

Tribes: Return Salmon Home Above Grand Coulee Dam

By John Osborn, Upper Columbia River Group

In bygone days, millions of salmon returned to the Upper Columbia each year, renewing a great cycle of life. Then in the 1930s, with the construction of the Grand Coulee Dam, the salmon were blocked. The consequences have been devastating. Now a plan to reopen the Upper Columbia to salmon by building Columbia River salmon runs brings hope. This move will offer great benefits for people and wildlife including orcas in Puget Sound.

In October 2014, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (Council) amended its Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program to investigate reintroducing salmon and steelhead back into the main stem Columbia River and tributaries upstream from Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams.

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One of the salmon canoes carved by Indian youth is shown blocked by Grand Coulee Dam. Photo: Voyages of Rediscovery

Washington Legislature in Full Swing

By Tim Gould, Chapter Executive & Legislative Committees and Bruce Wishart, Chapter Legislative Affairs Director

The 2015 Washington legislative session has been a busy one for Sierra Club staff and activists. This year, Governor Inslee is providing true leadership in addressing climate change and fossil fuels by introducing major legislation on carbon pricing, electric cars, and oil transportation safety. Sierra Club has also been a leader on legislation to phase out the Montana Colstrip coal-fired power plant, along with efforts to protect water supplies in rural areas of the state. On top of all that, the legislature has been debat-



Oil Train. Photo: Snohomish County Train Watch

ing a major transportation revenue package, which could have profound implications on greenhouse gas emissions.

As of this writing, the outcome of these debates is uncertain. The House of Representatives has generally promoted positions supported by Sierra Club, while the Senate has fought to derail many important bills on these topics.

Given this polarization between the House and Senate, many observers predict a lengthy

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The Crest

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The Crest is published quarterly. Contributions of news, opinion, art, and photography may be sent electronically to ashbetty@gmail.com or by post c/o the Washington State Chapter, 180 Nickerson Street, Suite 202, Seattle, WA 98109.

Submissions must be received by the first of the month prior to date of publication.

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The Crest (ISSN 0199-0810) is published quarterly by the Washington State Chapter of the Sierra Club, 180 Nickerson Street, Suite 202, Seattle WA 98109. \$1.00 of the annual Sierra Club dues goes toward a one-year subscription to the Crest. Periodicals postage paid at Seattle, WA.

Office Phone: 206-378-0114

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
The Crest, Sierra Club
PO Box 52968
Boulder, CO
80321-2968



Watch Online Documentary About Salmon Restoration *One River. Ethics Matter.*



Canoeing on the Columbia River. Photo: Treaty Talks

A group of intrepid Columbia River paddlers, made up of youth and students, has released an online documentary titled *Treaty Talks: Paddling up the Columbia River for People and Salmon*. The film examines the potential for salmon restoration through the eyes of the Spokane and Colville Tribal youth who carved the dugout salmon canoes to make the journey upriver starting in Astoria, Oregon and going 1,240 miles to Canal Flats, British Columbia.

The 35-minute movie takes the viewer up the river and into the lives of the participating tribal members—along with many others dedicated to returning salmon home to the Upper Columbia. The film was supported by the Upper Columbia United Tribes, the Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission, the Okanagan Nation Alliance, and the Columbia Institute for Water Policy. Check it out!

Treaty Talks – the film: vimeo.com/116831814

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Tribes

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Traditional Chiefs of the Colville Indian Reservation in 1941 gather to witness the completion of Grand Coulee Dam.
Photo: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

In accordance with the Council's Program, the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) developed a draft plan, "Upper Columbia River Basin Fish Passage and Reintroduction—Phase 1." The plan calls for a phased approach to study and implement reintroduction of anadromous (upstream running) fish, such as salmon, steelhead, and eels to areas where fish have historically migrated, but which are now blocked by dams.

You can show your support for this plan by sending your comments to John Sirois, john@ucut-nsn.org, Upper Columbia United Tribes, 25 W. Main, Ste. 434, Spokane, WA 99201. Below is a sample letter you can adapt:

Dear Upper Columbia United Tribes,

Thank you for your leadership in returning salmon home to the rivers and streams of the Upper Columbia. I support UCUT's draft proposal to study returning salmon to the rivers and streams above Grand Coulee Dam. This first phase of the study needs to be done in a timely way, and be completed by the end of 2016 to prepare for Phase 2 of salmon return.

