



North Olympic Group Newsletter

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May - Jun 2019



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Meetings & Events

May 3-5 – Earth Repair Conf., Fort Worden Conf Ctr., Port Townsend

May 10 – Orca Forum 1 PM to 4 PM at the Elwha Heritage Ctr at 301 E First St in Port Angeles.

May 11 – Celebration of Science & Technology 10 AM to 5 PM at the Port Angeles Pier.

May 14 – Excom mtg in Sequim, 2-4 PM, at Security Nat Bank

May 13 – “How to Let Go...” 6:30 PM at QUUF, Port Townsend

Jun 11 – Excom mtg in Port Hadlock, 2-4 PM, at Library



The Aurora Borealis as seen from Alaska
Photographer: CJ Kale
Website: <http://500px.com/CJKale>

Aurora Borealis

Be Aware of Bagged Composts

By Darlene Schanfald

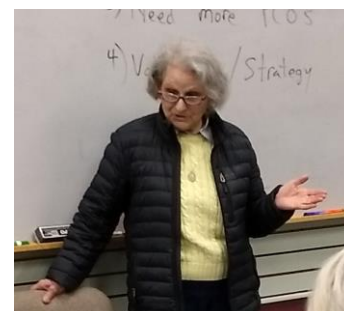
The Sierra Club has been updating our members over the years about commercial compost and that some brands can contain highly toxic contaminants and even pathogens. We oppose the use of contaminated toxins and/or pathogens containing waste as a compost ingredient and the application of municipal sewage sludge as a fertilizer. Now the US EPA Office of Inspector General backs us up.

On November 15, 2018, the US EPA’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) published its [audit](#) of the agency’s “Biosolids” Program and found that **the EPA was unable to assess the impact of hundreds of unregulated pollutants in land-applied “biosolids” on human health and the environment.** To date, the EPA has identified 352 pollutants in biosolids, out of an unknown and incalculable total that frustrates any meaningful risk assessments; 61 of these pollutants have been categorized as hazardous by other federal programs. These pollutants currently are not considered for further regulation because the agency lacks the data and tools necessary to assess the health and environmental risks.

On April 8, 2019, the OIG issued a [management alert](#) informing the US EPA that its Toxic Release Inventory data pertaining to releases of hazardous substances from publicly owned wastewater processing plants are inaccurate. As a result, the public and researchers are not receiving complete and timely information about environmental conditions affecting human health

If you are purchasing commercial compost/fertilizer that comes in a bag, read the label. If it has no statement that it does NOT contain sewage sludge or “biosolids”, ask your vendor to request that information from the manufacturer. Best to be safe and aware.

Here, long-time environmental activist, Darlene Schanfald is speaking in Port Angeles on April 17th. She presented the Thalie Productions’ documentary Sludge Diet. The film discussed biosolids and the risks involved in applying them to our farmlands. She then led a discussion on wastewater treatment methods and effectiveness.



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

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

Executive Committee:

Norm Baker

Genie Mixson

Krestine Reed

Darlene Schanfald

Bill Volmut

Newsletter Editor –Genie

Mixson mixsoneg@gmail.com

Complaints, suggestions, and opinions are always welcome

We Missed the Message

In April, PBS aired a documentary that looked back 50 years on a near environmental catastrophe that faced our world.

I remembered the problem so I watched: *Ozone Hole: How We Saved the Earth*.

This was a major environmental issue during the 1970s - 1980s. Scientists Sherwood Roland and Mario Molino found that Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), an aerosol propellant used in common household cleaners, deodorants, and commonly known by the manufacturer's name of "freon" were causing the earth's Ozone layer to deteriorate. The **ozone layer** is a natural **layer** of gas in the upper atmosphere that shields all living things from excessive ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. **It is crucial to life on Earth.**

Satellite images showed what appeared to be a massive hole over the continent of Antarctica. For the next 10-15 years, scientists and activists fought an up-hill battle to get governments to ban the use of the popular CFCs. Public attention was brought to the problem in a 1975 episode of *All in the Family* when Meathead and Gloria argued about her having to give-up her hairspray. Finally, at the Montreal Convention in 1987, twenty of the world's major leaders signed an agreement to phase out ozone depleting substances. Then president Ronald Reagan, and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were credited for bringing this about. For a more detailed review of the video, click [here](#).

With such a dangerous event in our not-so-distant past, one would think that we would recognize the next serious threat to our atmosphere. For years most Americans missed the message, or possibly felt secure that the climate change reality that we now face will be reversed by a group of brilliant scientists that will remove the excess greenhouse gases that drive climate change. That may not happen, so **we** every day citizens have precious little time to turn it around.

Be strong,



you never know who you are inspiring.

Brinnon Update

On March 28, the Kitsap Superior Court [reversed Jefferson County Ordinance 04-0604-18](#) adopting the Development Agreement for the Pleasant Harbor Master Planned Resort (MPR) and remanded it back to the county for further proceedings. Ordinance 04-0604-18 was adopted in June 2018 by the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners. It was challenged by the [Brinnon Group](#), a local grassroots non-profit that has opposed this development's size and design for a number of years.

