



North Olympic Group Newsletter

P.O. Box 714 Carlsborg, WA 98324

northolympicgroupsc@gmail.com

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



Jan - Feb 2020

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Meetings & Events

Jan-Feb – Fridays for Future from Noon to 1:00 PM in front of the downtown fountain in Port Angeles.

Jan 13 – Movie: Let Them Eat Dirt at QUU Sanctuary, 6:30 PM; 2333 San Juan Ave, Port Townsend

Jan 14 – Excom mtg in Sequim, 2-4 PM at 1st Security Bank

JAN 15 – Water Lobby Day, 11:00 AM; United Churches of Olympia
Contact nmanning@celp.org

Jan 15 – Water Law in WA at Shearwater Law PLLC in Port Angeles

Jan 24 – Brinnon Fund Raiser. 4-7 PM at Finn River Winery in Chemicum

Feb 11 – Excom mtg in Port Townsend, 2-4 PM, at Library



Winter on the coast.

Our EXCOM Elections are Behind Schedule

There are four open positions on the Executive Committee that need to be filled starting February 2020. This year we have not had any members express interest in running. Write-in candidates are very welcome.

Please return your ballots by January 30th.

PO Box 714
Carlsborg, WA 98324

OR

Email ballot or write-in to: northolympicgroupsc@gmail.com



Deadline for mailing vote is January 30th

Vote for up to four candidates:

Write-In 1 _____

Write-In 2 _____

Write-In 3 _____

Write-In 4 _____

**WE
NEED
YOU!**

Without your help, we will not continue to grow, keep on top of issues, and sponsor events.

220-lb. 'Litter Ball' Found Inside a Whale's Belly

We have all seen pictures of birds that have starved to death after eating trash that they mistook for food. After reading [this article](#) in Live Science, I was shocked at the magnitude of how humanity has despoiled our oceans. The shock value of seeing the **220 lb trash ball** held in the sperm-whale's stomach is a reminder that is not easy to forget. We cannot continue to treat our waters as garbage dumps.

Group Executive Committee

As of January, we are governed by three volunteers, with help from our conservation committees and interested members. To contact Excom members or for more information email them at northolympicgroupsc@gmail.com

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

All Sierra Club members are welcome to attend.



Officers:

Chair: Vacant

Vice Chair: Vacant

Secretary: Darlene Schanfald

Treasurer: Genie Mixson

There is room at the table. If you are interested in joining the EXCOM, contact us via the email address above.

Executive Committee:

Norm Baker

Genie Mixson

Darlene Schanfald

Newsletter Editor

Genie Mixson

mixsoneg@gmail.com

Complaints, suggestions, and opinions are always welcome

The Brinnon Group Won

The Brinnon Group won its Black Point - Pleasant Harbor Master Planned Resort (MPR) legal action against Jefferson County.

Jefferson County had agreed that the developer of the 256-acre MPR could build some condos and a drain field and have 45 years to develop the other components. The Brinnon Group sued the County and in April 2019 won a judgment in Kitsap Superior Court that required Jefferson County to rewrite the development agreement with the developer. Judge Sally Olson ruled that the County ordinances are clear that both residential and recreational components of the MPR need to be done in each phase of development. The developer now has to do a lot of up-front work. In addition to the residences, there is to be a completed 9-hole golf course, a spa, sports courts, a pool, a recreation center, a conference center, a maintenance building and commercial space.

The Brinnon Group is now monitoring state and federal permits that the developer will be required to receive for the development to proceed. Thus far, the developer has not moved forward to get sewage permits. Is he hoping to hook up to some central system in place rather than building his own?

The Brinnon Group and friends are planning a January 24, 4-7 PM fundraiser at the Finn River Winery in Chimuicum. There will be information on tables about the MPR as well as about the Duckabush elk herd, the area geography, and other related topics.

Questions can be sent to brinnongroup@gmail.com.



Winter Wisdom

In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.

--Albert Camus

In a way winter is the real spring, the time when the inner things happen, the resurgence of nature.

--Edna O'Brien

Penned Finfish Aquaculture

WA State is the only state on the west coast that allows penned finfish aquaculture.

You may recall that in 2017, the Canadian firm Cooke Aquaculture wanted to build an open-water net pen a few miles east of Port Angeles. It would be stocked with Atlantic salmon and would be the first such pen in open waters. It was strongly opposed by Washington State citizens. Then, later that year, a net pen operated by Cooke collapsed near Cypress Island. An estimated 250,000 non-native Atlantic salmon were released into Puget Sound. This event presented a concern that the Atlantic salmon could out-compete native Chinook salmon and steelhead for food. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife encouraged fishermen to catch as many of the Atlantic salmon as they could. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) cancelled some of Cooke Aquaculture's leases, (including the one in Port Angeles) and fined them a meager \$332,000 USD. For that same instance, the nonprofit Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC) sued Cooke for having violated the Clean Water Act. In December, Cooke Aquaculture settled with WFC for \$2.75 million. Most of that award will be used to improve Puget Sound water quality and aquatic habitat clean-up projects.

