



Loo Wit Rumblings



Loo Wit Loses Longtime Hike and Climb Leader

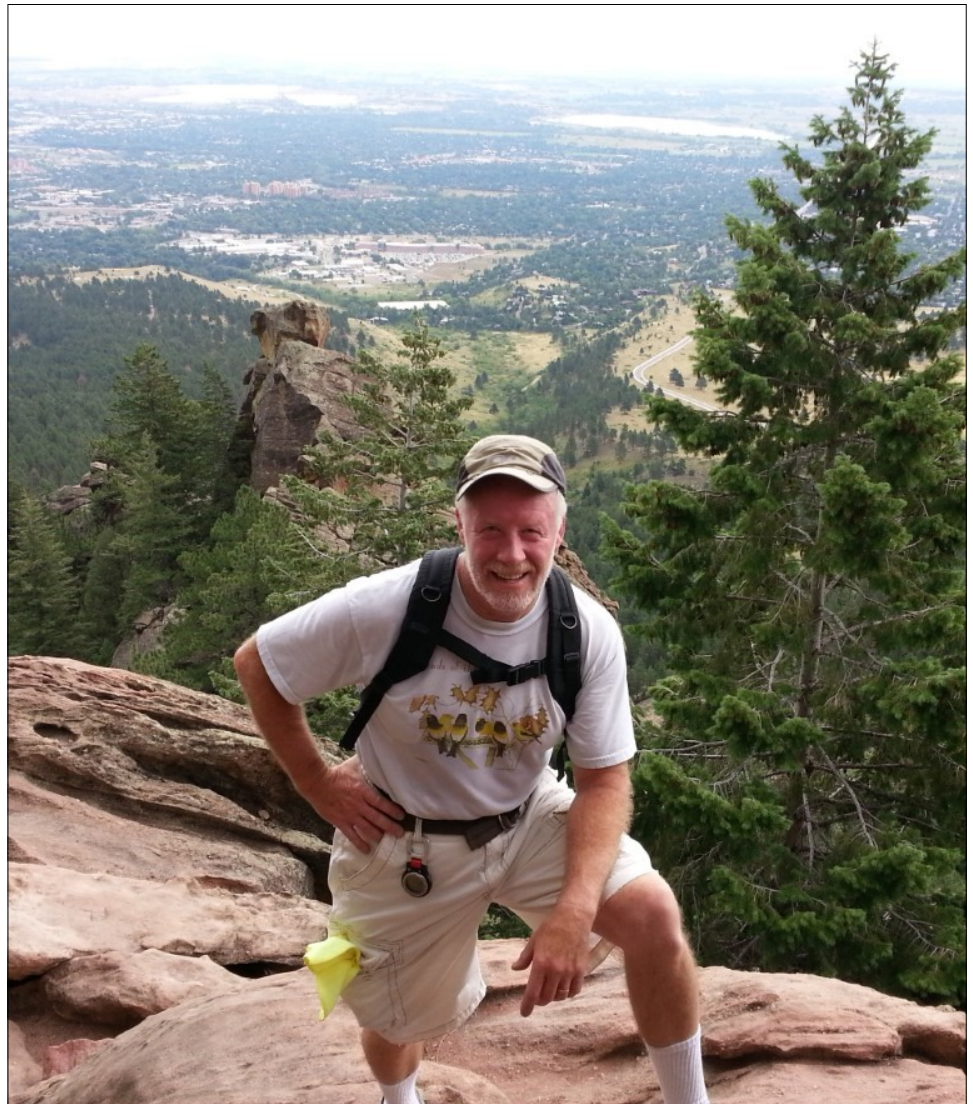
By Lehman Holder

Mike Newsham, 74, past Loo Wit outings chair and a longtime outings leader, passed away on July 2, 2021 at his home in Ridgefield. Mike is survived by his wife, Barbara, sons Patrick and Matthew, and 7 grandchildren. He was a graduate of the University of Iowa and a U.S. Army veteran. His service included a year in Vietnam.

