

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

Winter 2009

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We thank all our members and donors for their financial support. If you have not yet contributed, we hope you will become inspired to do so. The back page shows easy ways to donate.

As you will see, by this newsletter, we busily continue to fulfill our mission, and need your help to keep doing so.

Conservation Groups Call for a National Forest Watershed Restoration Corps

by Bonnie Phillips

Everyone these days is talking about the Obama Stimulus Package, now slated to be about \$800 billion dollars and climbing. Green jobs in the woods came to our minds—people working to protect and restore watersheds. The idea for a National Forest Watershed Restoration Corps was hatched by the Washington Watershed Restoration Initiative (WWRI) coalition, consisting of 15 environmental and recreation groups and the state Departments of Ecology and Fish and Wildlife, and through outreach to other groups around the nation, especially those linked to the informal Legacy Roads group.

WWRI's goal is to help get sufficient funding to decommission and repair roads on Washington state's national forests, as well as to fix and replace culverts. We recognized early that this requires a national effort, and thus our connection to Legacy Roads, a national forum.

The coalitions recently finalized a letter to political leaders, signed by 97 organizations and individuals (including OFCO) which can be found at www.olympicforest.org/182.pdf.

We are also fortunate to have the support of Rep. Jay Inslee of Washington and Rep. Peter DeFazio of Oregon, who spearheaded a Dear Colleague letter to important committee chairs and other House of Representatives leaders. This letter went out in mid-December. Although their request covered national parks, national refuges and other entities, they had a special section that they took right from our letter. Since it appears in both documents, I will quote:

"Finally, we are recommending the creation of a National Forest Watershed Restoration Corps in which \$500 million could be provided over two years to create highly skilled jobs in resource-dependent communities adjacent to public lands through contracts and temporary, professional appointments in the Forest Service. This temporary program could expand the work currently done under the Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation account by creating up to 3,500 direct jobs annually for two years. This small-scale, temporary variation on the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) would complement the programs described above. This program is consistent with the Western Governors' Policy Resolution 08-3 and is endorsed by more than sixty grassroots conservation, labor, and state organizations [now 97] across the nation."

Sue Gunn, WWRI campaign coordinator (I am coalition coordinator), deserves the credit for pulling this off. Now we'll see what President Obama thinks!





Conservation legend Polly Dyer (in foreground), with Bonnie Phillips and Tim McNulty, visiting her namesake ancient forest grove currently threatened by reconstruction of the Dosewallips Road. *— photo by John Woolley*

Dosewallips Road Washout Update

by Jim Scarborough

The U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and Federal Highway Administration published the Dosewallips Road Washout draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) in mid-2008, which proposed reconstructing this controversial road through either centuries-old ancient forest on an unstable slope, or through critical salmon habitat. In response to the DEIS, as described in our previous newsletter, 72 percent of over 500 public comments—a record for Olympic National Forest—rejected the agencies' intent.

A clear majority of the public is in favor of converting the final five miles of road beyond the washout into a scenic, three-season, non-motorized trail. The same is true of regional tribes, state agencies, and even other federal agencies charged with reviewing this project. The onus is now on the lead agencies to properly respond to the public will.

The Forest Service has recently informed OFCO that the three lead agencies will meet in January to determine a preferred alternative for the

Dosewallips washout. Afterward, this alternative will go to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service for consultation, which could take up to four months. The Forest Service currently estimates the final EIS will be published in midsummer 2009, followed by another 30-day comment period. A "record of decision" will be signed by Olympic National Forest Supervisor Dale Hom shortly thereafter.

Although Mr. Hom and the Park Service have shown signs of digging in their heels on reconstructing the Dosewallips Road despite the severe (and likely illegal) environmental devastation that would result, we're maintaining a modicum of optimism that the lead agencies will eventually acknowledge and pursue the public's chosen direction. There would be great risk to the well-being of the Dosewallips River, as well as to the trust accorded to the lead agencies by the public, if a belated attempt to punch this road through occurs. Let's hope for better things.

Legislation to Change the Northwest Forest Plan Coming Our Way?

