

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 2015

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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.

You can donate to OFCO online on our website olympicforest.org. Or, if you prefer, you can mail a check to PO Box 461, Quilcene, WA 98376.



Connie Gallant

President's Column

Since our last newsletter, much has happened in the environmental world. For starters, we learned of the death of OFCO's former executive director, Bonnie Phillips. It was very sad news for all of us who knew and worked with Bonnie. While she was a hero to admire and emulate, her dedication and leadership are irreplaceable. We are dedicating this newsletter to Bonnie, and covering some of the issues that she held dear to her heart. Our special gratitude goes to Tom Phillips, Bonnie's brother, for sharing with us many of the photos and articles about her; more about her follows in this newsletter. Here are some updates:

- The little seabird facing possible extinction—the Marbled Murrelet—is central to many of our ongoing battles. Threats range from habitat loss (the result of poor forest-management decisions and practices), to overdevelopment, to disruptive activities by the U.S. Navy and U.S. Army. All these issues are of great concern to OFCO, and we continue to fight and advocate for the protection these birds require and deserve. Marcy Golde reports in this newsletter on how the future might look through the eyes of a Marbled Murrelet.



- Once in a while we get some good news: For years, our friends in the Hood Canal Coalition have been battling in court against the Pit-to-Pier project (the Thorndyke Resource Project), which never seems to run out of money for appeals. We are delighted that the latest court decision, ruling against the project, encourages further action by federal and state agencies to protect the future of Hood Canal and its fragile ecosystems. Indeed, any industrialization—no matter what the source or type—is a detrimental step in the wrong direction for the protection of our waterways.

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- This spring and summer, OFCO board members participated in several field tours in different forest types and stands around the Peninsula, numerous stand reviews, and discussions with Derek Churchill (ecological forestry expert, Stewardship Forestry), ONF foresters, biologists, and industry representatives. Based on this work, OFCO board members and contractors Toby Thaler and Jill Silver are helping the Olympic Peninsula Collaborative to develop draft prescriptions for two selected pilot project sites. Read Jill's and Toby's report on this process on the next page.
- The Olympic National Forest and the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe have partnered to construct 15 large wood jams and stabilize three naturally occurring wood jams to improve fish habitat within the Dungeness and Gray Wolf Rivers. Log jams are to be constructed in four separate reaches of the Dungeness and Gray Wolf Rivers on National Forest lands, between approximately river mile (RM) 13.4 to 14.2 on the Dungeness River and RM 0.4 to 2.0 on the Gray Wolf River. Log jams are to be constructed by flying in trees and materials to the river channel by helicopter, and thus no excavation or recontouring of the streambed and channel with heavy machinery would occur. This action is in Clallam County within the Middle Dungeness River and Lower Gray Wolf River subwatersheds.

Fish species that spawn in the proposed reaches are steelhead, bull trout, Chinook, pinks (odd years), and coho salmon. According to Forest Service fish biologist Marc McHenry, one of the objectives of the wood jams is to collect spawning gravels and thus increase spawning habitat; the other is to improve and increase rearing habitat by scouring pools and re-activating dry side channels. Pink salmon return to our peninsula's rivers to spawn in odd years and, because this was a pink salmon run year, the Tribe and Forest Service have decided to implement the project in autumn of 2016.

A draft Environmental Assessment should be released in early 2016.

- The Forest Service and Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) stakeholders have proposed to develop an OHV trail system and staging area in the Bonidu area within the North Fork Calawah watershed. The proposal would provide about 21.1 miles of interlinking trails. Presently, the project is on hold. During public sessions, OFCO was represented by vice president John Woolley who submitted our concerns for the project.

Military Proposals on the Olympic Peninsula:

- The U.S. Army has submitted a proposal to establish three off-base helicopter training areas and one mountain training area. One of those locations is in southwest Washington/Olympic Peninsula—in Marbled Murrelet/Spotted Owl habitat. The training area would allow up to 75 practice landings a month, at seven designated training areas, throughout the year. Landing/training areas would include the Olympic Peninsula and the Alpine Wilderness in the North Cascades.



The aircraft involved include the massive twin-rotor Chinook and the smaller Black Hawk and Apache helicopters. See separate article on the next page.

