



# Clinton Vows to Protect 40 Million Acres of National Forest Roadless Lands

**NOTICE!**

Public Hearings on Clinton's Roadless Plan:  
→ Pt. Angeles Dec. 15 6-9 pm  
→ Olympia Dec. 16 7-9 p.m.  
*Details on Page 3*

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*Photograph by Johsel Namkung*

*by Tim McNulty*

On October 13, President Clinton promised to protect 40 million of the 60 million acres of National Forest roadless areas remaining in the U.S. One of three areas nationwide singled out for protection in the President's announcement was South Quinault Ridge. This 9,800-acre roadless area is a spectacular blanket of old growth and temperate rain forest that forms a stunning backdrop to Lake Quinault.

OPA has lobbied intensely for wilderness protection for South Quinault Ridge since 1974. A narrow, overgrown road and two 30-year-old clearcuts are all that separate it from the larger Colonel Bob Wilderness Area to the east. We have argued that

the road should be closed and the area protected as a single unit, the largest swath of intact rain forest left in Olympic National Forest.

Clinton's plan is still unformed, but road-building, logging, and mining presumably would be prohibited. The lands would not be designated as Wilderness by Congress, but would be protected by administration directive. The Forest Service estimates that timber harvests will decline nationally by only about 28 million board feet (of an average 4 billion annual cut, which is itself less than 5 percent of the annual U.S. lumber and fiber demand).

Public hearings are being scheduled (see Page 3), and regulations should be developed by the Forest

*Continued on P. 3, Roadless Lands*



## Next OPA Board Meetings

**Dates:** Wednesday, January 26, 2000

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

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

**Place:** Kingston Community Center

A short walk up the hill from the ferry, white building on the right.

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

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

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## A New Video on Grassroots Wilderness Preservation Efforts



*Ancient Forests: the Power of Place* is an eloquent and beautiful new video that articulates the value of wilderness in Washington State. It features interviews with conservation leaders and citizens living adjacent to roadless areas, as they describe their love of the wild lands and their efforts to preserve the wildlife habitat they love.

The video is an inspiration for local grassroots groups working on saving wild public lands, and a good teaching tool for explaining the importance of habitat preservation and the role of the individual citizen conservationist.



Price: \$10

To order a copy:

Green Fire Productions

3948 E. Burnside

Portland, OR 97214

Phone 503-736-1295

For information <[info@greenmedia.org](mailto:info@greenmedia.org)>

## Voice OF THE WILD OLYMPICS

is published three times per year by Olympic Park Associates.

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OPA membership dues are:

\$20 for individuals;

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\$50 for organizations;

\$5 for students or low income individuals;

\$250 for a life membership.



Printed by EcoGraphics on elemental-chlorine-free, 50% recycled paper, 20% post-consumer waste.



## Roadless Lands

*Continued from P. 1*

Service before the end of next year. "We're going to have a big fight on this for about a year," Clinton said. "In the end, we're going to protect all this before it's too late."

Public hearings will help determine which of the roadless lands on Olympic National Forest and elsewhere will be protected. Along with South Quinault Ridge, there are extensive areas in the middle Dungeness including Three O'Clock Ridge, Dirty Face Ridge, and the north and east slopes of Mount Townsend. In the highly visited east Olympics, Jupiter Ridge, Lena Lake, and the upper Hamma Hamma watershed remain unprotected, as well as the spectacular valley of the South Fork Skokomish River. On the west side, Moonlight Dome and Rugged Ridge await protection.

These will vie with other roadless lands in Washington worthy of protection, Dark Divide and the Kettle Range among them. Many of the remaining roadless areas in Olympic National Forest already have some protection, either as roadless recreation areas, or as late

successional reserves under the Northwest Forest Plan. At present, 37% of the forest, 145,765 acres, is now off-limits to road-building. But only 88,265 acres of that are congressionally protected as Wilderness. The rest can be changed with a new administration and different directives to the Forest Service. Clinton's plan would make changes in roadless status somewhat more difficult to accomplish.

It is important to let the Forest Service know that we want full protection for critical roadless areas in Olympic. Write Forest Supervisor Dale Hom (address below); tell him to protect key roadless lands remaining in Olympic National Forest, and ask to be placed on mailing lists for announcements and scheduled public hearings on roadless area protection. Be sure to send copies of your letters to Senators Gorton and Murray and your congressman.

Nationally, the comment period on Clinton's proposed roadless area policy ends December 22. Letters should also be sent to: USDA Forest Service-CAET, Attn: Roadless Areas NOI, P.O. Box 221090, Salt Lake City, UT 84122. Request that the Forest Service:

- (1) include all national forests in the process, including the Tongass in Alaska;
- (2) eliminate all logging, grazing, mining, and off-road vehicles from selected areas, and;
- (3) protect all roadless areas of 1,000 acres and larger until final decisions are made.

