



North Olympic Group Newsletter

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March – April, 2015

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Meetings & Events

Mar 12 – Excom Retreat, Sequim members are invited. See Page 1 for RSVP contact information

Mar 19 – Audubon meeting with 3-Crabs area restoration presentation, open to the public – River Center, Sequim at 7PM (Page 4)

April 9 – Excom meeting in Port Townsend, 1 to 3PM – contact monicaftet@gmail.com for more information

April 11 – Lake Ozette outing (Page 10)



“In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.”
— Margaret Atwood



LOOK UP

There's a change to the first page of the newsletter. Contact information is now Included in the mast head.

This was done to make it easy for you to contact the NOG Executive Committee by “snail mail” or email. We have also included access to the North Olympic Group web page at the Washington State Chapter website. The Executive Committee (Excom) officers who work for you and represent you with Chapter and National look forward to hearing your suggestions and/or questions.

Now

LOOK DOWN



Remember you are an important part of the NOG and welcome at all Excom meetings held in Port Townsend and Sequim.

The following are the new NOG Excom officers and board members for 2015.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Chair | Bob Sextro |
| Vice-Chair | Peter Guerrero |
| Secretary | Bill Volmut |
| Treasurer | Monica Fletcher |
| Board Members: | Norm Baker |
| | Ken Bleyer |
| | Darlene Schanfald |

The Excom is holding a special afternoon retreat meeting on March 12th from 10am to 3pm. They will be making plans for 2015. All members are invited. For more information please RSVP to exploreolympics@gmail.com

Group Executive Committee

We are governed by seven volunteers, with help from our conservation committees and interested members.

Meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each month alternating between Sequim and Port Townsend.

All Sierra Club members are welcome to attend.

Officers:

Chair: Robert Sextro

Vice Chair: Peter Guerrero

Secretary: Bill Volmut

Treasurer: Monica Fletcher

Executive Committee:

Norm Baker

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Complaints, suggestions, opinions are always welcome



Biochar Olypen

Norm Baker

Biochar, which is nothing more than charcoal usually made from woody waste, is proving itself important in three different ways. First, it can be used to sequester carbon and fight climate change. Second, it retains plant nutrients in the soil and improves the productivity of agricultural and horticultural soils. Third, it has an important role in creating renewable energy. Research and development surrounding biochar has been accelerating at an amazing pace. The contribution biochar is making to environmental sensitivity and sustainability is also simply amazing. It is an ideal subject for citizen science research and there are many of us who are participating.

Here on the Olympic Peninsula, we have *Biochar Olypen*, a group of people who have a broad interest in biochar. Our group is very informal, opened sourced and share any new information or ideas or discussions about any aspect of biochar. Currently we have about 40 individuals who participate. Anyone interested in the subject of biochar and any aspect of it, can simply drop an email to Norman Baker (ntbakerphd@gmail.com) and ask to be included in our blog – Biochar Olypen.



“Monsanto should not have to vouchsafe the safety of biotech food. Our interest is in selling as much of it as possible. Assuring its safety is the F.D.A.’s job.”

—Philip Angell, Monsanto’s director of corporate communications. “Playing God in the Garden”. *New York Times Magazine*, October 25, 1998.



“Ultimately, it is the food producer who is responsible for assuring safety.”

—FDA, “Statement of Policy: Foods Derived from New Plant Varieties.” May 29, 1992. 57 FR 22984.



A Threat to our USFWS Dungeness Refuge and Watershed?

During January and February, 4 volunteers leafletted over 200 homes in 3 communities in the sightline of the proposed Taylor Shellfish (TS) geoduck project near the USFWS Dungeness Refuge and an adjoining multi million dollar

WA Department of Fish and Wildlife wetland restoration project in the 3 Crabs area.

TS is leasing 348 acres in the Dungeness watershed from a private gun club. TS claims that only 30 acres are suitable for the geoduck project. On January 10, the North Olympic Group and other organizations held a community information meeting about industrial sized shellfish farming. This meeting drew 108 persons.

Following, on February 11, the Dungeness River Management Team (DRMT)* hosted two speakers, Bob Boekelheide, bird expert and former Director of Sequim's Dungeness River Center, and Bill Dewey with TS. There were approximately 85 present in the audience, most were citizens we reached through leafletting and who had attended our January meeting.

Boekelheide reviewed the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society's multi year bird studies where the geoduck project would be sited. He reported that this winter birding area is in the Top 10 Audubon birding sites and that it is a restricted access area which has provided a safe, undisturbed area for birds where they would not be stressed. He closed by asking Dewey how it would avoid interference with the activity of thousands of birds; deal with bird poop on geoducks; ensure geoduck protective devices would not harm the wild ducks; and ensure no eel grass is lost?