While serving as outings chair for Loo Wit, Mike led more than 200 hikes and climbs from the early-2000s to 2018. He loved taking participants on hikes and climbs “to places where they wouldn’t normally go on their own.” This includes numerous climbs on Mt. St. Helens, South Sister and Mt. Hood. In 2014, Mike summited Kilimanjaro, highest point on the African continent at nearly 20,000 feet above sea level.

Before his death, Mike was honored by Loo Wit for his contributions to outings and for his work on the Loo Wit Executive Committee (ExCom).

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Mt. St. Helens Institute. Click [here](#) to donate.



Former Loo Wit outings chair Mike Newsham, during a hike before his illness. **Photo by Patrick Newsham (son)**



LOO-WIT ENDORSEMENTS

By Richard Kolber, Political Committee

Diana Perez is a candidate for Vancouver City Council position 3. Diana aligns with the Sierra Club on environmental and social justice issues. She was a founder of Vancouver’s LULAC. She is interested in reducing homelessness with 5 action steps: 1. reorganize and coordinate city and county governance oversight of homeless activities; 2. Restore the “Navigation Center”; 3. Establishing homeless centers serving specific homeless populations including single men, women, families, elderly, and disabled; 4. Create one step services through collaboration of existing agencies and community services; and 5. benchmarking with other top homeless programs. Diana has been involved with environmental issues for 25 years with the Audubon Society, The Wildlife Society, as a Sierra Club member, and as an employee of United States Government. She serves as commissioner of the Washington State Parks and Recreation. She has a BS in wildlife management.



Diana Perez. Image via twitter.com/ElectDianaPerez

Kim Harless is a candidate for Vancouver City Council position 1. She holds the values of the Sierra Club and will work towards using them while serving on the Vancouver City Council. As an indigenous and Latina Kim understands what social and environmental justice means. She has a degree in environmental science and has served as an environmental operations specialist and helped plan the waste and recycling system for Clark County. She understands who environmental degradation has impacted our most vulnerable community. Her priorities include affordable housing, equity and inclusion, and truly addressing climate change. She supports developing parks in East Vancouver and other diverse areas. Kim also knows of the need of sidewalks in parts of the city. She does support of electrification of all new buildings. She favors expanding the urban tree canopy and supports the Urban Forestry Program. Kim supports developing compact neighborhoods that are walkable.



Kim Harless. Image via [ClarkCountyToday](https://www.clarkcountytoday.com)



LOO-WIT ENDORSEMENTS

By Richard Kolber, Political Committee

Erik Paulsen is a candidate for reelection for Vancouver City Council position 2. He recognizes climate change as an urgent issue that needs to be addressed. Erik believes in a climate action plan that is pushing for more aggressive targets. He is forward thinking and wants to consider the growing population and it's needs and impact on the planet. Erik supports the 6 recommendations by homeless response coordinator, especially the creation small camps providing people increased safety, access to resources and a pathway to housing. He recognizes the value of local parks, especially on the east side of Vancouver for easier accessibility to all. His other priorities are housing, mobility, and economic development More density= less driving, healthier people, lower greenhouse emissions, complete streets, and public transit will reduce single-occupancy vehicle miles, etc. Erik has values that match the Sierra Club.



Erik Paulsen. Image via ep4cc.com

Eric LaBrant is a candidate for reelection for Vancouver Port Commissioner. His votes are consistent with Sierra club values. He has worked with the other Vancouver commissioners to develop a good climate action strategy leading to a good climate action plan. He has worked against fossil fuel expansion at the port. He has worked at getting commissioners from other ports to develop environmentally friendly action. .



Eric LaBrant. Image via ballotready.org

Anne McEnery- Ogle for reelection as Vancouver mayor was covered in a prior news letter.

The City of Vancouver is developing a climate action strategy and will be developing and climate action plan. We need people like Anne, Erik, Diane, Kim, and Eric to help enact the best possible plan.