Let's do all we can to help Clinton keep this last, grand presidential promise.

### Public Hearings on Clinton's Roadless Lands Protection

The Forest Service is holding listening sessions on all the national forests involved in Clinton's roadless lands preservation plan.

Please plan to attend the Olympic National Forest hearing and voice your views.

Comments need not be limited to Olympic National Forest: speakers are welcome to address other national forest roadless areas at any of the hearings.

### Olympic National Forest Public Open Houses / Hearings

#### *Port Angeles*

Wednesday, December 15, 6-9 p.m.

Vern Burton Community Center

321 East 5th Street

Port Angeles, WA.

#### *Olympia*

Thursday, December 16, 7-9 p.m.

Olympic Nat. Forest Headquarters

1835 Black Lake Blvd.

Olympia, WA 98512

For information about hearings on other national forests in Washington State, contact the PNW Region Public Affairs Puget Sound Office, (425-744-3572).



Express your support for protection of roadless areas by:

- Attending a public hearing (dates and locations, this page).
- Writing letters to:

Forest Supervisor Dale Hom

Olympic Nat. Forest

1835 Black Lake Blvd.

Olympia, WA 98512

The Honorable (your congressman)

US House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable (Patty Murray,

Slade Gorton)

U. S. Senate

Washington, D.C. 20510



## Troublesome Elwha Bear Gets Eleventh Hour Reprieve

by Tim McNulty

The summer of 1997 was a record for wildlife news. Cougars made cameo appearances throughout the Olympic Peninsula, often stalking pets, sometimes people. A small dog was snatched on Little River Road near the Elwha, another was roughed up at Sol Duc Campground. Park Managers reminded hikers and campers what to do if encountering a cougar (look large, maintain eye contact, back away slowly). Some reports suggest that the big cats find this behavior curious; it might even distract them from a more nefarious errand.

But front-page headlines were reserved for the saga of "Devil bear".

Readers of the Voice will recall an earlier report, "Bears Prompt Closure of Portions of Elwha Trail" (Summer, 1999). Some Elwha bears were getting into mischief. They had torn open backpacks and snagged food bags from tree limbs. One tried to enter, uninvited, an occupied tent. As a result, a seven-mile stretch of the Elwha trail, from Lillian Camp to Elkhorn, was wisely closed to camping.

The final straw came this summer when a particularly troublesome bear routed a party of English campers at Elkhorn and finished their picnic for them while they watched, terrified, from nearby trees. The bear was a known repeat offender. It had gained notoriety for similar antics, and for shaking off two radio collars. The local press picked up on the unfortunate name "Devil Bear," dropped by a frustrated ranger.

Following the English incident park managers decided that the bear had to be killed, and rangers were dispatched to do the job. They camped at Elkhorn for weeks but the bear eluded them. Finally, in Mid-September with the summer hiking season behind, the bear was given clemency. "The sentence has been lifted," Superintendent David Morris told the Peninsula Daily News. "If he behaves himself, the pressure's off."

But another aspect of the story came vividly to light a few days earlier. In a letter to the Daily News, Joanna Wigginton of Modesto, California, took issue with the name, "Devil Bear." She noted that none of the seven rangers, a packer, or several trail crew members she spoke with while hiking the Elwha used the name Devil Bear, or wanted to see the animal killed. She didn't see the bear. What she did encounter, however, was campers who left so much trash that the next party filled a good sized bag with it, including hot dogs and marshmallows that were strewn across the meadow. "I think it was quite obvious," she wrote, "that if there was any devil around, we were looking at it in the mirror."

Joanna commended the rangers for their patience and efforts and educating campers about backcountry etiquette. But rangers cannot be all places at once. In Yellowstone this summer, our family's backpacking trip into grizzly habitat was preceded by a thorough session in bear-country etiquette before we received our permit. Campground

rules forbid leaving anything even scented with food out on picnic tables, and rangers and camp-tenders educated with born-again fervor. Perhaps Olympic could do more up front to educate campers on how to avoid making wilderness nuisances of themselves and causing good bears to go bad. In the meantime, we hope that "Troublesome Bear" keeps a safe distance from junk food pushers in the woods. As Joanna Wigginton put it, "If I were making a decision about this animal, I would remove the dangerous people from the bear's home turf."





## Wild Washington Campaigns for Olympic Wilderness Additions

*by Jim Scarborough, Wild Washington Campaign*

Building upon the many conservation victories in the Olympic Mountains over the last century, the Wild Washington Campaign seeks to extend Wilderness designation to the remaining roadless areas of Olympic National Forest. The Campaign is a statewide effort aimed at achieving permanent protection for three million acres of Washington's federal public lands. With specific regard to Olympic National Forest, the Pacific Biodiversity Institute estimates that over 120,000 acres remain potentially eligible for future Wilderness designation.

