

VOICE of the WILD OLYMPICS

Olympic Park Associates

Founded in 1948



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Winter 2019



Photo by Russel Dalton

Fast-track Elwha Road Project Shortcuts Public Participation and Environmental Review

by Tim McNulty

As the Elwha River reclaims its historic floodplain, winter floods continue to cut through the Elwha Road at multiple locations. Temporary bridges over the washouts were removed this fall, and access to the upper valley, including Elwha Ranger Station, maintenance area, historic CCC Camp, mule corral, trailheads, and interpretive exhibits at the Glines Canyon Dam spillway, is now limited to foot or bike.

To restore motorized access to the valley, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

conducted geotechnical drilling along a proposed reroute last fall. The new one-mile road would be located along the forested toe-slope east of the floodplain and the existing road. Data will be gathered for a year to assess the feasibility of locating a road there. The National Park Service (NPS) environmental assessment (EA) for test drilling called for construction of a 6- to 10-foot wide "path" for drill rigs that

would minimize ground disturbance. Compressed or crushed vegetation would be left in place where practicable, and few trees would be removed.

Apparently, the Federal Highway

Continued on P. 3, Elwha Road

The National Park Service called for a "path" that would minimize ground disturbance.

Apparently, the Federal Highway Administration didn't get the memo.

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OPA Meeting

Next: Sunday, March 24, 2-4pm, The Dungeness River Audubon Center, 2151 West Hendrickson Road, Sequim, WA 98382

Regular Meetings Schedule: 4th Tuesday of odd-numbered months, except (usually) the 3rd Tuesday in November, and no meeting in July.

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

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WA State: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder>

US Congress: 202-224-3121 to reach any member of Congress

Senate: www.senate.gov

US House of Representatives: www.house.gov

US Senate, Washington DC 20510

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www.kilmer.house.gov

2 Rick Larsen (D)

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Elwha Road

Continued from P. 1

Administration didn't get the memo.

OPA members reported a 10 to 15-foot wide bulldozed road for the drill rigs and wide landings for the test bores, with little concern given to vegetation or other resources.

Then, just weeks into data collection and well before the effects of winter rains and fluctuating groundwater levels could be assessed, FHWA judged the bypass route "feasible" and commenced engineering for the project.

Fast-track Planning

For its part, the National Park Service has leaped into the next phase of the project and released preliminary alternatives for rehabilitating the Elwha (Olympic Hot Springs) Road. In December, NPS asked the public to comment on three preliminary alternatives (no action, elevating and bridging the existing road 10 feet, and building a one-mile bypass road). There is little doubt the preferred alternative will be to construct the bypass. Although the alternatives were offered without analysis or review of even preliminary test results, the park required public comments to be filed by January 6, 2019. Of course, the partial government shutdown made that impossible.

OPA has expressed support for restoring vehicle access to the Elwha Valley. We also expressed trepidation over Federal Highway's unrestricted approach to road construction in a national park (see *Voice*, Spring 2018). FHWA's heavy-handed treatment of the test drilling "path" has done nothing to ease our concerns.

Olympic National Park managers have yielded to local pressure to build a replacement road with minimum environmental review and are moving ahead with a fast-track environmental



Near the south end of Pioneer Road

About one-third in from south end of Pioneer Road. Photo by Russel Dalton

assessment (EA). According to a FHWA spokesman, the reroute option proposes an 80 to 130-foot wide clearing cut through mature and old-growth forest with fills up to 30 feet in height. The projected cost for the reroute is \$5 to \$7 million. Rehabilitating the rest of the Olympic Hot Springs Road is expected to run to \$13.5 million. This is a large and complex project. It should have full environmental review and public participation in an **environmental impact statement** (EIS). An expedited EA is utterly inadequate.

The Elwha dam removal was the largest salmon restoration in the United States. Restoring access to the Elwha Valley deserves thoughtful planning and comprehensive review. OPA has requested that the park service withdraw its preliminary alternatives for an expedited EA and begin a public scoping process for a comprehensive environmental impact statement. Everyone

who has an interest in the future of the Elwha River should have an opportunity to consider a range of options and share their vision for the future of the Elwha Valley. A full consideration and thoughtful analysis of alternatives and environmental impacts is essential.

