



North Olympic Group Newsletter

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Nov - Dec 2019



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Meetings & Events

Nov 10 – Time for a Green New Deal, 2 PM Olympic UUF 1033 Barr RD, Sequim

Nov 11 – Movie: The Last Salmon at QUU Sanctuary 6:30 PM 2333 San Juan Ave, Port Townsend

Nov 12 – Hearing on proposed Tax for Conservation Futures. 10:30 AM at Clallam Co Courthouse, PA

Nov 18 – Webinar on Rayonier Cleanup 12:00 – 1:00 PM at Peninsula College in Port Angeles

Nov 19 – Excom mtg in Sequim, 2–4 PM at 1st Security Bank

Nov 22 – Webinar on Rayonier Cleanup from 12:00 – 1:15 PM. See Page 8 for link.

Dec 10 – Excom mtg in Port Townsend, 2–4 PM, at Library

Dec 11 – Tribal Water Rights at Sequim City Hall Council at 6:30 PM



In Fall, the waters return.

Global Climate Strike

On September 20th, three days before the UN Climate Action Summit began, the US and world demanded action be taken to address the climate crisis. The local Sierra Club joined with OCA and 350.org in demonstrations in Port Angeles and Sequim.



Photo by Vincent Lucas

Washington Chapter Offers Workshops

The Washington Chapter is offering workshops for both the equity and justice organizing workshops this year! In Olympia, on November 17th we will hold a general training on developing new leaders and working with tribes and native peoples. In Everett, on November 16th we will hold a “train the trainers” program.

Everett:

November 16th

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Lunch Included

Tom Crisp’s house: 1011 Temple Dr Everett, WA

RSVP for [Equity and Justice Leadership](#)

Olympia:

November 17th

12:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Snacks and beverages included

South Puget Sound Community College: 2011 Mottman Road SW, Olympia, WA

RSVP for [General Equity and Justice](#)

Group Executive Committee

We are governed by four 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

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

Complaints, suggestions, and opinions are always welcome

Can 'Climate Cases' Move Forward? It's Up to the Supreme Court

Oil companies face a growing number of "nuisance" claims from local governments in which state and local officials seek to hold oil companies accountable for their role in climate change. Provided the Supreme Court doesn't step in, proceedings could continue in state courts.

Industry lawyers have filed three emergency requests that urge the justices to stall cases from Rhode Island, Baltimore, and Colorado municipalities that are among state and local governments using public nuisance law against energy companies. If the Supreme Court declines to step in, oil companies will have to face state-court proceedings and potentially expensive discovery targeting internal documents related to company knowledge of the links between fossil-fuel combustion and climate change.

"These are early test cases," said Baltimore Solicitor Andre M. Davis, the city's top litigator. "There are states and cities all over the country watching and studying these developments very closely." [Click here to read more,](#)

