



North Olympic Group Newsletter

Explore, Enjoy, Protect the Planet

Mar - April, 2014
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Meetings and Events

Mar. 13 – Executive Committee Meeting at Sequim Library
1 to 3 PM

Mar. 22 – Theler Wetlands Outing
(See Page 5)

April 10 – Executive Committee Meeting in Port Townsend 1 to 3 PM - Contact Monica at monicaflet@gmail.com for more information

April 25 – Film "Momenta", 7:00 PM, Peninsula College, Port Angeles (See Page 11)

April 27 – Gray Wolf River Outing (See Page 5)



Home is where the heart is.

Climate Change Update - time for action in our State!

By Bob Lynette

In 2008 our State Legislature passed an act limiting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Washington State. It has specific requirements to reduce GHG emissions in the State to 1990 levels by 2020, and further reductions by 2035 and 2050. Everyone agrees that we won't meet those requirements if we continue on our current course. So last year, in response to pushing by Governor Inslee, the Legislature created the Climate Legislative and Executive Workgroup (CLEW), charged with the responsibility of recommending ways to meet the requirements.

The CLEW was made up of two Democrats, two Republicans, and the Governor. Each member, except for the Governor, had one vote on the final recommendations. Governor Inslee was a non-voting member. They hired a consultant company (SAIC), held numerous hearings, and received more than 10,000 individual comments and public [testimony](#). Not reaching agreement (surprise, surprise), two reports were issued - one from the two Republicans, and one from Governor Inslee and the two Democrats.

The Republican report's major recommendations were:

- Incentivize hydroelectric and replace fossils fuels with nuclear generation
- Promote (R&D) for new technologies
- Modify fuel mix reporting system
- Study more, reevaluate the goals, and modify the reporting system

The Inslee/Democrats' major recommendations were:

- Establish a cap on carbon pollution emissions
- Replace out-of-state coal power we use with in-state renewables like wind and solar
- Establish an energy smart building program and help finance the development and use of clean energy.
- Promote use of clean fuels and modernize our system for transporting goods and people.

(continued on Page 2)

(All of the workgroup's reports, compiled into one document, can be [found here](#).)

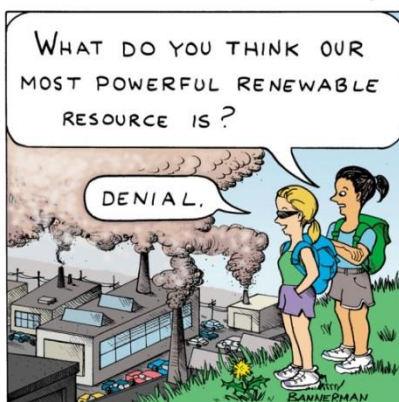
The Republican proposal is questionable and would just stall things with no immediate action. The most solid recommendation from the Inslee-Democrats plan is a cap on carbon pollution. Setting a limit on carbon pollution or setting a tax for emitting carbon are the best ways to achieve the needed reductions in an economically efficient way. (This writer prefers the carbon tax approach, with the proceeds recycled to the non-polluters that are hurt by the tax.) A carbon tax or a binding cap would end our current unwritten policy of allowing unlimited carbon dumping - a huge subsidy to the fossil fuel industry. Such programs have been effective in California and British Columbia, and are needed in Washington to drive the clean economy.

The other Inslee-Democrats' proposals are also excellent and should be implemented. But our current State Legislature is divided and little, if any steps will be taken to move forward on the proposals. Studies conducted by the University of Oregon found that, absent additional action to mitigate the impacts of climate change, each household in Washington will pay an additional \$3,633 each year by 2020 (2008 dollars) – a total cost to the state of almost \$10 billion by 2020. These costs come from predicted impacts – including irrigation and hydropower impacts from lost snowpack and natural water storage, increased public health-related costs, increased energy costs (increased demand and reduced hydropower supply), increased wild land fire costs, and increased coastal and storm damage. *(Taken from Governor's report that recommends Washington State do its own study of potential financial impacts.)*

Our North Olympic Group has endorsed supporting a personal pledge aimed at getting our political candidates and other decision makers to get off the dime and start taking strong steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The goal is to have them receive a huge number of notes from citizens who have taken the Pledge. It reads:

"I will support and give my vote to candidates who commit to take concrete, timely action to reduce climate-disrupting activities."

