



# The Rainier Review

Spring 2014

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SERVING THE PIERCE COUNTY COMMUNITY AND BEYOND

“Explore, enjoy  
and protect  
the planet”

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## Endorsements of Electoral Candidates for 2014 Elections Has Begun

The Sierra Club has recently started the endorsement process for Federal Congressional candidates in 2014. For parts of Pierce County we have in the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District (Tacoma, Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula areas) first-term **Rep. Derek Kilmer**, who recently introduced the Wild Olympics legislation in the House, and in the 9<sup>th</sup> District (Port of Tacoma and NE Tacoma areas) **Rep. Adam Smith**, a veteran environmental champion, who are the first two Incumbents in Pierce County to receive the Sierra Club’s endorsement. For U.S. Congressional endorsements in Washington State, see website: <http://content.sierraclub.org/voterguide/washington>. Completed State and local endorsements will be posted by June 30, 2014 on the website: [cascade.sierraclub.org](http://cascade.sierraclub.org).



**Rep. Derek Kilmer**  
6<sup>th</sup> CD



**Rep. Adam Smith**,  
9<sup>th</sup> CD

The Tatoosh Group also is moving to quickly re-endorse our green incumbent state legislators in Pierce Co., so we can focus more on vetting the newer candidates who can best lead and support our legislative agenda for protecting the environment. Club members interested in helping with this effort can contact Bliss Moore, Tatoosh Political Committee Chair, at [blissmoore2004@yahoo.com](mailto:blissmoore2004@yahoo.com).

## Metro Parks Tacoma Prop. 1 Bond Issue – Election Day, Earth Day-April 22

Through its planning processes with the community and staff review of system assets, Metro Parks Tacoma (MPT) identified and prioritized more than \$500 million in needs system wide. This \$198 million public investment would help preserve the more than century-old park system through the following district-wide capital priorities:

- Park Improvements and Expanded Citywide Access to Recreation**
- Preservation of Point Defiance Park, Zoo & Aquarium**
- Protection of Lakes & Natural Areas, Waterfront Access and Connecting Trails**
- Preservation of Regional, Cultural and Historic Landmarks**
- Safety, Health & Security Upgrades**

**Get More Information at: [MetroParksTacoma.org/2014ParksZooBond](http://MetroParksTacoma.org/2014ParksZooBond)**

The Tatoosh (Pierce County) Group of the Sierra Club has worked closely with MPT over the last decade through the “Chip-In” program where our group has been mainly involved cleaning out invasive plant species throughout the MPT Parks System, with an emphasis on Pt. Defiance Park. We urge all voters within the MPT district, to vote on Prop. 1. It should be noted MPT has done an excellent job of implementing the last bond issue passed several years ago. Prop. 1 should improve and upgrade, not only, recreational, educational and historic facilities, but also restore the natural areas throughout the park system. Clearly it will help improve the livability and economic viability of the Greater Tacoma area as well. **Be sure to VOTE by April 22, 2014.**

## Buckley Fish Trap and Diversion Dam

by Russ Ladley

### **Background**

The Buckley Fish Trap and Diversion Dam (collectively “the Facility”) is located in Buckley on the White River, which empties into the Puyallup River in Sumner, downstream of the Facility. The Facility is two separate components, a Diversion Dam that diverts water in Lake Tapps and the Fish Trap itself. The Diversion Dam was constructed in the early 1900’s as part of the hydroelectric facility operated by Puget Sound Energy which created Lake Tapps and generated electricity from a no longer operating hydro power facility.

The Fish Trap was constructed in the 1940’s as part of the construction of Mud Mountain Dam. The Fish Trap was constructed to allow the Corps of Engineers to execute its responsibility of moving migrating fish, in particular salmon, above Mud Mountain dam because the construction of Mud Mountain Dam completely blocked fish migration to their spawning grounds. The Fish Trap operation is a function of the Corps responsibility to move fish above Mud Mountain Dam to prevent extinction of fish species. The continued operation of Mud Mountain Dam, which serves as a major flood control structure protecting key economic areas from flooding in the Puget Sound Region, requires the Corps of Engineers to comply with the Endangered Species Act (“ESA”). In 2007, the Army Corps was obligated to upgrade and repair the aging facility in a biological opinion issued under the ESA.