Tarboo Ridge Coalition Update

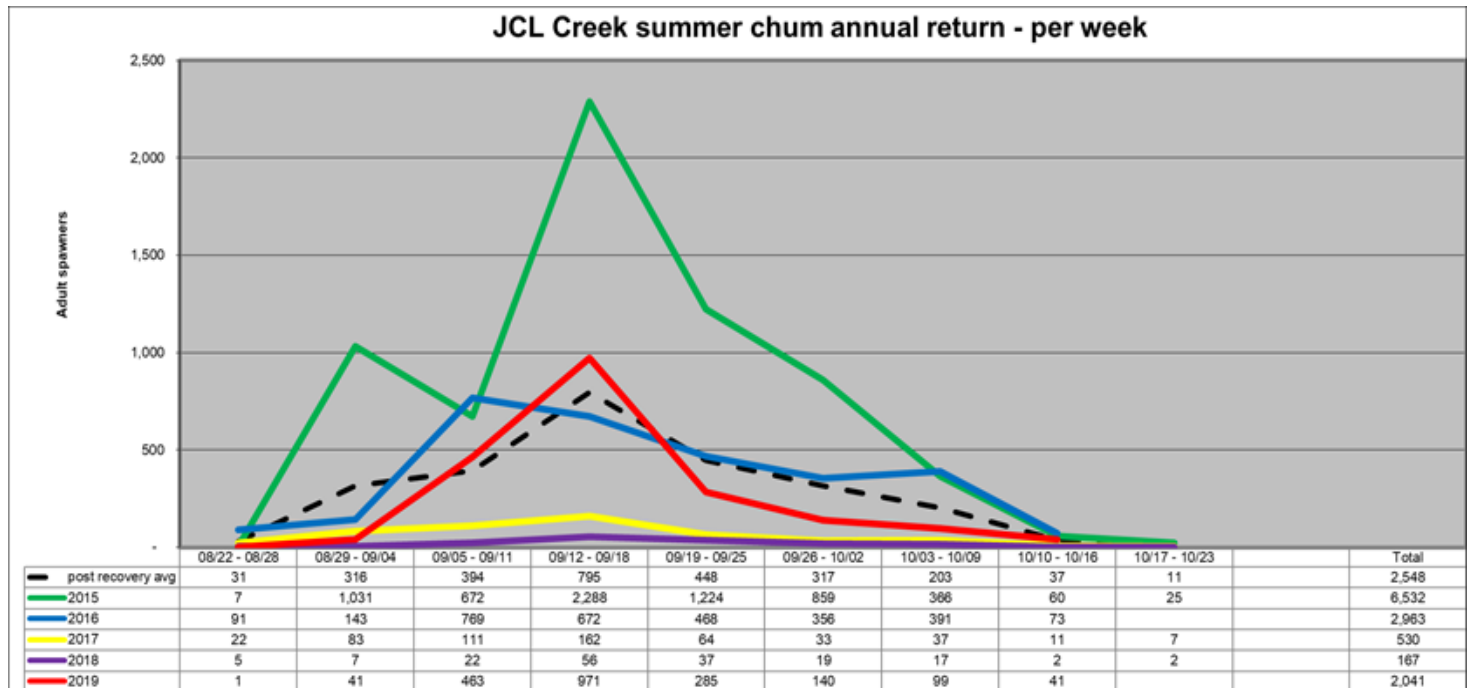
The Jefferson County Planning Commissioners will be holding a public meeting at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, Nov. 5th at Chimacum High School. They will be hearing comments about recommendations they should make to the County Commissioners regarding the new, draft ordinances on gun range design. In 2018, the Planning Commissioners recommended a series of clear, "bright-line rules", including 500-yard setbacks from public lakes, no military training, no aircraft, 8 am-5 pm operation only, 8' security fencing and 16' noise barriers. These recommendations were ignored in the old ordinances. **A better outcome is possible this time. Please attend and speak up for farms, fish, forests, and families!**

TRC plans to deliver their petitions, which endorse those bright-line rules—to the Planning Commissioners that evening. This issue is, and will continue to be critical to the safety and well-being of Jefferson County.

Jimmycomelately Creek Makes a Comeback

Two decades ago, the Jimmycomelately Creek was in terrible condition. Habitat was so damaged that in 1999 only seven salmon chum were found. A restoration project lead by the Jamestown S’Klallam tribe began in 2002. Numerous environmental groups and Agencies such as the Washington Fish and Wildlife Department, North Olympic Salmon Coalition and the Streamkeepers joined the effort. Click [here](#) and then the salmon to see the creek.

The channel was returned to its natural flow, buildings demolished, two roads and a railroad bridge were removed. Native vegetation was planted. By 2010 there were over four thousand summer chum returning. The populations of the salmon runs have fluctuated over the years, but as this graph, maintained by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Department illustrates, the restoration of the Jimmycomelately Creek can be considered a success.



More information on this project can be found at the [Northwest Indian Fisheries](#) website.



