

# VOICE of the WILD OLYMPICS

Olympic Park Associates

Founded in 1948

Fall 2004



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## OPA Sues Park Service Over Shelter Flights in Olympic Wilderness



Paul Gleeson, Cultural Resource chief, and park carpenter Jim Wesley with the "historic" prefabricated shelters. OPA, PEER, and Wilderness Watch assert that these new structures do not belong in Olympic Wilderness. Photograph by Seabury Blair, Jr.

By Tim McNulty

Olympic Park Associates and two national environmental organizations have filed suit in U.S. District Court in Tacoma challenging Olympic National Park's plan to fly two prefabricated shelters to remote sites in the Olympic Wilderness. The suit, which was joined by Wilderness Watch and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), was filed October 29 by attorney Gillis Reavis of Brown, Reavis & Manning of Seattle. It charges the National Park Service with violating several provisions of the Wilderness Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

As readers of the *Voice* know, Olympic National Park (ONP) proposes to airlift the shelters by heavy-lift Chinook helicopter to Low Divide and Home Sweet Home meadow in the heart of the Olympic Wilderness ("Park Decided to Fly

Shelters In Next Fall," Spring 2004 issue; see also Spring 2003). ONP issued a "Finding of No Significant Impact" on the action in September.

The shelters are not "historic" as ONP claims; they were constructed in the Elwha maintenance yard in 2001. Nor are they essential for visitor safety, another claim made by ONP.

Our suit charges that installing these shelters in the Olympic Wilderness violates the National Park Service's duty to preserve the area's wilderness character under Section 4(b) of the Wilderness Act. The proposed action also violates the "no structures" and "no use of motorized vehicles" directives and the "mechanized equipment" restriction in Section 4(c) of the act. Because the structures do not serve the purpose of the Wilderness Act "as necessary to meet the minimum requirements for the administration of the area" they are specifically prohibited from

(Continued on P. 3, OPA Sues Park Service)

## OPA Board Meetings:

**Next:** Wednesday, November 17, 2004; Wednesday, January 26, 2005

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.

**Place:** Kingston Community Center

**Please join us.** OPA members are always welcome at Board meetings.

**The regular OPA Board meetings** are in the Kingston Community Center on the 4th Wednesday of odd-numbered months, except no meeting in July.

## How to Reach Your Members of Congress

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From this number you can reach any member of the US Senate or House of Representatives.

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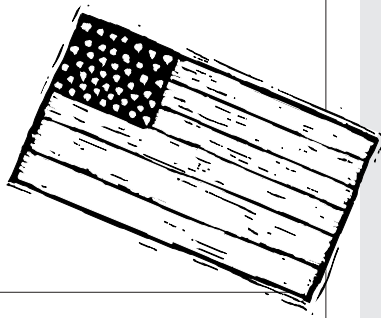
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# OPA Sues Park Service Over New Shelters In Wilderness

(Continued from P. 1.)

wilderness.

“Flying new buildings in with heavy-lift helicopters is a misguided way to manage one of the world’s premier wilderness parks,” said OPA president Donna Osseward. “The Wilderness Act is clear on this; new structures simply aren’t allowed in wilderness.”

By law, a designated wilderness is “an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man.” The National Park Service mistakenly contends that newly constructed shelters airlifted to subalpine sites are historic cultural features that will enhance wilderness character. ONP’s environmental assessment even stated that the wilderness would be adversely impacted if the former shelter sites were allowed to revert to a natural condition.

This kind of convoluted logic has permeated other planning efforts underway at ONP and threatens the integrity and effectiveness of the park’s upcoming General Management Plan. That plan will set direction for park management for the next fifteen to twenty years. In the meantime, park managers have once again pushed ONP’s long-overdue Wilderness Management Plan onto the back burner.

OPA, Wilderness Watch and PEER petitioned the Court to declare the National Park Service in violation of the Wilderness Act and NEPA, to block any action toward installing the shelters in the Olympic Wilderness, and to order the National Park Service to complete a Wilderness Management Plan and EIS for Olympic National Park.

With this suit we look forward to a legal resolution of this long-simmering issue at Olympic.

## Ed Bauch, Former OPA Trustee, Passes On

By Polly Dyer

Edgar Bauch served as an officer and on the Board of Trustees for Olympic Park Associates in the 1960s. On August 2, 2004, Ed succumbed to a rapidly developing illness. He turned 80 last April 27.