The majority of Olympic National Forest's roadless areas are contiguous to its previously designated Wilderness Areas and Olympic National Park. For a variety of reasons, these relatively pristine extensions have yet to receive official protection from Congress, despite clearly warranting it. Examples include the rainforest of South Quinault Ridge, the ancient forest of the Upper South Fork Skokomish, lower Lena Lake, and the rainshadow drainage of Sleepy Hollow near Mount Townsend, to name a few.

The Campaign was given a tremendous boost with President Clinton's announcement in October of his intent to protect National Forest roadless areas nationwide. (See accompanying article, Page 1.) The focus of his proposal entails devising administrative regulations for managing these areas in a manner consistent with their unique natural characteristics. Political opposition is certain to be intense, yet it is hoped that the regulations, once finalized, will essentially ban all new road-building and logging in our roadless areas, including those in Olympic National Forest.

The Wild Washington Campaign views these developments as a giant window of opportunity for advancing the cause of Wilderness designation for those roadless areas that qualify. Administrative

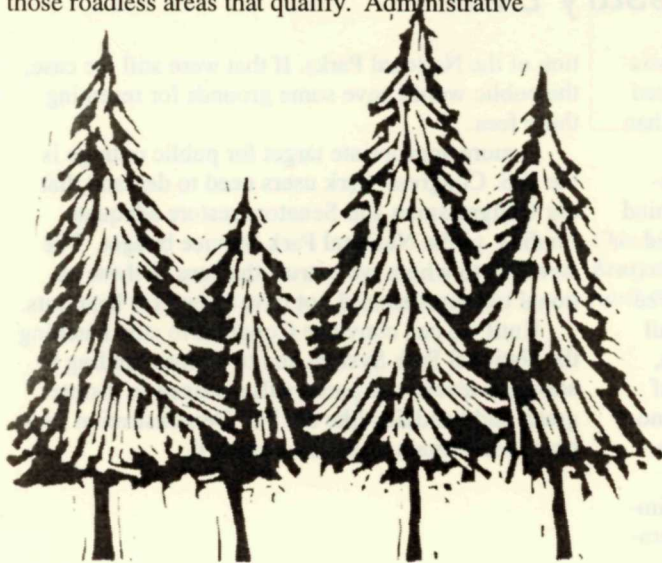
revisions such as those proposed by the President, while not providing the ironclad, legal protection of Wilderness designation, should enable such areas to remain intact until Congress can be persuaded to act. In summary, the President has granted Olympic's roadless areas a reprieve, and it is now our job as concerned citizens to strive for permanent, unequivocal protection for them. This is only possible through their actual designation as Wilderness Areas by Congress.

To this end, volunteers have spent much of the past summer exploring these areas firsthand in a process called "ground-truthing," whereby maps are directly compared to on-the-ground reality. Aside from the obvious benefit of increasing our knowledge of the land, this activity has the added benefit of generating a personal and intimate appreciation of these obscure forest jewels.

The Campaign is an ongoing endeavor that will require the energy and enthusiasm of a multitude of volunteers for success. There are many ways to contribute while having fun along the way. It's no secret that several OPA members were instrumental in the passage of the 1984 Wilderness Act, one of the great accomplishments of recent times. However, whether you're an old veteran or a fresh face in the conservation community, the Campaign needs you.

To get involved in the Wild Washington Campaign, contact Jim Scarborough (206-780-2254) e-mail <whulj@aol.com> or Ezra Eickmeyer (206-633-1992), e-mail <ezra@wawild.org>.

For more information on the Wild Washington Campaign, call toll free 1-877-4WILDWA, or visit <www.wildwashington.org>.

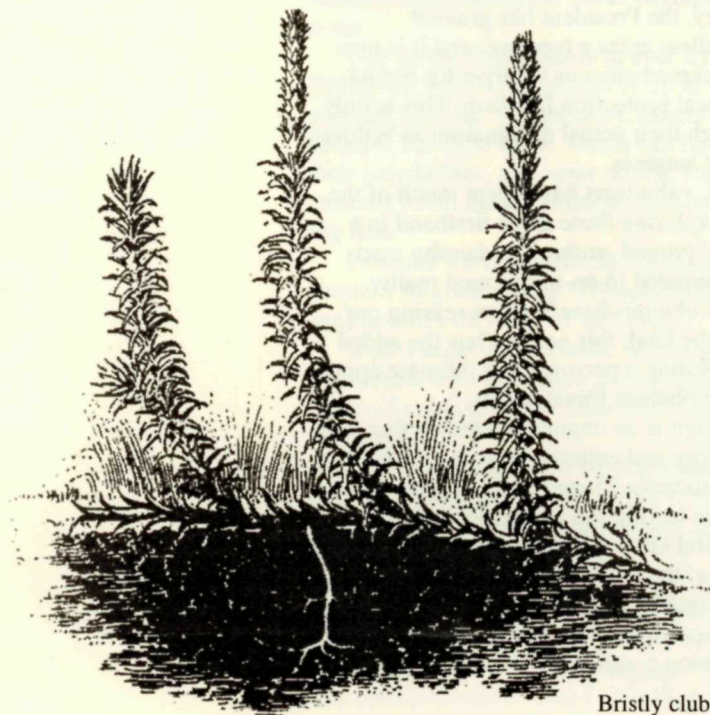




## Olympic National Park Receives \$50,000 Grant From Cannon USA, Inc.

Olympic National Park has received a \$50,000 grant as part of Cannon USA's Expedition Into The Parks program and the National Park Foundation.