Because salmon offer an important boost for our economy and environment, I encourage you to undertake a robust public process to involve the public of the region. There has never been adequate mitigation for the loss of salmon in the Upper Columbia. It's time we right historic wrongs, repair damage, and restore integrity to our rivers and forests, of which salmon are a part. Thank you again for taking this important step for all of us.

(name)
(address)

New Dams in Alpine Lakes Wilderness?

By John Osborn, Water & Salmon Committee

A recent proposal for new dams in Washington State targets the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, specifically the Enchantments. The lakes proposed for dams and diversions include: Colchuck, Eightmile, Upper Klonauqua, Nada, Upper and Lower Snow, and Square. All seven flow to Icicle Creek.

The Office of Columbia River (OCR) was created in 2006 by the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) with the primary purpose of “aggressively pursuing development of water supplies” resulting in a series of proposals for new irrigation dams and reservoirs. Alpine Lakes Wilderness joins a growing list of proposed new dams and reservoirs on OCR’s list, including Bumping Lake and Lmuma Creek in the Yakima Basin, among many others.



Nonfunctional dam at Eightmile Lake in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Photo: Karl Forsgaard

Pressure to build dams in this area stems from a lawsuit brought by the City of Leavenworth against Ecology regarding quantification of the city’s water rights. The case is currently on hold in the court of appeals. Meanwhile, OCR has entered into a \$700,000 contract with Chelan County to form the Icicle Work Group (IWG), to address the issue of water resources for Leavenworth.

If the effort fails and the lawsuit moves forward, a court decision could undermine Ecology’s authority to quantify water rights that predate the 1917 water code. The state-wide implications are substantial.

In addition to finding water for Leavenworth, IWG goals include solving instream flow problems in Icicle Creek, making the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery sustainable, protecting tribal rights to fish at the Hatchery, improving water reliability for agriculture, and promoting ecosystem health. All this

Alpine Lakes Wilderness joins a growing list of proposed new dams and reservoirs, including Bumping Lake and Lmuma Creek in the Yakima Basin, among many others.

must occur while achieving compliance with state and federal laws, including the Wilderness Act—no small feat.

Questions have been raised about whether the IWG’s goals, including ecosystem benefits, can only be achieved if new water supply is provided for Leavenworth. This, in turn, raises questions about whether state and federal laws, such as, Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act permits, may be superseded by a stakeholder-based collaborative process.

Conservation Alternative

Water conservation opportunities are substantial in the Wenatchee River Valley. Rather than building new dams in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, many believe that the City

of Leavenworth and other water users should aggressively pursue water conservation. These actions, combined with promoting water markets that facilitate selling and trading

