



# North Olympic Group Newsletter

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

Jul-Aug 2019



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## Meetings & Events

**Jul 2** – Excom mtg in Sequim, 2 – 3 PM at Security Natl Bank

**Jul 4** – Independence Day celebrations

**Jul 8** – Artifishal 6:30 PM at QUUF, 2333 San Juan Ave in Port Townsend

**Jul 11** – Dammed to Extinction 6:30 PM at Peninsula Coll (Mair)

**Jul 19-21** – Lavender Festival in Sequim

**Aug 6** – Excom mtg in Port Hadlock, 2 – 4 PM, at Library

## Clallam County PUD Offers Public Solar Investment

Clallam County PUD is offering a community solar program to its customers. Instead of solar panels for an individual home, the community solar program allows PUD customers to invest in the solar project built and administered through Clallam PUD. PUD plans to locate its solar program at 410 E Washington Street in Sequim, adjacent to the former Sequim PUD office. The program site served as an electric substation in the past. Investors will provide most of the funding for the community solar project and will receive state incentive payments annually for 8 years as well as monthly utility bill credits. Clallam PUD anticipates generating 32,000 kilowatt-hours annually with approximately 96 solar panels. The project is currently accepting investor payments. For more information, go to:

<https://www.clallampud.net/communitysolar/> or phone 360-452-9771.

## NOG Remembers Dr. Eloise Kailin

The Sierra Club - North Olympic Group lost a long-time member and local activist on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Eloise Kailin was a resident of Sequim. Dr Kailin graduated from medical school in 1943 as an allergist-immunologist. She was prominent on the Olympic Peninsula for many years where she engaged in environmental, health, and social activism.

She co-founded the Olympic Environmental council. Some notable accomplishments are her fight against building a nuclear power plant at Miller Peninsula, pushed forward upgrades to the Sequim sewage treatment, improved and fought to stop fluoridation of drinking water in Port Angeles. To read more, you can [click here](#).



Hikers at Miller Peninsula

## **Group Executive Committee**

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

To contact Excom members or for more information email them at

[northolympicgroupsc@gmail.com](mailto: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: Bill Volmut

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

Bill Volmut

**Newsletter Editor** – Genie Mixson [mixsoneg@gmail.com](mailto:mixsoneg@gmail.com)

***Complaints, suggestions, and opinions are always welcome***

## **Dealing with Drought**

On May 20th, Governor Inslee and the Washington Environmental Council included the Olympic Peninsula in Washington's drought declaration of emergency for 2019. This brings almost 50% of the state into the drought category.

By definition, a drought exists when the precipitation is less than 75% of normal and water users within the area will likely incur hardships as a result of water shortages. In late May the Olympic Mountain snowpack, where most of the summer water is stored, was 22 percent of normal according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

There have been several articles printed in local newspapers that try to balance the seriousness of the situation with a rationale that it may not be as dire as it seems. One scientist (Cliff Mass) at the University of Washington says the situation is not as bad as reported. Municipal water sources are not as dependent on the snow pack as agricultural users. Most people I've talked to intend to take a "better to be safe than sorry" approach to their personal water management. Lists of how to do your part in conservation are plentiful. You may read one at this [link](#).

Forested areas are likely to be adversely affected by drought as the trees and undergrowth becomes dry. They are generally more in danger of wild fires than urban areas. However, last year's Campground fire in California quickly engulfed the town of Paradise. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) works to help our state become more resilient to the wildfire threat through its [Community Wildfire Protection](#) program.

Both Clallam County and Jefferson County fire districts are preparing for the threat of wildfires in their areas this year.



Seriously depleted reservoir during drought in California

## Up to 1,000,000 Species in Danger of Extinction

In May and June of this year, mainstream news media picked up a story that has been lurking in the shadows for over two decades.

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released their report in May 2019.

“The average abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats has fallen by at least 20%, mostly since 1900. More than 40% of amphibian species, almost 33% of reef-forming corals and more than a third of all marine mammals are threatened.”

We can easily relate to the gray whales that have been dying in alarming numbers this year, but what about the small migrating birds that arrive at their spring location only to find that their food hasn't yet materialized? The report that is quoted above is thorough, but not easy for many people to stick with. One of our members volunteered to do a review of a book published in 2014.

### Book Review

*The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert, 2014

Although this book was written 5 years ago, it has become a “common man's” window into a very complex situation.

Author Kolbert vividly depicts the ways in which modern man has uniquely altered and continues to alter our planet, producing a mass extinction of species. Prior to man, planet Earth experienced 5 massive species extinctions in 500 million years. We are currently witnessing the **6th extinction**.

