

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 2010

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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.

WWRI Coalition Receives National Award

by Bonnie Phillips

Last October the Washington Watershed Restoration Initiative (WWRI) coalition, initiated by OFCO in 2006, received a "Rise to the Future—Public Awareness Award" from the U.S. Forest Service, under its National Aquatics Program. In December, several coalition members traveled to Washington, D.C. to receive the award, including WWRI Coalition Director Sue Gunn, who gave a half-hour presentation on our past efforts.

Congressman Norm Dicks, through his role as Chair of the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, has been the major congressional champion for our work. He named this program Legacy Roads, a term now in common usage. Although the WWRI is a Washington state coalition, its work has called attention to a set of problems afflicting many parts of the country, and the issue has been recognized since 2008 as one that merits national attention. Indeed such recognition was an essential antecedent to the Fiscal Year 2010 (beginning September 1, 2009) appropriation of \$90 million for the Legacy Roads program. Thanks to the successful work of the Olympic National Forest in decommissioning and repairing roads and culverts to restore watersheds, our national forest received a nice share of the total. *(Please see next page for late-breaking news about this forest.)*

Currently, there are 15 environmental and recreational organizations in our coalition, as well as the state Departments of Ecology (DOE) and Fish and Wildlife. DOE has been particularly active.

The WWRI coalition currently functions through a four-person executive committee. OFCO Executive Director Bonnie Phillips serves on that committee along with Sue Gunn and a representative from The Wilderness Society and Pacific Rivers Council. Stephen Bernath of DOE serves as an *ex officio* member of this committee. The entire coalition meets periodically and has a series of conference calls throughout the year.

The WWRI coalition has three new goals that we will be working on. These goals were presented to Congressman Dicks and other key congressmen and senators during the December meeting in Washington, D.C.:

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1. Authorizing Legislation for Legacy Roads

Currently funding levels are proposed by appropriations committees in both houses of Congress. If there is a difference between the House and Senate funding measures, this is reconciled in what is called the Conference Committee. Funds appropriated are for one year, thus each year the process starts anew. The Forest Service has been reluctant to hire new staff because of concerns that appropriations may not continue. Having this program authorized (through authorizing committees in the House and Senate) will help solve this problem. Congressman Jay Inslee, who serves on the House Resources Committee, has agreed to help out, as have several other members of this committee.

2. Funding a Planning Process for Developing a Minimum Roads System

Most national forests have not done an evaluation of their current roads, nor even made preliminary decisions on which roads need to stay in their system. (The Olympic again is ahead of the curve). WWRI and other organizations will be lobbying for \$30 million to begin this process. Without this evaluation, it is impossible to make decisions for effective watershed restoration.

3. Creating a Watershed Restoration and Protection Program in the Forest Service

The idea behind this effort is that having a single program to deal with watershed restoration and protection is far more efficient than relying on many separate ones, leading to far too many communication problems. Meetings with Forest Service D.C. staff led to mixed reviews on this idea, but Harris Sherman, Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment, agreed to facilitate a meeting sometime in 2010 between the agency and our coalition.

One question we will be attempting to answer this year is whether or not to extend the work of the coalition to other states, particularly Oregon, California and Montana. This has been an exciting and very successful program. Growing our efforts will be well worth our time.

Breaking News: WWRI Faces Crisis as ONF Asks for Dose Road Funds as "Restoration"

At press time, we received disturbing news that could threaten the successful work of the WWRI coalition, a project OFCO initiated and into which we have poured a great amount of energy.

In a list of proposed projects for Washington's national forests, submitted to the Regional Office for funding with Legacy Roads money, the Olympic National Forest (ONF) had included "Dosewallips Road Repair" as a "watershed restoration" project.

Those familiar with the history of the Dose Road know too well that it would devastate the watershed, not restore it.

"Our entire coalition went into full crisis mode to get this project off the list," said Bonnie Phillips, OFCO's executive director.

"To be fair, each national forest submitted at least one bad project, but there was broad agreement that the Dosewallips was the most egregious on the list.

"Unfortunately, conversations with ONF Supervisor Dale Hom and District Ranger Dean Yoshina did not resolve the issue. We were assured by one important ONF Regional Office staffer, however, that this project did not meet the criteria and would not make their office's final list. We won't bank on that until we see that final list, but will hope for the best.