Ed and Ethel Bauch arrived in Seattle from Ohio in 1961, for engineer Ed’s position with Boeing. Ethel recalls the first group they joined was the Washington Alpine Club. Soon, Ed was designated WAC’s representative on Olympic Park Associates’ Board. For several years he served as OPA’s vice president. Both Ed and Ethel were active in behalf of OPA. Ethel helped with quite a bit of essential typing. Ed, handy with woodworking, built a wooden fold-out exhibit case for OPA. He designed it to fit into a small Volkswagen “bug”. It is still being used, although not as often as today’s lighter weight

exhibit stands. When it was opened recently, two early exhibits were found in it: one, in general, about Olympic National Park; the other advocating for Wilderness in Olympic National Forest.

When Ed’s term on the OPA Board was over, he didn’t remain idle. Ed went on to become Mayor of Tukwila (1976-1980) and a Member of its City Council (1982-1990). In the ‘70s Tukwila was still a “small town on the side of the road”. Ed was a dominant force in moving the Mayor’s office from a couple of trailers to a small building, and then overseeing the building of the efficient headquarters Tukwila now occupies across from Southcenter.

Edgar Bauch was a dedicated person, no matter what he set his mind and talents to. It was a great pleasure for all when Ed was a part of OPA and its Board.

## OPA Spring Field Trip: April 16-17, 2005

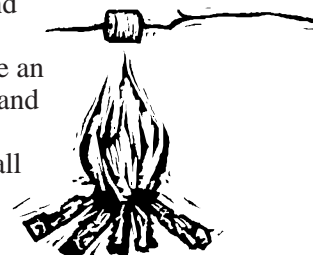
OPA is planning a field trip for the weekend of April 16-17, for folks to look at the Dosewallips road washout and nearby environmental points of interest.

Join members of the OPA Board to explore possible new Dose road alternative routes or solutions, the state of Buckhorn Campground, the road from there to the Park campground, and the park campground itself. AND maybe we will pull some

Herb Robert from the washout, AND tell ghost stor... uh ... environmental horror stories around the campfire Saturday night.

This will be a chance for people to examine an environmental package of problems up close, and for a variety of folks to talk.

For more information, closer to the date, call Donna Osseward, 206-362-3296.



# Washington Invasive Species Coalition Formed to Combat the Advance of Alien Species

By Donna Osseward



Sudden Oak Death. Photo by Joseph O'Brien, USDA Forest Service

“Invasive species represent the greatest threat to the native forests of the world. Period,” says Dr. Jerry Franklin, an internationally renowned forestry expert and professor at the University of Washington. “I don’t know why people don’t pay more attention to it. Maybe it’s not as sexy as protecting old growth.”

Changes caused by invasive species can affect whole ecosystems. Food sources for fish and mammals are altered, endangered species are wiped out, diversity is lost thus making the forest more susceptible to future invasive species, native species are out-competed, natural fire patterns are thrown out of whack, and the general balance of the ecosystem is damaged.

Invasive species are one of the top two threats to global biodiversity; fragmentation of habitat is the other. Since Washington is a port state, we deal with a high level of existing and new invasive species on a regular basis.

**One hundred billion dollars a year** are spent trying to remove or prevent invasives from coming into our country. Olympic National Park and the Olympic Peninsula are no exceptions to invasive species problems. With the ease of transportation and global trade, a wide variety of invasives are moving into the Pacific Northwest.

The easiest and cheapest way to deal with invasives is to prevent them from coming into the Northwest. However, some have already arrived. Here are some examples on the Olympic Peninsula.

The Dosewallips River valley has been invaded since the road washout. **Herb Robert** was noted three years ago in the State Park. Since then it has moved up the river and much of it is now found at the washout parking area. Other sightings of Herb Robert include: Beacon Rock State Park, Dosewallips State Park, and Duckabush Campground.

Some newer and potentially major threats, if not stopped, include the **Sudden Oak Death**, and the **Citrus Long Horned Beetle**, a few of which have been found in Washington State nurseries. Sudden Oak Death and the Citrus Long Horned Beetle are a threat to our forests and native plants.

Sudden oak death, caused by the pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*, can be carried by a range of plants and can kill or injure oak vari-

eties and other ornamental species such as rhododendrons and camellias.

When a **Citrus Long Horned Beetle** was found in a nursery in Tukwila in 2001, all the neighborhood’s vulnerable trees within 1/8 of a mile of the nursery were cut down and chipped to prevent its spread. It had arrived in an ornamental plant from Asia.

The **Green Crab** is a new aquatic threat that has been migrating up the coast from California. A Green Crab has been found in Grays Harbor. This very aggressive crab species reduces native crabs because it can out-compete them for food.

A **Washington Invasive Species Coalition** (WISC) has been formed to work on the problem in this state. It is comprised of The Mountaineers, The Nature Conservancy, Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, People for Puget Sound, Seattle Audubon, University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture, University of Washington Sea Grant, and the Washington Native Plant Society.