The Court ruled that the development agreement approved by the Commissioners failed to include a community center as required by a county ordinance approved in 2008. In addition, the Court found that the phasing plan approved did not require that each phase of the development include sufficient amenities, such as the promised recreation center, pool, and community center, so that each phase could stand alone if no additional phases of the proposal are developed.

The developer will be required to make changes in the proposal consistent with the Court ruling before project permits can be issued.

Plans to continue the development also threaten natural [kettles](#) on the Black Point property. These kettles are important both for their geological features and for local tribal cultural concerns.

The Black Point kettles are rarer than most of these land forms, left over from the last ice age. At 150 feet deep and 12 acres, the largest is much deeper than most kettles in the US (as deep as a 15-story building). It is dry and does not hold water, as most do. The development would destroy this large kettle and use it for reclaimed water from sewage treatment along with storm water collected from buildings and roads. The kettle is also historically and culturally significant for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe. The tribe has applied to have it on the National Register of Historical Places.

The Brinnon Group is in need of funding to help with their attorney fees. You can find out more by visiting their web site: www.brinnongroup.org

Washington 100% Clean Energy Bill Passes

In the last week of the 2019 Washington State Legislature Session, the 100% Clean Energy Bill was passed. At this writing it is on Governor Inslee's desk for signing.

While other cities and states have passed clean energy legislation, the Washington plan is considered the most comprehensive. It includes:

- No coal by 2025
- Achieve 80% of the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) by 2030 with the remaining 20% mitigated to be carbon neutral.
- 100% clean by 2045
- Energy assistance to 60% of low-income families by 2030, 90% by 2050
- Incentives for fair labor standards in the development of renewables

Read more on this plan by clicking [here](#).

Tarboo Ridge Coalition Update

Tarboo Ridge Coalition (TRC) is challenging the legality of Jefferson County's recent changes to the development code. They filed a 25-page brief in April. The Coalition objects to the County allowing unlimited sized, private, for profit gun ranges capable of covert training of military units and opening up 76% of the land in unincorporated Jefferson County to such facilities.

In its appeal to the Growth Management Hearing Board (GMHB), TRC alleges that the County failed to follow existing protocol set by the State Environmental Policy Act. They also bypassed required Planning Commission review, and adopted regulations that are inconsistent with the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies.

Jefferson County answered TRC's brief on April 22, 2019. They first requested that key components of TRC's brief be dismissed and then focused on regulatory differences between Health and Safety and Land Use.

TRC will file a rebuttal by May 16. The Governor appointed Hearings Board will then travel to Jefferson County for a public hearing on June 11 at the courthouse where the three-member Board will take oral testimony from attorneys representing TRC and the County. The hearing is open to the public. A decision will be rendered by July 17, 2019.

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.

THINK AGAIN BEFORE ELIMINATING THE CLOVER IN YOUR LAWN

The misunderstood clover:

- Provides your lawn with enough nitrogen to eliminate any need for ecologically hazardous synthetic fertilizers
- Acts as an important food source for declining pollinator populations
- Attracts earthworms and other beneficial soil microorganisms
- Remains green year-round
- Resists drought

Source: *Taking a Stand on Clover* by Drew Toher





Pipeline Update

Recent actions at the Federal level are threatening to undermine court decisions that have the Keystone XL pipeline building stopped.

1. A new permit issued on March 29th as a “Presidential Memorandum” replaces the original (and identical) permit that was issued by the Department of State. **The administration argued that the old permit (the one that has the stop work)** would therefore be moot. Since TransCanada is ready to begin work, the goal of replacing the old permit with a new one appears to be a brazen attempt to [circumvent](#) the court.
2. To make it easier for firms to build oil and gas pipelines and harder for state governments to intervene, Trump signed two Executive Orders. The first applies to transporting across international borders. The president is to have the final say on all permits. The second cuts the states out of the decision-making process. In recent years Washington and New York cited environmental and safety concerns to halt pipelines transporting fossil fuels through their states. Transportation of liquefied natural gas (LNG) via rail and truck has had safety concerns in the past, but the Department of Transportation is given orders to see to it that these alternate methods are encouraged.

Shellfish Farming Poses Hazards to the Ecosystem

On March 13 and 14, Laura Hendricks, Director of the [Coalition to Protect Puget Sound](#), gave two presentations on Shellfish farming. The first was in Port Angeles and then the next day, in Sequim.

Ms. Hendricks explained how intertidal zones were denuded of natural beach and sediment life with the use of pesticides and other methods in order for industrial shellfish growers to raise geoducks and various clams. Industrialized shellfish sites are acres in size — 10, 20, 35, 50, depending on the area and approved permits.