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New Dams

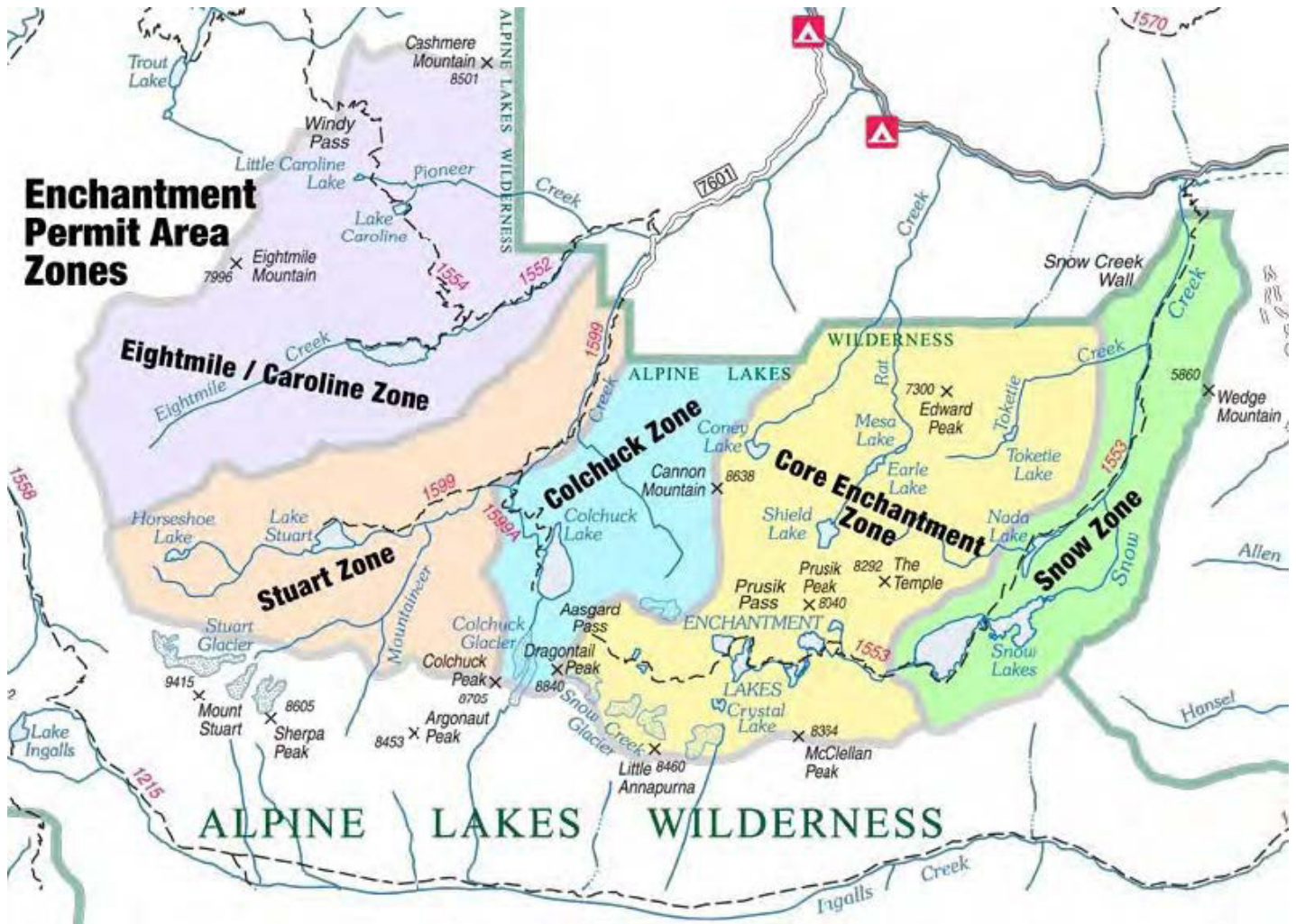
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water rights, could supply future water uses. To address the critical need to increase flows to Icicle Creek in the 6-mile stretch near Sleeping Lady Resort (just upstream of Leavenworth), the point of diversion for irrigation could be moved downstream to the Wenatchee River. This would add approximately 117 cubic-feet-per-second to Icicle Creek.

Because the state has invested so heavily in *supply-side* solutions to water scarcity—by creating and funding the OCR—water conservation and other *demand-side* solutions are generally disregarded. This threat to the Alpine Lakes

Wilderness is about water scarcity—a problem that may only be getting worse. Fundamental reforms in water management are needed in order for the Washington State government to fulfill its public trust duties on water.

To volunteer, contact Karl Forsgaard (National Forest Committee, karlforsgaard@comcast.net) or Elaine Packard (Water & Salmon Committee, espackard@msn.com). For more information, read the 4-part blog post in Naiads.wordpress.com by Rachael Paschal Osborn.



Alpine Lakes Wilderness - The Enchantments - where dams and diversions are proposed. Map: U.S. Forest Service

Moving Beyond Colstrip: A Clean Energy Future for Washington

By Seth Ballhorn, Beyond Coal Organizer

Sierra Club is working to pass state legislation to retire the Colstrip Generating Facility, a coal-fired power plant located in Eastern Montana, providing power to Washington State. We support a planned, orderly transition that treats Colstrip's workers and community with fairness while retiring the polluting coal plant and replacing it with clean, renewable energy. This calls for a legislative package with an agreed-upon retirement schedule for the Colstrip plant and a replacement package of wind, solar, and energy efficiency leading to clean energy jobs in Washington and Montana. Coal energy puts Washington's climate and residents at risk. The Colstrip Facility produces as much carbon pollution as half of all passenger vehicles in Washington State. Statewide, coal provides only 14 percent of our electricity but contributes more than 80 percent of greenhouse gas emissions from our electricity sector.



Colstrip Plant. Photo: Beyond Coal Campaign

Why Now?

Colstrip faces rising costs due to its age and the need to install modern pollution-control equipment, along with potential fines for air- and water-quality violations. Colstrip's Washington-based owners, including Puget Sound Energy, Avista Utilities, and Pacific Power, could be faced with hundreds of millions of dollars in expenses—costs that could fall on Washington residents. Meanwhile, the cost of coal power is rising.