Bill Dewey told the audience that the Taylor Shellfish Company started in the 1990s and by late 1990s commercialized 800 acres in Puget Sound. TS owns many hatcheries and leases and owns a combined 11,000 acres in WA State and other states, and "is excited to come to Clallam County." TS grows manila clams, muscles, and oysters in addition to geoducks. The company sells all over the world; 50% to the



TS plans to submit a formal permit request to Clallam County in one to two months. From the lengthy Q&A period that followed the two presentations, it was clear the citizens were not supportive of the TS project in the sensitive Dungeness watershed area.

TS began talking about legislative laws in 2007 and worked with the WA State Department of Ecology on developing geoduck regulations in shoreline master plans (SMP). This has translated into Ecology instructing every community to allow shellfish projects on their shorelines in their SMPs.

(continued on Page 4)

A Threat to our USFWS Dungeness Refuge and Watershed?

(continued)



Shellfish planting and harvesting is not new. What is new is the industrial sized projects requiring miles of beaches covered with nets, harvest machines that liquify and disturb natural beach systems, and plastic geoduck pipes that are aesthetically disagreeable and break apart adding to the plastic washing over beaches, settling in sediments, and being digested by animals. Rather than Ecology protecting our beaches from this pollution, the agency is promoting it through SMPs. That is why communities like Bainbridge Island are appealing Ecology's ability to force communities into opening all its beaches and waters to aquaculture — open water fin fish and intertidal shellfish -- or risk not having their SMPs approved. Stay tuned.

(*The DRMT is a non decision making group consisting of tribe, business, environment, and other representatives working to develop and implement locally based, long-term solutions to Dungeness Watershed management issues.)

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society

Membership Meeting

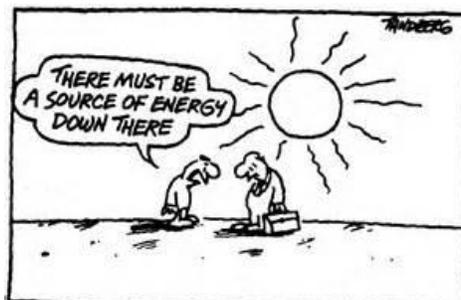
7 PM March 19th 2014

Dungeness River Audubon Center

3 CRABS RESTORATION PROJECT

Speaker – Jamie Michel, Biologist and Project Leader
for North Olympic Salmon Coalition

[A free event open to the public](#)



Legislative Threats to Public Lands

Peter Guerrero

There is nothing more practical in the end than the preservation of beauty. I feel most emphatically that we should not turn into shingles a tree which was old when the first Egyptian conquerers penetrated to the valley of the Euphrates.

--President Theodore Roosevelt

The new Republican-controlled Congress lost no time introducing the National Monument Designation Transparency and Accountability Act of 2015 (S. 228) that, if enacted, would restrict the President's authority to designate new national monuments under the Antiquities Act of 1906. Congress passed this act in 1906 in response to concerns over the theft and destruction of archaeological sites and the plundering of the west's primeval forests and its resources. It was designed to provide an expeditious means of protecting these lands by authorizing the President to proclaim national monuments on public lands. Olympic National Park owes its very existence to this law.

This attack on the nation's wild and culturally significant lands also extends to Olympia where several bills have been introduced to "study" the return of federal lands to the state, premised on the notion that the state can better manage these lands (no explanation is provided how exactly the state will accomplish this as it struggles to find funds for education and its own park system). These bills have the fingerprint of ALEC—the American Legislative Exchange Council founded in 1973 to support policies favorable to its corporate advisory board, including Exxon Mobil and Koch Industries. ALEC state legislators organized a 2014 conference in Salt Lake City that they called the "Legislative Summit on the Transfer of Public Lands" and the Olympia bills are similar to those discussed at the summit and introduced in other state houses across the West.

In observing this trend, Martin Heinrich, a United States senator from New Mexico, recently wrote in the New York Times:

Admittedly, the federal government does not do a perfect job of managing America's public lands. There are real problems that need to be solved, like creating more access points for recreation, hunting and fishing...but these are problems we can solve because of the very fact that these lands are public and we each have a voice in their management. America's forests, wildlife refuges and conservation lands are part of the fabric of our democracy.

Let's keep them that way. Let your elected officials know at the state and local levels that our public lands belong to all of us and to future generations of Americans and are not to be sold off to the highest bidder.