I will argue that every scrap of biological diversity is priceless, to be learned and cherished, and never to be surrendered without a struggle. – O.T. Wilson





Save the Tongass National Forest

The State of Alaska is trying to exempt the Tongass National Forest (NF) from the 2001 Roadless Rule with an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule. Such a rule would mean more logging roads and old-growth clear-cut logging on the Tongass NF. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released a Draft Rule and Alternatives for Alaska that severely impacts over half of the nearly 17-million-acre forest, which is among the largest intact temperate rainforests on Earth. Public comments are being accepted by the USDA until midnight Alaska time on **Dec. 17, 2019**. Please protect the Tongass and national forest Roadless Areas across the country! You can make comments to the U.S. Forest Service via [their website](#) page.

Unless the attack on the Roadless Rule is defeated, the Tongass could set a terrible precedent nationally. It would signal to timber industry lobbyists and

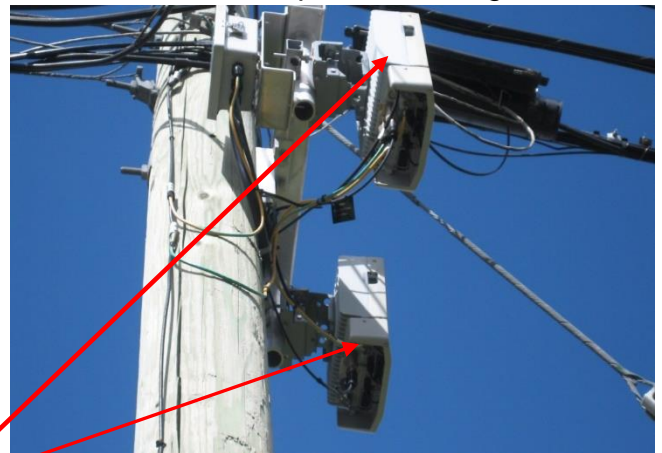
politicians in states that have no interest in protecting our forests that this administration is willing to completely throw away one of our most important conservation laws in order to allow harmful clear-cut logging and road building in our nation's wild forests.

5G Concerns

It has been a year since The Clallam County Public Utility Department's (PUD) Board of Commissioners announced their intent to convert existing electric meters over to Advanced Metering that would rely on 5G technology. What had been a quiet health concern for some residents soon became a large public outcry from the community. The PUD held a number of public meetings to discuss the pros and cons of the decision, but never fully won the public confidence. They, along with smart phones, video streaming, and many more products, are moving forward with their plans.

Some support for those who oppose 5G moving into our neighborhoods can be found in the October 17th issue of [Scientific American](#).

The 5G range is less than has been used in cell phones thus far, so may have to use poles currently erected for other purposes.



These antennas are mounted on an existing power pole.

Rayonier— It is a COVERUP, not a CLEANUP

By Darlene Schanfald

Americans have a short memory. Maybe this is what the Rayonier Pulp and Paper Corp. (Rayonier) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (known as 'Ecology') have been counting on. It has been 20 years since the Rayonier closed down. The US EPA originally was set to start the site clean-up at the end of the last century, but the state and local governments had it turned over to the WA State Department of Ecology's Solid Waste division with a 7-year estimate for completion. Little was accomplished in those seven years, so it was passed on to Ecology's Toxics Clean-up Program (TCP), where it should have gone to in the first place. TCP re-assessed the sediment toxin loads and surrounding soils. Now, thirteen years later, Ecology intends to allow Rayonier to **cover over** its hazardous wastes in the Port Angeles Harbor sediments with sand and its upland property soils with more soil. Ecology's thinking for the sediments is that the sand will wash away and integrate with the polluted sediments, lowering the toxic level; therefore, the marine life would be less contaminated!

Ecology is handing Rayonier a cheap option for cleanup, claiming a more expensive one doesn't do much more. Not so. If Rayonier can haul sand from a long distance, Rayonier can instead remove the toxins and haul them to a hazardous waste site.