Washington's future lies in clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. Washington leaders have a remarkable opportunity to transition from dirty coal to clean-energy solutions that create thousands of jobs. Washington's private utilities can live up to their reputations for environmental stewardship and energy innovation by championing a clean, renewable energy grid that works for our economy, health and climate.

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The Trouble with Colstrip

- *One of the most-polluting coal plants in the West.*
- *Produces about 15 million tons of climate pollution every year, equal to half of all passenger vehicles in Washington State.*
- *Spews 200% more sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxide than Montana's next nine-largest air polluters combined. These toxic chemicals are key contributors to acid rain and regional haze.*
- *Leaks toxic chemicals into nearby groundwater from more than 800 acres of coal ash waste ponds—the area of about 605 football fields, and growing!*
- *Uses millions of gallons of groundwater to keep the ash ponds' toxic pollution from spreading, without the water rights to use it.*
- *Will need hundreds of millions of dollars from its utility owners to comply with federal and state cleanup requirements.*
- *Faces citizen lawsuits for air and water pollution violations.*
- *Creates financial risk for Washington customers*

Take a Closer Look at Your Compost

By Darlene Schanfald, Water & Salmon Committee

Preparing flower beds and vegetable gardens for spring planting? When selecting composts or fertilizers for soil amendment, it is helpful to be able to distinguish between labels that are marked simply, organic, and those that are certified organic. Many composts and fertilizers that are labeled organic may contain unwanted contaminants and pathogens.

Some composts and fertilizers are made with treated sewage sludge, also known as biosolids. These products are then mixed with yard waste, lime and other materials and sold as fertilizers. Since human waste and yard waste are technically organic, these products can be labeled as such. It is not required that compost and fertilizer labels list everything that may be in the mixture.

It is a well-known fact that many contaminants end up in sewage treatment plants. Unfortunately, these plants were not designed to fully treat all of these contaminants and some make their way into biosolids. Further, according to the National Institute of Health, the waste flow can sometimes contain antibiotic resistant bacteria and infectious diseases.

The federal Toxic Substances Control Act, which was created to regulate the chemicals that Americans encounter daily, has not been updated since its 1976 inception despite the introduction of approximately 2,000 new chemicals annually. Some of these chemicals are of particular concern in the waste stream. For example, Triclosan, a chemical found in antibacterial soaps, is believed to interfere with the beneficial effects of helpful bacteria at wastewater treatment plants. Recent studies have also shown that treatment processes fail to eliminate many toxic chemicals, such as flame-retardants.

As Sierra Club members, working to protect wildlife and the environmental health, we want to make sure our garden soil is safe too. The next time you are considering buying a compost or fertilizer, ask your vendor if the product contains biosolids.

For more information, please contact Darlene Schanfald at darlenes@olympus.net.



Flower garden
Photo: Junior Libby



Grape hyacinths. Photo: Anna Langova

The Fight Against New Oil-By-Rail Terminals in Washington

By Laura Ackerman, Clean Air, Healthy Communities Committee

Local and regional environmental groups have their work cut out for them in efforts to prevent oil companies from building several oil-by-rail facilities in Washington. From Tesoro-Savage, the largest proposed oil-by-rail terminal in Vancouver, to the nearby NuStar facility, to three proposed projects in Grays Harbor, Washington faces an onslaught of crude-by-rail proposals. This means mile-and-a-half long trains carrying crude oil from the Bakkan region of North Dakota or the Alberta, Canada tar sands to Washington shores for shipment on the Pacific Ocean.

A Critical Decision for Our State

One significant victory in this many-pronged battle was the decision issued on February 23, 2015 by Skagit County Hearing Examiner, Mr. Wick Dufford, stopping Shell Oil's plan for a crude-by-rail terminal at the Shell Oil Refinery in Anacortes until a full environmental and public health review is prepared.

When Skagit County's Planning and Development Services gave the project a green light in August of 2014, several environmental groups, including Evergreen Islands, Washington Environmental Council, Resources For Sustainable Communities, Friends of the Earth, Friends of the San Juans, and ForestEthics, represented by Earthjustice, filed an appeal. A three-day hearing in Mount Vernon followed at the end of January.

