



Monitoring Olympic's Martens

By Janis Burger

A few winters ago, while cross-country skiing near Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park, I noticed abundant bounding snowy tracks of martens near my cabin. Locals suggested I hang out by the dumpster to see the actual critters since they were often spotted dumpster diving!

Here in the Olympics, it's a different story. Though Pacific martens (*Martes caurina*) were historically present, overharvest and habitat loss led to a steep decline by the 1960s. Despite countless hours of camera trapping between 2001 and 2017, only four martens were detected, though the cameras captured many images of their successfully reintroduced larger cousins, Pacific fishers, as well as other species. So the park partnered with Olympic National Forest, Woodland Park Zoo and the U.S. Geological Survey to test newly developed scent dispensers with infrared camera traps that could be left out all winter. That pilot project detected martens at



*A Pacific marten leaping from a tree after investigating the scent dispenser.
Photo by Olympic Marten Project Seven Lakes Basin area, April 2023*

11 of 33 scent stations in 2018 and 2019.

The technique could safely monitor hard-to-reach, snowy, high elevation sites all winter long, a challenge for biologists. So the park worked with the University of Washington to fund Master's student Dylan Hubl to expand the survey. Again partnering with Olympic National Forest and Woodland Park Zoo, and with financial help from Olympic Park Advocates, Hubl and his crew deployed 67 survey stations across the park and forest in summer 2022. Each site had an automatic scent

dispenser and two cameras, one

monitoring the scent station and the other a nearby wildlife trail.

Hubl and his crew recovered the survey stations in 2023 after the cameras had spent a year silently watching for martens and anything else attracted to the odoriferous lure .

"Unfortunately, we only detected marten at two of the 67 survey sites," Hubl said after recently reviewing the images.

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VOICE OF THE WILD OLYMPICS

Masthead photo by Pat O'Hara

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Climate Change Ramps Up Fire Behavior in ONP

By Tim McNulty

Global warming has turned up the heat on the frequency and intensity of wildfires in the Olympic Mountains. In four of the past eight years, fires have grown to over 1,000 acres on the peninsula. The 2023 fire season upped the ante considerably.

Following an unusually hot and dry spring and summer, an August 28 lightning storm sparked a rash of fires in Olympic National Park. Most of the seven fires burning in the Olympics remained small but affected park visitation. Fires below Hurricane Ridge and at Eagle Point on the Obstruction Point Road closed access to these popular park destinations, and interior fires closed seven trails in the park. The four-acre Hurricane Ridge area fire required some suppression as it posed a threat to a park road and developments. In contrast, the 123-acre Eagle Point fire spread through subalpine forest stands, enhancing additional habitat for Olympic marmots and other subalpine species.

Fire is an integral part of forest ecosystems, enhancing plant and animal habitats, recycling nutrients, and lowering the risk of catastrophic fires in the future. The remaining fires burning deep in the Dan Evans Wilderness in ONP were monitored but largely allowed to run their courses.

Then, in mid-September, the Delabarre fire in the upper Elwha watershed blew up, eventually covering more than 4,000 acres. Due to extreme weather



Delabarre Fire is seen on Sept. 16, 2023. Olympic National Park photo

conditions, fuel moisture had dropped below 15 percent, extremely low for Olympic forests, where late spring and early summer and early fall rains are the rule.

The Delabarre fire burned through old fires scars from 1960s and 1981 fires, highly unusual fire behavior for the Olympics. Fire managers are continuing to study the implications of the 2023 fire season. As global warming continues to assert its influence on natural processes on the peninsula, fire behavior is one of many effects that will influence future ecosystem processes.

U.S. House Slashes Budget for National Parks

From the National Parks Conservation Association

In November the House of Representatives passed its fiscal year 2024 spending bill for the Department of the Interior. The spending bill cuts \$433 million (12.5%) from the National Park Service's budget. This reduction could mean as many as 1,000 fewer staff to ensure visitor experience and safety, shuttered facilities, and fewer resources to protect our beloved natural and cultural historic sites.