Kevin Geraghty and Bonnie Phillips attended a December meeting to discuss the legislation, now in draft form, coming from Oregon Senator Ron Wyden and Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio. Their legislation would protect the remaining old growth forests but at the price of a much higher volume of thinning timber sales. There are many elements in each proposal that are good, and many that are not good at all. The longstanding debate among public lands leaders in Washington, Oregon and Northern California centers on whether we can help make the bills something we can support, or if we should just work to defeat the bills. A big issue in Washington is how do we approach our congressional delegation. Some think that they can

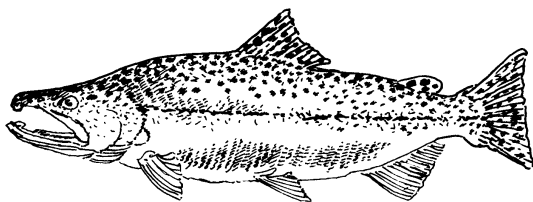
make the bill much better, thus giving support. Others think that we should just ask them not to support or to stay neutral.

Bonnie has organized a mid-January meeting for forest activist leaders statewide to discuss this issue. If the decision is that we will be working on the bill, we'll let you know in a full article in our next newsletter, so stay tuned. Frankly, this is a very complicated scientific and policy issue with no clear pathway to resolution. If legislation begins to move, the outcome could be very important for our forests.

Two Fisheries Biologists Join Our Board

January has brought two new board members to OFCO. Both are fisheries biologists, a skill we sorely need. Coleman Byrnes will work on our state and private forest team, especially covering the northwest end of the Peninsula. Shelley Spalding, who is just retiring from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will, we hope, assist us on scientific issues relating to federal forests. We'll know better after our February board meeting. In a few months you will be able to read their biographies on our Web site.

We are very fortunate in our board: they all work very hard for OFCO. We are especially pleased with our new members. Welcome!



Chinook salmon – by Larry Eifert

Election Results Will Bring Changes in State Forest Management

by Toby Thaler

The big news for the state forest lands campaign is that Peter Goldmark has replaced Doug Sutherland as Commissioner of Public Lands on January 14. While most rural counties went for the incumbent, returns from King County were strong enough to sustain a 30,000 vote margin for Goldmark, or 50.55 percent. After a grudging and late concession by Sutherland, the transition is now well underway. Unfortunately, lame duck Commissioner Sutherland tried to push a number of last minute actions that may have to be addressed or reversed by Goldmark, including some that affect the Olympic.

The change to Goldmark is sure to affect all of OFCO's state lands work. After eight years of a hostile administration at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), we are excited by the prospect. To see Goldmark's platform, see www.petergoldmark.com—select "About Peter; Peter on the Issues."

The parallel change from Bush to Obama at the federal level will also affect our work. The regional directors and possibly other positions at all three key natural resource agencies—the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service—are likely to change. EPA has a major role in the Clean Water Act assurances process leading to a major decision in summer 2009 whether the forest practices habitat conservation plan (HCP) complies with water quality requirements. The Services are responsible for overseeing forest practice HCP compliance on state and private lands. If you have contacts and interest to influence any of these crucial appointments in the Obama Administration, please contact us.

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Election Changes.....Continued from Page 3

Of most direct interest to OFCO in the near term is the Olympic Experimental State Forest (OESF) plan. Under the state lands DNR HCP, the OESF is treated differently from the rest of the trust lands. DNR committed to do an EIS for the OESF plan, and its scope, alternatives, and schedule are undergoing active review. OFCO finds itself with some unity of interest with Peninsula DNR trust land beneficiaries: both groups want the OESF plan done and done well. But the beneficiaries are after certainty of revenue while we want certainty of conservation.

The OESF does not include DNR lands along the Strait or Hood Canal, so OFCO is also concerned with implementation of the HCP outside the OESF. Other pending DNR HCP issues are the development of a Marbled Murrelet conservation strategy and the treatment of small streams ("headwaters"). In addition there are forest practices compliance (Is it happening?), effectiveness monitoring (Does it work as advertised?) and disputes over the WEC v. Sutherland settlement.

Sadie Creek Shooting Area Proposal Is Not Feasible

by John Woolley

After 40 years of trying to establish a public shooting area in Clallam County, advocates are now pushing a proposal for an area north of Lake Crescent at Sadie and Susie Creeks. It is proving to be environmentally unsound and should be abandoned.