In his decision, Mr. Dufford noted that oil transport by train has "skyrocketed." He also cited the poor safety record of rail cars used to transport oil, even the supposedly safer models that Shell had committed to use, as recent incidents include derailments and fires. Also of concern were risks to the Skagit River's very productive salmon habitat, the safety of an old rail bridge over the river, the brilliance of the Padilla Bay ecosystem, and the lack of analysis of traffic impacts in certain areas in Skagit County, including Mt. Vernon, Burlington, and Conway, as well as a limited emergency response in those areas.



Proposed Shell Crude-by-rail-Eastgate rail terminal area on March Point, Anacortes.
Photo: Evergreen Islands

Mr. Dufford stated: "The environmental review done in this case assumes that the whole big ball of federal, state and local regulations will somehow make the trains safe. And that if an accident happens, the response efforts described on paper will result in effective clean up. ... There is no proven basis for such conclusions." Mr. Dufford indicated that the full environmental review should contain at least six areas of study, one being the impacts of rail traffic from the four existing oil refineries in Puget Sound. Shell is appealing the decision, although Skagit County is prepared to go forward with the full review of the project's harms and risks to people and the environment.

Looking Ahead

Beyond the Shell Oil Refinery, this decision has implications for the NuStar proposal in Vancouver, which has not yet undergone a full environmental and public health review. Columbia Riverkeeper and several other environmental groups are working to halt this facility. They recently sent a letter to the City of Vancouver, citing Mr. Dufford's ethical and thoughtful decision as a primary reason that NuStar's potential risks and harms also need further review.

For more information, contact Laura Ackerman at lackerman@landscouncil.org.

Our Wild America: Campaign Update

By Graham Taylor

So far, 2015 has been a busy time for Sierra Club's Our Wild America campaign, ushering in new wilderness areas in the Alpine Lakes, as well as permanent protection for three new rivers: the Middle Fork Snoqualmie, Pratt, and Illabot Creek! The National Park Service has kicked off a long awaited process to augment the grizzly bear population in Washington's North Cascades National Park. The Forest Service has invited conservation groups and the public to examine the Northwest Forest Plan—a peace treaty that ended the spotted owl wars in the 1990's. All of these opportunities have kept us busy in our enduring effort to protect wild places for generations to come.

Legislative Champions

In February, conservation groups hosted a grand event, thanking Sen. Patty Murray and Rep. Suzan DelBene for their painstaking work to pass new legislation in Congress. While the final package contained some difficult measures, our leaders made sure that Washington received additional conservation in the nick of time before the control of the senate shifted.

A ray of light continues to be the dogged support offered by Rep. Dave Reichert who remains dedicated to protecting the forests and headwaters in the North Cascades. Sierra Club applauds his efforts and has scheduled an event to honor him. We encourage folks to thank their representatives and enjoy these newly protected rivers and the lands that will be protected as wilderness for generations to come.

Welcoming Grizzlies Back to Washington

The ghost bear of the North Cascades is finally getting some help from our federal government agencies who are eager to find ways to bring the great grizzly back to Washington State. While many have searched for the elusive grizzly, it has been many years since a verified record of their presence in our state. The grizzly has been part of Washington's ecosystem for generations, before being wiped out by habitat loss and devastated by the historic fur trade. Sierra Club supports the effort to protect and recover this keystone species, which digs for insects, roots, and tubers, causing natural



Grizzly Bear. Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

aeration of the soil, which is critical for the meadows and beautiful wild flowers we all enjoy.

The Northwest Forest Plan

As the 20-year anniversary of the Northwest Forest Plan passes, we look back gratefully on the first ecosystem-wide management plan in our history. Steeply reducing the clear-cutting in Northern California, Oregon and Washington, the Northwest Forest Plan dramatically changed our priorities, placing value on biodiversity, recreation, and clean water. Sierra Club was a big part in bringing about the Northwest Forest Plan and continues to be committed to its values. Looking toward the next 20 years, we will advocate in defense of this remarkably effective plan.

If you love big trees, big bears, or big new wilderness areas, 2015 has been a year for you. We at the Wild Campaign are excited for the many opportunities ahead. We can work together to keep Washington State green.

For more information about Our Wild America, contact Graham Taylor at graham.taylor@sierraclub.org.

Legislative Threats to Public Lands

By Peter Guerrero

Historical Perspective

“There is nothing more practical in the end than the preservation of beauty, than the preservation of anything that appeals to the higher emotions of mankind.” These are the words of president Theodore Roosevelt from a speech made at Stanford University in 1903. He went on to say, “I feel most emphatically that we should not turn a tree which was old when the first Egyptian conqueror penetrated to the valley of the Euphrates, which it has taken so many thousands of years to build up, and which can be put to better use, into shingles.”