- A proposal to reissue a special use permit to the U.S. Air Force to conduct survival school training on National Forest System lands is in process. What all of this training entails is not known to us at this time; in fact, we have only very recently become aware of this proposal. The area of activity would include campgrounds and surrounding ONF lands in the Calawah River watershed. What impact any training or use of training equipment will have on the watershed is not yet clear to us—but we suspect it wouldn't be warm and fuzzy.



- The Navy also has plans afoot for training and testing that would potentially impact the Olympic Peninsula. We urge you to visit our [website](#) and read a letter sent by West Coast Action Alliance and OFCO to the Navy referencing the Navy's Notice of Availability for the Northwest Training and Testing (NWTT) EIS.

Army Helicopter Training on the Peninsula? Have Your Say!

The U.S. Army wants to set up at least one helicopter training area in "southwest Washington/Olympic Peninsula"—which would be Marbled Murrelet/Spotted Owl habitat. Overseeing the proposal is the Aviation Division within the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM).

The Army has prepared a scoping document for the Environmental Assessment to seek additional information pertinent to this analysis. If you have any information that would contribute to an accurate and thorough analysis of the project-specific and cumulative effects associated with the proposed project, you are encouraged to submit them during the scoping period, which has been extended through November 3.

The scoping document, including project maps, and a comment form are located at:

www.lewis-mchord.army.mil/publicworks/sites/envir/eia_HTA.aspx

To submit comments, send an email to usarmy.jblm.imcom.list.dpw-eis@mail.mil

or write to:

Department of the Army
 Directorate of Public Works
 ATTN Environmental Division (NEPA)
 2012 Liggett Ave., Box 339500 MS 17
 Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA 98433-9500

Olympic Peninsula Collaborative Update – Summer 2015

by Jill Silver and Toby Thaler

As mentioned in the President's Column, OFCO board members and contractors Toby Thaler and Jill Silver are helping the Collaborative to develop draft prescriptions for two selected pilot project sites. The sites are located in Adaptive Management Areas (AMAs) where thinning is encouraged and where there is no Marbled Murrelet habitat or documented use, since these sites contain no large-diameter trees with large, mossy limbs.

The draft prescriptions reflect the shared goals of providing long-term protection for older trees and increased timber supply for local mills. OFCO expects to see increased diversity of plant and

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animal species, more downed and standing dead or dying wood important to cavity nesters and nutrient cycling, openings for increased understory diversity, and "skipped" areas for maintaining existing stand structure, such as dense hemlock and larger Douglas-fir, cedar and spruce.

The prescriptions are now being prepared for review and feedback by the full Collaborative and USFS staff. Next, the sales on the two small (70-acre) sale areas will be laid out on the ground.

Balancing the multiple uses and functions of the forest is on our minds: carbon storage and sequestration of the forest, including not only in live trees, but also in ecologically important dead wood and soil. Habitat structure to support Marbled Murrelets and cavity creators and users—such as Pileated Woodpeckers and Northern Spotted Owls—and a diversity of food sources for the web of life that should be in our forests will be encouraged to evolve more quickly than it does in dark, dense, overstocked and stagnating stands.

Stewardship contracting is another key component of OFCO's participation in the Collaborative; additional habitat improvement work will be funded with part of the proceeds from each thinning sale. For each of the pilot project areas, a list of possible stewardship projects is proposed, such as fixing road problems and barrier culverts on streams, adding downed wood, and planting missing but essential understory species.

Industry representatives have been open to our requests, and the ONF staff have been helpful in providing background information, explaining the complex procedures for setting up and implementing sales, and sharing site-specific information. OFCO is working with the other parties to develop monitoring systems to assess whether we are achieving the desired outcomes of more resilient and diverse healthy forests with stable roads and productive streams, while still providing some wood to local mills and markets.

What's Been Happening to Protect Murrelets?

by Marcy Golde

If you were a Marbled Murrelet, you might not have noticed any big changes over the last couple years. However, the fragmentation of the forests around your nesting sites continues. The sometimes nearby roads are built and rebuilt, buffers around your nesting sites continue to be thinned, and the crows and ravens still come around occasionally, especially if the logging crews have left the remains of their lunches. If you are a Marbled Murrelet, the struggle to survive has increased.