What You Can Do to Help

Write Acting Superintendent Lee Taylor at Olympic National Park, 600 East Park Ave., Port Angeles, WA 98362.

Check the project planning website at: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/OHSREA>.

For updates or more information, go to olympicparkassociates.org.

OPA Writes to Strengthen State Marbled Murrelet

In December the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) released its Revised Draft EIS and Habitat Conservation Plan Amendment for the Marbled Murrelet Long Term Conservation Strategy (LTCS). The population of Marbled Murrelets in Washington has declined 44% between 2001 and 2016. But as it is written, the DNR draft strategy does not bode well for the continued survival of this threatened seabird here.



OPA responded to the strategy. We pointed out that a meaningful conservation plan and HCP amendment should help meet the recognized biological goals for this species: to stabilize and increase its population, to expand its geographic range, and to increase resilience of the marbled murrelet to natural and human-caused disturbance. The preferred alternative (Alternative H) doesn't do enough to support murrelet recovery primarily because it permits the harvest of too much of our mature and old forests over the next 50 years and does not conserve enough habitat as mitigation. Specifically, what is needed is:

- A conservation strategy that will stabilize and increase the murrelet population on state-managed lands, broaden its geographic distribution, and increase its resilience to natural disturbances and climate change.
- Protection of vital habitat on state-managed lands in key geographic areas, including where extensive murrelet habitat has been lost to private timber harvests.
- Protection of all murrelet nest sites, quality murrelet habitat, and forests that will become quality habitat in the near future, as recommended by scientists.
- Substantial buffers around nest sites to prevent nest predation, physical damage, and other detrimental impacts of habitat fragmentation.



Photo credits: Alaska Department of Fish and Game; NPS

Restoration forestry practices to improve degraded habitat, especially to support development of large blocks of contiguous high-quality habitat.

Importantly, a meaningful Long-Term Conservation Strategy must set aside enough current and future old forest to not only offset the habitat the DNR plans to log but also to improve forest habitat conditions for the murrelet, without putting the existing population at further risk. The Long-Term Conservation Strategy must truly support real conservation for the murrelets for the long term.

OPA will work with our partner organization, Olympic Forest Coalition, and support the Marbled Murrelet Coalition's proposal to strengthen the state strategy for murrelet conservation to insure the survival of this remarkable forest-nesting seabird.

For more information, go to wecprotects.org/marbled-murrelet/

First Year of Mountain Goat Removal a Success

Following completion of Olympic National Park's *Mountain Goat Management Plan* in May of last year, the first period of mountain goat capture and translocation took place in September. It was a remarkable success.

During a two-week period, 115 goats were captured by helicopter and crew and removed from the Olympic population. Of these, 98 were medically examined, inoculated and translocated to the northern Cascade Mountains, where goats are native but surviving in low numbers. They included eleven kids, which were released with their nannies. Six other kids, which could not be paired with their mothers, were transferred to Northwest Trek Wildlife Park in Eatonville, Washington. There were six fatalities that were related to capture and two that occurred during transport. Three animals were euthanized due to illness. Two more two-week capture periods are planned for 2019. Capture and translocation may continue into 2020, depending on the results of the 2019 efforts. The agencies hope to capture from 325 to 375 goats or about half of the estimated population. Remaining goats will be lethally removed over the following years.

"The success of this year's translocation effort is thanks to the cooperation and expertise of more than 175 people, including 77 volunteers from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife," said Olympic National Park Wildlife Branch Chief Dr. Patti Happe. "The collaboration with our partner agencies and the support from everyone involved was phenomenal."

Aerial capture operations were conducted by Leading Edge aviation of Lewiston, Idaho, which specializes in the capture of wild animals. The helicopter crew used tranquilizer darts and net guns to capture goats and transported them in slings to the staging area. The animals were examined by veterinarians before Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) wildlife managers



A chartered helicopter carried mountain goats captured the day before in Olympic National Park to their new home on the slopes of Stillaguamish Peak. Photo by Tom Banse – NW News Network, reported on KNKX

transported them overnight to staging areas in the north Cascades for release the following day.