UPDATE ON THE LITTLE RIVER ROCK QUARRY

Carmen Germain

The mine owners of the proposed rock quarry/open pit mine on the Elwha River, Mike Shaw and Jerry Lane, recently applied for another Forest Practices (FP) permit. Some of you may recall that ten years

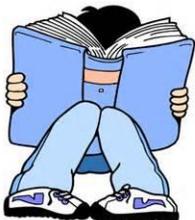
ago Shaw and Lane applied for a FP permit from DNR to construct a road for an exploratory mine. The Upper Elwha River Conservation Committee (UERCC) pursued aggressive discovery that proved the permit was improperly issued, and the permit was withdrawn. Shaw and Lane then approached Clallam County to obtain a removal of the Critical Areas designation in order to remove SEPA and EIS requirements. As you may know, the attempt to remove the site from Critical Areas has gone through exhaustive litigation with decisions, appeals, and counter appeals. In April 2014 the Superior Court decision was that the site can be removed from Critical Areas. This story isn't over yet.

Shaw and Lane recently applied for another Forest Practices permit, and DNR has denied the permit based on the same reasons the previous FP application was denied. Shaw and Lane with their attorney Miller have now appealed this decision.

UERCC is pursuing the following action plan:

A Motion to Intervene has been filed on behalf of the UERCC requesting standing in this hearing on the side of DNR. The pre-hearing took place January 27, 2015; the hearing date is scheduled for June 26, 2015. Core Legal issue: whether or not the mine owners clearly express intent to create a mine (which is inconsistent with maintaining the land in forestry), was DNR correct to deny the non-SEPA Forest Practices permit?

UERCC is applying for a Community Response grant from the NW Fund in order to cover this litigation.



THE READER'S CORNER

Book review courtesy of Darlene Schanfald

The Last Beach

O.H. Pilkey & J.A.G. Cooper. Duke University Press, 2014.

Duke University Pilkey and Ulster University Cooper immediately open the reader's eyes to a worldwide view of beach conditions and why many have become unsafe even to walk on. Included are numerous photos of beach conditions from human attempts to engineer beaches to protect private properties. The author's include suggestions about real and long lasting restoration and saving beaches. This is a little thought of subject, but an incredibly important one given the impacts to marine life as well as our own lives when we take a day on the beach.



THE NAVY BY THE NUMBERS

Peter Guerrero

Number of explosives the U.S. Navy plans to detonate in the Pacific between now and 2018: 260,000

Estimated number of times the explosions will disturb marine mammals: 9,600,000

The Sierra Club recently commented on the Navy's supplemental EIS for sonar and explosives testing in the Pacific. These comments followed on the heels of our earlier comments on the Navy's proposal to add additional Growler jets on Whidbey and its request to the USFS to use the Olympic National Forest for electronic weapons testing. Our comments and background on these issues can be found on our website:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/washington/north-olympic>

Earthjustice and other environmental groups, including us, feel that the Navy needs to establish time and place restrictions on their Pacific exercises to reduce the hundreds of thousands of unnecessary deaths and injuries to marine mammals and other living creatures. As things stand, even the Olympic Marine Sanctuary is not off limits!

And, now there's a new website that's the definitive "go-to" place for the latest information on the Navy's proposal to conduct electronic warfare exercises on the Olympic Peninsula and other related matters: <http://westcoastactionalliance.org>

Please continue writing your elected officials to let them know of your concerns. Check out this resource for doing so: <http://westcoastactionalliance.org/location>

NOG AND THE SHORELINE MASTER PLAN

NOG recently commented on Clallam County's update of its Shoreline Master Plan (SMP) asking the County to take into account the effects of climate change as it updates the plan.

Localities are required to prepare SMPs under the Washington's Shoreline Management Act of 1971. This Act seeks to promote public access and protect shoreline natural resources and functions by prioritizing shoreline land use. The State also requires that "local SMPs include regulations and standards ensuring that each permitted development will not cause a net loss of ecological functions of the shoreline."

Our comments on the SMP can be found on the NOG website:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/washington/north-olympic>

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe."

John Muir





PLEASANT HARBOR DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Barbara Moore-Lewis

Jefferson County released the draft SEIS for the Pleasant Harbor Golf Club and Resort in Brinnon in November 2014. The 45 day comment period covered Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years.

The Sierra Club, along with several other groups concerned about the development, asked for more time to analyze the complex document and to give comments, but the county refused to extend the comment period. The reason given was that the developer was opposed to extending the time given to the public to comment on his plan. The Washington Administrative Code allows for an extension and does not mention involvement of the developer. The developer's reasons were: *"Why? This program has been processed through the population for 7 to 8 years. Even the Nay-Sayers are tired of hearing about Pleasant Harbor (Barbara)"*

The county has extended deadlines a number of times for the developer and, at the end of February, has no firm date for the completion of the FSEIS that will go to the Planning Commission.

The Brinnon Group, a local non-profit, has done extensive analysis both of environmental and economic impacts of the planned resort. Environmental impacts include salt water intrusion, depletion of the aquifer, forcing waste water with drugs and chemicals in it into the aquifer, and damage to Hood Canal from several thousand additional car trips a day in the summer. Economic impacts include increased taxes for ALL county residents for life safety services and for social services for employees with part time minimum wage jobs. The Brinnon Group has taken legal action against the development in the past.