The spending bill also includes deep cuts to Park Service maintenance and repairs. Additionally, the bill slashes funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's clean air and water programs while undoing recent investments to help our communities and park landscapes better face climate change and natural disasters.

The National Park Service is only a tiny slice of

our federal budget — less than one-fifteenth of one percent — yet delivers significant economic benefits, with \$15 in economic activity generated for each dollar invested. Between 2012 and 2022, visitation grew by 10% while staffing declined by 13%. Today, the Park Service has 2,600 fewer staff than in 2011. The deep and unrealistic cuts proposed in the House's Interior appropriations bill only add insult to injury and undermine years of bipartisan progress in Congress to address park funding needs.

The Senate has prepared a bipartisan version of the bill that rejects the cuts embraced by the House. But the clock is ticking. Theresa Pierno, president of the National Parks Conservation Association said, "The Park Service has been surviving off barebones budgets and losing staff for decades. The Senate must oppose these reckless cuts."

Opposition Mounts to Elwha Logging

By Tim McNulty

Popular resistance to Washington's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) clearcutting of older forests continues to mount. Mature, naturally regenerated "Legacy" forests share many habitat characteristics of old-growth forests and serve as critical carbon reserves which help lessen the effects of global warming.

Fewer than 77,000 acres of Legacy forests remain, less than three percent of DNR lands. Nonetheless, the agency, under Public Lands Commissioner Hillary Franz, is intent on logging them.

A demonstration earlier this year protested clearcutting of the Aldwell timber sale on a tributary of the Elwha River. (See "Demonstrators Protest DNR Logging in the Elwha Watershed" in the Spring *Voice*.) This past summer DNR auctioned off another Legacy forest in the Elwha watershed. Unit three of the Power Plant sale straddles a bluff directly above the river.



Washington DNR Power Plant timber sale is along this bluff above the Elwha River. Photo by John Gussman

A lawsuit filed by Earth Law Center and other groups failed to halt the sale. Port Angeles's mayor, the city manager, and the city council wrote to Commissioner Franz asking her to cancel the sale. They stated, "Logging these forests compromises efforts to restore endangered and recovering species, destroys essential carbon sinks, and threatens Port Angeles' sole drinking water source."

Center for Responsible Forestry and Elwha Legacy Forests have mounted a campaign to persuade Commissioner Franz to withdraw the Power Plant sale. Visit them at elwhalegacyforests.org.

New Book Celebrates the Olympic Peninsula

By Shelley Spalding

The new Braided River/Mountaineers book *Salmon, Cedar, Rock & Rain* is not only a feast for the eyes, but a feast for one's heart and soul. One cannot help but be inspired and awed by the many layers of connection within the magnificent Olympic Peninsula that are described in this book.

Our guide on this journey is writer, naturalist, and conservationist Tim McNulty. The book also draws upon the deep knowledge and wisdom of seven writers representing five Tribes that have been connected to these rivers, mountains, and valleys since time immemorial, as well as the work of more than 30 photographers.

Aldo Leopold once said, "The first rule of intelligent tinkering is to save all the cogs and wheels." One piece that has not been saved on the Olympic Peninsula is the wolf. When describing the role that Roosevelt elk have played in shaping the character of this temperate rain forest, the book clearly describes the link between the health of these elk herds and the relatively recent disruption of this elk-rain forest relationship due to the loss of the elk's top predator, the wolf.

Another keystone species eloquently described in this book is the Pacific salmon. They bring nutrients from the mountains to the sea and return nutrients from the sea to the mountains. In the words of McNulty, "[S]almon embody the unity of mountains,



Overlooking the Hoh Valley from High Divide. Photo by John Gussman

forests, and ocean ... salmon remain at the center of the Peninsula's identity, economy, and health."