The grant will finance a comprehensive inventory of the park's mosses, lichens, and liverworts.



Bristly clubmoss  
*Lycopodium annotinum*

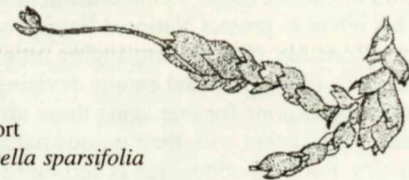
Mosses, lichens, and liverworts comprise the "green draperies" of Olympic's temperate rainforest and are also abundant throughout the rest of the park.

Although these plants are common, they are small and often overlooked. You may be surprised to learn that they play important ecological roles.

Mosses, lichens, and liverworts provide:

- food
- shelter
- nesting material
- absorption of heavy rain
- moisture retention during droughts
- maintenance of high humidity characteristic of rainforest
- an indication of forest health (e.g. monitoring and assessment of the effects of air pollution)

In addition to an inventory, the Cannon grant will enable the park to produce educational materials about these species for use by park staff, researchers, and the public.



Liverwort  
*Marsupella sparsifolia*

## Fee Demonstration Program: A Necessary Evil?

Since Congress authorized the Fee Demonstration Program, Olympic National Park has utilized nearly \$2 million from this program for more than 100 projects in the park.

Most of the money has gone toward maintenance and repair which has fallen woefully behind during the past 15 years as Congress has slashed the National Park Service budget.

Some of the maintenance performed with Fee Demonstration funds includes: backcountry trail repair and reopening; campground, picnic area, and sign repairs; reroofing, paint, and repairs of public use buildings; restroom construction, renovation, and repair; lighting and water system repairs, revegetation.

Many park visitors are under the mistaken impression that their "tax dollars" pay for the opera-

tion of the National Parks. If that were still the case, the public would have some grounds for resenting these fees.

A more appropriate target for public outrage is the U.S. Congress. Park users need to demand that our Congressmen and Senators restore adequate funding to the National Park Service budget. The stewards to whom we entrust the care of these national treasures should not have to beg for handouts.

Until we can convince Congress to stop bleeding the National Park System and to restore funding to adequate levels, our parks will continue to disintegrate, and band-aids like the Fee Demonstration Program will remain as a necessary evil.



## Dam Breaks on Funding for Elwha Removal

by Tim McNulty

A watershed was reached this fall in the contentious struggle over removing two salmon-blocking dams on the Elwha River. In October, U.S. Senator Slade Gorton, Representative Norm Dicks, and Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt reached an agreement on funding the purchase of the dams and engineering for removal of the Elwha Dam, the lower of the two.

For months Senator Gorton had held dam removal hostage for an agreement not to breach any of the dams on the Snake or Columbia rivers in eastern Washington. But this fall, Gorton, who chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee, agreed to drop the stipulation.

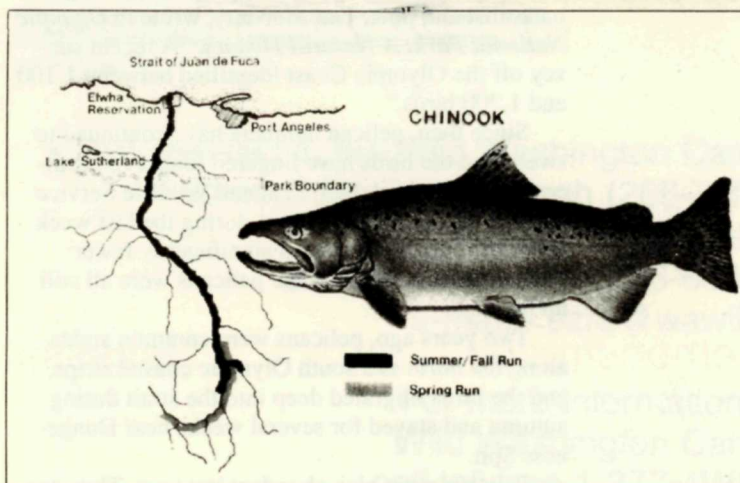
With these three key players in agreement, it was agreed that the government will purchase the dams by the end of February 2000. Though Elwha Dam removal was a top environmental priority for the Clinton administration, much of the credit for breaking the deadlock and securing funding goes to Congressman Dicks.