There are three top priority issues for WISC:

1. **Create a Washington State Invasive Species Council via the Governor’s office and legislation.** The coalition is actively working on this project, has garnered support from most of the environmentally related state agencies, and is working closely with the Governor’s office.
2. **Close down marine pathways of invasion: Curtail infested ballast water discharge.** WISC will advocate for enforcement of existing Washington ballast water law that regulates ballast discharge from large ships, and secure funding for enforcement and monitoring. Our long-term goal is to establish uniform protection from invasive species carried by ballast water along the entire West Coast from Mexico to Alaska.
3. **Close down terrestrial pathways of invasion: Implement nursery codes of conduct.** WISC is working with nurseries to phase out the sale of highly invasive plants and to offer alternatives.

The Board of Trustees of Olympic Park Associates passed a resolution at its September 2004 board meeting to support the work of WISC and to work with other conservation organizations to reduce invasive species.



Green Crab, *Carcinus maenus*. Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife.



Herb Robert, *Geranium robertianum*.

# Budget Crisis Cripples Olympic National Park

*Nature's Champion, Olympic National Park* was a feature story in the July issue of National Geographic. The stunning opening photograph was of Point of the Arches, an area OPA worked to include in the park in 1976.

But most of the national media attention that focused on the park this summer was less than flattering. Olympic became the poster child for budget cuts to our national parks.

In March, Olympic National Park announced it would close the Hurricane Ridge Road during the month of April and close its Forks visitor information center for the season. The reason for the cuts—or “service level adjustments,” as park officials were advised to call them—was a budget shortfall of crisis proportions.

A report released that month by the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA) identified a \$6 million budget shortfall for park operations at Olympic and a \$600 million National Park Service shortfall nationwide. Not only were Olympic’s visitor centers at risk, the park stood to lose most of its seasonal interpreters and rangers—the dedicated staff that help visitors appreciate this world-class park and provide for visitor safety.

With 3.2 million people coming to Olympic National Park last year, it is the fourth most-visited national park in the U.S. Its annual budget is \$10 million; it needs \$16 million.

OPA, NPCA and a broad coalition that included the cities of Port Angeles and Forks contacted Congressman Norm Dicks about the funding shortage. As ranking Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, Dicks secured some extra funds to forestall visitor center closings.

In May, Dicks visited Olympic to discover the extent of cuts. They were dire. Olympic was able to hire only 35 seasonal employees this year, compared with 130 hired in 2001. The park’s permanent employees had dropped from 140 to 120, including only one fisheries biologist to oversee more than 3,000 miles of river sand streams. The Seattle Times reported that Olympic’s 2004 workforce was as small as it’s been in a decade. Visitor center hours were reduced; restrooms were cleaned less often.

A survey conducted by NPCA this summer found visitors complaining about a lack of rangers, dirty campgrounds and long lines at visitor centers.

Dicks laid the blame for the funding crisis squarely on the Bush administration. “One of the things the Bush administration promised was to fund to fund the national parks,” Dicks said. “They haven’t kept that promise.”

Dicks was able to leverage an additional \$55 million for the National Park Service budget this fiscal year, but that’s still a long way from what is needed. Those funds will be directed toward visitor services.

Other members of Washington’s congressional delegation—and the administration—need to hear that Olympic’s budget needs to increase significantly. Olympic is too valuable to the world to run on a shoestring

## To do:

- ➔ Thank Congressman Dicks for securing additional funds this fiscal year for Olympic National Park.
- ➔ Urge WA congressional delegation and the administration to significantly increase Olympic’s budget.

# Olympic NF Restudying Dosewallips Road Reroute

As reported in the Spring 2004 *Voice*, OPA, Olympic Forest Coalition, Olympic Audubon, and two individuals appealed a Forest Service decision in March to re-route the Dosewallips road upslope of a massive washout. The proposed reroute would have sliced through at least four acres of centuries-old forest and critical habitat for threatened murrelet and spotted owl.

For the near-term at least, our appeal was successful, as Forest Supervisor Dale Hom on June 22 withdrew his decision to implement the reconstruction. Instead, further study on slope stability will be conducted, with a third environmental assessment expected later in autumn.

OPA has and will continue to argue that the Forest Service’s plans thus far for the Dosewallips

road amount to a major federal action, thereby requiring an Environmental Impact Statement. To date, the agency has resisted that assertion. We hope that additional study might include detailed analysis of the most appropriate means of relocating the Dosewallips trailhead and car-camping opportunities downstream of the washout site.

In the meantime, a recent decision by the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court on a separate matter casts serious doubt on the Forest Service’s latitude for destroying any amount of designated critical habitat (as would occur in reconstruction of the road). OPA and partners will continue to monitor this situation closely, provide comments for the record, and utilize the legal options available for the ecological benefit of the Dosewallips watershed.