In 2018, the WA State Legislature approved HB 2957, outlawing net pens stocked with nonnative species, such as Atlantic salmon, beyond the dates the current leases expire. The very first section of HB 2957 read in part:

But just as evidence has emerged that nonnative marine finfish aquaculture may endanger Washington's native salmon populations, so too has evidence emerged that marine finfish aquaculture in general may pose unacceptable risks not only to Washington's native salmon populations but also to the broader health of Washington's marine environment.

HB 2957 also includes language in its Section 5 that instructs the WA State Department of Ecology, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and the Department of Natural Resources to develop guidance *by November 1, 2019* on how best to manage this industry if it were to continue with penning native fish. This did not happen, instead, WDFW moved forward without the required guidance and made a determination (MDNS 19-056) that would allow raising sterile all-female triploid rainbow trout/steelhead (arguably non-native) at existing marine net pen sites in Puget Sound, including a faulty one in Port Angeles Harbor, with "native steelhead."

When District 23 Senator Christine Rolfes learned of this, she wrote the agencies:

*In 2018 when the legislature took the bold step of getting ahead of state agencies to regulate net pen aquaculture, we also gave your agencies 18 months to update guidance and information resources. We even took the unusual step of saying **MUST** in the bill language. This **MUST** be completed, specifically by November 1. Instead, ...we've been informed that the work might be done next year... I want you to know that the public is asking the legislature to hold the agencies accountable for failure to comply with the clear direction.*

At this point in time, we have not heard responses from the agencies.



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Explore, Enjoy, Protect the Planet

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Sierra Club Advocates for 2020 Legislative Agenda

In late November through early December, a team of North Olympic Peninsula activists met with 24th district legislators to discuss the Sierra Club’s top priorities for the 2020 legislative session. The Washington Chapter has identified four bills as the key pieces of legislation we hope to see passed. All four were introduced during the 2019 session, but didn’t make it over the finish line. The bills are:

- 1) SB 5412 and HB 1110 -- Clean Fuels Standard - sets progressively aggressive targets for reducing the carbon intensity of fuels refined or imported into Washington (co-sponsored in the House by 24th Rep. Steve Tharinger).
- 2) SB 5811 and HB 1999 -- Adopts California emissions standards designed to increase market penetration of Zero Emissions Vehicles.
- 3) HB 1597 -- Directs the Dept. of Ecology to develop reliable data on methane leakage and other releases throughout the natural gas production, distribution and use cycle.
- 4) SB 5322 and HB 1261 -- For the first time, regulates destructive suction-dredge mining in rivers and streams, protecting critical salmon habitat.

Representatives Mike Chapman and Steve Tharinger were strongly supportive of the Clean Fuels legislation. Rep. Tharinger is a co-sponsor. Rep. Chapman was enthusiastic, seeing it as potentially promoting rural economic development. Senator Kevin Van De Wege was more cautious, indicating that he wanted to learn more about cost impacts; but concluded, “I’ll probably get there in the end.”

The 2019 legislative session passed landmark bills to address greenhouse gas emissions in the electricity sector, but failed to address emissions from transportation, the largest source of emissions state-wide and on the Olympic Peninsula.

All three delegation members were supportive of the other bills, although they seemed less informed on the methane tracking legislation. Our Club delegation emphasized the outsized greenhouse impacts of methane – 26 times as powerful as carbon dioxide in trapping heat on a molecule-for-molecule basis.

The Club delegation included Holly Hallman and Marilyn Showalter from Jefferson County and Lisa Dekker, Elizabeth Schilling, Marc Sullivan and Terri Tyler from Clallam.

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Note from the editor: Climate change is a real threat to life as we know it on our planet. We need to continue striving to reach zero carbon emissions but we are racing against time. We need to develop viable **Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR)** technologies. I invite you to submit articles on this subject to be shared with our group.

Washington Environmental Council Issued Their List of Priorities

CLEAN FUELS NOW

The transportation sector is responsible for nearly half of our climate and air pollution in Washington. We need our transportation to be clean, affordable, and accessible. **A Clean Fuel Standard will require fuel producers and importers to reduce pollution from the fuels that power our transportation system.** It is a tested and effective policy that would clean our air, give us more options to fuel our vehicles (such as electricity and local renewable biofuels), create economic development, cut climate pollution, and move us beyond oil.

REDUCE PLASTIC POLLUTION

Our local waterways, ocean, and recycling systems are overloaded with plastic pollution. Thin plastic bags that are used for just a few minutes and then thrown away pose a particular problem: only 6% ever get recycled. Single-use bags enter into our waterways and the ocean where they clog the stomachs of wildlife. They also clog recycling equipment where they are costly to remove and are the major contaminant in our commercial compost. **The Reusable Bag Act would eliminate thin carry-home plastic bags at all retail establishments and help Washington address a growing recycling crisis.**

CLIMATE POLLUTION LIMITS

Climate action requires carbon reductions across the board and deep investments in healthier natural landscapes—shorelines, forests, and farms. This means setting credible and ambitious climate pollution limits, providing clear direction to meet these limits, and investing in nature-based solutions like trees and soils to capture excess carbon. **This priority will update the state's greenhouse gas limits to reflect current science and lay groundwork to reach net zero carbon emissions and beyond.**

HEALTHY HABITAT HEALTHY ORCAS

With our beloved orcas facing extinction, bold actions to increase salmon populations are needed. **After decades of development-related habitat loss, we seek passage of a new standard, net ecological gain, to protect and restore habitat and leave our environment better than we found it for future generations.** We will work with state and local governments to implement this key Orca Task Force recommendation to accomplish results now and in the future.