"OFCO and other WWRI members have been very supportive of watershed restoration work in the ONF. But we cannot stand by without letting our readership know that this move is potentially damaging to the relationship we've built. The irony of OFCO and other member groups lobbying for funds that would destroy the very resources we are working to protect is stunning.

"By the time you read this, WWRI members will have compiled a list of all projects, which do not meet the criteria for use of these funds, to submit to Regional Forester Mary Wagner, with whom we also plan a conference call to discuss the issue.

"Some WWRI coalition members rightly are asking why we should work to get funding for Legacy Roads if national forest managers see it as a way to fund pet projects not in line with our goals. Meanwhile, however, we continue to stand united in our work for watershed restoration."

Please stay tuned and check our Web site as this story unfolds. We'll keep you informed.

-Ed.

President's Column

Salmon at Sadie Creek Take Second Place – Again

by John Woolley

Despite likely disturbance to the headwaters of two North Olympic creeks, Clallam County Parks has reaffirmed its request to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for reconveyance of the Sadie Creek site to its original owner, Clallam County, thus clearing the way for a shooting range.

The North Olympic Peninsula Lead Entity (NOPLE) has found that the shooting range would harm both salmon and ongoing scientific studies on Sadie Creek. NOPLE includes salmon scientists, tribes and local governments that make up the local salmon project funding agency.

Two of the three Clallam County Commissioners, Mike Doherty and Steve Tharinger, remain loyal to the shooting range project, perhaps in anticipation of an upcoming election and a long-standing demand for a public shooting center; Clallam County has already paid a \$5,000 fee.

DNR will schedule a public meeting on the return of state-managed lands to the county, probably in March or April. The process of approving the reconveyance will likely be a formality, the project's complete lack of merit notwithstanding. DNR has never denied a county request, which would have to be approved by the Board of Natural Resources and signed by Lands Commission Peter Goldmark.

After the land is reconveyed, Clallam County will commence permitting the shooting range project and take over management of both the land and the process.

The county's old military shooting site, located in Salt Creek Park, is contaminated with lead and copper at levels which pose a risk to the health of people and animals using the park, according to the EPA, which is planning a cleanup.

Concerned citizens should write or e-mail State Lands Commissioner [Peter Goldmark](#), PO Box 47001, Olympia, WA 98504-7001, and urge DNR to deny the reconveyance.

Sierra Club leader [Josey Paul](#) of Joyce, near the Sadie Creek site, can supply complete information.

OFCO Vice President Connie Gallant Receives First Annual Karen Fant Award

by Bonnie Phillips

At the Washington Wilderness Coalition (WWC) award ceremony on November 12, OFCO Board Member and Vice President Connie Gallant received the first annual Karen M. Fant Award. (Karen was one of the two founders of WWC and met an untimely death a few years ago.) Congressman Norm Dicks, at his own request, introduced Connie at the ceremony—an honor indeed, and we are all so proud of her.

This award is earmarked for a special wild lands activist, and Connie certainly fits the bill.



Congressman Norm Dicks introduces Connie Gallant

I first met Connie and her husband, JD, several years ago, at their request. We had already been in e-mail communication, and I hoped that Connie would agree to join OFCO's board of directors and manage our Web site. Well, Connie said yes, and has been an outstanding board member ever since.

What amused me at the time—and amuses me still, on recollection—was her comment that she was overwhelmed to be in the company of such knowledgeable forest activists and wondered what she would have to contribute.

Talk about misplaced modesty! Not only has Connie led campaigns to halt bad timber sales, she's a major player for OFCO in opposing the Dosewallips Road reconstruction and also, along with our president, John Woolley, represents our organization in the Wild Olympics Campaign.

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Gallant Receives Award.....Continued from Page 3

Recently, she's taken on the leadership role to protect the Gibbs Lake area (see Connie's article, next page) and has developed a very impressive activist network, especially in East Jefferson County.

And yes, she manages our Web site and is a great sounding board for me in my job as OFCO's executive director.

The *Peninsula Daily News* spotlighted Connie's life and work in a January 3, 2010 feature, accompanied by several prominent photos. Readers learned that Connie was born in Cuba and came to the United States in 1962, arriving in Boston in a snowstorm. As an adult she moved to California where she met JD. After a road trip along the West Coast, they arrived in Quilcene, fell in love with the place and moved there permanently in 1982.