More on how we all can help soon.





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Group Executive Committee

We are governed by seven volunteers, with lots of help by our conservation committees. Meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each month. **All Sierra Club members are welcome to attend.**

Chair: Monica Fletcher

Vice Chair: Robert Sextro

Alternate Vice Chair: Darlene Schanfald

Secretary: Bill Volmut

Treasurer: Monica Fletcher

Executive Committee:

Norm Baker, Monica Fletcher,
Peter Guerrero, Darlene Schanfald,

Robert Sextro, Bill Volmut, John Woolley

Contact info:

Norman Baker:

ntbakerphd@gmail.com

Monica Fletcher:

monicaflet@gmail.com

Peter Guerrero

studio374photography@gmail.com

Darlene Schanfald:

darlenes@olympus.net

Robert Sextro:

robert.sextro@noblis.com

Bill Volmut:

bill.volmut@gmail.com

John Woolley:

woolley@tfn.com

Group website:

Newsletter Editor – Janet Marx

Janetmarx_76@msn.com



Updates

Black Point/ Pleasant Harbor Development Brinnon, WA

According to a schedule provided by the Jefferson County Project Planner the Developer, Statesman Group, will submit the Preliminary Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to the County on March 3rd. The schedule now projects the final draft will be released for a 45 day public comment period on April 21st. All of this is dependent on the Developer providing all final reports supporting the Draft Supplemental SEIS by February 24th. As of Feb. 25th the required water report had not been submitted so the timeline is slipping already.

Oregon Marbled Murrelets

In early February three environmental groups trying to protect the threatened marbled murrelets have settled a lawsuit that has canceled 28 timber sales in Oregon state forests. The case began in 2012, when the Audubon Society of Portland, Cascadia Wild lands and Center for Biological Diversity sued the Oregon Department of Forestry to halt timber sales on 1,956 acres in the Elliott, Clatsop and Tillamook state forests.

WAMEND - Washington State "Move to Amend"

Signature gathering has begun for Citizen Initiative I-1329. This measure would urge an amendment to the constitution that states constitutional rights apply only to natural people, not corporations. To date 14 states have passed similar initiatives. If you want to volunteer to collect signatures contact:

Clallam County - Andrea Radich,

andreasangels@msn.com, 360-457-6884

Jefferson County - Dianne Diamond,

diannejoydiamond@yahoo.com, 360-385-2341

Students for Sustainability Making a Difference

By Peter Guerrero

“These kids are our future - let's give them a shout out for doing the right thing! Climate change will impact their lives, and they are doing something about it.”

-- Port Townsend citizen

Members of the Students for Sustainability Club at Port Townsend High School are embarking on a 3,000-mile journey of a lifetime to travel by public transportation (bus, ferry, and train) to Washington, D.C. to lobby for climate action. After their work on the local level to address climate change resulted in a very prestigious honor from the EPA--the President's Environmental Youth Award—the students now hope to take their message for a sustainable and livable future to a larger audience. To provide a voice for fellow concerned students, they will be contacting schools along the train route from Seattle to D.C. (55 stops through 12 states!) and picking up petitions from students as they go (see Updates to download) or sign their [national online petition](#).

The students, scheduled to leave March 27, are currently in the midst of a fundraising campaign for the trip. Individuals who want to help support our next generation of environmentalists can contribute at this website:

<http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/3-000-miles-by-train-to-lobby-for-climate-action>

Contributions can also be mailed; make your check out to *PTSD No. 50* and on the note line put *Students for Sustainability Trip* and send to: Port Townsend High School, c/o Lois Sherwood
1500 Van Ness St.
Port Townsend WA 98368

You can find out more about the students at their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/sfspths> or contact them at sfspths@gmail.com



This is our hope and our future



FOREST BRIEFS

By John Woolley

Queets Thin: In July/August volunteers will survey the roads the Forest Service wants to build in order to thin 5000 acres to provide jobs for locals. Volunteers can be bunked at nearby private property that overlooks the Pacific Ocean. If you are interested in volunteering please contact John Woolley at [360-683-0724](tel:360-683-0724) or woolley@tfon.com

Forest Road Plan: A year behind schedule the new US Forest Service Supervisor, Reta Laford, intends to finish the priority list of roads to be decommissioned, or possibly converted to trail. The Trail category includes hikers, bikes, horses, ATVs, motorcycles...