The Marbled Murrelet might not be able to protect itself from the dangers of logging, but we as humans can, through a science-based Long Term Murrelet Conservation Strategy. However, the date for the release of a DEIS on the Conservation Strategy continues to be postponed. Currently, the Alternatives are due out in the fall with Board of Natural Resources action to follow. The Conservation Strategy and the Sustainable Harvest Calculation are expected to be completed and out for public comment in the summer of 2016.

The final OESF Landscape Plan and FEIS are to be based on the Interim Murrelet Conservation Strategy from 1997 and released in May 2016. Kevin Schmelzlen of the Murrelet Survival Project has been working very effectively organizing people to attend the Board of Natural Resources meetings, speaking to various groups in the communities around the sound and in colleges, and recruiting supporters to push for DNR to provide adequate protection for the Marbled Murrelet.



Remembering Bonnie

by Peggy Bruton



Bonnie in more physically active days

I can't even remember when I first met Bonnie Phillips. It was soon after I moved to the Pacific Northwest, in 1991, and began attending forest conferences in Washington and Oregon, the region reeling from the timber wars and scorched-earth policies of the Reagan years. Bonnie was always at the center of the strategizing, a calm and methodical leader who understood the complexities of national and regional politics as well as she understood the forests she was so intent on saving.

We met and exchanged pleasantries early on, but mostly I admired her from a distance, and envied her a lot—her confidence, her unflappable determination to keep going, even when disagreements arose among activists and tempers flared, her quiet strength even as she sat in her wheelchair.

Then, when she moved to Olympia in the late '90s, we started carpooling to meetings in Seattle and elsewhere, and got to be friends. I was still in awe of her accomplishments; by then she'd been featured in major magazines and books. But now I was getting to know the complex and multi-faceted person she was. We talked about all the things friends share—family, our respective past lives, friends in common (interesting, since we had both worked in environmental advocacy in Washington, D.C.), favorite authors and music. But there was always this about Bonnie: the causes for which she worked with such passion and dedication were so integral and central to everything else about her life. Everything she thought or read or experienced seemed to be connected with her determination to save the forests and, increasingly, in her later years, to deal with global warming.

I got to know Bonnie even better after she became OFCO's director, in 2003, and recruited me to join the board. OFCO's roots go back to 1989, when Alex Bradley and Bob Crowley formed the Quilcene Ancient Forest Coalition (QUAFCO). It expanded its focus and changed names in 2003, and Bonnie became director.

Officially, Bonnie's executive director role was not a full-time job, but she poured her enormous energy, experience and dedication into it, even as she pursued an advanced degree at The Evergreen State College. I believe it was not until she left OFCO that I began to understand the value of her work—her focus, the organizing skill that kept us all on track, and the institutional memory and cool intellect that always gave her an edge when there was bargaining to be done on the design and scope of a timber sale.

I believe all us never quite took the measure of Bonnie's effectiveness until she left OFCO in 2010 and we began trying to find our way forward without her. Trying to replace her was never an option; maintaining a salaried director was always a struggle but Bonnie's unique qualifications and history made it worthwhile.



Bonnie, 4th from R, with OFCO Board at the time

Bonnie's health problems, including the fibromyalgia that kept her mostly wheelchair bound and off the trails for long stretches of her later years, were well known to us, but we also knew about her determination to be well and to keep up the fight for the causes she cared about so deeply. So her untimely passing last spring

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was a shock and an occasion of great sadness. Even though she'd left OFCO, she was still a valued friend a source of inspiration, and, at least for some of us, a "go-to" person for wise counsel in our activism.

We'll remember her as our leader and, as we look over press clippings from throughout her life, as the beautiful, young girl growing up in Wisconsin, making her mark as a tireless hiker and climber, before her illness grounded her, and then as the storied activist she became with Pilchuck Audubon. And then, of course, as the power that put OFCO on its feet.

One evening—it can't be more than a few years ago—Bonnie and I carpoled to Seattle, parked in a labyrinth lot, and then couldn't find my car after the event was over. We divided up the territory and went off in different directions, Bonnie in her wheelchair. I felt seriously guilty about subjecting Bonnie to this ordeal. But I needn't have worried! As our paths crossed, I saw that Bonnie was enjoying the ride—the challenge of the uphill stretches and the rush of the downhill. She didn't look stressed—she was having fun! This was the quintessential Bonnie, her joy and grit undiminished by her health problems.