# Comments by Olympic Forest Coalition on Board of Natural Resources' Sustainable Harvest Proposal

[Excerpted from testimony by Bonnie Phillips, Chair, Olympic Forest Coalition, at BNR hearing September 7, 2004.]

**Using sound science to increase forest health, community health, harvest levels and intergenerational equity.** Currently, DNR states that 63% of the state's forests are in poor health. By 2067 the projection is that 61% will still be in this condition. This latter figure is disturbing and indicates that sound forest management was not used in developing the preferred alternative. However, we believe that forest health will even be worse during this decade and the decades beyond. Climate change was not considered in developing timber harvest figures.... The scientific consensus for this region is that we will have a warmer climate, less snow pack, greater disease and insect infestations, and more erratic weather patterns. Those erratic patterns would include more frequent and serious storm events, bringing greater rainfall and higher winds. Examples of such events occurred in October and December of 2003 and created a great deal of damage to forest stands, roads and other infrastructure....

DNR intends to provide 80% of the timber harvest from clearcutting.... The increasing number of clearcuts that DNR plans is not only detrimental to fish and wildlife, but also to downstream neighbors.... Implementing the preferred alternative will only exacerbate these problems.

Forest Ecologist Dr. Jerry Franklin has stated that it will be the older forests that will survive best in a new climate. His concern lies with young stands. Therefore, it would be prudent for DNR to substantially increase the amount of upland thinning in dense, young, managed stands to increase both health and productivity for the future.... The amount of clearcutting recommended will simply leave our forests far more vulnerable, and far less healthy.

Unless our vision for our forests incorporates the best of what we know about our future based on sound science and sound economics, the promise of sustainable harvest will not be delivered.

The Board of Natural Resources has a legal and moral obligation to provide for intergenerational equity.... fairness of the distribution of the costs and benefits of a policy when the same are borne by different generations. In the case of a climate change policy, the impacts of inaction in the present will be

felt in future generations.

**Protecting Old Growth Forests.** DNR ... has a mandate to protect and restore habitat for ESA-listed terrestrial and aquatic species. [T]he preferred alternative, we believe, is one more "back to the past" action on the part of DNR.... [O]n our field trip we heard ideas such as selectively logging Old Forests, with the hope (we suppose) of not doing damage. There is a sound scientific saying when talking about restoration: "Save the best and restore the rest." OFCO believes all Old Forest should be protected.

**Not Protecting Northern Spotted Owls.** The evidence coming from the Scientific Panel on the Northern Spotted Owl ... shows that the Northern Spotted Owl is on the brink of extinction in Washington State.... Forest Ecologist Dr. Jerry Franklin has stated ... that saving all suitable owl habitat could make a real difference during these critical bottleneck years.... In contrast, DNR managers are calculating timber harvest in some of the "owl circles" that they plan on removing from protection.

**Streamside Harvests and Protection of Watershed and Salmon.** ...[R]iparian protection along rivers and streams is still an issue for discussion between DNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Without waiting for an agreement between agencies, DNR managers call for an increased level of logging in riparian areas, including small clearcuts....

**Forest Stewardship Council Certification.** It is our firm belief that the guidelines required for Forest Stewardship Council certification would increase the likelihood of healthier forests, a more sustainable flow of timber, and a greater opportunity for the future.... However, by acceptance of the preferred alternative, the Board will eliminate this opportunity. Again, the preferred alternative is not sound forest management.

**In conclusion,**... we can't help wondering about a state government that continues to leave essential community service funding at the mercies of harvest levels and market forces. ... Creating another boom and bust cycle for some communities and at the same time putting communities throughout Western Washington at risk of additional flooding and continued loss of salmon habitat is moving towards an economic and sociocultural catastrophe.

Approximately 60,000 acres of old growth are scattered about on DNR lands on the west end of the Olympic Peninsula. Significant portions of this original forest can be found in the Elk/Bear creeks (Quillayute watershed), Hoh River, Clearwater River, and Goodman Creek drainages.

Jim Scarborough,  
Olympic Forest  
Coalition

## 2004 Books of Note

by Polly Dyer

### The Enduring Wilderness: Protecting Our Natural Heritage Through the Wilderness Act

By Doug Scott. Campaign for America's Wilderness. A Speaker's Corner Book by Fulcrum Publishing, 2004. Published on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. The author has stipulated that royalties from sales of *The Enduring Wilderness* will be distributed to wilderness/environmental organizations. Doug will take none of the royalties.

*The Enduring Wilderness* is a *must* for every conservationist book shelf. Organizations may order in large quantities to sell to their supporters and the public and, of course, retain all proceeds over and above the publisher's wholesale price.