Photo: Buckley Fish Trap and Diversion Dam, credit Russ Ladley

### **Current Condition of the Facility**

The Diversion Dam is deteriorated to the point of metal rebar and wood spears on the apron sticking out into flows where fish are repeatedly injured or killed trying to pass the diversion dam. The design and condition of the dam fails to provide adequate flows into the fish trap at the most critical time, increasing wait time and forcing fish to attempt to move past the dam, thereby impaling themselves on the disintegrating apron.

The Fish Trap is too small to handle the fish returning to spawn, particularly in years where a growing pink salmon population returns, which occurs every two years. This year, fish have been backed up at the facility for over a mile, which causes delay in spawning, and an estimated 20% mortality for fish listed under the Endangered Species Act. The Trap itself is outdated in design, and often leads to endangered species being ripped in two during operation of the Trap.

### **Impacts**

**Fish Mortality.** Endangered Species, particularly spring Chinook salmon, are delayed in spawning which leads to not only less efficient reproduction, but mortality before spawning, because the Diversion Dam injures or kills them as they repeatedly try to move past the dam. The Fish Trap is simply not able to accomplish the job of moving fish adequately as required as part of the Corps Operation of Mud Mountain Dam.

**Loss of Fishing Opportunity and the Economic Benefits from Fishing.** The impacts to fish cause a loss of fish for both Tribal and Sport Fisherman. The Sports Fishing industry is a multi-million dollar industry in the region, and continued decline due to the Facility is heavily impacting a large economic opportunity for the region. Furthermore, the Corps of Engineers is interfering with the Tribes Treaty Right to fish by impacting the species survival and availability.

**Diminishing Costly Restoration Efforts.** Millions of dollars are spent in attempts to recover salmon species in Puget Sound yearly as a result of the listings of salmonid species under the Endangered Species Act. However, such efforts are diminished or completely rendered useless if the species cannot return to their spawning habitat due to the Facility’s failure to move fish above Mud Mountain Dam.

**Liability under the Endangered Species Act.** The failures of the Army Corps of Engineers could lead to substantial liability for the agency under the Endangered Species Act. Such liability will be costly in federal dollars both in time to litigate such liability and implement any forced remedies as a result of such liability.

Tell your elected representatives we need to fix the Buckley Diversion Dam and fish trap.

See the dam here: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INETW0P\\_4w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INETW0P_4w)

## Ivy League Work Parties

Most events are scheduled on Saturdays from 9am to noon to work on removing invasive plants, such as Ivy, or planting native plants in parks or urban green spaces. Participants should wear gardening/work clothes and be dressed for weather conditions. The Tatoosh Group will provide gloves, tools and refreshments though you are encouraged to bring your own gloves and a water bottle. Participants must sign a liability waiver form and a parent/guardian of a minor (under the age of 18) must sign a permission & liability waiver form for a child participant. If you wish to be on the Tatoosh Ivy League email list, please contact Bliss Moore ([blissmoore2004@yahoo.com](mailto:blissmoore2004@yahoo.com), 253-752-6472) so we can remind you of the events and notify you of any event changes.

### Next Event: Ivy/Blackberry Removal Work Party

Date: Saturday, April 19, 2014

Time: 9 AM – noon (8:45 AM sign-in starts)

Location: Pt. Defiance Park, hilltop just above the Nature Garden at corner of Bristol St. & N. Park Ave.