WDFW released mountain goats at five selected sites in the Cascades with the help of tribal and University biologists, and Hi-Line Aviation of Darrington.

This was a significant start on removal of an estimated population of 725 goats on the Olympic Peninsula. It is also a remarkable multi-agency ecosystem restoration effort involving state and federal agencies, tribes, and volunteers. OPA has advocated for non-native goat removal since the mid-1970s. We're gratified to see it finally under way and send congratulations to everyone involved.



U. S. Navy's Growler Training Plans: Update

By Donna Osseward, President, OPA

Olympic Park Associates is working with residents living on and off the Olympic Peninsula to monitor and challenge the jet noise over Olympic National Park and Olympic Peninsula. OPA has joined, as an associate member, the Sound Defense Alliance, a collection of Washington State residents and organizations that oppose the Navy's plans for escalating jet noise in Puget Sound and Olympic Peninsula. OPA is not part of the governing council of this alliance, but is cooperating in their efforts to control the noise and disruption to life in Northwest Washington. OPA also joins National Parks & Conservation Association in this alliance.

In July, a group that included OPA brought to the Washington Attorney General's office our case for challenging the Navy's plans for Growler Jet training over the Olympic Peninsula. We brought documents on the Navy's and Forest Service's EIS and EAs which OPA believes are flawed. We brought documents reporting health effects resulting from and exacerbated by noise, as well as a letter from the Washington State Health Department asking for more research on the possible health effects from the Whidbey Navy Airbase operations. We brought a letter from a Canadian Parliament member protesting Navy jet noise in the Canadian Gulf Islands. We have documents on the popularity of Olympic National Park and the likely economic effects of the increasing jet noise. We are waiting to hear whether the Attorney General can become involved in this issue, and continue to update their office with new information.

EIS: 36 More Growlers, 18,000 More Flights

The Department of Defense released their Final EIS on Sept. 28, proposing huge increases in



Whidbey Naval Air Station operations. They will be adding 36 more jets, increasing operations on Whidbey at Ault Field, and planning four times more flights at Outlying field in Coupeville (from 6,100 to 24,000). The ROD (Record of Decision) is expected soon.

Coupeville area housing values have gone down because of the noise.

The training the Navy is bringing to this area has been practiced for decades in Idaho and Nevada. The Idaho training takes place over a federal government land designated for military training. The Mountain Home base has operated under the Air Force since its establishment during World War II.

The Navy recently broke off talks with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation over the effects of noise on historical sites in the Whidbey area.

260 Days a Year, 12-16 Hours a Day

When the training has completed its move to Washington State, this is what will happen here:

1. Growler jets (1-4 at a time) take off from Whidbey Island Naval Air Station,
2. fly to the west side of the Olympic Peninsula,
3. fly a search pattern over the west side of the peninsula looking for electronic emissions from trucks sitting at various places in the Olympic National Forest.
4. After an hour or so, they will return to Whidbey.
5. Another set of jets will take off and repeat the pattern of flight.

This will go on for 12 to 16 hours a day for up to 260 days a year.

Beneath this search pattern lie:

- Olympic National Park, 8th most visited national park, an International Biosphere Reserve, World Heritage Site

What You Can Do to Help

Write or email:

- Your state representatives. For Washington s
- Both of your U.S. Senators and your U.S. Re
- Gov. Jay Inslee at: <https://www.governor.wa.g>
- Attorney General Bob Ferguson: <https://www>
- National Parks and Conservation Association

When you are in northwest Washington and you map. The map will be visual proof of the Growler

e and How You Can Help

- Olympic National Forest Wilderness
- Ocean strip
- Bogachiel
- Queets
- Quinault
- Washington Islands Wilderness;
- Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary
- Washington Islands National Wildlife Refuges
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources land
- Quinault, Quileute, and Hoh Reservations
- Thousands of acres of private land, including the towns of Forks and Amada Park
- The Pacific Flyway
- Whidbey Island & San Juan Islands
- Historic sites
 - Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve
 - San Juan Island National Historic Park



Health Effects of Aircraft Noise

Noise from aircraft is increasingly being understood as a health issue to people. Noise causes and aggravates health problems:

- Increase in blood pressure (hypertension), heart disease (ischemic heart disease), hearing impairment;
 - Increase or worsening of mental health problems
 - Changes to the immune system and birth defects
 - Increased incidence of accidents (stress, startle & inability to hear danger)

Furthermore, the sound profile of the Growler is very different than that of other jets. It is not only loud but includes a low frequency vibration that travels further and vibrates objects in its path. This aspect of the Growler's complex noise profile creates a deadly combination beyond annoyance that impacts human health.