Rest in peace, Bonnie. We won't forget you.

Bonnie and Me

by Connie Gallant

It was a rainy day in Olympia, Washington, when I first sat across from the fiery red-headed woman who would ultimately change my path. I had been concerned about a thinning proposal made by the Forest Service for the top of Mt. Walker and had established a website for the local Quilcene residents to submit their comments to the Forest Service, Congressman Norm Dicks and our senators, Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell.



Bonnie contacted me through the website, asking that we meet. I had no idea what to expect, but soon learned that she and the board she represented at the Olympic Forest Coalition were impressed with the savemountwalker.org site and wanted me to replace their existing site with something newer. She emphasized, at great length, that this would be my only task as part of the OFCO board. Naively, I believed her ...



Bonnie Phillips with Senator Brock Adams and aide Weland June 1992, Washington, D.C.

... but not for long. Here I was, among veterans of the spotted owl wars, a conflict that I'd watched from the sidelines, primarily because of being more than busy establishing our rural Internet business. During board meetings, it was difficult for me to keep my mouth closed—not because I had anything to add, but because I was in awe of being surrounded by such incredibly savvy and passionate people. I learned a great deal by listening.

Bonnie's past experience blew me away. She had stood up to the timber industry and huge federal (and state) agencies in defense of our old-growth forests and endangered species, showing what one person can accomplish with a mix of determination and passion.

Before long, I was elected to the vice president position. That was scary, but Bonnie always had my back. And, believe me, I needed her support. My lack of experience and knowledge in "forest-speak" scared me. But it never fazed Bonnie. She kept reassuring me I'd learn all I needed to know. She kept telling me, "There are enough of us nerds around who know it by heart. All you need to do is use our knowledge, ask questions and, because we're nerds, we are happy to oblige!" Bonnie also had a great sense of humor.

When the time came for our then-president John Woolley to step down, I found myself getting Bonnie's unwavering support to fill in the presidency seat. We kidded many times how she was so successful in luring me into OFCO "only as a webmaster." She kept telling me she never doubted my abilities to lead this organization.

I learned tremendous lessons in strategy by observing Bonnie's negotiating skills in action, and these lessons boosted my confidence for the latest collaboration effort among OFCO, the timber industry and Congressman Derek Kilmer. I feel Bonnie's wisdom guiding me at all these sessions—although, perhaps ironically, she herself was wary of such liaisons. "Don't be afraid to walk away; there is no shame in it," she told me time and time again.

But, of course, years had elapsed since I'd first watched Bonnie in action, and the times had changed. I am stubborn, and felt these efforts were promising and worth pursuing. So far, I feel they've paid off; at the very least, we've been successful in establishing a level of trust with timber folks. I can only hope Bonnie would have approved, though there's no way of knowing.

Bonnie's passing filled me with sadness. Perhaps I was feeling a bit sorry for myself, knowing I had lost such a tremendous source of experience, courage and determination to draw from whenever I needed it.

I can never thank her enough for having turned my path to environmental activism, and for giving me a chance to prove my mettle.



Scholarship Fund Established in Bonnie's Name

To honor Bonnie Phillips' life and work as an environmental activist, OFCO has initiated a scholarship fund in her name with a contribution of \$1,000 at The Evergreen State College, where Bonnie earned a Master of Environmental Studies degree. Scholarship funds will be awarded to a student interested in environmental studies, with a preference for those interested in climate change and forest protection.

Checks should be made to The Evergreen State College Foundation and mailed to 2700 Evergreen Pkwy NW, Olympia WA 98505-0001, Attn: Advancement. Please include Bonnie Phillips Memorial Scholarship in the memo line.

Because this effort is just getting off the ground, the exact nature of the fund is not yet clear. If donations to the scholarship reach or exceed \$27,000, then the scholarship will be endowed and will continue on in perpetuity. If this threshold is not reached, then the scholarship will be given out until the funds are exhausted. Regardless of the type of scholarship, The Evergreen State College Foundation assesses a 5% one-time fee on gifts.

We hope you will join us in contributing to this fund and honoring Bonnie's legacy.

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