

## SUMMER OUTINGS

*Explore - Enjoy - Protect!*

Join us for our Summertime Thursday evening walks and other Sierra Club Outings. Each Outing will be led by a certified Sierra Club Outings Leader so that you may safely enjoy the outdoors while also learning about important decisions facing our region's rivers and forests – and even the earth's climate.

### SUMMER INTO FALL OUTINGS CALENDAR

#### THURSDAY, JULY 18 (6pm)

**RIVERSIDE STATE PARK** Take a walk through the southern portion of Riverside State Park and learn about our precious resource – the Spokane River. Biologist Carolyn Connelly will be along to show us some interesting bugs that share our river. This trail through the woods can be rocky in sections. The route is partly shaded and half of the walk follows the Spokane River including the section that goes by the City Sewage Treatment Plant. This walk is about 5 miles with 394 feet of elevation gain. The pace will be relaxed with stops for vistas, photography, and discussion of Spokane River history and concerns. Wear hiking boots, bring water and a snack; poles suggested but optional. Polite dogs welcome on a leash. You'll need a Discover Pass (or carpool with someone who does). Contact Karen Jurasin: [kjoutdoors@comcast.net](mailto:kjoutdoors@comcast.net) 509.624-3150.

#### SATURDAY, JULY 20 (10am) Mt. SPOKANE OLD GROWTH FOREST HIKE

Join forest advocates on a hike to view the old growth forest threatened by ski expansion and learn more about the issue as we walk along the service road. A 4-5 hours, 5 mile round-trip experience within the beauty of the old growth forest. Amateur and professional naturalists will be available to answer your questions about the flora

and fauna on Mt. Spokane. Bring a lunch, water, camera, and a friend. We'll eat lunch at the old growth before turning back.

On the return trip, we will stop at the CCC cabin. Sierra Club is supporting this hike – contact Chris Bachman: [chrisbachman@comcast.net](mailto:chrisbachman@comcast.net) 509.280-8159.

#### THURSDAY, JULY 25 (6pm)

**PEACEFUL VALLEY HISTORY TOUR** (Carol Bryan / Crystal Gartner) We will meet at the Sandifur Bridge at Clarke and Riverside and walk west through Peaceful Valley, discovering some of the valley's colorful history. Along the way you'll learn why residents are concerned about the impact of increased coal and diesel train traffic on the Spokane River and on the neighborhood quality of life. 2 miles of easy walking. Contact Crystal Gartner: [crystal.gartner@sierraclub.org](mailto:crystal.gartner@sierraclub.org) 509.209-2395.

#### THURSDAY, AUGUST 1 (6pm)

**DISHMAN HILLS CONSERVATION AREA - GLENROSE** This hike will focus on the Glenrose area about 2 miles east of Ferris High School – wildlands protected in 2012 using Conservation Futures funds. The hike is easy to access from the urban South Hill



*Explore - Enjoy - Protect.* In April, local family farmers led us on a magical hike in the Juniper Dunes Wilderness, and then nearby to Easterday's new 30,000 cattle "finishing" feedlot supplying Tyson's slaughterhouse near Pasco. A loophole allows industrial stock operations to pump vast volumes of ancient groundwater, threatening the family farmers' domestic wells.

and features outstanding views of the surrounding areas. It's 3 miles round-trip with a few short, steep sections; hiking poles recommended but not required. This hike will highlight the possible Dream Trail in the Dishman Hills. RSVP to Jeff Lambert: [jlambert@envirosciencegroup.com](mailto:jlambert@envirosciencegroup.com) 509.999-5100.

#### THURSDAY, AUGUST 15 (6pm)

**NEWMAN LAKE** This hike features our fairly recent Conservation Futures acquisitions, McKenzie Conservation area. This loop hike begins above the lake and continues through evergreen forests and rocky outcrops with views of Mt. Spokane and Newman Lake. The trail (built by local trail angels) goes downhill to lakeshore wetlands of Cottonwood and Aspen groves. 2.5 miles with about 300 ft. of elevation gain as we hike back up to the parking lot. This is an important wildlife habitat and nesting site for Bald Eagles. Our discussion will include the importance of these lands for wildlife corridors and we may pull a few noxious weeds as we walk along. Contact Karen Jurasin: [kjoutdoors@comcast.net](mailto:kjoutdoors@comcast.net) 509.624-3150.