Please support these endorsed candidates.

LOO WIT CALENDAR OF EVENTS

****The September 2nd Executive Committee Meeting will be held IN PERSON at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church****

Executive Committee Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of the month at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Vancouver, WA. Glass Room. 6:30—8:00 pm.

****Climate Task Force (previously Beyond Coal & Oil) meetings will be remote for August, October, and November. The September and December meetings will be IN-PERSON at the address below.***

The Climate Task Force Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of the month at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Vancouver. Meet & greet with pizza starts at 6:00 pm, followed by the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Connect With Us!

If you haven't already, please give us a "like" on Facebook! We share information about upcoming events, photos from outings and the latest Loo Wit news. You can even share our posts with your own Facebook friends, helping to spread the word about Loo Wit!

All of our upcoming outings are posted on MeetUp, and archives of our monthly newsletters on our website. You can find us on Instagram by searching "LooWit.Group"

www.facebook.com/loowit.group

www.meetup.com/Portland-Vancouver-Sierra-Club-Outings-Events

www.sierraclub.org/washington/loo-wit

You can also join our listserv for pertinent conservation related news! Send an email to CASCADE-LOOWIT-CONSFORUM@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG with "subscribe" in the subject line to be added to the list!



Loo Wit Executive Committee Members

Kelsey King—Chair

Mark Leed—Vice Chair

Lehman Holder— Outings Liaison

Fred Suter — Legislative Liaison

Steve Foster—Treasurer

Emily Waters—Newsletter/NF Comm.

Wendy Cleveland —Conservation Comm.



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Explore — Enjoy — Protect



Interstate Bridge Replacement

By Don and Alona Steinke, Advisory Council

Sierra Club's official club position is that any new road capacity should be reserved for public transit and freight.

This is because adding more lanes for single occupancy vehicles always leads to more air pollution, more destruction of farm and forest land, and more miles traveled in SUVs.

Money spent for new roads becomes money not available for public transit, and without density, transit is not viable. Transit is the most viable when it is so good that people would rather take it than drive. I believe that congestion pricing may be the only way to reduce congestion and free public transit is a good way to make it equitable.

It is our experience that adding lanes increases the time of travel because of the increased demand. **Good environmental policies seldom happen without persistent and organized public engagement.** Please get involved in the meetings of the <https://www.interstatebridge.org/>

Most of the above comments are relevant to City and County streets. Please get involved with The Vancouver Transportation and Mobility Commission: <https://www.cityofvancouver.us/TMC>



The Interstate 5 bridge looking south. Photo via [interstatebridge.org](https://www.interstatebridge.org)



SIERRA CLUB

Explore—Enjoy—Protect

Update on Steigerwald Restoration Work

By Mark Leed, Loo Wit Vice Chair

At Loo Wit's 2019 holiday party, we learned about the 965-acre floodplain restoration project at Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Much progress has been made since that time, including two major milestones in the last few months. In May, contractor Rotschy, Inc. began removing 2.2 miles of the existing levee separating the Columbia River from its floodplain. Material removed from the levee is being used to build two new setback levees that will mitigate flood risk for neighboring properties, including the Port of Camas-Washougal. At the beginning of July, a massive concrete water diversion structure was removed. The structure was built in 1992 to disconnect Gibbons Creek from the floodplain. Its removal will allow the creek to be reconnected to its floodplain and alluvial fan, enabling juvenile salmon and lamprey to pass through the Refuge out to the Columbia. Before the diversion structure was demolished, all fish and shellfish were removed from the affected section of Gibbons Creek, which has been temporarily rerouted through a culvert. Washougal contractor LKE, Inc. is reconstructing the creek's historic channel and building wood habitat structures. This construction is slated to be complete in November. The Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership will then begin planting trees on 170 acres of riparian habitat, and the refuge will reopen to the public in spring 2022.