### Away Out Over Everything: The Olympic Peninsula and the Elwha River

Photographs by Mary Peck, essay by Charles Wilkinson, a few words from Tim McNulty. Stanford University Press, 2004.

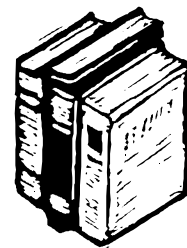
### Wild Seattle: A Celebration of the Natural Areas in and Around the City

Photographs by Terry Donnelly and Mary Liz Austin, text by Timothy Egan, Afterword by Doug Scott. Sierra Club Books, 2004. One of a series. An early one in the series was *Bay Area Wild – A Celebration of the Natural Heritage of the San Francisco Bay Area*, by Galen Rowell, with Michael Sewell. Sierra Club Books, 1997.

### Defending Wild Washington: A Citizen's Action Guide

Editor, Edward A Whitesell, with Students from Evergreen State College; Foreword by Dan Evans. 2004, The Mountaineers Books. (Whitesell is better known as "Ted").

*Defending Wild Washington* is the book for which Ted had his TESC students do research, carry out interviews, visit wilderness sites, and write, for one academic year. Included, of course, are the Olympics.



## Olympic National Park Announces 6<sup>th</sup> Annual *Perspectives* Series

This season's series of *Perspectives* programs will explore the diversity of Olympic National Park and surrounding areas.

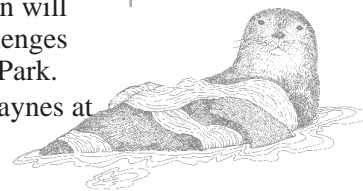
The series will begin on Tuesday, November 9 and will continue on the second Tuesday of each month from November through May. All programs will take place at the Olympic National Park Visitor Center at 3002 Mount Angeles Road in Port Angeles. All are offered free of charge and will begin at 7:00 p.m.

- **November 9: Tracking the Olympic Black Bear.** Carrie Donnellan, field technician with the U.S. Geological Survey's Olympic Field Station, will present an overview of the black bear research being conducted by the staff from the U.S.G.S. and Olympic National Park using global positioning technology.
- **December 14: Marine Mammals of the Olympic Coast,** with Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary staff. Twenty-nine species of marine mammals live within the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.
- **January 11: Pioneer Life on the Washington Coast.** Olympic National Park anthropologist Jacilee Wray will present diaries and photographs of Fannie Taylor, postmistress at Mora

beginning in 1909. Her family preserved her diaries, written between 1914 and 1922, and donated them to Olympic National Park.

- **February 8: National Parks of East Africa,** with Greg McCormack, a local naturalist and former park ranger. Greg will illustrate his adventures as an ecotourist with photographs from a recent trip to east Africa.
- **March 8: What's New with Spotted Owls?** Olympic National Park wildlife biologist Scott Gremel will give an update on the spotted owl population in the park
- **April 12: When the Tide Is Out,** with Olympic National Park coastal ecologist Steve Fradkin. This program, to be presented just before the sixth annual Olympic Coast Clean-up on April 23, 2005, will focus on what visitors might observe along the coast, and how we can continue to care for this fascinating world.
- **May 10: Fire in the Wilderness.** Olympic National Park Fuels Specialist Todd Rankin will discuss special considerations and challenges for managing fire in Olympic National Park.

**For further information,** contact Barb Maynes at Olympic National Park, 360-565-3005.



# How Logjams Invigorate Our Rivers

Josh Latterell, Graduate Student, Riparian Ecology

Photographs by Josh Latterell.

The primal charm and grandeur of Olympic National Park is deeply rooted in the wild rivers that adorn its flanks. As a graduate student of riparian ecology, I have spent the last three years studying the Queets River, which runs west from Mount Olympus to the Pacific, through some of the most magnificent floodplain forests on the planet. I weathered its moods and was humbled by its strength. I saw riverbanks and gravel bars sculpted by watery hands. I have come to know and value the wildness of an untamed river. As we nurse large rivers in our communities back to health, we can look to rivers like the Queets to inform our decisions and inspire us to action.



Logjams and old growth along the Queets.

Stream flows pulse with subtle variation in timing and intensity, causing the river to twitch and flex and dance across the valley. Always on the move, the river may sweep gracefully outward at meander bends, skip back and forth among old channels, or unravel new ones through streamside forests. The legacy of these channel movements may be reflected in the architecture of the floodplain forest and valley floor for hundreds of years. As the channel undercuts old stands of Sitka spruce and hemlock, they topple over and stick in the channel or float downstream until they lodge in the shallows or against a logjam.

Pioneer Island.



Wild coastal rivers tend to be restless.