The Navy claims this is the "Sound of Freedom."

OPA maintains that our military should be preserving our way of life, not damaging our physical and mental health, natural treasures, and economy.

OPA is not against the U. S. Navy. We object to their use of Northwest Washington to the detriment of its people and wildlife. OPA maintains that these newly imported Naval operations will hurt the health and economy of Northwest Washington. The Navy can keep its operations in Idaho without detriment to our national defense. We cannot move Olympic National Park, the people who live on the peninsula, or its wildlife. The Navy needs to learn how to work with the U.S. Air Force and respect the citizens of Washington.

The emitter training part of the program has not yet started in earnest. Rumors are that it will begin this year. Already the current jet flight patterns have rattled houses from Coupeville, Port Townsend, Port Angeles, Forks, to Amada Park. People in Forks have recorded 74 decibel flights that literally cause houses' decking boards to rattle. The Navy claims this is the "Sound of Freedom."

state, use this link: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder/>

representatives (see P. 2 of this newsletter).

gov/contact/contact/contact-gov-inslee

atg.wa.gov/contact-us

has a Growler Tracker at: <https://arcg.is/0b8zuX>

hear jet noise, use this link to put it on the NPCA's presence and range.

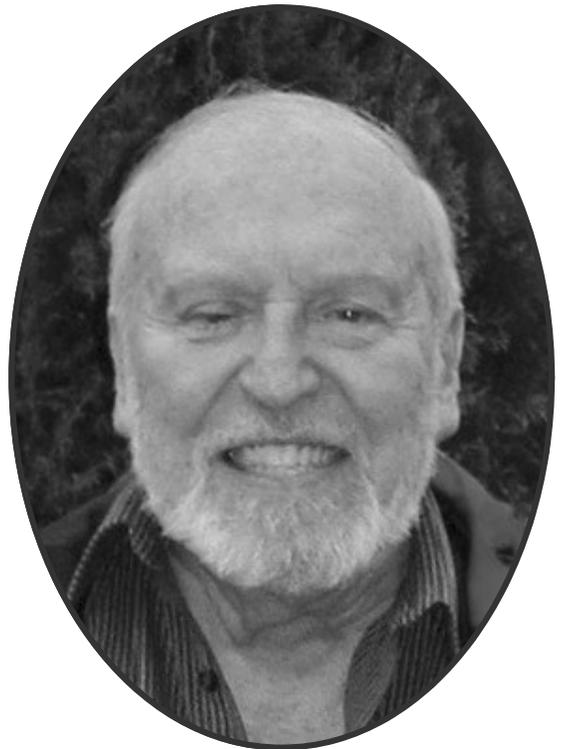
OPA Recognizes Norm Winn

by Donna Osseward, OPA President

The Board of OPA expresses its appreciation to Norman (Norm) Winn for his very generous memorial contribution in memory of Polly Dyer. With this action Norm showed his appreciation of the ongoing conservation efforts of OPA, and also expressed his sincere respect for Polly's decades of dedicated efforts on behalf of both local and national conservation causes.