Three years later, Roosevelt signed into law, the Antiquities Act of 1906, designed to provide an expeditious means of protecting these lands by authorizing the president to proclaim national monuments on public lands.

Congress passed this act in response to concerns over the theft and destruction of archaeological sites and the plundering of the West’s primeval forests and its resources. Olympic National Park and many other Northwest gems owe their existence to this law.

New Threats on Wildlands

The new Republican-controlled Congress has lost no time introducing the National Monument Designation Transparency and Accountability Act of 2015 (S. 228). If enacted, this act would restrict the president’s authority to protect public wildlands.

The attack on wild and culturally significant lands also extends to Olympia where several bills have been proposed to study the return of federal lands to the state, with the notion that the state can better manage these lands. No explanation is provided how exactly the state will accomplish this as it already struggles to fund its own park system.

These bills have the fingerprints of ALEC—the American Legislative Exchange Council founded in 1973 to support policies favorable to its corporate advisory board, including Exxon Mobil and Koch Industries. ALEC state legislators organized a 2014 conference in Salt Lake City that they



Lost Basin, Olympic National Park. Photo: National Park Service

called the “Legislative Summit on the Transfer of Public Lands” and the Olympia bills are similar to those discussed at the summit and introduced in other state houses across the West.

These lands are our public lands. In observing this trend, Martin Heinrich, a United States Senator from New Mexico, recently wrote in the New York Times:

Admittedly, the federal government does not do a perfect job of managing America’s public lands. There are real problems that need to be solved, like creating more access points for recreation, hunting and fishing...but these are problems we can solve because of the very fact that these lands are public and we each have a voice in their management. America’s forests, wildlife refuges and conservation lands are part of the fabric of our democracy.

This provides a clearly stated perspective of those who care deeply about the protection of America’s national monuments and protected wildlands.

For more information about this issue, please contact Peter Guerrero at studio374photography@gmail.com

Legislature

Continued from page 1

session that could extend past July 1, the start of the new fiscal year.

Climate Change and Oil-By-Rail Are Top Issues

The chapter is following a full list of bills. Climate change legislation is the highest concern. The governor's carbon pricing bill, House Bill 1314, has held center stage on this topic. Hearings in the House have drawn large numbers of activists and leaders concerned about the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Washington. The fate of this bill is likely to lie in the balance until the final days of session.

Transport of crude oil-by-rail is also getting a lot of attention, due to a significant number of oil trains that have derailed and caught fire in the past several months. With oil companies and distributors proposing several new oil terminals across the region, the House has passed a strong safety bill. House Bill 1449 would, among other things, require that freight railroads invest in safety measures, authorize state inspections, and require safety precautions for marine transportation of oil.



Oil Train in Mulkiteo. Photo: Snohomish County Train Watch

Transportation Funding Legislation “Poison Pill”

Transportation funding is proving to be another contentious issue with several potential trade-offs that affect environmental policies and state budgets. For example, the Senate transportation revenue bill, SB 5987, contains a “poison pill” that would force Governor Inslee to choose between funding for transit and pedestrian/bike programs or the authority to develop a cleanfuels standard to reduce air pollution from cars.

The revenue bill is also contingent on the passage of a series of policy reforms, which include raiding a toxic clean-up account to pay for transportation mitigation and offering exemptions from the Shorelines Management Act for construction projects. Sierra Club helped to narrow the exemptions to these standards through successful amendments to HB 1850. Senate proposed funding is skewed too heavily toward new projects that encourage more sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions, with too little dedicated to basic maintenance and transit service improvements.

Water and Growth

Our state's growing land use development in rural areas

poses a great threat to water supplies and instream flows necessary to protect endangered salmon runs. Recent legal decisions have required local governments to better manage growth in areas where water is scarce. A spate of bills introduced in the Senate would have reversed the law on this matter, allowing significant impacts on salmon and existing water users. Sierra Club has been working to stop these bills and promote sensible water management.

Phase-out of Colstrip Coal Plant

Last, but not least, Sierra Club has been involved in sensitive discussions around legislation which may determine the fate of the enormous Colstrip Coal Plant in Montana and investment in the facility by utility company Puget Sound Energy, which obtains about 20 percent of its electric energy from the plant. Sierra Club is promoting efforts to phase out the plant—one of the largest sources of carbon emissions in the United States—and transition to alternative clean sources of energy for our region.