In death, these forest giants add variety to the landscape and help maintain the vitality of the floodplain communities. Large logs with their roots attached are able to resist muscular winter floods and form logjams by trapping wood carried by the current. In a river like the Queets, there may be dozens of

logjams in a single river mile. Some logjams weather the battering of floods and may redirect the river, reinforce stream banks, create pools, sandbars, and side channels. Many jams will break up within a few years and reform downstream. Since wild rivers are constantly undercutting floodplain forests, lost jams are quickly replaced with wood from upstream. This ongoing process of organization and disorganization helps to invigorate and refresh habitats for plants and wildlife.

The fates of the floodplain forest and river are closely interwoven. Sandy soils collect in the wake of logjams and in abandoned channels. Thickets of red alder and willow take root in these soils and symbiotic bacteria in the roots of the alder fertilize the soil, allowing other plants to flourish. When flow conditions are right, black cottonwood seedlings will sprout either from seed or from the tips of branches shed from larger trees. Young forests grow feverishly and swallow the logjams. Fierce competition ensues as individuals battle for resources, causing dense thickets to become more sparse and park-like, especially where gardens of annual vegetation are tended by Roosevelt elk. Many patches of young forest are reclaimed by the river within years to decades after they form. This process provides thousands of small trees that fuel the growth of logjams throughout the river. In young forests that persist, remnant logs are softened by microbial decay and the activities of termites and carpenter ants. Sitka spruce seedlings sprout in and around the weakening shoulders of their dead ancestors, starting the process of renewal. Red alder rapidly mature then succumb to old age as they are overtopped by spruce trees growing quickly in the brightening shade. Over the next few centuries, spruce-dominated floodplain forests become complex in three dimensions as western hemlock, bigleaf maple, and vine maple establish a solid presence.

A wild river is a stage for a vast ecological play with many important characters. Coho salmon fry swarm in the web of springs and side-channels that traverse the valley. Adult chinook salmon churn the riffles to froth as they power upstream to their spawning grounds. Wild steelhead and charr spurn the most handsome offerings of hopeful fishermen. Hardy and adventuresome coastal cut-





throat trout thrive in the harsh upper reaches of the tributary streams. Ornamented sculpin patrol the streambed in fits and starts. Garter snakes thread themselves through river cobbles. Remnant pools teem with wriggling tadpoles and ornately-decorated leaf-munching caddisfly larvae. Roving bands of river otters play in pools and romp in riffles, and lounge under logjams. Herds of elk bask on sand bars and wade in the river during hot summer days, nibbling most every shrub in the valley. Cougar and black bear leave fresh footfalls in muddy trails. Grouse explode with a clatter from their hiding places in alder thickets. Kingfishers chatter and swoop while flotillas of adolescent mergansers drift by, and osprey and eagles keep watch from above.

Now rare, rivers like the Queets were once commonplace. Wild rivers flowing through valleys carved by glaciers had room to breathe. Their relationship with the floodplain and the forest was intimate and complex. Boundaries between land and water were blurry and fleeting. These interactions kept much of the landscape fresh and new. Variety was manifested in every detail. Wild rivers contained a quiet, pervasive energy and were vivid and bold in color and form. Floods were almost serene, as the water was free to roam about the valley — a quiet, yet unstoppable force that chewed at riverbanks until forests young and old acquiesced and toppled into the current. Floods brought life and renewal in the midst of death and destruction.

We are deadly efficient in engineering the wildness out of rivers. Wild rivers were messy and confusing to the human eye. While we found subtlety and complexity to be valuable in art and literature, it was frustrating, threatening, or wasteful in the natural world. Rivers that once had the ability to inspire and sustain us in their own ways have been bent to our

will. The burden of providing electricity, transportation, and predictability has broken the backs of the mighty rivers that once provided many other goods and services. By amputating the floodplain from the river with levees we constrained their ability to build and refresh habitats. Through the operation of our dams, we have replaced seasonal pulses and rhythms in flow with either mechanical regularity or bewildering unpredictability.

Many communities are working to nurse their large rivers back to health. These efforts often focus on minimums, averages, and the inevitable question: “How much is enough?” For answers, we can look to wild rivers like the Queets. Increasingly, we recognize that the health and productivity of wild rivers is rooted in their variety, manifested in constant change, in ranges and distributions. This is a hard concept for us to grasp. Many of our restoration efforts are engineered for stability; change is viewed as failure rather than success. If we want to ensure sustained vitality of a large floodplain river, it must be allowed to change. It must be reconnected to its floodplain, given variable flows, and allowed sufficient room to move so that some of the landscape will grow to be old. The hardest question to answer is, “How much are we willing to share?”

