



# Loo Wit Rumblings



Events, Education, Conservation, Environment—Serving SW Washington

[www.washington.sierraclub.org/loowit](http://www.washington.sierraclub.org/loowit)

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## **Outings season is here!**

Hiking, cycling, sea kayak outings underway!

If you love our spectacular Pacific Northwest outdoors, outings opportunities are waiting for you!

Mike Newsham and his corps of enthusiastic, experienced hike leaders have hikes going nearly every weekend. Bicycle and sea kayak outings are also underway, led by Loo Wit chair Lehman Holder, and kayak outings leader Laura Skehan. Haven't taken part in a Loo Wit outing lately? What are you waiting for? Join us and explore SW Washington with friendly, like-minded folks.



**On a recent outing to Frenchman's Bar, Loowit cyclists were greeted with perfect weather and beautiful views of Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams.**

Next bike outing is coming up on June 14 (Saturday), for our semi-annual Banks-Vernonia State Trail ride. The Banks-Vernonia is one of the best bike trail rides in

the area, 28 miles there and back on a paved path on an old railroad grade. You would be hard pressed to find a prettier or easier bike ride, or one as long as this where you did not have to compete with cars for a piece of the road. Contact Lehman Holder for details, [Tripsguy@aol.com](mailto:Tripsguy@aol.com).

On Saturday June 21, Laura Skehan will lead us on a paddle on the East Fork Lewis River, one of Clark County's gems. Contact Laura Skehan by June 19 to sign up. [lauraskehan@gmail.com](mailto:lauraskehan@gmail.com).

And on Sunday June 29 Laura will take kayakers out to circumnavigate Bachelor Island. A fun loop trip of 3-4 hours. This is a "B-level" paddle, for those who have some experience and are comfortable on the water. Includes stop for lunch. Rentals available in Ridgefield. Check the Loo-Wit website for more activities and events, the address is at the top of the page.

## **Members always welcome at the Loo Wit ExCom meetings**

Loo Wit Group has about 1,400 members across SW Washington, most of whom reside in Clark County.

If you're a resident of SW Washington, you're invited to visit a meeting of the Loo Wit executive committee (ExCom), where you can gain a better understanding and

appreciation of how Loo Wit functions. The ExCom is composed of nine members, all volunteers, who are elected by the membership for two year terms, and these members work very diligently and effectively to protect and preserve our SW Washington environment by addressing numerous issues and threats. Volunteer opportunities exist in conservation, political, outings, programs, legislative and several other areas.

Loo Wit ExCom meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month (except August) at the United Congregational Church, 1220 NE 68th St (top of the hill) in Hazel Dell. Questions? E-mail Lehman Holder, chair, [tripsguy@q.com](mailto:tripsguy@q.com).

***Acclaimed documentary CITIZEN KOCH to be screened at the Kiggins Theatre in Vancouver starting July 10th.***

**By David Bybee**

Currently scheduled to show only at the Kiggins in downtown Vancouver, this powerful new documentary about the infamous billionaire Koch brothers investigates their involvement in funding the Tea Party and traces their impact on unlimited election spending by corporations and their fellow billionaires. Wisely eschewing party lines (one of its heroes is GOP Buddy Roemer) CITIZEN KOCH is alternately terrifying and funny and is an essential and powerful portrait of our political times.

For more details including movie trailer, visit <http://watch.citizenkoch.com/> For show times as July 10th approaches, view particulars at <http://kigginstheatre.net/>



***2014 legislative session review***  
by Mary Lynch, legislative chair

As anticipated, it was a tough year for environmental efforts in Olympia. The state senate is very conservative, and enviro bills faced still opposition in this body. The session was on a compressed time frame, plus it's an election year. Some legislators introduced bills with no expectation of passage, although it made them look good in their home districts.

The session was characterized as one of the least productive in recent years as illustrated by the lack of agreement between the House and Senate on a Capital Budget. The Good News was that there was no budget deficit for the first time in years, allowing them to reach agreement on the Operating Budget.

Because of the climate in the legislature, environmental priorities remain fluid. A revised version of the environmental justice bill was reintroduced, and work continues on water resources and water quality issues that affect salmon recovery. The transportation revenue package was watched closely, but negotiations did not lead to any agreement. A bill that would regulate safe transport of oil by rail also failed.

It was a difficult session, but the really damaging issues affecting the environment were kept at bay, at least for now.

***Building SW Washington's Environmental Movement***

by Brooks Berndt, Conservation Chair

Loo Wit's conservation committee is off to an exciting start this year as we consider the best ways to build the environmental movement in SW Washington by having a

well-defined sense of purpose. At our next meeting on July 3, we'll be considering two areas of potential focus: 1) developing and executing a strategic plan of action aimed at restoring the East Fork Lewis River from the devastation of gravel pit mining; and, 2) developing a long-range strategic vision in the fight against global warming. With regard to this second matter, we're planning for what the next important struggles will be after victories are won against the proposed oil terminal in Vancouver and the proposed coal terminal in Longview. We eagerly invite new members to our committee. For info, contact Brooks at: [brooks@vanucc.org](mailto:brooks@vanucc.org).