Quinalt Indian Nation tribal representative Gary Morishima, in his essay titled "Quinalt Worldview," describes the Tribe's worldview as being grounded in "interdependence, interconnectedness, and humility that has both spiritual and metaphysical dimensions." He describes the disruption to the Tribe as various treaties were signed: "A complex and ever-changing web of unfamiliar laws, rules, regulations, and policies disrupted Quinalt relationships to the environment and their neighbors. ... Tribal tenets of sustainable use and communal sharing were displaced by consumption, endless growth, and accrual of individual wealth."

The same disruptive forces are also affecting the long-term health and sustainability of the Olympic ecosystem as it grapples with the rising tide of climate change. Throughout the book, writers acknowledge the threat that climate change poses to this magical place: glaciers are melting, snowpacks are declining, wildfires are increasing. Our eminent task, McNulty writes, is to "meet the threat of global warming with bold visionary measures and restore degraded ecosystems."

This book, through its beauty and descriptions of the varied and intricate web of life, can help inspire us to take those needed next steps.

Help the Grizzly Return to the North Cascades

By Rob Smith

Parks should be where the wildlife is, including grizzly bears in the North Cascades (and wolves in the Olympics). National parks at the wild heart of these ecosystems still provide places where these native creatures can recover and thrive.

In October, the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced options to restore the grizzly bear to the North Cascades where they have not been confirmed since 1996, although a few still are seen just north in British Columbia. Past trapping and shooting reduced grizzly numbers to a point of no natural recovery, and developed areas have prevented them from coming back from the Rockies on their own.

However, the habitat is still there for a healthy population in the 6 million-acre North Cascades grizzly recovery zone — an area bigger than Glacier, Yellowstone and Jasper national parks

combined. The agency's proposal is to import carefully selected bears from the Northern Rockies, a few at a time, for a total of 25 over the next decade. Their preferred option is to keep the bears away from communities and potential trouble under special rules allowing more active management than usual for a protected species.

The National Park Service expects to make a final decision in early 2024. Now is the time to speak up for recovering a keystone species for a still-wild national park and ecosystem. National parks in the Northwest should be places for our wildlife heritage. Here's another opportunity to recover what is now missing for the future.

To review the draft proposal and find additional information, visit: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/NCEGrizzly>. Or mail to: Superintendent, North Cascades National Park, Grizzly Restoration EIS, 810 State Route 20, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284.

Martens *Continued from p.1*

One was in Seven Lakes Basin and the other near Low Divide, he explained.

They did get images of black bears, cougars, bobcats, coyotes, flying squirrels, elk, and deer. A highlight was documenting fishers—which were reintroduced starting in 2008—at 15 sites across the Peninsula, some in places they hadn't been seen yet.

Hubl is interested in how his data, combined with past surveys, may help reveal how fisher occupancy has evolved on the Peninsula.

His team also collected scat, and deployed tiny brushes and sticky pads near the lures to collect hair samples from animals as they investigated the odor. Those will be sent in for DNA analysis.

Hubl is deploying five scent stations at different locations in Olympic National Forest this winter. There they will keep a watchful lens peeled for marten through the snowy winter while he analyzes data and takes classes in the less challenging environs of Seattle.

A Summer Walking with Olympic Rivers

By Sandra O'Connor

There are 14 rivers radiating like the spokes of a wheel from the mountains at the center of Olympic National Park. Between May and September of this year, I backpacked, mostly solo, along some portion of each of them. I spent 58 nights and walked over 450 miles, from the high alpine country of their headwaters to the lowlands of their estuarial mouths.

Knowing them, of course, is the work of decades, not just a single season. But this summer I spent countless hours walking and floating in their waters -- and learning the true nature of surrender and forgiveness. Discovering what it means to flow from the source. Dreaming into the magic of the hydrological cycle and the journey of a single drop of rain. Exploring feeder streams and connecting with the riparian ecosystems they roll through.

For me, these rivers hold great wisdom and are imbued with spirit of place. I believe each river has its own "voice" and its own unique being. In my longtime love affair with these rivers, they have gifted me something beyond price. I was searching for some way to reciprocate, something I could offer to them.