Our relationship with rivers has been dysfunctional for centuries, but has the potential to be a positive one. Go visit the Sol Duc; the Bogachiel; the Hoh; the Queets; the Quinault; the Hamma Hamma; the Duckabush; the Dosewallups; the Gray Wolf; the upper Elwha. Start by getting your feet wet. Explore the riparian forest. Push your way through alder thickets. Stand with your back against a massive spruce. Pick up rocks and handfuls of sand.

Climb atop logjams and have a look around. Look beyond the obvious. Search for the hidden and unseen.

There is no summit here — no scenic climax. Your reward lies in the ornate detail and richness of life that surrounds you. Learn to see the rivers of your youth, your backyard, and your watershed in a new light. See them for what they once were and again could be.

“The health and productivity of wild rivers is rooted in their variety, manifested in constant change, in ranges and distributions.”



*The author having a look around.*



# Reintroduction of Fishers In the Olympics Proposed



Fisher.

A new feasibility study on reintroducing fishers in Washington State concludes that the Olympics have the largest amount of suitable fisher habitat, and recommends reintroduction of fishers into Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest. The study, *Feasibility Assessment for Reintroducing Fishers to Washington*, by Jeffrey C. Lewis and Gerald E. Hayes, was done as a partnership between the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife and Northwest Ecosystem Alliance. It was published in September, 2004.

## The Fisher

The fisher (*Martes pennanti*) is a carnivorous mammal in the family Mustelidae (weasels, etc.). It is built like a large, bulky weasel. Males measure about 100 cm (40 in) in total length and weigh 3 to 3.5 kg; females weigh half that. The fishers' habitat is low- to mid-elevation mature conifer forest. They require large blocks of continuous canopy cover, large live trees, large snags, large downed logs for denning and resting, and a complex physical understory that supports a diversity of prey species. Their opportunistic diet includes snowshoe hares, mice, voles, squirrels, porcupines, birds, insects, fruits, and ungulate carrion.

Two subspecies once existed in Washington: *pacifica*, from the coast to the eastern foothills of the Cascades; and *columbiana*, from northeastern Washington to the Blue Mountains.

## Population Status

The fisher was listed as an Endangered Species by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission in 1998. (It is not federally listed.) Systematic surveys between 1990 and 1997 had failed to locate any fishers in Washington State, despite their being relatively easy to trap. The decline in fisher populations resulted from overtrapping by commercial trappers, followed by loss, degradation, and fragmentation of habitat. In Washington there has not been a fisher trapping season since 1934, but the failure of populations to recover suggests that by that date unregulated trapping had already taken its toll. Predator control measures such as strychnine and trapping to eliminate wolves, cougars, and coyotes probably also diminished fisher because all of those predators' historic ranges overlapped significantly.

## Fisher Reintroduction

The fisher is one of the most likely among the carnivores to be successfully reintroduced. At least 31 fisher reintroductions have occurred in 18

states and provinces (not including Washington) in the US and Canada between 1947 and 2003. Of those, 21 reintroductions (68%) have been considered successful (fishers persisting for more than 10 years). The number of individuals released in successful reintroductions has ranged from 12 (Nova Scotia, 1947-48) to 190 (Pennsylvania, 1994-98).

The current feasibility study assessed the amount and condition of likely fisher habitat in the Cascades and Olympic Peninsula based on the historical range of the fisher and the existence of late-successional forest. Also considered were the presence of a diverse prey base and the availability of suitable sources of fishers.

The analysis identified three potential reintroduction regions: the Olympic Peninsula, the Northwestern Cascades, and the Southwestern Cascades. Of those three areas, the Olympic Peninsula has the largest amount of suitable fisher habitat in general, the largest amount on public land and on federal land, and the highest predicted carrying capacity for fishers.

The success of reintroduction can be enhanced by using stock that is genetically suitable and from nearby populations that have similar predator/prey complexes. Genetic analysis determined that fishers from British Columbia would be the first choice, followed by California and Alberta. However, fishers are protected in California and unavailable for use.

The potential effect of reintroduction upon existing species is always a concern. Marten populations on the Olympic Peninsula are low; however, fisher and marten typically coexist in other parts of their range, so the effect of fisher reintroduction is not expected to be significant.

## Legal Issues

As a state endangered species, fisher cannot legally be trapped. Total furbearer trapping and the number of trappers have both declined as a result of recent restrictions. However, if those restrictions are overturned and commercial trapping increases, reintroduced fisher can be expected to be incidental take in traps for other furbearers.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest lands on the west side of the Olympic Peninsula are the most suitable sites in Washington State for reintroduction of fisher, and recommends the initiation of NEPA analysis.