Accompanying the world's leading tropical ecologists, marine biologists, ornithologists, paleo-geneticists, wildlife biologists, and other top scientists out in the field, Kolbert weaves together true stories of species (frogs, birds, insects and plants) becoming extinct right before our eyes. She concurrently delineates the history of our understanding of the annihilation. Kolbert concludes with plausible explanations for mankind's destruction of competing life forms, and she leaves us in the present with an uncertain future.

A quote from Stanford ecologist Paul Ehrlich published in Kolbert's book reads as follows:

**“In pushing other species to extinction, humanity is busy sawing off the limb on which it perches.”** Elizabeth Kolbert has written a powerful book of exceptional quality. Perhaps, in reading the book, humanity can save itself...

### Did You Catch It?

Two members of the NOG executive team were interviewed by Port Townsend-based radio station KPTZ on June 25th. Bill Volmut and Darlene Schanfald were interviewed by host Missy Nielson. Her questions gave them an opportunity to describe recent issues, and activities.



## Another Geoduck Invasion

North Squamish Harbor currently has two geoduck farms with a proliferation of protective plastic tubes. These farms have diminished wildlife feeding areas and threatened forage fish habitat. Jefferson County DCD is now considering an application for a third geoduck farm. We will provide more information as the proposed project develops.



Current geoduck farms along Shine Road adjacent to Highway 104

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*Man is a complex being: he makes deserts bloom - and lakes die.*

-- Gil Scott-Heron

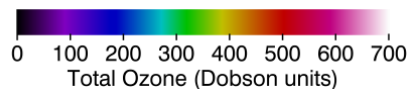
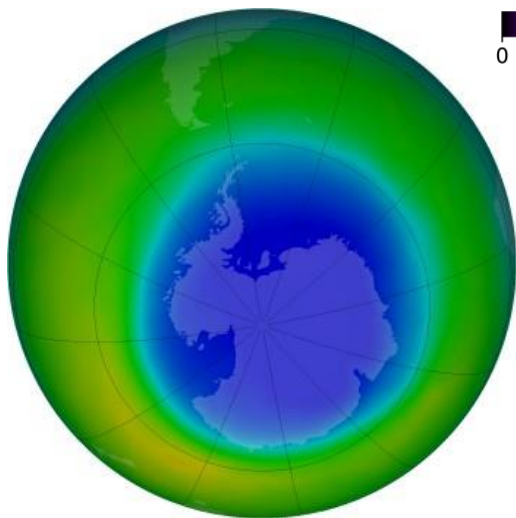
## Ozone Update

The last issue of this newsletter contained an article about ozone depleting chemicals. In the 1970s a “hole” was developing in the atmosphere’s ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) layer over Antarctica. This is not a total hole, but more a thinning of the protective layer. Without the ozone layer blocking the sun’s ultraviolet rays, life on our planet would not be able to exist. Scientists identified a commonly used group of chemicals: Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), as the primary cause. For the next 15 years global leaders worked together to ban the use of the CFCs and it’s first replacement HCFCs in the 1987 Montreal Convention.

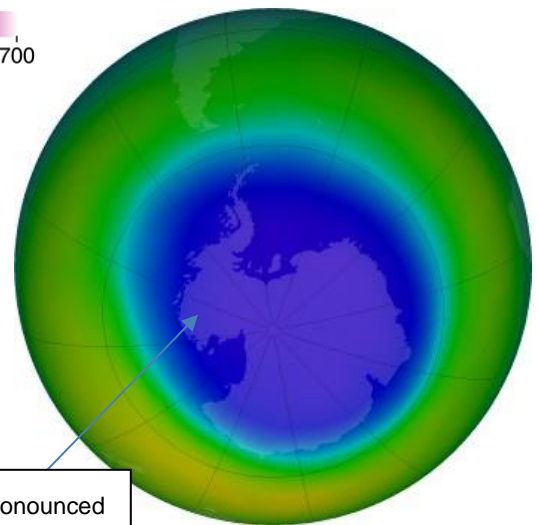
The earth has been in a slow recovery for almost 30 years. In 2012, the recovery began to slow. This year the halt in progress was traced to the construction industry in China where CFC-11 is used to blow insulating foam into buildings.

A picture is worth a thousand words and in this case, we need color. In these samples the magenta tint indicates a thinning of the Ozone layer. Click [here](#) to use the density models produced by NASA Ozone Watch. The size and position of the hole fluctuates with the season. These samples are during the Antarctic spring.