Navy Growler Update

Last March, the U.S. Navy moved forward in acquiring 36 additional EA-18G (Growler) Electronic Attack Aircraft. These will ramp up the number of flights over the Olympic National Park from 2,300 per year to an estimated 5,000 per year. This has been a controversial issue for the communities in the flight path. For the residents of Coupeville, the noise level is greater as the take-off and landing practice will greatly increase over today's 112,100 per year.

In July, Washington Attorney General Robert Ferguson filed suit against the Navy and the WA Department of Natural Resources. The lawsuit alleges that a Navy environmental review of the expansion unlawfully failed to fully measure the impacts to public health, as well as bald eagles, tufted puffins and other wildlife that, due to the noise, might have feeding and breeding disrupted.

In Congress, Senator Maria Cantwell and Representative Rick Larson added \$1 million funding to the National Defense Authorization Act to cover Sound Monitoring and Reporting for two sites.

Representative Kilmer pushed that bill in the House Appropriations Committee as well as an additional \$2 million to continue development of noise abatement technology.

Tarboo Ridge Coalition Update

Brief History:

In June 2017, Fort Discovery Inc. and Joseph D'Amico filed a pre-application to develop a 40-acre forest on the north shore of Tarboo Lake in Jefferson County. The document described a private weapons training complex featuring seven gun ranges, cabins, a clubhouse, two helicopter landing pads and more.

A group of Jefferson County residents most impacted by the proposal organized the Tarboo Ridge Coalition (TRC) to oppose it. In December 2018, Jefferson County Commissioners rejected their Planning Commission's recommendations and passed two ordinances paving the way for the facility to be built. TRC appealed to the Growth Management Hearings Board. The GMHB's September 2019 ruling cited multiple errors by the County, invalidated both ordinances and ordered Jefferson County to come into compliance by March 2, 2020.

Update:

The BOCC, in a rush to meet the deadline and come into compliance with the State's Growth Management Act, referred the matter back to the Planning Commission for new recommendations. After researching best practices being followed by other jurisdictions and holding numerous public meetings, the Planning Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to recommend that **all future shooting ranges in Jefferson County be built indoors in commercial and industrial zones**. The Planning Commission noted:

1. Indoor ranges allow for safe shooting that imposes few impacts on surrounding communities and the environment.
2. Indoor ranges impose fewer costs on local government and applicants for permitting, monitoring and enforcement.
3. Indoor ranges eliminate shooting noise complaints.
4. Indoor ranges will not encroach on our commercial forests and assure that our forests, farms and fishery-based economy can continue to flourish.
5. This is a progressive way to protect the future of Jefferson county while assuring all residents have access to gun safety training and target practice.
6. Indoor ranges eliminate the risk of tax-payers having to foot the bill if operators of lead and copper contaminated outdoor ranges abandon their shooting sites.

The County Commissioners are expected to hold a hearing on the Planning Commission's recommendations in February 2020.



Rayonier— It is a COVERUP, not a CLEANUP, continued

by Darlene Schanfald

In NOG's November-December 2019 Newsletter we wrote that Rayonier's draft "cleanup" plan of its hazardous wastes from its former Port Angeles pulp mill was for "institutional controls (IC)." In this case, IC means fence the area, cover up the "hot spots" in the sediments and upland property with clean sand and soil, allow people on the site twice a week, leave the piles of toxic soils upland that now are covered with grass, and monitor these actions over the years. In fact, we've had these IC's for the past two decades, except for the fact that people access the site daily. There are no signs informing the public about the seriousness of the contamination.

The public comment period on the draft was the end of October. Upon request for an extension, the Washington Department of Ecology allowed another month for public review. This was essential in that it allowed more citizens to review the lengthy draft and submit comments. To assist the community, two webinars were given by the Olympic Environmental Council's technical advisor, Dr. Peter L. de Fur. These webinars were co-sponsored by NOG and four other non-profit organizations. He gave background on the site's history, the **draft** recommendations, and **his** recommendations, which are to:

- Oppose options leaving contaminants in place.
- Support removing all structures and debris, including the jetty and the failing wharf and its nearly 1000 creosote pilings and newer arsenic-based pilings.
- Ensure the restoration of Ennis Creek and the migratory safety of the native salmon and steelhead. (Ennis Creek runs through the middle of the Rayonier site.)

One webinar was held on the Port Angeles campus of the Peninsula College and one was a link-in through the University of Washington.

160 comments were submitted to Ecology from tribes, individuals, agencies, and business and environmental organizations. All, except 3 individuals, support a quality cleanup, not a cover up.

Ecology's next step is to respond to the comments.



The Rayonier Mill Study Area is located along the shoreline and in the eastern portion of Port Angeles Harbor.