Nearly 50 organizations and independent citizens are asking Ecology to do the following:

- **Remove structures and debris.** We support the removal of the jetty and the wharf -- with its nearly 1000 creosote pilings and newer arsenic-based pilings.
- **Options that leave contaminants in place.** We oppose the proposed upland and sediment options which leave the pollutants in place, cover them, monitor the site over years, and rely on institutional controls (such as signage, fencing, and allowing public access twice a week). This will not protect the public, the marine ecosystem, or the wildlife. It will leave all life vulnerable for years. The proposed option does not meet the intent of the Shoreline Management Act nor, again, the Puget Sound Partnership cleanup mandate, of which Ecology is a major partner.
- **Option that removes contaminants.** We strongly support an option that will remove contamination. We believe that the \$81.5 million estimate for this is well within Rayonier's financial capability. The company should leave the Port Angeles community and Puget Sound healthy.

As sea level rises and as storm surges create more destruction along our coastline, it makes no sense – morally or financially - to leave the hazardous waste in place. The waters host endangered and threatened species, including chinook and Southern Resident Killer Whales. Furthermore, a quality cleanup, as was done by the Port of Port Angeles at the KPLY/PenPLY site and at Site 4 in the Lower Duwamish Waterway – complete removal – results in the elimination of future costs and maintenance, long term monitoring and liability.

- **One additional task should have been added:** Ennis Creek, which runs through the center of the mill, is known for having the greatest potential for salmon habitat recovery among Port Angeles's streams. We have an obligation to assure that the fish and other wildlife are not endangered by remaining hazardous wastes. Toxins left at the site will negate the tremendous investments made by Port Angeles citizens and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe to date.

Rayonier must be held to the best cleanup option. Protect our natural resources, our wildlife, and our public health. Get this done well and soon.

The comment period has been extended to November 26, 2019.

Click here to comment:

[Ecology comment input.](#)

Ref: Facility Site ID: 19 Site
Cleanup ID: 2270



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

Related News

Dr. Peter L. deFur, technical advisor to the Olympic Environmental Council, will be giving two virtual presentations on the Rayonier proposed cleanup plan and best cleanup options. There will be Q&A.

- Monday, 18 November, Noon – 1 PM Peninsula College Little Theater
- Friday, 22 November, Noon – 1:15 PM

[Click here to link in electronically to the presentation through the University of WA.](#)

Space is limited to 100.

Dr. Peter L. deFur is an environmental biologist in Richmond Virginia, with nearly 40 years of experience as a faculty member, consultant and senior scientist for numerous non-profits, and the government. He presently serves on the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council as a representative from Virginia. Dr. deFur has consulted for communities on the cleanup of contaminated sites around the country, including Portland OR, Seattle WA, Brunswick GA and Port Angeles WA. Most of the sites are on or in waterways involving industrial chemical contaminants.

Impact of the Amended State Environmental Policy

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has issued a proposed amendment to The State Environmental Policy (SEPA). "This proposal involves amending the DNR State Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan with a long-term conservation strategy for the marbled murrelet. "

[Eight alternatives](#) are analyzed. These options affect the methodology for calculating the sustainable harvest. None of the alternatives will adequately benefit Clallam County tax revenues or the endangered marbled murrelet primarily because the following facts have not been considered

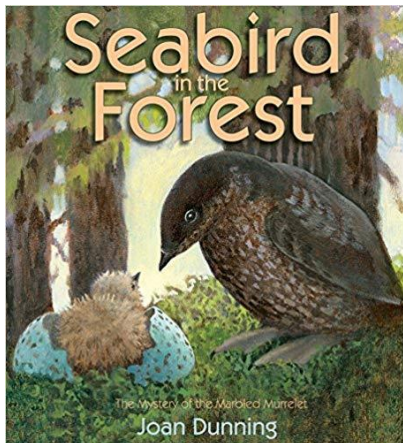
Every 10 years, the DNR sets a Sustainable Harvest Level that is supposed to guide the agency's logging in such a way that the trust's forest environment is protected and the trust's income is fairly distributed between current and future generations. Generally, this means harvesting on a 60-year rotation.

This year, it's more complicated than usual because the marbled murrelet Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is included, as well as a consideration for "arrearage." Arrearage exists when actual harvests fall short of planned harvests. Normally, arrearage (under harvest) is just passed into the next planning period, and balanced out by overages.