Dose Road: Benign neglect continues as Dean Yoshina, ONF has at this time decided to do nothing to accommodate recreation users at the Dose Washout. It is agreed that some miss-use and abuse are occurring at this popular trailhead, but any temporary fixes lack funding and may stir the controversy regarding rebuilding the road to Muscott Flat. Questions on rationale are encouraged.

Duckabush Biomass Cut: DNR has issued a first for our area - a logging unit to provide for biomass use specifically.



Explore, Enjoy, Protect

By Peter Guerrero

The Sierra Club's motto has its priorities straight! You can't be a strong advocate to protect what you don't know or value. Wilderness is one of those things and here, on the Olympic Peninsula, we're blessed with some of the most spectacular natural beauty in the lower 48 states. But protecting it has been a constant struggle and we can thank those who came before us for having the wisdom to protect what appeared to some, at the time, as an endless wilderness to be exploited.

Last year the North Olympic Group's outings focused on showcasing the areas that would be protected under the Wild Olympics legislation recently introduced by Congressman Kilmer and Senator Murray. This year we'll be doing the same with a few new additions: a hike reachable by mass transit, a wheelchair accessible hike, and a hike on the west side of the Peninsula with an optional overnight at the historic lodge where FDR stayed when he made the case for Olympic National Park.

See Page 6 for a calendar of outing events.



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2014 Sierra Club Outings

Date	Location	Round Trip	Description
March 22, Saturday	Mary E. Theler Wetlands Nature Reserve	3.5 miles, easy	Easing into the Season: This is an early season, wheelchair accessible walk in the wildlife rich estuary of the Union River. Eagles, osprey, herons and otters make their home along these wetlands of the Hood Canal.
April 27, Sunday	Gray Wolf River	8.5 miles, moderate	Spring Woodland Flowers: A perfect early season leg-stretcher for all ages, this trip includes old-growth conifers, woodland flowers, cascading creeks, and plenty of good picnic spots along the way. Early portions of the trail include areas that would be protected as new wilderness under the Wild Olympics proposal.
May 28, Wednesday	Mt. Walker	5 miles, moderate	Take the Bus: The eastern most peak in the Olympics with sweeping views of the Puget Sound lowlands and Hood Canal; it's one of the best places in the state to see the coast rhododendron in bloom. This trip will be timed to coincide with Jefferson Transit's bus schedule.
June 15, Sunday	Upper S. Fork Skokomish River	8 miles, moderate	Help Save This Spectacular Olympic Wilderness: A valley as wild as any in the adjacent national park with some of the biggest trees on the Peninsula and the wild Skokomish for a companion as it cascades through a narrow box canyon. This is an area that should have but designated wilderness but currently lacks protection. It is one of our hikes showcasing the importance of the Wild Olympics proposal. Olympic Park Associates is a co-sponsor of this event.
July 13, Sunday	Grand Valley/Obstruction Peak	Up to 10 miles, strenuous	Alpine Meadows in Bloom: Sparkling alpine lakes adorning bold mountain faces along this mile-high valley. Wildflowers, old growth, alpine tundra, marmots and bear are all here in this outdoor cathedral.
August 23, Saturday	South Quinault Ridge/West Fork Humptulips River	10 miles, moderate, but requires numerous fords of the Humptulips	Help Save This Spectacular Olympic Wilderness: This remarkable area is home to one of the most extensive blocks of ancient rain forest not already protected by wilderness designation in the lower 48 states. Huge Douglas fir, Sitka spruce and western red cedar trees are numerous, sometimes topping out at 300 feet and supporting girths of nine feet or more. This is the second hike showcasing the importance of the Wild Olympics proposal. Located on the west side of the Peninsula, participants may wish to spend the weekend at the historic Quinault Lodge or to camp at nearby Park Service campgrounds.