I meandered along the glacier-fed, braided channels of the western flank rivers which flow to the Pacific Ocean. I hiked the short, steep, and wild



Sol Duc River in Olympic National Park. Photo by John Gussman

eastern flank rivers that merge with Hood Canal. I listened to their songs and sang my human songs back to them. I offered my praise and appreciation to the waters and the amazing forests they flow through. I walked in profound gratitude.

I spent countless hours walking and floating in their waters -- and learning the true nature of surrender and forgiveness. ... these rivers hold great wisdom and are imbued with spirit of place. I believe each river has its own "voice" and its own unique being .

My job this summer was to quiet my internal "monkey mind," getting still enough to really listen. Easier said than done, as you probably know. Especially when multiple times a day, sometimes multiple times an hour, in what seemed like every corner of the park, there came a gut-shaking roar from the sky. A very pervasive, very loud, very human-made noise shattered the peace and quiet of this pristine wilderness. It was the roar from Navy Growlers conducting electronic warfare training over the pristine Olympic National Park.

I can recall airplane noise on the peninsula in past years, but nothing like what I experienced this year. In what has been described as one of the quietest places on Earth, the Hoh Valley, the noise was so loud I couldn't hear the river at times. I found the noise most disruptive

in the western flank of the park, but I heard it in almost every place I visited.

In my search for what I could give back to the rivers, one thing that emerged was to help stop this invasion of noise pollution permeating my beloved wilderness. It feels kind of like David going up against Goliath, but this one small human will do what she can. Those rivers are worth it.

Course Corrections Still Needed for Noisy Navy Jet Flights

By Rob Smith

The U.S. Navy can continue to build up its fleet of noisy "Growler" jets on Whidbey Island, which trains over Olympic National Park, despite failure to adequately study noise impacts on human health or consider alternative training bases, according to a U.S. District Court ruling in September.

Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson and a citizens group filed suit against the Navy in 2019. The court ruled in their favor in 2022 and has given the Navy a year to redo its analysis. However, the latest ruling did not prevent the Navy from proceeding with its expansion plans while more studies are done. This allows the Navy to dial up noise by increasing its fleet of electronic warfare jets by 33 percent at its Whidbey airbase.

While the AG's suit was aimed at noise impacts to Whidbey and surrounding residents and wildlife, the same issues were raised by OPA, National Parks Conservation Association and others about Growler training over the Olympics. In 2021, in a separate analysis, the Navy finally recognized Olympic National Park as a noise sensitive area and altered its flight paths between the base and the training airspace to avoid flying over the heart of the Park. Anecdotal reports indicate the Growler flights are now usually -- but not always -- flying around the Park. (See "A Summer Walking with Olympic Rivers" above.)

The loudest aircraft should not fly over one of the quietest places in America, Hoh Rain Forest. The Navy has indicated that it can alter its flight routes, and it could fly higher and use airspace over the ocean to further reduce noise over the Olympic Peninsula. Let's keep asking Washington's Senators Murray and Cantwell and Rep. Kilmer to get the Navy to do better for Olympic National Park.



Washington's Trust Land Transfer Program Helps Protect Olympic Forests

The Trust Land Transfer (TLT) program is the means by which the state of Washington can move lands that have high ecological value from extractive use (usually clear-cut logging) to protected status. The state legislature codified this as state law last year and funded it sufficiently to make a big difference across the state, and especially here on the Olympic Peninsula. The upshot of the new law is added transparency, consistency, and public input in determining which lands are protected.

OPA has actively supported the TLT program in the state legislature, raising awareness of the importance and benefits to the Olympic Peninsula with lawmakers in Olympia.

TLT work for 2022-2023 conserved 4,425 acres of land across the state, including 415 acres at Devil's Lake and even more at Dabob Bay on the Olympic Peninsula. Indeed, in addition to the original TLT at Dabob Bay, an additional 500 acres of prime forest that were slated for clear-cutting are being considered for protection. A decision on the additional 500 acres is pending at

the time of publication of the *Voice*.