Dicks, the ranking Democrat on the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, led five of his fellow committee members on a tour of Olympic National Park in July. They visited the dam sites with park Superintendent David Morris and river restoration specialist Brian Winter, and enjoyed a clear and glorious day on Hurricane Ridge. For one committee member, Representative Joe Skeen (R-New Mexico), the trip was a homecoming. He recalled being among the school children in Port Angeles in 1937 who welcomed Franklin Roosevelt to the Peninsula on the eve of the creation of the park. According to Dicks, the visit created a lot of enthusiasm for dam removal among the committee members. Echoing their sentiments, he predicted the project would be "one of the greatest restorations in the history of the country."

The deal received a final seal of approval in September when Secretary Bruce Babbitt, National Park Service Director Robert Stanton, and members of the National Park Foundation also visited Olympic. Babbitt assured reporters that money for purchase and engineering for removal would be in this year's budget. "At long last," he told the Peninsula Daily News, "this is the beginning of the end."

The government had already set aside \$29 million to buy the dams. An agreement hammered out in November provided an additional \$22 million for the restoration. About \$5.5 million of that would be siphoned off for a pork-barrel water treatment project for the city of Port Angeles. The rest goes to engineering for removal of the lower dam.

Senator Gorton remains "a little skeptical" about the success of the restoration according to a spokeswoman from his office, and is still unwilling to fund removal of the upper dam. In a final effort to wrest a pound of environmental flesh for the appropriation, Gorton attached a rider that would circumvent a recent federal court ruling by allowing agencies to log forests without conducting wildlife studies required under the Northwest Forest Plan. Clinton promised a veto, and Gorton was forced to let it drop. "It's total frustration on our part," his spokeswoman said.



*Chinook salmon historic spawning habitat on the Elwha River. From Elwha River Ecosystem Restoration Implementation Draft Environmental Impact Statement, April 1996.*



## Brown Pelicans Returning to the Peninsula

by Doug Rose

Doug Rose is the author of *Fly Fishing the Olympic Peninsula*, Frank Amato Publishing, 1997. Rose writes a weekly *Outdoors* column for the *Peninsula Daily News*. This story is excerpted with permission from the *Peninsula Daily News*.

After an absence of many decades, brown pelicans have once again become common summer and autumn sights along the north Olympic Peninsula coast.

One of the largest birds to ever fly over the Olympics, with wingspreads of up to 7 1/2 feet, pelicans nest on California's Channel Islands and in Mexico. Juvenile birds, which can be identified by their pale bellies, and some adults, follow warm currents north during summer, and feed on schooling fish.

Pelicans were historically relatively common summer migrants to the Olympic coast, but in recent decades they all but vanished....

Both Pacific and Atlantic brown pelicans were threatened with extinction during the 1970s because of contamination from DDT and habitat destruction.

By the early 1980s, however, pelicans had responded to the DDT ban. In addition, strong El Nino activity pushed warm water north into Olympic Peninsula coastal waters.

"The first sightings were associated with the 1982/83 El Nino but annual visits persist," Sequim naturalist and poet, Tim McNulty, wrote in *Olympic National Park: A Natural History*. "A recent survey off the Olympic Coast identified between 1,100 and 1,200 birds."

Since then, pelican numbers have continued to swell, and the birds have lingered longer in northern waters. Indeed, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service surveys along central Oregon during the last week in August last year counted significantly fewer birds than usual because the pelicans were all still up here....

Two years ago, pelicans were common sights along the north and south Olympic coastal strips, and the birds migrated deep into the strait during autumn and stayed for several weeks near Dungeness Spit.

Pelicans were also abundant last year. They penetrated even further into the strait and remained at Port Angeles Harbor and on Admiralty Inlet until

near Christmas.

If anything, even more pelicans seem to have returned to the Olympic coast this summer, and Fish and Wildlife Service biologists in Oregon say more are on the way.

My wife Ellie and I saw more than one hundred birds at the mouth of the Quillayute River last weekend. We also watched their crash-dive feeding maneuvers at First Beach and saw them roosting on offshore islands between the Hole-In-The-Wall and Cape Johnson.

Like many people who hike the Olympic coast, we have become accustomed to seeing the big birds. But their characteristic beat-beat-glide flying stroke and their fondness for flying so low over the water that they periodically disappear behind wave furrows remain endlessly fascinating....

In our area, pelicans feed on schooling fish such as smelt, sand lance, herring and anchovies.

Before they can swallow the fish they capture in their dives, pelicans must drain the water out of their bill pouch. This makes them vulnerable to harassment for opportunistic Heerman's gulls that try to steal their catch....

Brown pelicans belong to the family of birds Pelecanidae, which includes the cormorants, and they are in the same order as boobies, gannets, and frigate birds. Like cormorants, pelicans of both sexes have the same appearance.

The pelicans are colonial, ground nesters, and lay two-to-three whitish eggs, which both parents take turns incubating.

