiply and feed birds and salmon.

A forest is more than a gathering of trees. It is an ecosystem, and salmon are a keystone feature of that forest ecosystem. Hatcheries, net pens and destructive logging break the loop. As salmon suffer, so do forests.

### Stumpy's Ride: a Measure of Success

OFCO has been working hard for several months on a timber sale on state land called Stumpy's Ride in the Clallam and Hoko River drainages. We have had wonderful help from our affiliate organization, Western Straits Action Group and the Washington Forest Law Center (WFLC). When the final permits came out for review, WFLC wrote to Peter Goldmark, Commissioner of Public Lands, asking for a delay of the sale which was scheduled for approval by the Board of Natural Resources in March. Despite the letter, the sale was approved.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) did, however, offer to meet us in the field to review their interpretation of stream typing on the ground. The meeting took place recently and an all-day field trip was most productive in understanding why we differed radically on the meaning and application of DNR's governing regulations. As a result of that field trip, the sale has been modified, in that 29 acres and 960 feet of road were removed.

This effort also seems to have enhanced OFCO's ability to communicate with DNR, which should help us work more effectively in the future.

## Litigation Report:



### OFCO and Seattle Audubon Society Go to Court to Save Marbled Murrelet Habitat

by Paul Kampmeier

On Monday, March 18, Judge Heller heard oral argument in *Seattle Audubon Society and Olympic Forest Coalition v. Washington Board of Natural Resources, et al.*, King County Superior Court case number 12-2-19053-4SEA. The case arises under Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and presents the question whether the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) "clearly erred" in issuing a "determination of non-significance" for its proposal to open approximately 12,000 acres of previously protected, higher-quality Marbled Murrelet habitat to logging.

The 12,000 acres in question are part of 20,000 specifically identified by DNR as higher-quality Marbled Murrelet habitat in the early 1990s, after extensive reviews of more than 500,000 acres of forests it manages for trust beneficiaries in southwest Washington. Until last year, these forests were protected under DNR's federally approved Habitat Conservation Plan so DNR could consider them for inclusion in a long-term Marbled Murrelet conservation strategy that the agency, in 1997, promised to develop.

That strategy, long overdue, has never been presented; yet DNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agreed that DNR could begin logging the 12,000 acres last year. OFCO and other environmental groups decided to sue because they were shocked at DNR's decision that logging more than half the remaining higher-quality Marbled Murrelet habitat in southwest Washington would have no significant adverse environmental impacts.

Argument appeared to go well for the plaintiffs. Judge Heller focused on whether DNR violated SEPA

by discounting obvious and significant impacts, by weighing the adverse consequences against potential but minimal benefits, and by relying on murrelet survey information that's more than 10 years old. Wyatt Golding of the Washington Forest Law Center argued for the plaintiffs, with Peter Goldman and Paul Kampmeier at counsel's table in support; Martha Wehling argued for DNR; Elaine Spencer argued for the American Forest Resource Council; and Daniel Bigelow appeared for Wahkiakum County.

Demonstrating wide interest in the case, there was a full courtroom that included some notables. Maria Mudd Ruth, author of *Rare Bird*, a very readable book-length portrait of Marbled Murrelets and their human friends, attended the argument, as did Commissioner of Public Lands Dr. Peter Goldmark. Supporters from Seattle Audubon, Sierra Club, and Olympic Forest Coalition also attended, with some wearing Marbled Murrelet stickers on their lapels.

Judge Heller said he would not issue a decision for a few months. We'll update you when he does, so please stay tuned.

### Elwha Mine Update: Keep the Pressure On

by Toby Thaler

A number of years ago (about 15) the Shaws and Lanes bought a 40-acre parcel along the Elwha River just outside of the Olympic National Park and Forest and began applying for permits to convert the steep mountain side above the river plain into a rock quarry.

They proposed to blast the mountainside into a huge pit over a period of many decades, visible to people coming up the Elwha into the Olympics from Highway 101. Clallam County required environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The Shaws and Lanes faced mounting expenses because review of such an environmentally harmful project is intense.

To cut costs, Shaws and Lanes attempted to circumvent County review by using a forest practices permit (FPA) from the Washington Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) to start their mine. DNR issued the FPA permit and a bulldozer punched a road up the slope, causing rocks to fall on the road and sediment to run into the river.

Operation under the DNR FPA was then suspended because of impacts on wildlife (Marbled Murrelets, to be exact). When the permit came up for renewal, a local group formed to fight it: the Upper Elwha River Conservation Committee. The UERCC retained counsel,

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*Elwha Mine.....continued from page 7*

OFCO board member Toby Thaler, and on appeal DNR withdrew the permit.

Then the Shaws and Lanes went back to the County. This time (about three years ago) they tried to get the County's geologic (steep slope) critical areas rules changed so they could avoid SEPA review. Both Clallam County and UERCC resisted. After a confusing series of judicial actions, the matter is now before the Washington Court of Appeals, Division II.

Oral argument in the pending Court of Appeals case is scheduled for **Friday, May 24**, at 9 a.m. in Tacoma, 950 Broadway, Suite 300. All are welcome to attend.

One hopes this saga of absurd land abuse and complex decision-making will come to an end soon. All the Court of Appeals can really do, however, is to send the matter back to Clallam County—perhaps with some helpful guidance to strengthen the County's hand. But nothing appears capable of quenching Shaws' and Lanes' desire to mine the mountain—not even a potential land trust purchaser that UERCC had lined up; Shaws and Lanes refused to speak to them.