A local grassroots organization, Protect the Peninsula's Future (PPF), has requested that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) delay both its proposed public meeting on the issue and a determination of whether the proposed site should be reconveyed to the County—at least until after Clallam County has prepared an

environmental impact statement for acquiring the state forest lands.

OFCO agrees and does not support a shooting range at the headwaters of Sadie/Susie Creeks. The proposal is clearly not compatible with salmon restoration efforts, and conflicts with safety concerns for nearby trail users. Heavy rainfall and poorly drained soils in the area make it likely that toxic substances, including copper and lead, will drain into crucial salmon habitat.

The proposed site violates the most basic guidelines of the EPA's Best Management Practices for locating a shooting range. Potential high costs to taxpayers would include liability insurance and loss of future logging revenues.

In addition, the impacts of a shooting range could disturb Marbled Murrelets' nesting areas and stress other wildlife.

This project is not consistent with the Growth Management Act and Clallam County's Comprehensive Plan. OFCO has urged that the county and DNR abandon this shooting range proposal, as the public's time and money should not prolong the inevitable rejection of this project.



Great Blue Heron – by Larry Eifert

Dabob Bay Preserve: We Want a NAP!

by *Connie Gallant*

Not the resting type ... but the preserving type.

The Dabob Bay Natural Area Preserve (NAP) is located in the Tarboo Watershed in eastern Jefferson County, north of Quilcene on Hood Canal.

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has proposed a 195-acre preserve to protect high-quality coastal sand spits, estuary habitats and upland riparian forests surrounding Dabob Bay. Spawning salmon in Tarboo Creek and shellfish production are an integral part of the preserve. Dabob Bay is considered one of the top five bays in the world for natural-set oyster spat and a primary provider of spat for the oyster industry in Washington and beyond.

At an October meeting in Quilcene, DNR gave the public an opportunity to view the proposal (see map at www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/em_dabob_bay_map.pdf), speak with staff, and comment on the proposed boundary expansion.

The majority of the local residents are very much in favor of this proposal; a few residents, however, are concerned with the loss or change of property rights. DNR has stated that the proposed expanded boundary would in no way compromise or change private landowners' property rights. The boundary would not be "regulatory" in nature. An expanded boundary would accomplish two things:

1. DNR land within the boundary would be transferred from "trust status" (subject to timber harvest) to "protected status" (no timber harvest). This would both preserve wildlife habitat and protect the bay's aquaculture (oysters) from siltation that can follow logging in inappropriate areas.



Tarboo-Dabob Bay. This view is looking south, with Shine to the left and Quilcene to the right.

– photo by Washington State Department of Ecology

2. Boundary expansion would also permit private landowners within the new boundary to sell their land to DNR, if the landowners are willing and interested. There is absolutely no condemnation power associated with the expansion.

The 2007 Legislative Session allocated \$5 million to Tarboo-Dabob Bay through the Trust Land Transfer program. An expanded natural area boundary will allow for use of this appropriation.

OFCO fully supports this DNR proposal. Tarboo-Dabob Bay is considered one of the crown jewels of the Hood Canal and is definitely worth preserving.

OFCO Salutes the Life of John Pedersen

John V. Pedersen was born October 9, 1916 and died December 9, 2008. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Marilyn Pedersen, and by his children Hans, Kirie, Lisa, Celia, Rolfe, and Brynne; grandchildren Jeanette, Nathan, Trillian, Benjamin, Averie, and Justin; and by great-grandson, Liam. John, Marilyn and their family

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John Pedersen.....Continued from Page 5

built and lived in a log-and-stone cabin on Dabob Bay without electricity, power, or plumbing from 1946–1956, and, on weekends and summers thereafter, grew organic vegetables and harvested shellfish. After 20 years, John and Marilyn returned to their Hood Canal property full-time. They were members of the Quilcene Ancient Forest Coalition, now the Olympic Forest Coalition, and active in theater, environmental protection, and education. Mr. Pedersen earned an art degree from Cornish School of the Arts and a master's in English from the University of Washington, and worked as an artist and educator.

Kirie Pedersen writes that if it weren't for her father and what he taught his children, grandchildren and great-grandson about caretaking the wilderness and shorelines, there would be fewer trees and animals/creatures that live in those trees and along the shorelines.

OFCO salutes John V. Pedersen and his long and meaningful life. Those wishing to honor his memory may do so in the form of a gift to OFCO.

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