Parking: Bristol St. (both sides) or N. Park Ave. (south side)

Bus Service: #10 or #11 (bus stops 1 to 3 blocks away)

Contact: Bliss Moore at [blissmoore2004@yahoo.com](mailto:blissmoore2004@yahoo.com) or 253-752-6472(h) or 253-820-2306(m)

## Outings – Get up, get out in the great outdoors

All outings are subject to change depending on conditions so **be sure to sign up** with the hike leader to be in the loop. Contact [dorothyw@centurylink.net](mailto:dorothyw@centurylink.net) or 253.265.6059 for more info and to sign up. **Dress for the weather (Don't skimp; put that jacket in your pack.). Wear boots or sturdy shoes, not sandals; bring lunch, sun protection and water.**

### Sat, April 12, Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River – Roundtrip 6 miles, elevation gain 200'

Located off of I-90 on this side of Snoqualmie Pass, the trail follows the fast-moving cold river upstream. The trail rolls in and out of the trees, sometimes dropping down close to the water's edge while at other times it pushes far into the forest. The Middle Fork is a trout-rich river, so it's not uncommon to see fish-eating birds along its banks. At about 3 miles, the trail drops down to the riverside. We'll eat lunch here before heading back to the trailhead. Our carpool will leave Puyallup at 8:30 AM and should be back by 4:30 PM. Northwest Forest Pass is required for each car.

### Sat, May 24, Iron Horse Trail – Round trip about 9 miles, elevation gain 300'

The Iron Horse Trail runs down the middle of the John Wayne State Park. The trail utilizes the old rail line known as the Milwaukee Road, which carried locomotives of the Chicago-Milwaukee-St. Paul-Pacific Railroad. At 4 1/2 miles out, is a towering trestle spanning the deep cut of Change Creek, where we will have lunch while enjoying the stunning views. Our carpool will leave Puyallup at 8:30 AM and should be back by 4:30 PM. Discover Pass is required for each car.

### Thurs, June 19, Twin Falls - Round trip 3 miles, elevation gain 500'

The South Fork Snoqualmie River squeezes into a narrow rocky gorge before tumbling over a very impressive stairstep falls. When the water has been churned into a frothy torrent, it plunges over a 150-foot rock wall, creating the stunning cascade of the Lower Twin Falls. Our carpool will leave Puyallup at 9:00 AM and should be back by 4:00 PM. Discover Pass is required for each car.

### Thurs, July 17, Crystal Ridge - Round trip 6 miles, elevation gain 1300'

Off of Highway 410 on Crystal Mt Blvd, this hike starts before the ski resort parking lot and wanders along the MR National Park boundary providing stunning views of Mt Rainier and the White River from the top of the ridge. We will decide whether to continue the hike to the Crystal Mt gondola and a ride down or turn around. Our carpool will leave Puyallup at 8:30 AM and should be back by 4:30 PM. Northwest Forest Pass is required for each car.

For the latest on outings check our web site. **Tatoosh Group Outings are listed here:** <http://washington.sierraclub.org/tatoosh/outings/index.asp>

**All Washington State Chapter Outings are available to you.** Washington State Chapter Outings are listed here: <http://cascade.sierraclub.org/events/outings>



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## Would you benefit from a home energy audit?



The Tatoosh (Pierce County) Group of the Sierra Club is partnering with *SustainableWorks* to bring you information on their “Save Energy Today” program. Hear from homeowners who are saving money and helping our environment.

**Watch your email for an invitation to a neighborhood home gathering or visit [www.sustainableworks.com](http://www.sustainableworks.com) for program details.**

*SustainableWorks* is a non-profit general contractor helping you make your home more energy efficient. Their mission is to create living wage jobs and the pathways to them, provide social and economic benefits for families, and improve the environment by upgrading the existing building stock. To date *SustainableWorks* has helped Washington homeowners achieve reductions of 13M kilowatt-hours of energy and 3,631 metric tons of carbon. The carbon reduction is equivalent to removing nearly 500 cars from the road, year over year.

With your consent, a *SustainableWorks* Building Scientist will come to your home to assess how your home is using energy at a cost of \$150. Furthermore, during the assessment, a Weatherization Specialist will make immediate energy saving improvements on the spot. Depending on your home’s needs, the actual true value of the assessment and the immediate improvements may be up to \$1200. You will receive a consultation on how your home is currently performing, and what can be done to maximize energy efficiency. The Building Scientist will provide you with a rating for your home and specific cost effective recommendations for energy efficiency improvements.