If you would like more information, you can email brinnongroup@gmail.com.

**Get BIG MONEY
OUT of politics!**

WE THE PEOPLE ★ **Claiming our Democracy**

WAmend.org

WAmend is working once again for government by the people and will begin collecting signatures early April 2015 and through to the end of December. Then it is up to the voters of Washington State to approve a public initiative in the November 2016 general election that calls for the passage of a US Constitutional amendment clarifying that corporations are not persons; spending money to influence elections is not speech; and federal, state and local governments shall regulate political contributions and require public disclosure.

Andrea Radich is our local coordinator for the WAmend effort. If you can donate a few hours to help out with the signature gathering contact Andrea Radich at andreasangels@msn.com. You can also visit the state campaign website for more news and updates at www.wamend.org

In working for political change you never give up



PIT TO PIER UPDATE

John Fabian

Lisa Berntsen, our principal consultant with Geoengineers for the Pit To Pier project, died unexpectedly on a mountain climbing trip in Nepal. Geoengineers will be working to find a replacement for Lisa, but it won't be easy and could take some time. This will definitely set back the final release of the EIS and shoreline permit hearing. Based upon my last update from Lisa, they had conducted some necessary field work (geoducks,

forage fish) that needed to be done by October 1st. A complete analysis of the comments and subsequent additional technical work remains to be finished. We can't final the EIS without that. We are in the process of scheduling a meeting with WSDOT to discuss the bridge transit/allision issue. We are also planning a visit to the barge loading facility in Dupont (South Puget Sound) to personally witness how that works and the associated noise levels. TROC has also challenged our noise standards under the old SMP which they are vested under (old JCC 18.25.110(3)(f)) and argue that they should only be held to the State noise standard under JCC 18.30.190. I understand from TROC that they are now working with the Tribes to assuage their concerns since without their support, the Army Corps is unlikely to approve their permit. That permit approval, however, will not be informed by our EIS, but is undergoing a separate environmental review under the Federal NEPA law.

The EIS, once finalized will inform the approval of the County permits required State permits listed here:

1. Zoning Conditional Use Permit
2. Shoreline Substantial Development Permit
3. Shoreline Conditional Use Permit
4. Building Permit
5. Right-of-Way Use Permit (Thorndyke Road crossing)
6. On-Site Sewage System Permit, Group B Public Water System Approval
7. Hydraulics Project Approval (HPA) - Department of Fish and Wildlife
8. Aquatics Land Use Authorization - Department of Natural Resources
9. Forest Practices Permit/Forestry Service Road - Department of Natural Resources
10. Section 401 Water Quality Certification - Department of Ecology
11. Coastal Zone Management Certification - Department of Ecology
12. Expansion of Stormwater NPDES Permit - Department of Ecology
13. Water Rights Approval - Department of Ecology

For more information and updates visit www.hoodcanalcoalition.org



UP AND DOWN HILL WITH THE NORTH OLYMPIC GROUP

North Olympic Group's Outings Season Begins!

The North Olympic Group begins in April its third season of wilderness outings that will see 8 monthly events: 2 focusing on Wild Olympics; a multi-day backpacking outing—a first for us; a National Park Service led event focusing on the Elwha restoration; a mix of easy, moderate and strenuous hikes with the majority in the moderate category; and a geographically wide range of outings including the wild Pacific coast, tranquil river valleys and the more rugged interior of the Olympics. RSVPs are required for all events at exploreolympics@gmail.com or by going to our Meet-Up site <http://www.meetup.com/North-Olympic-Group/>

Date	Where	Description	Comments
Sat April 11	Lake Ozette Triangle	America's wildest coastline south of Alaska, the Ozette Triangle is one of the finest hikes on the Olympic Peninsula. A perfect season opener but be prepared for lingering winter coastal weather.	Participants are encouraged to arrive Friday evening and to camp in the area allowing for an early start on Saturday. Distance is 9.5 miles; hike is rated 3 out of 5 for difficulty, with 5 being the most difficult.
Sat May 9	Elwha River Restoration	This is a National Park Service led trip along the west bank of the Elwha on a trail that follows the former lakeshore above the now removed Glines Canyon Dam.	This outing is tentative, pending the completion of trail work following the recent dam removal. It is limited to 15 participants and is an easy, level hike lasting 2-4 hours.
Sun June 14	Gold Creek	Gold Creek is in an area that would be newly designated wilderness under the Wild Olympics proposal. Come see why this area is worth preserving for future generations.	Total distance is 8-9 miles. Difficulty is 3 out of 5 with 5 being the most difficult.