Fall outings will be listed in our next newsletter.

All hikes require an RSVP to Peter Guerrero at: studio374photography@gmail.com



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Air monitoring update and results

By Bob Sextro

As you likely know already, a large-scale woody biomass combustion to energy cogeneration plant started up in the fall of 2013 in Port Angeles (PA) at Nippon. The particle emissions from this plant (permitted to be as high as 202 pounds/day or 37 tons/year), even when filtered and controlled, could present serious health threats to the surrounding communities, especially for infants, the young, the elderly and those with pre-existing cardio-pulmonary conditions. It was because of this that several of our local NOG members worked diligently with our local air quality regulatory agency Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA), to provide for additional particle air monitoring in eastern Clallam county.

As was presented in our May-June 2013 newsletter, ORCAA, following their 2012 Clallam County Air Monitoring Saturation Study Plan, deployed and began operating 4 optical particle counters (OPCs) in PA and Sequim from January to April 2013. The OPCs are positioned and designed to detect and count particles sized around 2.5 microns (also called PM2.5) in our air. The Plan also included the operation of an aethalometer designed to detect soot (or very fine) particles in our air and differentiate their origin from either wood burning or diesel exhaust. The Plan calls for these air monitors to continue to operate for approximately 12 months and ORCAA has said they will discontinue their operation at the end of March 2014. ORCAA has also indicated the equipment will be refurbished and re-deployed to Jefferson County in April 2014. More information about this study and to observe the data being collected can be found at ORCAA's web site (www.orcaa.org/air/saturation-studies/clallam-county).

Since the Saturation Study for particles in our air in eastern Clallam is being discontinued, except for the permanent particle monitor located at Steven's Middle School in PA, we have asked ORCAA to report on and present the findings of this year-long study. Initially we were told by ORCAA that they would report the Saturation Study findings sometime in the summer of 2014 at one of their scheduled Board of Director meetings in Olympia. We spoke-up and indicated that a local presentation of the results somewhere here in eastern Clallam County would be much more desirable and get to a broader, local audience. ORCAA's answer back was their intent to host a Webinar-event from Olympia so that we could view the presentation via the internet. We are still of the opinion that a presentation of the study results for eastern Clallam county is best presented to our residents via a meeting held locally in the county. If you agree we urge you to contact ORCAA via phone or email, see below, stating your preference for a local meeting to present the results of our Saturation Study.

ORCAA Contacts: Fran McNair, Director: 360.539.7610; fran.mcnair@orcaa.org
Odelle Hadley, PhD, air specialist: 360.539.7610; odelle.hadley@orcaa.org
Phil Johnson, ORCAA Board Chair: 360.385.9100; pjohnson@co.jefferson.wa.us
Mike Doherty, ORCAA Board member from Clallam county: 360.417.2233;
mdoherty@co.clallam.wa.us

NOTEWORTHY INFORMATION: As part of the 2013 Washington budget negotiations the State funded a collaborative multi-year study (with ORCAA and Department of Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Washington) to measure for ultrafine particles in our air in eastern Clallam County. This study began in PA in the late fall of 2013 with chemical specific measurements, to determine the source of the particles, using a Chemical Ionization Mass Spectrometer (CIMS) and measurements of ultrafine particle number concentrations and size distributions, sized below 0.1 micron, with a TSI Scanning Mobility Particle Sizer (SMPS).



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE PORT ANGELES HARBOR?

By Darlene Schanfald

Rayonier – Port Angeles Harbor Cleanups Last year, the WA State Department of Ecology released the raw data attempting to compare several bays east of the Port Angeles Harbor -- Dungeness, Discovery, Sequim, and Port Townsend Bays -- with this Harbor.

Dr. Peter deFur, Technical Advisor for the Olympic Environmental Council (OEC) for the Rayonier and Port Angeles Harbor cleanups, reviewed Ecology's raw data. His report includes comparison of types and levels of contaminants found in each water body.

Since, OEC and Ecology discussed the findings and asked what Ecology intended to do. Ecology stated it will not be using this information for the Rayonier-Pt Angeles Harbor cleanup. Ecology received several comments and concerns having to do with complicating factors such as different sediment types at each site, distances sampled from known polluting sources in these water bodies, etc. "So DOE is pausing and vetting these questions and issues." Still, the cleanup process will proceed on schedule.