An overhead shot of the construction area at Steigerwald Lake. Photo via refuge2020.info



LOO WIT OUTINGS

OUTINGS RESUMPTION GAINING OPTIMISM

By Lehman Holder, Outings Liaison

After months of meetings, work and preparation, national Sierra Club's Outdoor Activities Committee has given the green light to local groups to restart outings activities. Effective date was July 5.

Wearing masks will NOT be required for outdoor activities, but will continue to be required for unvaccinated participants for indoor activities. Participants will not be asked whether they are vaccinated. Likewise, medical forms will not be required for "frontcountry" (local outings) that take place within an hour of Vancouver/Clark County.

Outing participants will still be required to sign the outings waiver at the meeting location for the outing. If a participant contracts covid following the outing, the waiver will provide information for contact tracing with other participants. Sierra Club has established a toll-free 800 number to report any such cases that is open 24/7.

As in the past, outing information will be posted online, on Loo Wit's [Meetup](#) page.

Participation will be limited to a max of 10 on bike outings and 8 boats on sea kayak outings (not including leaders). Lehman Holder and Chris Hartman will be leading the Loo Wit SW Washington outing since February 2020 on July 28th, "Introduction to Sea Kayaking". This event is posted on the Meetup site.

Questions may be emailed to Lehman Holder, tripsguy@aol.com.

Public Input Requested on Silver Star Scenic Area

Press Release published with permission from Washington Trails Association

The Silver Star Vision Plan Steering Committee invites public input on managing recreation in and around the Silver Star Scenic Area. This project seeks to define a vision that is shared among a diverse set of stakeholders including trail users, environmental groups and land management agencies; specifically the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) which manages the adjacent Yacolt Burn State Forest.

Information about the planning process as well as background information can be found at www.silverstarvisionplan.org. Those interested in providing input are invited to do so using the online survey found at www.surveymonkey.com/r/72QQ6GP. Please respond by August 31st, 2021.

Following this public input period, the Steering Committee will review responses and develop recommendations and a draft vision plan. A draft vision plan will be available for comments during the fall/winter of 2021/2022.

The Silver Star area is situated on the Southwest corner of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and abuts the Yacolt Burn State Forest (DNR). It is rich with scenic, natural, cultural and recreational resources. Yet, it lacks an up-to-date plan to guide stewardship activities and protect these values across the landscape. Vision plans are useful documents for setting the direction of further planning and management. They are not legally binding plans or have specific timelines but rather an expression of the collective voice of those organizations and agencies that develop the vision. Being less rigid than typical government planning frameworks allows state and federal agencies to engage as participants rather than drivers of the conversation.

The Silver Star Mountain and nearby ridges and valleys were designated as a Special Interest Area in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest Management Plan in 1990. The goal of this designation was to maintain the outstanding scenic, botanical, and cultural features of the area while still providing for an appropriate level of public access and enjoyment. Standards and guidelines specify that motorized vehicles should not be permitted within the Special Interest Area. In 1993 the Forest Service approved a trails plan that closed some of the roads that used to lead to Silver Star, authorized some new trails and established the management goal of providing a semi-primitive non-motorized experience with trails designated for hiking as well as some open to equestrians and mountain biking.

We respectfully acknowledge these lands are the homelands of Indigenous tribes of the Pacific Northwest. Tribes continue to rely on and share in the stewardship of these lands today.

The Silver Star Vision Plan Steering Committee includes representatives from the Mount St. Helens Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of Washington, Chinook Trail Association, Washington Department of Natural Resources - Pacific Cascade Region, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance - Southwest Chapter, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Washington Trails Association, and Washington Trail Riders Association. The group is facilitated by the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.



Don't Get Left Out in the Cold... Join Us!



Sierra Club Outings are a terrific way to meet new people and enjoy the great outdoors. Whatever your interests - hiking, canoeing or birdwatching - there is an outing for everyone. If you are new to the area, let your local Chapter or Group give you the lay of the land. Join today and become part of America's largest environmental organization offering the most enjoyable outings.

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Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

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