Pelicans will dive from as high as 50 feet above the water in pursuit of food. Air sacks beneath the skin of pelicans give them buoyancy and help them pop back to the surface after feeding dives.

Pelicans have strongly-hooked beaks, like petrels and shearwaters, but their nostrils are sealed to prevent water from entering while diving.

One of the reasons pelicans fly so close to the water is that it allows them to take advantage of the push and lift of the air made by waves advancing towards shore. This allows them to cover great distances with little energy expenditure.

Finally, if you like to watch pelicans off the Olympic coast, don't curse the weather the next time it is windy at the beach during the summer. In our area wind is one of the principal components of upwelling, and without upwelling there would be no plankton or schooling fish or, ultimately, pelicans.



# Forest Service Road Failures Threaten Endangered Salmon

by Tim McNulty

Last winter's La Niña conditions brought near-record snowpacks to the Olympic high country and played havoc with valley roads and trails. Five major trail bridges were destroyed in the park's backcountry last winter and every road accessing the middle and upper Dungeness country in Olympic National Forest slid or washed out.

Most problematic is FS Road 2860 which accesses the east side of the Dungeness River from Palo Alto Road to East Crossing campground and the river crossing above Gold Creek. Traversing steep, unstable slopes directly above the river, this road has been subject to slides and failures on several occasions in the past. It should never have been built. Past clearcutting on steep slopes above it only compounded problems. The Forest Service has curtailed logging in the area, and old cuts are regrowing. But the road, popular with recreationists, remains a problem. Over the past winter several sections of the road slid, and landslides carried silt and debris to the Dungeness River.

Quilcene District Ranger Ben Kizer is committed to maintaining access to the upper Dungeness River and the popular trailheads to Royal Basin and Home Lake, but he admits that the 2860 road may be to problematic to repair. "This road continues to erode loads of sediment into the river," he said, "and that's a tragedy considering the efforts being made to recover endangered salmon in the Dungeness."

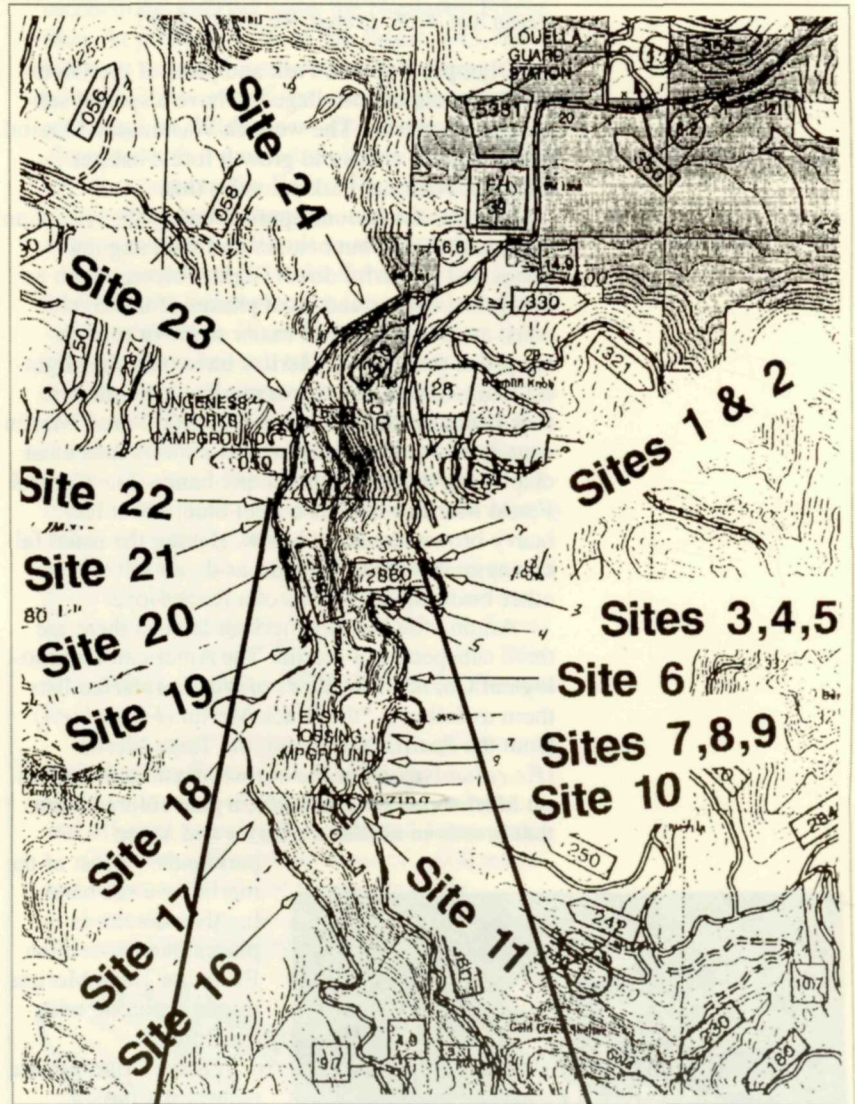
A major cooperative effort is underway to restore endangered Dungeness Chinook salmon, and numerous habitat restoration projects are directed at recovering other threatened salmon runs.