Norm has played a direct role in the conservation efforts of OPA for a number of years both as a Board Trustee and also as an OPA member. OPA has been extremely fortunate to be a recipient of Norm's legal talents. Examples are:

1. Norm worked on getting Federal government approval for the addition of the northern portion of the Ocean Strip to the Olympic National Park. Part of these efforts involved his working with a private property owner who wanted excessive compensation for abandoning a potential oil drilling claim.
3. Norm came to the rescue when the Federal Highway Administration wanted to widen the access road to the Sol Duc Hot Springs which would have required the removal of hundreds of old-growth trees. Norm's legal research provided the basis for putting enough political



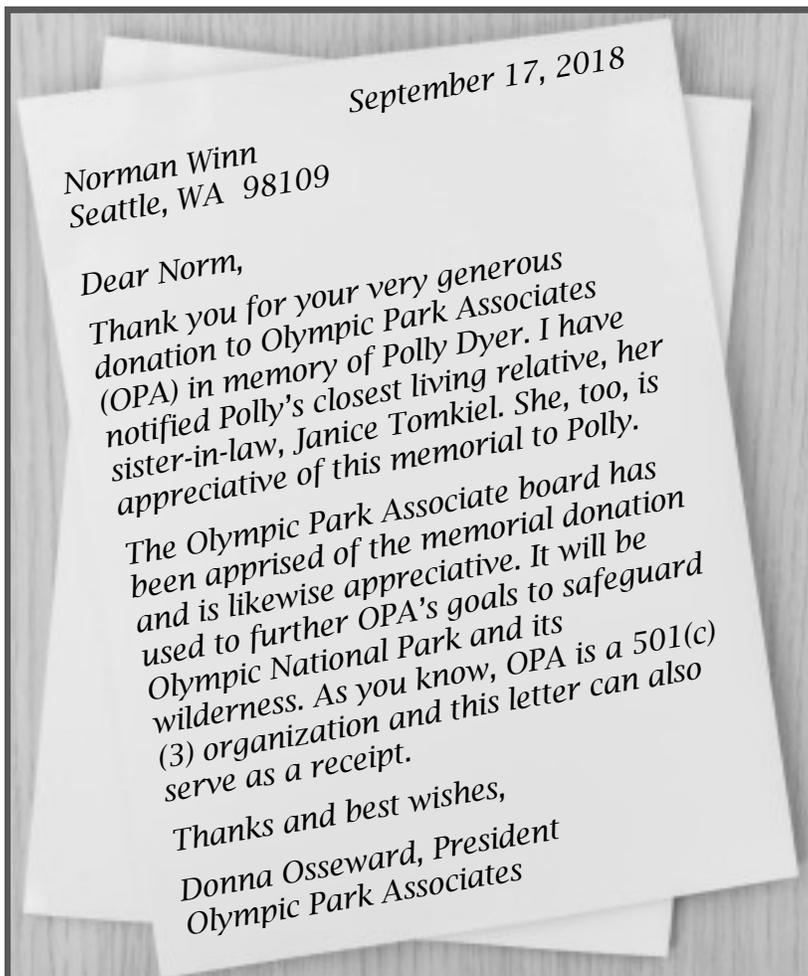
pressure on the National Park Service to adhere to the required environmental standards. As a result, the access road remained narrow with a reduced speed limit, thereby preserving the roadside ancient forest.

4. Norm provided his important legal expertise in the development of the 2008 General Management Plan for the Olympic National Park. In addition, Norm has played a significant role in a 30-year effort encouraging the ONP to prepare a Wilderness Management Plan which, as of 2018, has not yet been completed.

5. Norm extensively worked to advance the 1984 Wilderness Act which added several wilderness areas to the Olympic National Park.

In recent years Norm provided legal input to the lengthy process involved with the removal of the two hydroelectric dams on the Elwha River which has resulted in the restoration of the historic salmon runs.

The OPA Board truly appreciates Norm's valuable contributions toward the success of the above endeavors and for his very generous donation in memory of Polly Dyer, who among many other things was a past President of OPA.



Polly Dyer, OPA Longtime Leader, Featured in Olympia Exhibit 1968: *The Year That Rocked Washington*

by Llyn De Danaan, Author and OPA Board.

The late Polly Dyer, president of the Olympic Park Associates from 1989 to 1994 and member of the Board of Trustees until her death, is featured in the Washington Secretary of State's current exhibit called *1968: The Year That Rocked Washington*. The exhibit opened in the Washington State Capitol in fall of 2018 and is accompanied by a selection of online stories that document the work of all those individuals featured in the exhibit.

Dyer, who worked ceaselessly for the preservation of wilderness in our region, is described in the exhibit's press release as, "a cheerfully tenacious activist" who was at "the vanguard of the modern environmental movement."