Looking to the future, the City of Port Angeles completed an application for transfer of about 3,000 acres in the Elwha watershed to be conserved via TLT in the upcoming biennium. This is one of more than 20 applicants, so conservation is not guaranteed. Having said that, given the negative publicity, controversy and litigation involved with recent logging in the Elwha watershed (Aldwell bloc and Power Plant bloc clearcuts), there is reason to hope at least some of the Elwha forests will be protected in 2024-2025 via

TLT. This is vitally important, considering the years of effort to remove dams, improve fish habitat and restore native salmon runs that constitute the modern story of the Elwha River.

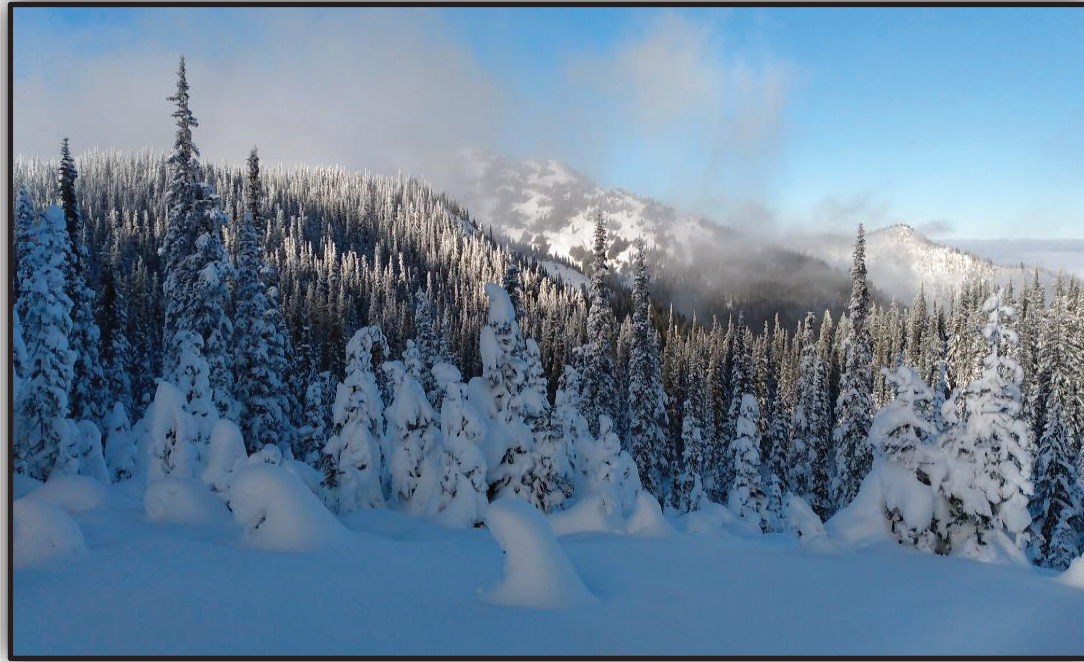
OPA is actively working to encourage the state Department of Natural Resources to prioritize conservation efforts in the Elwha watershed.



Lower Elwha River. Photo by John Gussman

Clallam Transit Shuttle Enhances Visitor Access to Hurricane Ridge

By Janis Burger



Hurricane Ridge Winter. Photo by Janis Burger

When the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center tragically burned to the ground on May 7, 2023, many wondered what future access to the area would look like. Suddenly there was no power, no restrooms, and much of the parking lot was off limits as an investigation into the fire commenced.

On June 27, the park was able to reopen the area with a much reduced parking area and a daily quota due to the limited capacity of temporary port-a-potties. Key to the reopening was a robust shuttle service by Clallam Transit, the public transportation provider for Clallam County. Daily capacity for the lot and restrooms was often reached by late morning, so taking the bus was often the only way to get to the Ridge.