Another critical impact, in addition to the poisons used, is their use of plastics. Geoducks are grown through plastic tubes covered by plastic nets. Other shellfish are grown in petroleum coated plastic bags. Plastic from these containers break off at some point, adding to microplastics in water bodies. These plastics can attract contaminants, like highly toxic PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). When birds forage, the plastic bits and added contaminants can be ingested. Another critical concern is that eel grass can be removed by the growers. This practice diminishes salmon nursery habitats, which diminishes feed for other fish, whales and other fish-eating wildlife.

Laura described several impacted sites. Two of the sites were USFWS areas in coastal Washington — Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor. They provide excellent resources on this topic as described in the recently released book, [Toxic Pearl](#) by M. Perle.

Recently Governor Inslee approved the use of pesticides to protect non-native shellfish farming in our marine waters. A petition to make him reconsider this action can be found [here](#).



Navy Growlers – A New (Draft) EIS

In March, the Navy made its final decision to bring 36 more EA-18G Growler jets into service at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and Outlying Landing Field Coupeville. The “Growlers” are noted for their unusually loud noise. By 2022 there will be 118 of them at NAS Whidbey, and the frequency of take-off/landings will be greatly increased. Citizens near the flight paths have been complaining for over five years.

In preparation to move forward after 2020, the Navy prepared a *draft supplemental environmental impact statement (EIS)* to support the issuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. The 1700+page Draft EIS is updated from the original in 2015.

The Navy proposes to:

- Conduct training and testing activities, at sea and in associated airspace, at levels required to support military readiness requirements beyond 2020.
- Accommodate evolving mission requirements, including those resulting from the development, testing, and introduction of new vessels, aircraft, and weapons systems into the fleet. They call this “*changes in the types and tempo of activities*”.
- The addition of those jets will also bring to the area personnel to maintain and operate them, the families of those personnel and additional flights at area airfields.

The Navy maintains that the addition of 36 EA 18G Growlers is necessary to maintain their overall electronic attack capabilities, for which NAS Whidbey is the home base. Incremental flight increases began in March.

A team of about 20 Navy personnel is holding Open House public information meetings in 8 cities. I attended the one held in Port Angeles on Friday, April 26th. The Open House was set up in a large assembly room with 8 poster display stations addressing the various aspects of the draft supplemental EIS/OEIS around the perimeter. An area for visitors to submit comments was conveniently placed in the center of the circle. The stations covered water-based activities like sonar and explosives, as well as the Air-based Electronic Warfare missions that I was interested in. Visitors were escorted to the appropriate stations after a short chat. The personnel were friendly and knowledgeable of their areas of expertise. I noticed that the stations that focused on the Growlers and noise issue, attracted the most visitors, an indication that the aircraft would not be able sneak up on the enemy.

The Navy personnel seemed to have answers that indicate that they have great concern for the environment.

Comments on this Draft EIS must be received by June 12, 2019. You can either submit them on-Line by clicking here ([COMMENT](#)) or mail them to

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Northwest
Attention: NWTT Supplemental EIS/OEIS Project Manager
3730 N. Charles Porter Ave.
Building 385, Admin, Room 216
Oak Harbor, WA 98278-5000



WILD FISH CONSERVANCY LAWSUIT

The Wild Fish Conservancy has been fighting to preserve our wild fish environment on three fronts:

In August 2018 they won a ruling against NOAA and the EPA who were trying to have an earlier case dismissed, asserting that it is not the responsibility of federal agencies to regulate net pen aquaculture.

On February 21, 2019 the Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC) asked the U. S. District Court to find that Cooke Aquaculture is violating its Clean Water Act (CWA) permits. On April 26th the Court granted WFC's motion finding Cooke is failing to develop adequate operational plans for their eight salmon farms in Puget Sound.

Cooke's Pollution Prevention Plan lacked necessary procedures for inspecting fish containment cages and failed to adequately address proper storage of chemicals. Cooke's Fish Release Prevention Plans do not include required procedures for tracking the number of fish lost to predation and escapement.

In another development a few days earlier the Court ruled that Cooke's testimony regarding net pen maintenance was "evasive". The company had dumped over 30,000 frequently referred to documents prior to testimony on their net pen maintenance.

WFC is continuing to investigate additional violations by Cooke so the CWA enforcement action against Cooke is ongoing with a trial date currently set for December 2nd.

Source: wildfishconservancy.org

On April 3, 2019, the Wild Fish Conservancy joined with the Center for Biological Diversity in filing a suit against the Trump Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service for mismanaging West Coast salmon fisheries. They stated:

"While orcas starve to death, the Trump administration is refusing to protect salmon populations crucial to their survival," said Julie Teel Simmonds, a Center attorney. "Salmon and the killer whales that rely on them are both in trouble, and this fishery must be better managed to promote their recovery. If federal officials don't act now, we'll lose our chance to pull these beloved animals back from the edge of extinction."

Perhaps Washington State will finally scrutinize the lack of oversight and the resultant damage being done to our waters and shorelines by the numerous aquaculture sites.

For most of history, man has had to fight nature to survive; in this century he is beginning to realize that, in order to survive, he must protect it. - Jacques-Yves Cousteau