The exhibit will remain at the Capitol for one year and then travel to museums and schools around the state. Among others profiled in the exhibit are Ralph Munro, Larry Gossett, and Art Fletcher. For more about Legacy Washington, including lesson plans for classroom use, see <https://www.sos.wa.gov/legacy/>



Former OPA Trustee Honored by North Olympic Land Trust

Longtime OPA trustee and former Clallam County commissioner, Dr. Harry Lydiard, was honored posthumously in November by the North Olympic Land Trust for his outstanding contribution to conservation on the peninsula.

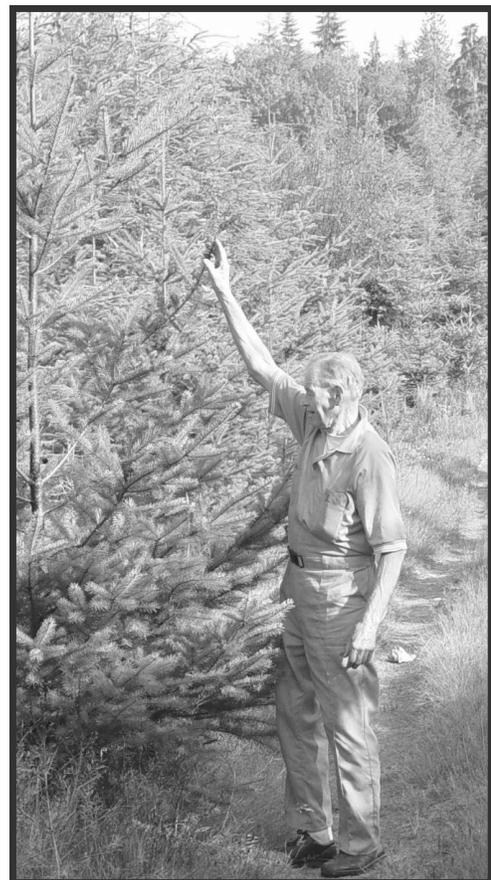
Harry frequently reminded his colleagues at OPA that continued preservation of Olympic National Park and surrounding wilderness areas depended on sound, sustainable management of the peninsula's commercial forest lands. Moreover, he acted on his convictions. Harry purchased cut-over forest lands and brought them back into production by hand-planting seedlings. He also purchased Dungeness Valley farmland threatened with residential development, to keep it in agricultural production.

Harry established conservation partnerships with the land trust to ensure that these lands, more than 300 acres in all, are protected from other uses through conservation easements.

"Harry's dedication to maintain our region's natural resources and his efforts to keep them available for future generations has helped shape the land trust's appreciation for both working and wild lands," said Tom Sanford, the land trust's director. Harry's children continue to partner with the land trust to steward the lands their father conserved, including a section of the Olympic Discovery Trail on the Elwha River.

OPA extends its continued appreciation to Harry's family.

For more information on the North Olympic Land Trust, go to northolympiclandtrust.org



Credit: North Olympic Land Trust

Book Review

Leopold's Legacy is Alive and Well on Tarboo Creek

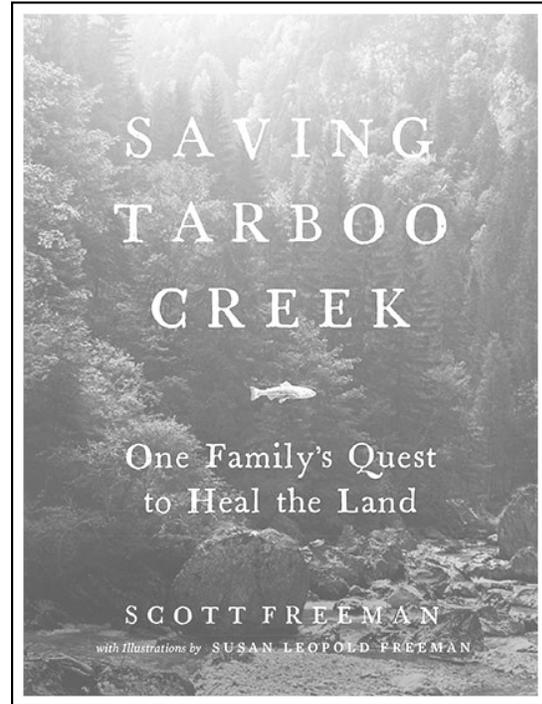
by Shelley Spalding, OPA Board.