"This partnership allowed thousands of visitors access to the Ridge," Park Superintendent Sula Jacobs said.

According to Jim Fetzer, general manager of Clallam Transit, over 24,000 users took the scenic round trip, including over 700 on the busiest day, July 3, 2023.

"Since Hurricane Ridge is one of the main attractions for the area, during a time of crisis, it was a good thing to get going," Fetzer said. He added that it was very popular, with most trips having standing room only. The \$1 fare made it very economical as well.

Clallam Transit provided seven round trips a day starting at 8:15 a.m. with the last bus leaving Hurricane at 3:45 p.m. Buses departed from the Gateway Transit Center in downtown Port Angeles and stopped at two trailheads en route. Service ended for the season on October 9. Fetzer will be meeting with the Park staff about future summer

service. If the shuttle returns, Fetzer said he'd like to provide service later in the day, but stop after Labor Day when ridership really dropped off.

This fall, the Park installed a temporary restroom trailer and ranger operations trailer at Hurricane Ridge for this winter season. The Park plans to construct an interim building next summer to fill the multi-year gap until a new lodge can be completed.

In late October, Senator Patty Murray secured an \$80 million allocation in President Biden's supplemental budget to rebuild Hurricane Ridge Lodge. A partnership between the Hurricane Ridge Winter Sports Club, Olympic Hiking Company, and Black Ball Transport plans to offer a once daily shuttle to the ridge on weekends from early January to the end of March. The cost would be \$15 for adults, not including park entrance fees.

Transportation generates the majority of greenhouse gas emissions in both Olympic National Park and Clallam County. The summer 2023 shuttle greatly reduced the number of private cars heading up to Hurricane Ridge. In summer 2022, Clallam Transit offered three roundtrips a day, but only 3,200 people used that service, likely because they could still drive up independently.

Hurricane Ridge is the easiest place in the Park to view the glaciers that are disappearing largely due to human-caused climate change. OPA hopes the park works to keep, and perhaps even expand, public transportation to help improve visitor experiences, reduce carbon emissions, and protect resources in this national jewel.

Can You Dig It?

By Tom Butler

We know them as mysterious purveyors of black mounds on the green carpet and uneven stepping stones. Or maybe our spring tulips topple over and summer garden water pours into some underground abyss. Despised by gardeners and golfers

everywhere, they're built for a subterranean life, with short, massively boned front legs, huge, paddle-like front feet and shoulder muscles that would make Arnold Schwarzenegger weep with envy. Tiny hindquarters, non-directional fur and a short tail make turning around in tight spaces easy and they can tolerate CO2 levels that would drop you in your tracks.

Even though it seems like they're everywhere (and they are), moles lead pretty solitary lives. If a digging mole encounters another tunnel, you'd think they'd use the free highway, but instead build a barrier and set off in a different direction. They prefer flat ground, but are still somehow aware of depth, since shallow tunnels seem to remain the same distance underground even when digging up or down over the edges of hills or embankments. They'll use the same tunnel for a long time as long as prey is abundant, and sometimes permanent tunnels are maintained by generations of moles between useful areas.

Moles spend almost all their time underground, but moles surprised on the surface make a squealing noise and will dig rather than run, sinking into the soil so fast that they seem to disappear right before your eyes. Tunnels in too-sandy soil will collapse, but I read somewhere that in moderately compacted soil a talented mole can dig ten to fifteen feet of tunnel in an hour. Why the highway department doesn't hire them is a mystery.

Moles are usually mostly safe underground, but almost all predators will eat them in a pinch if given the opportunity. They smell bad though, (kind of musky), and that might be some protection, as their little corpses can sometimes be found lying on the surface where they were killed and apparently



Photo by Peter Paquet

In moderately compacted soil, a talented mole can dig ten to fifteen feet of tunnel in an hour. Why the highway department doesn't hire them is a mystery.

dropped by some predator who decided they just weren't so hungry after all. (Bleah - Pa-too!) The eyes hardly function, but their ears are very good at picking up earthbound sound. Our omnivorous moles spend four or five years eating a third to a half their own weight every day year round in

underground beetles, grubs and many earthworms. There isn't much to eat in dry summer soil, so you may have noticed their recent return to the surface along with the fall rains and worms.