To see up-to-date information about pending legislative bills, please visit the chapter's website (<http://www.sierraclub.org/washington/legislative-action>) and the state's legislative bill page (<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo>).

Take Part in Fun, Educational Outings with the Loo Wit Group

By Lehman Holder, Loo Wit Group

Loo Wit educational outings are open to everyone. As in past years, Loo Wit Group, located in Vancouver (near Portland), will be offering a variety of sea kayak, bicycle, and hiking opportunities. Have fun and learn about wildlife habitat too. For a full list of kayak and bike outings, check out the Loo Wit website, www.wa.sierraclub.org/loowit.

Water Outings Training

Interested in becoming a water outings leader and learning new skills? Loo Wit outings leader, Lehman Holder, is offering a water outings leader training on May 16–17 in Vancouver and on Lake River near Ridgefield, just north of Vancouver (rentals available). E-mail Lehman at tripsguy@aol.com for details.

Hanford Kayak Outing

On July 25–26, Loo Wit will join Columbia Riverkeeper, a river conservation group, to paddle the Hanford Reach National Monument on the Columbia River, just above Tri-Cities. A tour of the Hanford Nuclear Facility will be included.

Women's Kayak Outing

Outings leader Laura Skehan will be leading an all-women kayak outing on the lower Columbia near Skamokawa on June 18–21. E-mail Laura at lauraskehan@gmail.com for more details.



Loo Wit kayakers. Photo: Shari Bandes



Loo Wit kayakers. Photo: Shari Bandes

Sea Kayak Outings

Beginners (includes instruction): May 2, June 7, July 12, August 8, and September 6.

All Others: May 9, May 30, June 18–21, June 28, July 25–26 (Hanford Reach), August 16, August 29 (Hope Island State Marine Park, south Puget Sound), September 26, and October 11.

Bike Outings

Scheduled for: April 19 and 26, May 3 and 30, July 5 and 18, August 1, September 13 and 19, October 3 and 18. These outings typically cover 20–30 miles at an easy pace (10–12 mph) and are group rides—no one is left behind! E-mail Lehman at tripsguy@aol.com for more details.

All sea kayak and bike outings require advance signup.

Hikes

For information on hikes, e-mail Mike Newsham at 2news-hams@comcast.net.

Find Outings Throughout Washington State on Meetup

The best way to find up-to-date educational outings is to join the Meetup in your region of Washington state. Here is a list of current Meetup groups.

North Olympic Group

The North Olympic Group begins its third season of wilderness outings in April. Here's a run-down on what we will offer:

- Two Wild Olympics-related events including Gold Creek on June 14 (Total distance is 8–9 miles Difficulty is 3 out of 5.)
- A multi-day backpacking outing—a first for us
- A mix of easy, moderate (the majority), and strenuous hikes
- A geographically wide range, including the wild Pacific coast, tranquil river valleys, and the more rugged interior of the Olympics

RSVPs are required for all events at exploreolympics@gmail.com or by going to our Meetup site: www.meetup.com/north-olympic-group

Olympic Peninsula Outdoors, Sierra Club

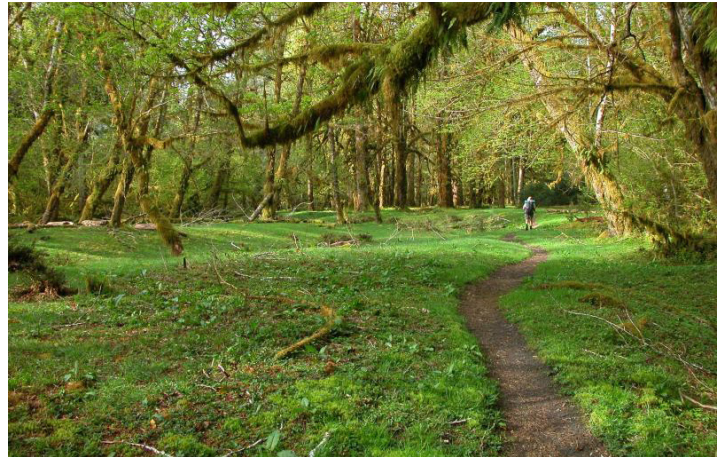
meetup.com/North-Olympic-Group/

Sierra Club Outings, Western Washington

meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Outings-Western-Washington/