This fall crews opened an alternative road to the upper river and did some erosion control along the 2860 road. La Niña conditions are expected for this winter as well.

Kizer admits the best option for the 2860 road is to decommission it: remove culverts, stabilize unstable slopes, obliterate the road bed, and revegetate the site. But past road closures on the forest have met with vocal opposition. For this one to go through, the Forest Service will need strong support from conservationists.

A decision will probably be made early in 2000.

In the meantime, a short letter to Olympic National Forest Supervisor Dale Hom would help the forest Service do the right thing. Request that the problematic FS Road 2860 (the East Crossing road) be closed and erosive slopes stabilized.



FS Road 2880  
Damage along this road largely repaired, allowing access to area.

FS Road 2860 on steep unstable slope, is heavily damaged. OPA recommends that it be decommissioned to prevent further erosion and siltation of salmon habitat.

Write:  
Forest Supervisor Dale Hom  
Olympic National Forest  
1835 Black Lake Blvd.  
Olympia, WA 98512

Request that FS Road 2860 (the East Crossing road) be closed and that the erosive slopes be stabilized.



## Coastal Forest Merlin on the Olympic Peninsula

Philip H. Zalesky

Phil Zalesky is the author of *Birding in Snohomish County*, published in 1997 by Pilchuck Audubon Society, 1803 Hewitt Ave, #108, Everett, Wa 98201, \$6.45.

Olympic National Park and parts of the Olympic Peninsula are privileged to have a special subspecies of merlin. The western Washington Coastal Forest Merlin needs old growth forest habitat. Olympic National Park provides this.

Merlins are falcons approximately the size of an American Robin but heavier and with angular wings and powerful direct flight. Falcons, such as Peregrine, Prairie and most phases of the Gyrfalcons, are noted for their malar stripe or mutton-chop-like mustaches. Merlins have only the slightest indication of one. Most merlins have three to four bands on the tail, but the Coastal Forest Merlin usually has only two. However, photographs exist displaying the bird without any bands. The Coastal Forest Merlin's back is a steel blue, and it has heavy brown streaking below. Having the usual falcon aggressiveness, it feeds, as do all falcons, on other birds, up to the size of a Rock Dove.

Among the North American falcons there are three subspecies of merlin. The American Ornithological Union's *The Birds of North America* lists them as follows: "the Black Merlin (*F.c.suckleyi*) from the Pacific Northwest, the Taiga Merlin (*F.c.columbarius*) of the boreal forest, and the Prairie Merlin (*F.c.richardsonii*), a pale colored form that breeds in northern prairies and aspen

parklands." Most of the merlins we see harassing the shorebirds in places like Bowerman Basin are Taiga Merlins migrating along with their prey.

David Drummond a naturalist from Bellingham, has been researching the Coastal Forest Merlin (*F.columbarius suckleyi*) for more than 10 years, working primarily on the Olympic Peninsula.

Drummond had worked

several years for Olympic National Park locating nests of Spotted Owls. In the process, he located a Coastal Forest Merlin. His curiosity inspired him to concentrate full time on seeking more definitive information about this falcon. Of the three merlins, the Coastal Forest Merlin has been researched the least. The curiosity for scientists, according to Drummond, is: "What are Coastal Forest Merlins doing in our Northwest Forests? Does the glacial recession account for our northwest subspecies?" Drummond believes that to be the case.

Most of Drummond's research has been funded

by small grants from such foundations as The Mountaineers Foundation. I met with Drummond to discuss his impressive research and its implications to the health of our forest environments. Few people are aware of Drummond's important research.

What does it take to do field research on the Coastal Forest Merlin on Olympic Peninsula forests? As a field researcher, you must conduct extensive "listen-look" surveys, network and train biologists to identify merlins. You will need to get down on your hands and knees in the wet forests and search for feathers that may indicate the presence of a merlin nest. After you find a nest, you will sit for 10 to 15 hours in the rain forest staring patiently at the bird, taking notes, and shooting pictures. One time, after sitting immobile for hours, Drummond found a banana slug on his shoulder and another crawling up his pant leg. In just such conditions Drummond has spent 500 hours since this past February carrying out his field research.

The Wild Conservation Trust's Coastal Merlin Forest Project is Drummond. His field research comprises all the knowledge that exists on this subspecies. And at this time, his 10 years of meticulous field work has yet to be published in the ornithological journals. Publication of his research findings are the next step for him. I was invited to hear a preview of part of his study.