We have three kinds of moles around here: Townsend's Mole, the Pacific/Coast Mole and the Shrew Mole. I don't know how to tell Townsend's from Pacific, which are both about as long as a dollar bill and found in forests, lawns and shrubbery, except that Coasties' shallow tunnels make those linear bulges while Townsends are the mound-builders. The Shrew-Mole is smaller, at only about three or so inches, and more active, "tunneling" frantically around mostly in leaf litter above ground. All are important mixers and aerators of the soil as well as being disseminators of seeds and spores.

My yard looks like a fraternity house on Saturday morning, but piles of mole dirt on the scraggly lawn still mildly irritate me for some reason. But of course the moles were here first, and it's kind of fun to think about them going about their strange business down there in the dark.

Charles Wilkinson

An Appreciation

By Mary Peck

For almost 50 years, Charles Wilkinson built a legacy as one of the nation's foremost scholars of the peoples, public lands, and waters of the West. In addition to writing 14 books and dozens of scholarly articles, he taught law at the University of Colorado School of Law and at the University of Oregon Law School. During the last years of the Clinton administration, he served on the USDA Forest Service Committee of Scientists, which helped the agency to rewrite the National Forest Management Act forest planning regulations. His efforts to protect two Utah preserves: the Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears national monuments were instrumental.

The impact of Charles Wilkinson's work as an advocate for tribes has been far-reaching. He considered the notion of tribal sovereignty to be central to his life's work and among his proudest professional achievements. "It's one of the greatest notions that's ever touched my mind. I wanted so much for people to understand the Indian way and how deep it is. It's not better, but it's a different way of knowing. There's a

many conservation groups) to USFS Deputy Chief Christopher French asking about LRT efforts on the Peninsula and the state of Washington (Region 6) and included Representatives Schrier and Kilmer and Senators Murray and Cantwell.

There is now new legislation being proposed by Senator Lujan of New Mexico: the Transparency in Legacy Road and Trail Remediation Act, calling for a commitment to improving the LRT Program. Representative Schrier will be introducing the House companion for the bill. The bill would address concerns from conservation groups over the lack of transparency and public engagement from the U.S. Forest Service when selecting LRT projects. It would require the USFS to publish annually, for each region, a list of projects eligible for LRT funding and accept and consider public comments for each.



Photo courtesy Seattle Times

Charles Wilkinson wrote the essay for Mary Peck's book of photographs, *Away Out Over Everything*, "The Olympic Peninsula's Elwha River: Prisoner of History, Harbinger of Hope." It is excerpted below.

From the beginning of the westward expansion, we adopted a rigid and narrow code to govern the rivers. The prior appropriation doctrine — among the oldest, most important, and most deeply ingrained of all laws in the American West — is a hard-edged, utilitarian doctrine that leaves most decisions to individual water developers. It shuts out recreationists and Indian tribes. It ignores the science of ecology.

The language of cooperation and spirituality — words like community and love and beauty and wonder — has never been part of the language of western water law. The softer and slower and abstract and emotive aspects of our language, of our humanity, have been left outside the scope of the water laws.

Yet who among us would deny the essential worth of a clutch of spring chinook who have moved up the canyon to the deep pool below the waterfall and are now waiting out the low water, ready to move when the spring freshet comes down; the crawfish under the stones of a small creek where a little girl, up to her knees, silently inspects for clawed movement; the still, shallow arm of a tiny mountain lake where insects work the surface and a few cutthroat, too small to catch, fin in the shadow of the sunken limb; or the community that lives -along a meadow brook—the willows and cottonwoods and wild roses and the field mice seeking cover from the redtails above?