Pressure on the County and other agencies needs to be maintained to thwart this misbegotten and destructive project.

**Clallam County Commissioners:**

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**Gateway to the High Country Is Tougher Than It Used to Be: FS Road #2870-120**

*by John Woolley*

These musings are not about getting older; they're more like marveling about change, and contemplating the nature of wilderness itself.

More than 15 years back, in another millennium (though it seems much closer in time), a 73-year-old hiker went missing near here, in the Buckhorn Wilderness near Mt. Baldy. A search was mounted and three would-be rescuers—all considerably younger folks—lost their lives when their helicopter crashed; several others were injured. No trace of the missing hiker has ever been found.

Part of our covenant with wilderness is that we risk a certain level of danger as we seek the solitude of this remote and often arduous terrain. But then there's also our covenant as members of the human family, and we're obliged to search for those who get lost.

Much has changed over the years, though the wilderness quality remains uncompromised. Climbers and strong hikers are pleased by maintenance on spur road 120 off FS #2870. Deteriorating road conditions have been repaired, enabling the scenic 1.9-mile drive to the good parking area just before Mueller Creek. The Dungeness Watershed Action Plan, completed last year by Olympic National Forest (ONF), awaits funding so some old logging spurs too costly to maintain can be decommissioned. Otherwise, these gouges into forest slopes erode, sending sediment into the Dungeness River and its tributaries, compromising clean water for salmon and healthy wildlife habitat.

At the trailhead parking area, someone had hacked off the small Doug-firs growing in the center of the turnaround. I recalled picking up a few dozen shell casings at this spot during an earlier Forest Service field trip. Mountain views are incredible, and I remember the ONF ranger saying that this was his first visit to this spectacular trailhead, a field trip finally providing an opportunity to get out of the office.

East across the Dungeness River, Castle Ridge runs from the Dungeness Tower at the north to 6,600-foot crags at the south. Castle Ridge is accessible from the Tubal Cane Trail and has intriguing rock formations as well as unusual wildflowers. Not easy. Gray Jays skirted around us, looking for something. After 40 years of visits, I noted that the trees were growing tall enough to block the full vista and I climbed up on the bank for a better photo.

Two trails start from the parking area, though one is the ragged less-than-direct climbing route that ascends 3,500 feet to the summit of Tyler Peak. Tyler's near-6,400-foot top is the landmark pyramid-shaped peak that can be seen from Highway 101 east of Sequim. This way trail approach to Tyler has become more defined this century, as climbers used to be able to drive across Mueller Creek and switchback up to an informal trailhead at an old fire cut, the Maynard Burn Way, saving a few hundred feet of elevation as well.

Wisely, ONF did not repair the bridge crossing of Mueller Creek last century when it washed out, as this informal access to the high country is recreational hiking and some deer hunting. This led to a way that cut steeply up through the forest to the Maynard Burn fire-cut way trail, a 1950s' swath on the ascending ridgeline to cut off a fire just to the north in upper Mueller Creek. This



brutal route climbs to Baldy and Gray Wolf Ridge, or allows a loop north and east to "B" and Tyler Peaks.

We hiked the long-gone road, working our way to the Lower Maynard Trail that descends into Royal Creek. A few steep washouts necessitated some ledge walking; even so, we observed tracks from one bicycle.

This old roadway once provided direct access to the Maynard Burn Way, that near-vertical fire-cut trail, steeply climbing 3,000-plus feet to the high country around Baldy. This route was popular with hunters, as it accessed Seven Buck Basin at the head of Mueller Creek. I recall how Jack Hughes, a now-retired park ranger, used to plant himself at the Olympic Park boundary during the first part of deer season to make sure no hunters transgressed the park boundary.

Descending to Royal Creek took longer than I remembered. The original Maynard Trail is a .4-mile trail that starts along this overgrown, now wild, road. Forest characteristics change remarkably as one enters the Buckhorn Wilderness. Douglas-fir and hemlock give the forest an open quality, with low salal as the groundcover. Royal Creek was a raging torrent of white water. This junction with the Royal Basin Trail is only a short distance up creek from the main Dungeness River Trail. To the right, it's still 5 miles up to Royal Basin.

As we returned up the trail and clambered our way along the old roadway trail back to Mueller Creek, I pondered how it used to be a bit easier to access Gray Wolf Ridge and Tyler Peak, during the 1970s and '80s. You know, it is nice to see a part of the Olympics become wilder.

Late in March, a federal district court in Washington, D.C., declared that time had run out for opponents of the **Clinton Roadless Rule**, thereby nullifying any ongoing or further challenges to the rule protecting more than 50 million acres of public land from development. We can thank attorneys with Earthjustice and the National Resources Defense Council for their years of hard work on this. While some state exemptions are still being sought, and an appeal by Alaska is seen as possible, the rule is now seen as "safe."

The state of Alaska had challenged the rule for the Tongass National Forest; had Alaska prevailed, the rule itself could have fallen.

This is something to celebrate!

## Thank You!

Thanks to all of you who supported us in 2012. You helped us continue our work, as demonstrated by the variety of topics covered in this newsletter edition. We hope you will continue your support by using the enclosed envelope.

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OFCO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization;  
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\$35 – Regular Membership

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I would like to do volunteer work for OFCO.

Please call or email me and let me know how to help!

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**You can also donate to OFCO online. Just go to  
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and we tell you how to on our Home Page.**

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