Connie and JD run a nonprofit organization called the RV Consumer Group, which monitors RV safety. It's a demanding job, and her energy, efficiency and dedication are demonstrated many times over in the success of her multitasking.

The list of her other activities is too long for this article but, among other things, Connie has two black belts in karate (don't get her angry!). Also, she and JD have started a new venture, GreenFleet Monitoring Expeditions.

Again, we are all very proud to know Connie and are incredibly fortunate that she's working with OFCO.

WRIA 19 and 20 Update: Your Help Needed!

by Coleman Byrnes

After almost a decade of intense discussion, the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 19 plan is ready to be sent to the public. It has been a long, hard struggle and the timber industry representatives have tried their hardest to prevent meaningful rules from becoming established.

But finally a plan is ready and its main feature calls for the establishment of minimal flow standards in the major streams in the western strait. WRIA 19 wants the watersheds of the western Strait of Juan de Fuca to be managed in a manner that allows for maintenance of 10% flow regimes in all of the area's salmon-bearing streams. As a result, the timber industry has pulled out of the process and has been lobbying the Clallam County

commissioners and the local PUD district to veto the plan.

Unfortunately the PUD seems more than willing to comply and to veto the plan upon arrival. The PUD commissioners don't want any restrictions on the number of new wells, even though it would not affect their water rights. They seem to want more development and more power customers.

The timber industry wants 10 years of study before minimal flow standards are established in WRIA 19. Moreover, they don't want any studies at all done on their property.

The plan for WRIA 20 calls for such a 10-year study, with the difficult decision put off indefinitely. The streams in the two WRIs, however, have very different hydrologic regimes. In WRIA 20, major streams originate high in the mountains and are fed by snowpack and glacier meltwater, and are thus less sensitive to groundwater withdrawal than in WRIA 19, where streams are born in low elevation foothills and are fed by rain and groundwater.

Summer flows in WRIA 19 are already dangerously low. Too many new wells and too much groundwater withdrawal in this region could lower stream levels to the point where salmon survival would be impossible. Ten years is too long to wait for a study.

And there is yet another threat to water and water management on the horizon. House Bill 2468, which has just been introduced in the legislature, would ban the metering of any exempt wells throughout the state. WRIA plans all over the state would be rendered meaningless, and rational water plans would be impossible. It's time to get out your pen and paper and let your Washington state legislators know what you think.

Quarry Owners Win a Round in Ongoing Elwha Protection Struggle

by Toby Thaler

The owners of 40 acres of mountainside land in Clallam County recently won a procedural skirmish in an ongoing battle that pits the integrity of the Elwha River and its riparian ecosystem against their "right" to mine gravel.

For a number of years, the owners (Mike Shaw and Gerry Lane) of the 40 acres along the Elwha River, just north of the Olympic National Forest and Park, have been trying to obtain permits to operate a gravel mine. The "Little River Mine" would remove the entire

mountainside to below the level of the river. The impacts on the Elwha River and the surrounding area as the mine would operate over the better part of a century are incalculable.

Clallam County told Shaw and Lane 12 years ago that they needed to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) before they could proceed. After spending considerable time and money, Shaw and Lane abandoned the EIS process and started to build the mine access road under a forest practices permit. That activity caused rocks to come down onto Olympic Hot Springs Road, and sediment-laden water to flow into the Elwha River. When challenged by the Upper Elwha River Conservation Committee (UERCC), the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) withdrew the permit for the road.

Shaw and Lane then went to Clallam County, asking for a ruling that the mine site was improperly designated as a steep slope and erosion hazard critical area. With this designation removed, Shaw and Lane think they can avoid the cost and requirement of an EIS and proceed with their mine.

Clallam County has so far resisted Shaw and Lane's attempts to remove critical area status for the Little River Mine site. The hearing examiner ruled that the site is in fact an erosion hazard because it is not all hard rock; the soils on the steep slope will come down—into the Elwha River, among other locations—when disturbed. (The common response to this ruling from those who know the site is, "Duh.") The county commissioners refused to hear Shaw and Lane's appeal of the hearing examiner's ruling on technical legal grounds.

Late last year Shaw and Lane appealed to Superior Court, which ruled at a January 8 hearing that the commissioners were wrong to dismiss the appeal. The next steps are not yet determined, but could include a hearing and decision "on the record" by the commissioners, or a reopening of the matter to new evidence by the commissioners or the hearing examiner.