Exploring the Inland Northwest with Sierra Club

meetup.com/Exploring-the-Inland-Northwest-with-Sierra-Club/



Hoh Rain Forest. Photo: National Park Service

Hiking and Exploring Nature in South King County with Sierra Club

meetup.com/Hiking-and-Exploring-Nature-with-Sierra-Club-in-S-King-Co/

Portland/Vancouver Sierra Club Outings and Events

meetup.com/Portland-Vancouver-Sierra-Club-Outings-Events/

Beyond Colstrip

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We've been here before, and we've succeeded. We've set a retirement date for TransAlta, our only in-state coal plant, and helped our Oregon neighbors develop a similar transition plan for their coal power plant in Boardman.

Our Coal-Free Future is Here

Wind and solar energy already support approximately 4,000 jobs in Washington, and we are eighth in the nation for installed wind capacity. Overall, we have enough wind-energy potential to meet 60 percent of our state's electricity demands. The cost-effective potential for energy efficiency and renewable energy would create an additional 4,000 family-wage jobs once Washington becomes coal free.

We don't have to choose between dirty power and prosperity; we can protect our health and climate while building a strong economic future for our state. Clean energy solutions protect our health and our climate. Let's create more Northwest jobs and grow our region's wind, solar, and energy-efficiency industries. Let's implement a transition plan and legislation for a coal-free Washington. This is Washington's opportunity to serve as a national leader in powering homes and businesses with clean energy.

For more information, please contact Seth Ballhorn at seth.ballhorn@sierraclub.org.

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Washington State Chapter Website

sierraclub.org/washington



Meetings

Snohomish Group Meeting

Tuesday, April 14, 7 pm, 1124 2nd Avenue South, Edmonds, WA 98020. We are local volunteers working on Snohomish and Island County issues. Guests are welcome; please join us. Our Conservation Committee would love your help. We're working on issues such as protecting the Skykomish River and dirty coal exports. Contact person: Rebecca Wolfe, 425-774-6546, rr.wolfe@comcast.net.

National Forest Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 6, 7 pm, Chapter Office. Learn about and help save Washington's ancient forests, roadless areas, rare wildlife, and trails. Many volunteer opportunities available around the state, including protecting iconic places in local Wilderness campaigns, reconnecting wildlife habitat through the Cascade Checkerboard Project, and restoring trails in the North Cascades. All are welcome! Questions? Contact Harry Romberg, 206-365-9302, hbromb@aol.com.

South King County Group Executive Committee: *Call for Nominees*

The South King County Group (SKCG) is seeking candidates for two open positions on its annual executive committee (ExCom) election. Each elected candidate will serve a two-year term.

The committee, which consists of five members, meets once a month and is responsible for directing the group's activities and priorities.

Any Sierra Club member within our territory and in good standing may run. If you are interested in being part of our leadership team, please write a short biography of yourself along with a candidate statement explaining why you want to serve on ExCom.

This should be e-mailed to Dorothy Johnston, at johnsdo@frontier.com, by April 20, 2015.

Invest in Washington's Environment!

Your financial support is essential to delivering the great work you read about here in the Crest. Please donate online at sierraclub.org/washington or by mailing a check today to:

Washington State Chapter of the Sierra Club
180 Nickerson Street, Suite 202
Seattle, WA 98109

Thank you!



Northern Pygmy Owl. Photo: National Park Service

Washington State Chapter
180 Nickerson Street #202
Seattle, WA 98109



The Clout of Being a Sierra Club Member—Your Voice!

By Don Steinke, Loo Wit Group

It makes a difference when Sierra Club members write letters and submit comments. Elected officials are generally reluctant to take action unless they get a lot of encouragement. They need to feel supported.

The ways you can get your voice heard include:

- *Writing letters to the editor of your local paper every month about issues you care about.*
- *Writing on-line comments in the newspaper on a regular basis (you would be surprised at the number of people who say that they read the comments!).*
- *Writing letters to your legislators, often.*

When one voice joins with another, we can make a difference.

When researching the issues, there are a number of website resources available such as:

- *Washington State Sierra Club: sierraclub.org/washington*
- *Washington State Legislature webpage: apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo*
- *Sightline: sightline.org*

When you write, be sure to let people know exactly what they need do to show support. Ask them to sign a petition, attend a meeting, or write a comment.

Don Steinke

crVancouverUSA@gmail.com

Loo Wit Group