*On the last day of the world
I would want to plant a tree*
—W.S. Merwin

Following his discovery, and subsequent lease in 1935, of a derelict farm in Wisconsin, Aldo Leopold and family planted thousands of pines, oaks, cedars, and other native trees and shrubs. In so doing, Leopold developed and later proposed a land ethic that has been an inspiration and guiding principle for conservationists globally: Treat the land we all live on with the same respect shown to other people. Kind of a corollary to the golden rule of always treating others as you would like them to treat you.

Fifty-six years later, Leopold's granddaughter, Susan Leopold Freeman, and her husband, Scott Freeman, purchased 18 acres on Tarboo Creek. Tarboo Creek is a salmon stream on the Olympic Peninsula that had been nearly as abused as Leopold's Wisconsin farm. *Saving Tarboo Creek: One Family's Quest to Heal the Land*, by Scott Freeman with illustrations by Susan Leopold Freeman, chronicles the family's intimate connection to the land and creek as they, too, devote themselves to rehabilitating a much abused and degraded piece of land.

Saving Tarboo Creek weaves several parallel stories together, including a great deal of information on the surprises and challenges of stream restoration ("make crooked that which was straight" and make complex that which was made simple) as well as of addressing global environmental degradation and alienation. The book includes chapters on the life history of salmon and the poetry and mystery to be found in their return to the stream of their birth ("salmon are movers and shakers...they are ecosystem engineers"). Other revelations include the intricacies of reforesting abandoned pastures and restoring wetlands; the importance of beaver ponds and dams for salmon and other creatures; the reasons why invasive plants are often considered to be "undesirables" ("planting native species is a way to practice poetry; but controlling invasives is all prose...makes you sweat, draws blood, and brings you to tears"); and



on the impact of climate change on forests, and the corollary impact of deforestation on climate change.

Bracketing the descriptive information on the how-to and the nitty gritty of stream restoration and reforestation, are chapters dealing not only with the Leopold land ethic but with what it means to be living conscientiously and ethically on this earth. Scott seems especially tuned into the challenges facing our young adults as they confront climate change and a materialistic culture. "Every generation has to find its own way of fighting our materialistic nature and reminding its children of the values that matter and endure. We are born to take, but we learn to give. So we have work to do." The book provides encouragement and hope for leading a more "natural life," and emphasizes connecting not just with the land but with other individuals who are also working toward a less consumer and more natural lifestyle. "Planting a tree is a way to apply hope. In restoration is the preservation of the world."

Funding for National Parks and Lands Depends on “Lame Duck”

by Rob Smith, Northwest Regional Director, National Parks Conservation Association