In the meantime, UERCC and OFCO are hopeful that a conservation-minded purchaser can be found for the land, and that Shaw and Lane will sell out before there is any further disturbance of the mountainside.

OFCO Board Member Toby Thaler is the attorney representing UERCC.



Olympic Salamander - Larry Eifert

Protecting Gibbs Lake ... for the Benefit of All

by Connie Gallant

Late last year, Sharron Sherfick, executive director for the Northwest Kiwanis Camp in Jefferson County, contacted OFCO seeking information and help regarding a timber sale planned by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The camp, a nonprofit organization whose mission is "to provide a unique summer camp experience for children and adults with medical and developmental disabilities," is located between Beausite Lake and Gibbs Lake. Both lakes host a wide variety of wildlife, including waterfowl and eagles (among many other bird species), deer and black bear. Beautiful walking and bicycling trails meander throughout the area surrounding Gibbs Lake.

When I met with Sharron, her two primary concerns were for the safety of the visiting children during the planned logging operation nearby and about the destruction of a beautiful recreation area that is also a wetland and home to an abundance of wildlife.

Back in the late 1980s, the lands near Beausite and Gibbs Lakes were purchased from the Boy Scouts of America by Manke Lumber Company. In 1990, in response to popular sentiment in Jefferson County, DNR acquired them in a land trade in order to preserve them from logging. In 1993 a portion of that land (approximately 380 acres) was transferred to Jefferson County to be managed as a park. The remainder was retained by the state. These lands are managed by DNR as "working forest" to generate revenue for Jefferson County, the trust beneficiary.

The sale is composed of seven units in various parts of eastern Jefferson County. Only Units 1 and 2, totaling 64 acres, are located between Gibbs Lake and Beausite Lake and represent most of the remaining older forest on a 240-acre block of DNR land in this area.

After most of the remaining timber is cut on the 240-acre parcel, DNR has no intention of keeping it in their long term ownership as "working forest." The parcel is outside of the area DNR considers suitable as "working forests" in their asset management strategy. By DNR standards, the parcel is too small and isolated and would probably be traded away to private interests if the opportunity arose. (The parcel is not part of the current Pope Resources–DNR land exchange now on hold).

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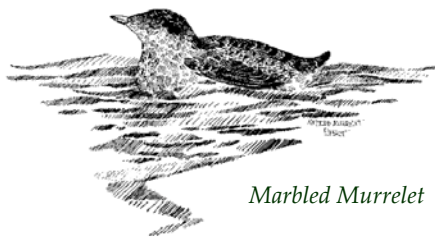
Protecting Gibbs Lake.....Continued from Page 5

In an effort to find out what could be done to avert the logging of the Gibbs Lake recreation area and to keep the area in public ownership for the long term, OFCO representatives met with Jefferson County Commissioners, Peter Bahls of Northwest Watershed Institute, and a representative of the Northwest Kiwanis Camp.

Among one of the recommendations spearheaded by Peter Bahls and Connie Gallant is the idea to turn Units 1 & 2 into Trust Land Transfer (TLT) for a long-term conservation solution. According to Peter Bahls, "the property, now classified as Forest Board land, would first need to be swapped for Common School land by the Intergrant exchange process so that it is eligible for TLT. Under this strategy, there would be no net loss of Forest Board land or potential revenue from such lands to Jefferson County and the property would be permanently protected as an addition to the existing Gibbs Lake Park. However, because parcels must generally have a high percentage of mature forest to rank highly for TLT funding, cutting the area now would jeopardize the potential for TLT transfer to the county. Of course, the proposed timber sale would also impact potential park assets, including 95+-year-old forests, wildlife habitats and popular park trails, several of which occur in the area to be clearcut."

In a coordinated effort, Jefferson County Commissioner John Austin contacted Peter Goldmark, Commissioner of Public Lands, to initiate a discussion of a TLT or other possible alternatives which would benefit DNR, the county and Gibbs Lake. The result of such coordinated effort has been a decision by Peter Goldmark to defer the Silent Alder Timber Sale until March of this year, to allow time to reach a satisfactory solution.

We should have news of such a solution to report in our next newsletter. In the meantime, **we urge you to please write to our [Jefferson County Commissioners](#), and [Public Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark](#)**, in support of a Trust Land Transfer for Gibbs Lake Units 1 & 2.