**SUMMER OUTINGS** continued from front page

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 22 (6pm)**  
**DISHMAN HILLS NATURAL AREA** You'll hike with Jeff Lambert and Michael Hamilton of the Dishman Hills Natural Area which was established in the 1960s. The hike is about 1.5 miles on relatively easy trails. Discussion of geology, native plants, the new trail system, and public policy. RSVP to Jeff Lambert: [jlambert@envirosiencegroup.com](mailto:jlambert@envirosiencegroup.com) 509.999-5100.

**SATURDAY, SEPT 7 (10am)**  
**DISHMAN HILLS CONSERVATION AREA: ILLER CREEK** This hike is about 4 miles on moderately difficult trails. Excellent views of the Valley and Palouse. You'll see interesting variations in the ecosystems from Iller Creek to Rocks of Sharon ridge line. Audubon Society has picked this as a top birding area. RSVP to Jeff Lambert: [\[envirosiencegroup.com\]\(http://envirosiencegroup.com\) 509.999-5100.](mailto:jlambert@</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY, SEPT 7-8**  
**SIERRA CLUB CAMPOUT AT BUMPING LAKE (NEAR MT. RAINIER)** Spend a weekend hiking and camping at Bumping Lake, adjacent to the William O. Douglas Wilderness. Our special focus will be the truly amazing ancient forests around the lake. Seattle restaurateur Chris Maykut and other local cabin owners will help host our campout. These ancient forests are threatened with destruction by a new irrigation dam, and the campout will be a start to understanding conflicts over scarce water in eastern Washington. RSVP to John Osborn: [john@waterplanet.ws](mailto:john@waterplanet.ws) 509.939-1290.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 MT. SPOKANE STATE PARK** Enjoy an easy to moderate hike, lasting 3-4 hours. Rich Leon, editor of Sierra Club's Trail

Guides and nature photographer, will lead this hike. Mt. Spokane is the state's largest park, and it's ancient forests are threatened by a proposed expansion of the ski area. Remember to bring a Discover Pass (or plan to carpool with someone who has one). Bring water and lunch. RSVP to Carolyn Leon: [lonestar4@aol.com](mailto:lonestar4@aol.com)

#### Outings Committee:

##### UCR Group

Sam Evans  
Crystal Gartner  
Karen Jurasin  
Jeff Lambert  
Carolyn Leon (*chair*)  
Rich Leon (*Sierra Club Trail Guides*)  
John Osborn



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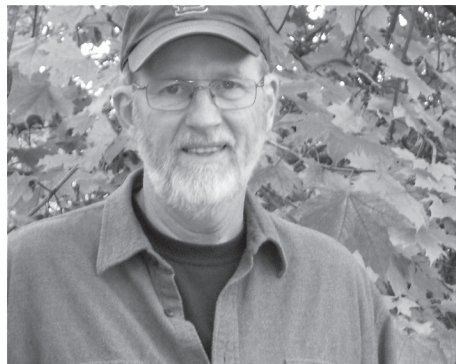
Upper Columbia  
River Group

## WELCOME TO THE TEAM



### FRED CHRIST

Fred returns to our Executive Committee after service in the 1990s. He is a committed Sierra Club volunteer, and a joy to work with. (You may have seen Fred working those long hours at our Winter Waters Celebration at the Patsy Clark Mansion.) Fred brings his values of environmental stewardship and a steady hand – important when he's working his job as a professional painter or as a committed Sierra Club volunteer and leader. Please welcome Fred to the UCR Group's Executive Committee. ([fredchrist@msn.com](mailto:fredchrist@msn.com))



### TOM SOELDNER

How humans relate to the natural world has captured Tom's unending interest. Tom supported the establishment of the Faith and Environment Network and serves on its board to engage congregations and people of faith in caring for creation. He continues to advance environmental awareness within the faith community and the public at large. Tom's focus on ethics and water will be important to us all as our Upper Columbia River region struggles with water scarcity, a legacy of polluting rivers and aquifers and issuing too many water rights, melting glaciers and a future of climate change. Please welcome Tom. ([waltsoe@gmail.com](mailto:waltsoe@gmail.com))

## UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER GROUP

### Executive Committee

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Katie Evans  
*Newsletter Editor*  
Rachael Paschal Osborn  
*Spokane River Project*  
Paula Whitson  
*Treasurer*

## Washington State Chapter

Visit our website: [washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol](http://washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol)

# LITIGATION UPDATE

by Rachael Paschal Osborn

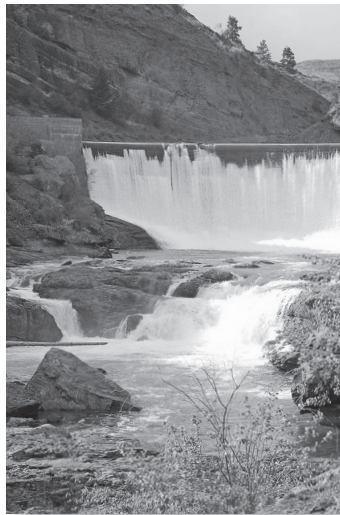
## **Sierra Club Upper Columbia River and Palouse Groups are involved in four lawsuits that are very active right now. Here's an update on each:**

**Spokane County sewage treatment plant appeal.** Sierra Club is challenging the pollution permit issued for the County's new sewage treatment plant, with the goal of converting it to a "zero discharge" facility. In a nutshell, the Clean Water Act forbids new discharges into an already-polluted river unless a cleanup plan is in place. Experts for Sierra Club and the County agreed that the County plant is discharging PCBs into the Spokane River, in violation of federal law. Meanwhile, there is no cleanup plan for PCBs in the Spokane River. (See column at right, bottom). Represented by ace Clean Water Act attorney Richard Smith of Smith & Lowney, Sierra Club and co-appellant Center for Environmental Law & Policy (CELP) went to trial on March 25 against the Department of Ecology and Spokane County. We await a decision from the Pollution Control Hearings Board, Washington's environmental court.

**Link for PCB cleanup:** [washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol/pcb/overview.html](http://washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol/pcb/overview.html)

## **Enloe Dam water quality license appeal.**

Enloe Dam is a 100-year old concrete plug sitting in the Similkameen River (near Oroville) that has not generated power since the 1950's. Okanogan PUD wants to restart generation by adding turbines on the riverbank next to the dam, diverting all water out of the river and de-watering Similkameen Falls, which sit just downstream of the dam. The Department of Ecology gave the PUD a permit to do just that, and Sierra Club and partners appealed. We are represented by attorneys Andrea Rodgers Harris and Kristen Larson, and completed a 6-day trial held in April at the Pollution Control Hearings Board.



*Enloe Dam & Similkameen Falls*

An interesting chronicle of each day of hearing, written by clients John Osborn and Rich Bowers, is online (see URL, below). Decision pending. Our co-appellants are American Whitewater, CELP, Columbia River Bioregional Education Project, and North Cascades Conservation Council. The PCHB will issue its decision later this summer.

**Link for Courtroom updates:** [columbia-institute.org/enloe/courtroom-updates.html](http://columbia-institute.org/enloe/courtroom-updates.html)

## **WSU "golf course water rights" appeal.**

Under western water law, if you don't use your water rights, you lose them. That rule should have applied to Washington State University when it asked the Department of Ecology to amend its six water rights back in 2006. WSU has never used nearly two-thirds of its rights – and if it did expand its pumping, that would accelerate drawdown in the Grande Ronde Aquifer, the ever-disappearing source of drinking water for Pullman, WA and Moscow, ID. Sierra Club Palouse Group, along with Scotty Cornelius and the Palouse Water Conservation Network, challenged the water right decisions and lo' these many years later, the case was heard by the Washington State Supreme Court on May 23, 2013. The lively exchange between the nine justices and the attorneys can be viewed online at TVW. Appellants are represented by Rachael Osborn. The Supreme Court will issue its decision in perhaps a year.