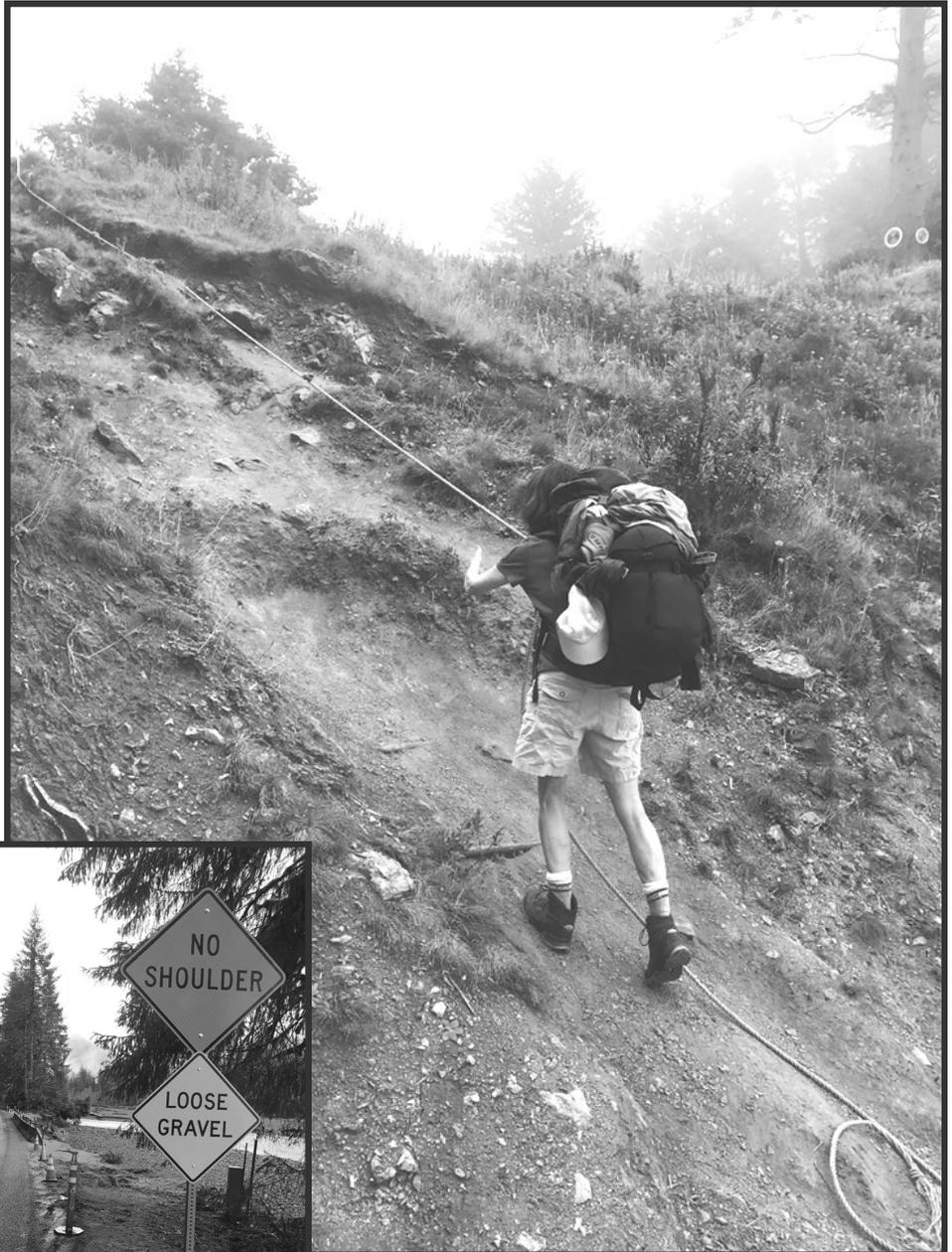
Funding much-needed repairs at Olympic and other national parks, plus renewal of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, is subject to the political whims of the “lame duck” (post-election) Congress as of this writing.

At stake is addressing up to \$150 million of important maintenance and repair projects at Olympic National Park, especially rebuilding decades-old water and sanitation systems, trail repairs and ranger housing. Chronically underfunding the National Park System through miserly Congressional budgets over many years has resulted in a serious backlog of facility and access upkeep. Nationwide, this has grown to a nearly \$12 billion shortfall.

So while the national parks are seeing record visitation – and Olympic is the most popular national park in the Northwest with over 3 million visitors annually – the ability of park managers to keep up has eroded faster than a steep sandy trail on the coast.

There is a fix in the Restore Our Parks Act, which has broad and bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate. Park repair budgets would be supplemented by extra mineral development revenues over the next 30 years if this law passes.

Rep. Derek Kilmer is a lead co-sponsor of the House



version and has used his position on the Appropriations Committee to advance this bill. Now it's down to the final deal-making as both chambers try to wrap up the unfinished business of this Congress.

Also ready for passage is a renewal of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which supports needed acquisition of land inside or adjacent to national park boundaries or other key conservation areas.

Park and outdoor advocates, along with many local residents and businesses, support both of these measures. Hopefully Congress will recognize that Americans can come together around protecting their national parks and they will act accordingly.



Voice of the Wild Olympics
Amy Youngblood, **Editor**

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to promote the protection and integrity of a World
Heritage Site and its Wilderness is infinite.*