### ***What I Have Learned about Community Involvement.***

By John McConnaughey

About three blocks down and around a corner from where I live there is a new subdivision being planned for a 3.5 acre lot, one of the last remaining large lots in the area. Up until now it has been an old ranch house surrounded by brambles and a seriously overgrown Christmas tree farm. Now a developer is applying to subdivide it into 11 single family residential lots called "Myers Addition Subdivision".

It doesn't bother me much to see this lot turned into houses, in fact I'm a little bit glad. Walking past this lot is a bit hazardous. There is no sidewalk, not even a parking strip. Pedestrians must walk alternately on the road surface or a narrow path with a steep drop off of about 6 feet into some brambles.

I stopped by the lot the other day while on an evening bike ride after work. There is a sign on the lot advertising the development, with a drawing. It showed sidewalks everywhere except along 49th Street. What

the heck? I emailed the city planner, and got a reply saying:

"While the staff recommendation has not been written yet, it is staff's initial opinion that requiring sidewalks along 49th Avenue does not meet the nexus and proportionality arguments for required land improvements."

"Nexus and proportionality"?? What the heck is that? Basically that is planner speak for saying that the development was either not near enough, ("nexus"), to 49th Street to make them build sidewalks along 49th, or that other developments in the area did not have to make sidewalk improvements so why should the Myers Addition be required to provide sidewalks, ("proportionality").

The lot adjoins 49th Street, and 5 of the new sub-lots would also adjoin 49<sup>th</sup> street. That's about as close to a nexus as it gets. And every other recent development in the area has included sidewalks and other street improvements. So how is this not "proportionality"?

In my job I frequently work with planners and developers, so I know that planners are usually in the middle, with developers trying to bend them one way, and citizens trying to bend them another way, and politicians making them go every which way. So it is not to surprising to me to see a planner being badgered into making interpretations that are favorable to the developer. And not having to make street improvements for 560 feet along 49th Street would certainly save them a bunch of money.

So part of our jobs as a community members is to look over these development notices, and make sure they are reasonable and will enhance the neighborhood...or at least not be a detriment. We have to be the backbone for our city planners. If they don't hear

from us, then who will they be listening to? Developers? Politicians?

So next time you get one of those notices for some project in your neighborhood, take the time to look it over and understand it. Or you might find yourself without sidewalks, bike paths, street lights or other amenities that make our neighborhoods livable.

### ***Planet Earth Pledge:***

New activism tool for Loo Wit

Earlier this year, the Loo Wit Group helped launch a new internet-based activism tool called Planet Earth Pledge. Participants in this program make a pledge to take at least one action against global warming during every week of 2014. An action could be as simple as sending an e-mail to a legislator or signing a petition. At present, 124 people have made the pledge. A weekly e-mail digest including the pledge website inform people of new actions they can take. There are currently 65 actions listed. Learn more by visiting: [www.planetearthpledge.org](http://www.planetearthpledge.org).

### ***Political committee completes first round of endorsement interviews***

Loo Wit political chair Cathy Morton and fellow "PolCom" members have completed the initial series of political endorsement interviews for both incumbent state legislative candidates and those running against incumbent candidates. The process has gone very smoothly, with five candidates from the 49th, 17th and 18 legislative districts seeking Loo Wit's endorsement.

After approval by Loo Wit's ExCom, the candidates' names are forwarded to the Chapter political committee for Chapter endorsement.

## ***Finding Hope in the Fight against Global Warming***

by Rev. Brooks Berndt

The crisis of global warming can seem overwhelming. One can feel powerless and alone in the face of it. That can change by making a simple pledge: pledge to join a growing number of people who have made a commitment to take action against global warming every week of 2014. Your weekly action can be as easy as signing an online petition or sending an email to your legislator. Your action might only require 15 minutes of your time each week. This is a small price to pay in the fight against the most significant problem of our time. Even if you have taken small or large actions previously, this will be different. It will be different because you will be doing it with others who have also taken the Planet Earth Resolution Pledge. When you write your legislator, for example, you can tell your legislator that you are one of many who have made a pledge to fight global warming. In fact, you can tell your legislator the exact number of people who are taking the pledge because we will be updating the number each week on the following website: [www.planetearthresolution.org](http://www.planetearthresolution.org). On this website, you can also learn more about how this project works and why it is so urgently needed. Most importantly, on the website, you can make your pledge. Those who pledge will have the option of receiving a weekly email digest that provides an extensive list of the different actions one can take. An updated list of actions is also available on the website. During the months of November and December, the initial drive for pledges is taking place. Your pledge will make a difference! Help us generate an early momentum that is full of hope!



Southwest Washington  
Sierra Club

**Loo Wit Group**

PO Box 13  
Vancouver, WA 98666-0013

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