Drummond refrains from using the name Black Merlin. Coastal Forest Merlin, as he prefers it, has a steel blue back with *no black* on it. It is the darkest of the Merlin subspecies, however. The *Birds of North America* also indicates that it migrates, although there is no banding evidence of an individual Coastal Forest Merlin migration nor does the brooding season seem timed to cycle with a neotropical migration.

To test for migration would require netting a falcon and banding it. Drummond will not net merlins, for he feels this activity leads to serious harassment ending up with nest failures and birds being injured. He feels it important not to lose one bonding pair, for his findings indicate that the Coastal Forest Merlins are few in number. In fact that very scarcity has led Drummond to see if the subspecies can be placed on the threatened and/or endangered list.

Drummond believes that humans have the primary responsibility as stewards for the protection of the Coastal Forest Merlin. While the merlin does have natural enemies, for example the Great Horned Owl, which will take the young from the nest, mankind provides the most danger to the Merlin. Drummond learned from researchers at the



Coastal Forest Merlin.  
Photograph by David Drummond.

Continued on P. 11.



## Olympic Coast Clean-Up: April 2000 Spend A Weekend at the Beach!

Celebrate Earth Day's 30th anniversary!

You are invited to join other volunteers for an April weekend and be part of the first-ever major community effort to clean up Olympic Coast beaches.

The Olympic Coast Clean-Up will collect and remove marine debris from Peninsula shores, preserving the natural beauty of Washington's wilderness beaches. The effort is being sponsored by a partnership of citizen volunteers, conservation groups, businesses, and government agencies.

Teams will be formed to clean up designated zones from Shi Shi Beach to South Kalaloch Beach. Each zone will be approximately 1/2 to 1 mile in length. Access to the beaches will be from the usual locations, respecting the wilderness character of the beaches and Olympic National Park.

Volunteers will register at field operation centers at Mora, Ozette, Oil City, and Kalaloch, where they will receive information, tools, and guidance.

Volunteers will also record descriptions of the debris collected as well as bird and mammal information. These data will provide a "snapshot" record of the coast, and will be analysed by naturalists and marine scientists at Olympic National Park, the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, and the University of Washington.

## Merlin

*Continued from P. 10.*

Prairie Merlin study in Saskatoon, Canada, that climbing to nests had resulted in nine nesting failures. In the Olympics, he has found falconers to be a major source of depletion of birds. Some young birds have been taken from nests he has been researching. Thus he will not release geographical locations of nests.

Drummond has sought out other ornithologists hoping that they may have knowledge about the Coastal Forest Merlin. At this point he has found very few. In scientific publications references to this subspecies are vague and generally conjectural. He contacted the Birds of Prey Specialist at the U.S. Forest Service's Regional Office in Portland. All he received was a stunned silence, as if this bird was completely unheard of. Coastal Forest Merlins may also be found in California's northern coastal mountains, But Drummond's queries to respected

*Continued on P. 12*

### Sign up NOW!

Name and address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Best phone number and e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help collect beach debris.  I will organize a team.

I would like to work with the host volunteers at one of the field operation sites.  Preference? \_\_\_\_\_

I would also like to help later to remove debris from cache sites.

An Olympic National Park ranger can call me to help.

I am interested in knowing more about volunteering with Olympic National Park programs.

### Send this form to:

Jan Klippert, Project Coordinator

14036 Meridian N., Seattle, WA 98133

phone 206-365-2689, e-mail <jpklippert@aol.com>.





# VOICE of the WILD OLYMPICS

Sally W. Soest, Editor

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## NOTICE!

Dec. 15 & 16  
Public Hearings on  
Olympic National Forest  
Roadless Land Protection  
Page 3 for details.

### Olympic Park Associates

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Please mail to:  
Laura Zalesky, Membership Chair  
2433 Del Campo Drive, Everett, WA 98208

### Merlin

*Continued from P. 11.*

California ornithologists came up empty, too. Other subspecies have been researched, especially in Saskatoon, Alaska (Denali), Montana, Wisconsin and Newfoundland. But Drummond appears to be working alone on this subspecies.

Why is it important to research this subspecies? The implications are that this may be an indicator species for the health of our forests, and even more so than the Spotted Owl. Drummond's field work has found virtually no Coastal Forest Merlins in logged-off areas and a limited number in the old growth. The falcon appears to like forest riparian areas, nesting within 800 feet of streams. Cut-over forests have no attraction to the subspecies for nesting. For example, he has found none of these birds on Department of Natural Resource lands, and only a couple on the National Forest where habitat has been severely disturbed by logging practices. The Peregrine Falcon was placed on the endangered list in the 1960s, and the Peregrine Fund has done a remarkable job in bringing it back.

What is the future of the Coastal Forest Merlin? Is it destined to end up on the Endangered Species list? Drummond feels that, even after 10 years, research is far from complete. His baseline investigation will provide insights on habitat and prey selection, as well as breeding territorial preferences. The environmental implications of his study and those that follow may be monumental in the long run.