**Link to watch Supreme Court action:** [twv.org/index.php?option=com\\_tvwplayer&eventID=2013050013C](http://twv.org/index.php?option=com_tvwplayer&eventID=2013050013C)

## **PCB Cleanup Plan for the Spokane River.**

In 2011, the Department of Ecology was on track to issue a PCB clean-up plan (called a "total maximum daily load" or TMDL) for the Spokane River. Then, the agency reversed itself and instead of adopting an enforceable plan, it created a "regional toxics task force" populated by polluters who decide for themselves how much pollution they can put into the River. Ecology then issued pollution permits to four existing dischargers and the new County plant. These permits have NO limits whatever on PCBs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is preparing to issue similar permits to the three sewage plants in Idaho. In taking these actions, Ecology and EPA ignored water quality standards adopted by the state of Washington and the Spokane Tribe. The Tribe's standards are especially important because they are designed to protect tribal members who eat a lot of fish. All of this clearly violates federal laws. In October 2011, Sierra Club and CELP filed suit against EPA in federal court in Seattle. The Spokane Tribe has intervened in support. The Washington Department of Ecology, Spokane County and Kaiser Aluminum intervened to oppose us. Legal briefs will be filed this summer, with a decision expected next year. This case is important not only for the Spokane River, but also statewide, because of the agencies' decision to ignore water quality standards that are supposed to protect human health. Appellants are represented by Richard Smith and Marc Zemel of Smith & Lowney.

**For more information about Spokane River PCBs:** [washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol/pcb/overview.html](http://washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol/pcb/overview.html)

**For more information about the WSU water rights case:** [pwc.org/](http://pwc.org/)

**For more information about Enloe Dam and Similkameen Falls:** [columbia-institute.org/enloe/dam.html](http://columbia-institute.org/enloe/dam.html)

*We could use some help with litigation expenses.* If you'd like to help, please send a check to Sierra Club, PO Box 413, Spokane, WA 99210 with "litigation" in the memo line.

Visit our website: [washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol](http://washington.sierraclub.org/uppercol)

# VOTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP.

## JON SNYDER ENDORSED FOR SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL

We've endorsed Jon before because of his strong environmental values – and we are doing so again. On City Council, he has tried to do what's right even in the face of controversy: voting for the Shoreline Master Plan and supporting a conservation rate structure for our water utility.

As the threat of coal trains emerged, Jon has taken action: requesting a resolution regarding the impacts of coal trains at the Spokane Regional Health District and joining many of us in speaking out about coal train impacts at the public hearing last year.

An advocate for a more liveable Spokane, Jon has also voted for an inventory of our City's trees, supported community gardens, promoted public transit, biking and walking, and voted for single-stream recycling.

We encourage your active support in returning Jon Snyder to Spokane City Council: [votejonsnyder.com](http://votejonsnyder.com).



*Councilman Jon Snyder helps plant a tree near the Fish Lake Trail east trailhead.*



### UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER GROUP

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## HEY SPOKANE: WHAT'S ROLLING THROUGH OUR CITY?



ABOVE: Oil train explosions in Canada: Lac Megantic, Que. July 6, 2013 (AP/ The Canadian Press, Paul Chiasson)



RIGHT: Response to the Rail Company CEO. (source: Stuff.co.nz)

Sierra Club's advocacy to stop coal trains has renewed concerns about public health and safety locally – and globally, with coal accelerating climate change. Now, proposals are underway to expand oil exports – and more oil trains.

We've long known that a derailment in our downtown core could have devastating consequences (including that Sacred Heart and Deaconess Medical Centers are just blocks away). The July 6 oil train devastation of Lac Megantic with the terrible loss of life should prompt railroad towns everywhere to focus on what is underway with oil and coal exports – including the City of Spokane.

We should never allow BNSF Railway Co and its parent holding company Berkshire Hathaway Inc to forget the purpose of the law that created the railroad: "to promote the public interest and welfare." BNSF has continuing obligations under its 1864 federal charter, including public health and safety.

(For more on the Congressional land-grant railroad and its corporate history: Railroads & Clearcuts: Legacy of Congress's 1864 Northern Pacific Railroad Land Grant. Derrick Jensen, George Draffan, John Osborn)

To help protect our community, contact Crystal Gartner: [crystal.gartner@sierraclub.org](mailto:crystal.gartner@sierraclub.org) 509.209-2395.