Western water law puts off-limits the emotions we all feel toward water. It walls off any ethical obligations to the animals, to the inanimate rivers, and to the inanimate and immobile canyon walls. The law, it is said, must be objective and rational. But the question now rides in the currents of every western river: How can a law be rational and objective if it leaves out the unquantifiable, the immeasurable, the emotional, the abstract, the spiritual?

bunch of different values in there, usually dealing with the land and family that they want to protect. The way to do it is through tribal sovereignty."

He introduced the field learning expedition, a lasting innovation to law teaching, while a member of the law faculty at Oregon.

"I realized that law was seeming so narrow to me. I'd been teaching appellate cases, which really are the law, but it's not real, like it is when you're out on the ground. It just changes everything to go out and instead of hearing about the Wind River Range and the wolves, you're up there and talking with the people that are making the decisions and hiking. It brings law to life."

He took students to the places they were studying -- the east side of the Cascades to study the problems of the Columbia River Basin and the perspectives of those who live and work there, and to the Elwha River after the dams were removed. The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe has hired Julia Guarino, one of Wilkinson's students, as Senior Associate Tribal Attorney. She says, "His passion was so infectious. He just really believed that we could all make a difference, that the work was there to be done and that the places and the people were worth doing the work for."

Continued on P11, Charles

Dungeness Watershed Roads Management Project: Five Years of Inaction

By Tom Hammond

OPA is an active partner in the Washington Watershed Restoration Initiative (WWRI), a group of national, state, and local conservation organizations focused on implementing the Legacy Roads to Trails (LRT) program. The LRT program seeks to remove the most ecologically/aquatically damaging roads from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) road system, in some places by converting roads to trails.

In October 2018, after years of public meetings and discussion, USFS Hood Canal District Ranger Yewah Lau approved a popular plan (that OPA helped create) to decommission 16 miles of high-risk or unneeded roads in the Dungeness watershed. The plan will close 14 miles of roads (no public access, but roads kept on the system for future extractive practices) and convert 1.4 miles of road to trail. These include decommissioning the Canyon Creek road (2875-070), which invites illegal use by off-road vehicles, and the end of the Silver Creek road (2870), which has led to overuse, forest vandalism, and severe degradation of the Silver Lakes area in the Buckhorn Wilderness. "Olympic Forest Completes Plan to Close Excess and Destructive Roads in the Dungeness Watershed" (See "Olympic Forest Completes Plan to Close Excess and Destructive Roads" on OPA's website.) All area trailheads would remain accessible by motor vehicles.

At a recent WWRI meeting, national partners reported that staff members for Washington's Representative Kilmer and Senators Murray and Cantwell had been told by the USFS that it had no projects ready to implement in the state of Washington except for a logging project in the North Cascades. OPA Trustee Hammond directly and emphatically disputed that blatant fiction such that a representative from Wild Earth Guardians came to the Olympic Peninsula to review the USFS documents and tour the area for first-hand, on-the-ground knowledge.

The visit resulted in a very pointed letter (signed by



Illegal tree cutting along short-cut trail to Silver Lakes in Buckhorn Wilderness

Charles *Continued from p.10*

Beginning in 1971 with work at the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), Charles fought for the rights of tribal nations. He built from those early cases throughout his career, devoting special attention to tribal fishing rights in the Pacific Northwest. Billy Frank Jr., the late Nisqually leader, was a close friend and the subject of Charles' book, *Messages From Frank's Landing*. To Charles

the seminal 1974 *U.S. v. Washington* tribal treaty fishing rights case, the Boldt decision, was as important and compelling as *Brown vs. Board of Education*, another case where civil rights and justice prevailed. He called it one of the best examples "of what America and its citizens can accomplish in the name of justice for dispossessed peoples..." The Boldt decision at 50 was the focus of his final book, which he completed just a few days before he passed away on June 6, 2023.



Voice of the Wild Olympics

Amy Youngblood, Editor

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