September 2010



September 2018



Magenta tint is more pronounced

## Gaming into Environmental Awareness

Have you ever wished that your children were more interested in going out-doors than playing video games? Well here are a few titles that might stir their interest in the environment:

SimAnimals (Nintendo, Wii, DS)

Star Wars: The Gungan Frontier (PC or Mac)

Chibi Robo: Park Patrol (Nintendo DS)

Flower (Playstation-3)

Fate of the World (PC or Mac)

Plan It Green (PC or Mac)

## Tarboo Ridge Coalition Update

This is an update on the proposed development of Fort Discovery, a large-scale shooting range and military-style facility at Tarboo Ridge. The State Growth Management Hearings Board traveled to Jefferson County for a public hearing on June 11, 2019 at the courthouse. They took oral testimony from attorneys representing Tarboo Ridge Coalition (TRC) and the County. The hearing was well attended by the public.

The Tarboo Ridge Coalition has challenged the ordinance asserting that it opens up valuable and productive forest land to conversion in violation of the Growth Management Act. In addition, the Coalition claims that the County sidestepped requirements for public comment on the issue by failing to involve the Planning Commission and conduct a State Environmental Policy review.

If the appeal is successful, the County will need to correct its errors or return to rules that allow only “Small Scale Tourist & Recreation” ranges at limited locations in the County.

A decision will be rendered by July 17, 2019.

## Brinnon Update

The last issue of this newsletter described the dispute between the developers of the Pleasant Harbor Master Planned Resort (PHMPR), existing property owners, and interested parties organized as the Brinnon Group. Although the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners passed Ordinance 04-0604-18 in June 2018, it was challenged by the Brinnon Group. On March 28, the Kitsap Superior Court reversed that ordinance and remanded it back to the county for further proceedings.

On June 18, 2019 PHMPR presented a revised plan which appears to address the remand requirement (phased in golf course, pool, slides etc.) of the March 28, 2018 Land Use Permit (LUPA) decision. The Board of County Commissioners was briefed on June 24<sup>th</sup>, but further information is not yet available.

## Taylor Energy Oil Spill Update

After almost 15 years of continuous leakage, the federal government has issued its first study of the Taylor Energy oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Scientists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and a Florida State University professor, joined several others in disputing the company’s claim that only one drop of oil per minute is being released, amounting to less than three gallons each day. The scientists’ estimate that up to 108 **barrels** per day — more than 4,500 gallons — is flowing from a site where an oil company’s platform and wells were destroyed during a hurricane. Clean-up is very difficult as was described in the [March-April issue](#) of the North Olympic Group’s newsletter. The Taylor Energy Corp was sold to a Korean conglomerate in 2007.

The story was picked up by The Washington Post on June 24<sup>th</sup>. Click [here](#) to read more.



## Hikers at Miller Peninsula State Park - June 1, 2019



Photos taken by Wendy Feltham

Saturday June 1st, the Sierra Club led an Outing to the Miller Peninsula State Park property, an undeveloped place you might not have heard of on the North Olympic Peninsula, which spans 3000 acres including coastal waterfront. The Outing's "Trail Talk" detailed the various activism, which first fought a plan to build a nuclear power plant in the late 1960s to court battles during the 1980s to prevent this publicly-owned wooded treasure from being privatized as a resort and golf course. Miller Peninsula is a reminder that activism works, and the people do have the power.



Can you find the frog?



Trametes Versicolor



### A Self-Guided Outing

A few weeks ago, I treated myself to a low stress outing at the Railroad Bridge Park in Sequim. The weather cooperated to produce a perfect day. Families were out; some were walking, some were on bikes, and an older couple was holding hands as they strolled on the bridge. I took my time, but on my way back, I stopped in to visit The Dungeness River Audubon Center. I've always been impressed by the displays of bird and animal specimens that have been donated from private collectors over the years. During this visit I saw a double-page poster sized depiction of 7 varieties of Northwest salmon. They were arranged in a way that showed their relative sizes, shapes, and coloration. I had a lot of



questions, and the docents answered them all. Then they helped me take a picture. After that, a youth docent spent some time showing me some of the animal exhibits.



Youth docent Dylan Jackson knows his stuff

### Upcoming Events

**Artifishal (The Road to Extinction is Paved with Good Intentions)** - July 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM  
Quimper Unitarian Universalist Sanctuary 2333 San Juan Ave, Port Townsend

**Dammed to Extinction (documentary)** - July 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM at Peninsula College Mair Hall, 1503 E Lauridsen in Port Angeles