For a copy of

*Feasibility Assessment for Reintroducing Fishers to Washington:*

<[http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/research/papers/fisher/fisher\\_reintroduction\\_assessment.htm](http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/research/papers/fisher/fisher_reintroduction_assessment.htm)>

## Marmot Declines Spur Research In Olympics

[Reprinted from *The Mountaineer*, August 2004.]

Hints of trouble for marmots indigenous to the Olympic Range have spurred a University of Montana researcher to recruit the help of Mountaineers and other alpine travelers.

Sue Griffin, who holds a BA in biology and is currently working toward her doctoral degree in wildlife biology, has been studying historic and current populations of marmots for the past three years. She maintains that marmots have been disappearing or declining in several areas where they flourished in the past. Meanwhile, they are still abundant in other areas.

For example, she explains, populations of the Vancouver Island marmot have declined to near extinction in the last 20 years. The decline is apparently due to the combined effects of habitat alteration and increased predation, she says, and their recovery will depend on the success of reintroductions of captive-bred animals.

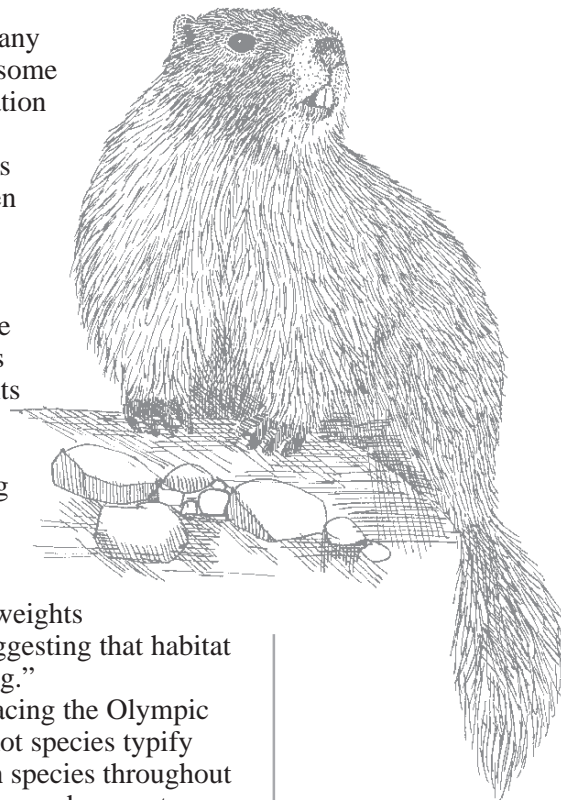
Griffin said she needs to document past populations more completely, thus the call to Mountaineers and others for help. "I am looking for records from people who may have encountered Olympic marmots over the last 50 years," she noted.

She and her field assistants are tagging

marmots for radio transmissions that may help to determine their births, deaths, and movement.

"Coyotes have killed many of the marked marmots in some areas, indicating that predation may be responsible for the declines," she said. Coyotes are not thought to have been present in the Olympic Mountains historically, so marmots evolved in the absence of this effective predator. Griffin said she is also conducting experiments to determine if human presence causes marmots to spend less time watching for predators, or reduces foraging time. "However, we have also recorded low reproduction and reduced weights compared to the 1960s, suggesting that habitat quality may be deteriorating."

She thinks the threats facing the Olympic and other Northwest marmot species typify those facing high-elevation species throughout the world as climate changes and ecosystems are disrupted.



## Olympic National Forest & Arts Olympia Celebrate the Forest

Olympic National Forest and Arts Olympia, a local arts organization, are inviting Northwest artists to use their talents to explore and express the beauty of the natural world of the Olympic National Forest: its snowcapped peaks, towering conifers, lush rainforests, cascading waterfalls, clear lakes and saltwater beaches.

"Artists have become a lost partner with natural resource stewardship. This special way of celebrating the Olympic National Forest invites artists to return to the great outdoors and communicate its natural beauty to all people through their artistic talents," said Dale Hom, Forest Supervisor.

Artists are invited to visit and explore the forest directly, and to celebrate a forest experience of their choice through their artistic work. The invitation is open to all media.

Following a selection process, the artwork will be displayed at a public art show. In conjunction with the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the National Forest System, an art exhibit is planned for April 2005 at the Olympic National Forest headquarters in Olympia, Washington.

"The spirit and intention of the project is to promote the enjoyment and beauty of the Olympic National Forest and to advocate for its protection," said Hom.

Find out how to participate by visiting the Forest's website at <[www.fs.fed.us/r6/olympic](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/olympic)>. Click on "Forest Art Celebration" in the top right corner of the page.



# VOICE of the WILD OLYMPICS

Sally W. Soest, Editor

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reverence.*

William O. Douglas  
As quoted in **Pursuing Wild Trout: A Journey  
In Wilderness Values**