Marbled Murrelet - Larry Eifert

What's Going on with the Marbled Murrelet

by Marcy Golde

OFCO is working to protect the Marbled Murrelet, listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, both inside the Olympic Experimental State Forest (OESF) and on other state forest lands.

There are at least two significant risks to these small birds, which live at sea, but nest on natural platforms on old, mossy, gnarly trees. Timber harvest, especially clearcutting, removes these trees. Wind farms destroy habitat; the birds and their young die as they fly into towers, wires and blades. In the last year OFCO has been working to reduce both of these hazards.

Here's some background: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) signed a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) with the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in early 1997, allowing the killing of some threatened Northern Spotted Owls, Marbled Murrelets and listed salmon species, in exchange for providing an increasing amount of habitat for these threatened species over time.

This HCP states that DNR will: "... make [a] significant contribution to maintaining and protecting marbled murrelet populations in western Washington over the life of the HCP" (DNR 199, p.IV.44)

There was not enough information available then to decide just how to protect the murrelet, so a five-step interim process of study, analysis, protection and limited harvest was agreed to. Within a year of the completion of this process, the development of the Long-Term Management Plan was to start, subject to FWS approval.

As the first step in this plan, a multi-agency science team was convened in 2006. Its report, "Recommendations and Supporting Analysis of Conservation Opportunities for the Marbled Murrelet Long-Term Conservation Strategy for the Olympic Peninsula and Southwest Washington," was released in late 2008, proposing a series of Marbled Murrelet Management Areas (MMMA) of varying sizes for these areas.

With no work currently underway on the Long-Term Plan, the estimated time for completion is between 2013 and 2015. The FWS interprets "making a significant contribution" as carrying out the Science Report. DNR interprets it as carrying out steps 1-4, but not protecting the proposed MMMA from current harvest, including clearcutting.

Timber Sales: OFCO conducted an incomplete survey of clearcutting in the MMMA's and found well over 1,000 acres had been cut. The FWS has recently identified several thousand more acres planned for harvest before the Long-Term Plan will be finished. This February OFCO will be going to the Board of Natural Resources and requesting that they defer two timber sales located in MMMA's. The D-2000 Again sale is a 72-acre clearcut with seven units, all within a proposed MMMA. The other is Bear Mill Divide, a two-unit sale with the a total of one half-mile edge of each unit intruding up to 135 feet inside the buffer of an occupied site.

Radar Ridge Wind Farms: In 2006 DNR leased more than 4,000 acres on Radar Ridge, in Pacific County's Nemah MMMA—the most highly rated murrelet habitat in Southwest Washington—to Energy Northwest to construct a large wind farm, with a cancellation provision if murrelets would be damaged. Today both DNR Commissioner Goldmark and Ken Berg of FWS have serious doubts about the project.

Energy Northwest, which represents Public Utility Districts in Grays Harbor, Clallam and Pacific counties, has conducted studies, as have the state and federal agencies and the Pacific Seabird Society; these studies, perhaps not surprisingly, have come up with differing recommendations. Just before Christmas, Energy Northwest announced that the requirements of the FWS had been met, citing a study by the Michigan State Mathematics Department affirming that their project would result in no impacts on the murrelet. DNR and FWS disagree and still want an independent peer review covering a whole range of questions, as previously agreed to. In addition, the company is applying for its own HCP from the FWS, but the FWS does not believe that the HCP application is complete and ready for review.

OFCO, along with 16 Audubon Chapters and many citizen activists, has written to DNR requesting a cancellation of the lease and to FWS requesting a full Environmental Impact Statement. This is an evolving story, the outcome is not yet clear. Stay tuned.

Thanks to You, We Met Our Match!

You may remember that an anonymous donor offered us up to \$10,000, provided that members and friends came forward with a like amount of "new money," that is, new memberships and donations above the standard \$25 membership renewal. OFCO is delighted to report that by the end of December we met our match in order to receive the \$10,000.

We were given six months to raise this money, beginning September 1, 2009 and ending February 28, 2010. Because of strong support from you, we raised our match in four months!!

Please don't stop donating to OFCO. We are facing the same major problems that other environmental organizations are facing—more difficulty in getting grants because environmental foundations have less to give right now. We expect 2010 to be tough and hope that 2011 will usher in more opportunities to receive foundation money for OFCO's work.

Thanks to all of you who supported us in 2009, especially during these hard economic times:

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