The timber industry now argues that negative arrearage (the harvest shortfall that is carried over to the next 10-year period) should be considered, but not the positive arrearage that the current 10-year planning period received from the previous planning period. Net arrearage (positive plus negative arrearage) was close to zero for the past 10-year period, proving that the DNR is properly representing the interests of present and future generations.

The timber industry created a shortfall of logs to local mills by exporting roughly half the raw logs coming off private lands to China. Industry exports these logs because the export log market pays 25-50 percent more for raw logs than domestic mills can pay, creating a shortage of logs for local mills and sharply reducing employment and economic activity in Clallam Co. Industry now demands that the DNR replace those exported private logs by increasing logging on public lands, which is not legal because it would harm timber income owed to future generations.

The marbled murrelet plan pushes the focus of protection to birds in the southwest part of the peninsula, abandoning protections for birds elsewhere. But the plan looks only at forest habitat,



not things like food that murrelets need to survive. The DNR considers all habitat within 50 miles or so from the ocean to be equal. But as nearshore salmon smolts and bait fish disappear, murrelets cannot sustain nests 50 miles away. Already, due to a loss of salmon smolts and bait fish, murrelets are having to switch their diets to low energy prey. The EIS does not look at how forest practices, especially riparian forest stands, affect salmon that murrelets need to survive. (For example, the massive mud flats at the mouth of the Pysht River where once vast meadows of eelgrass that provided spawning habitat for zillions of herring. Logging sediment smothered those meadows of eelgrass and turned them into mud flats that offer only a fraction of the food prey that murrelet and other species depend on.)

Murrelets lay a single egg in the forest each year

Sound Defense Alliance: Restoring the Balance

A frequent NOG partner, The Sound Defense Alliance (SDA) works to defend our communities and natural environment from harmful impacts of military activity around the Salish Sea, the Puget Sound and the Olympic Peninsula. In particular, they are working to alleviate the excruciating impact of EA-18G Growler flights over Pacific Northwest communities. In addition to their operations at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI), these jets practice landings and take-offs in a rural neighborhood of Central Whidbey over schools and homes – frequently from afternoon into early morning. The incessant thunder-like growl leaves residents emotionally on edge.

Imagine being at Olympic National Park and all of a sudden you are subjected to the ear-splitting sound of military jets slicing through what acoustic ecologist Gordon Hempton once dubbed the “one square inch of silence”. Concern about the impacts on ordinary citizens by the EA-18G Growler overflights to the region is clearly mounting. A church on south Whidbey Island is considering providing a noise refuge in their facilities for PTSD sufferers and audibly sensitive persons such as chemotherapy patients and mothers with newborns. It is hard to fathom that ordinary U.S. citizens in peacetime need to seek refuge from their own homes.



These noise issues extend beyond the human population and into the realm of marine life. Underwater sound monitoring has begun during Growler overflights.

Legislative efforts of SDA volunteer leaders and the advocacy actions their supporters have yielded great success. In July, Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson filed a lawsuit against the Navy citing that its recent environmental impact statement and review process of the EA-18G Growler expansion was inadequate. Three members of Congress — Cantwell, Larsen, and Kilmer have asked for actual on the ground real-time sound monitoring, giving us long overdue attention in Congress. Citizens of Ebey’s Reserve, also filed suit challenging the Navy’s Environmental Impact Statement. The National Parks Conservation Association filed suit to get critical information from unanswered Freedom of Information requests. As a result of these combined efforts, the Secretary of the Navy recently arranged a meeting with both the Attorney General and regional elected leaders.

This excellent [video](#) about the Growler impact on the Olympic Peninsula and the islands is available on line.

Another Keystone 1 Oil Leak

On October 31st, Trans Canada Inc. detected an approximately 383,000-gallon oil leak near Edinburg, North Dakota. Fortunately, the leak, which was on a remote wetland, was not wide-spread. Click here to [read more](#). This is the second substantial leak on this line in two years.