The single calendar change is allowing Rayonier an additional six months to release its draft, Interim Action Alternatives Section. This is now due June 30, 2014. It will describe the cleanup options that Rayonier will study.

The newest blog about the Rayonier Mill cleanup has been posted at

<http://ecologywa.blogspot.com/2014/01/around-sound-rayonier-mill-cleanup-7.html>

PenPly cleanup The process leading to cleanup of the abandoned Peninsula Plywood mill site on the city's waterfront is moving faster than anticipated. The mill site cleanup could begin next year.

<http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/article/20140204/news/302049976/0/SEARCH>

Marine Trades Area The Draft Cleanup Action Plan and public comment period is scheduled for Spring 2014 and later in the summer, a Public Review Draft remedial investigation/Feasibility Stop and public comment period.

Our Fresh Start Lastly, The Olympic Environmental Council recently produced a beautiful pictorial brochure of the Harbor's development history, plus details for each part of the Harbor naming the potential liable parties for the cleanups and the main contaminants of concern in each of these areas. It is also meant as a self-guided tour of the Harbor from Rayonier to the Ediz Hook US Coast Guard Station.

If you would like a copy of this brochure sent to you, please email your name and address to darlenes@olympus.net

If you know of an organization, including service organizations, that might be interested in a 3-5 minute presentation about the brochure information, please email Darlene their contact information.



A Visit to the Bullitt Center

By Norm and Peggy Baker

As environmentalists interested in the energy efficiency of buildings, we recently visited The Bullitt Center in Seattle. It was created by the Bullitt foundation and operates in conjunction with The UW-Center for Integrated Design. The Bullitt Center is advertised as *The Most Advanced Green Building in the World*¹. Grand opening was Earth Day, 2013. This we had to see firsthand.

Everything of importance in the construction of a green commercial building was considered and accomplished. The vision necessary to create this *state-of-the-art building in urban sustainability* required it to be self-sufficient for energy and water. It had to meet rigorous standards for green materials and indoor environment quality. This is the *Living Building Challenge* imperatives. All imperatives must operate synergistically. All must operate without a heavy reliance on overly complex or highly customized systems. The imperatives are:

- Site:** The location will support a pedestrian-, bicycle-, and transit-friendly lifestyle.
- Water:** Rainwater is collected on the roof, stored in an underground cistern and used throughout the building. Composting toilets on-site recycle water and all nutrients.
- Energy:** A solar array will generate as much electricity as the building and all its occupants use.
- Health:** The building will promote health for its occupants, with inviting stairways, operable windows and features to promote walking and resource sharing.
- Materials:** The building will not contain any “Red List” hazardous materials commonly found in building components. All construction was done with off-the-shelf construction materials and the Red List excluded hundreds of common chemicals.
- Equity:** All workstations are within 30 feet of large easily operable windows, offering all occupants and workers access to fresh air and natural daylight. You have to love that.
- Beauty:** Stunning architecture, an innovative photovoltaic array, a green roof and other native plantings, large structural timbers and a revitalized pocket park help beautify the surrounding neighborhood.

Environmentalists are generally aware of the LEED standards for building construction by the United States Green Building Council² started in 1998. LEED is a green certification program for buildings, homes and communities that guides their design, construction, operations and maintenance. Till now the LEED certification was the most comprehensive program available. It has been effective. Here in Seattle there are 266 LEED certified buildings³. Further, the Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment just released its *Resource Conservation Management Plan*, which aims to reduce energy consumption by 20% by 2020⁴.

The Bullitt Center was built to standards that far exceed the LEED certification standards. In the commons room, there are displays documenting the advanced technology of this building. For example, Dennis Hayes, who organized the first Earth Day in 1970 and is the CEO for the Bullitt foundation, is quoted as saying “If you really want to build a green building today..... you will find yourself in direct violation of two dozen building codes”. Here in the commons room, you also learn that 48% of the energy consumed in the United States is due to buildings and the average EUI (*Energy Use Index* or kBtu/sf), for Seattle buildings is 92. The next closest building in the entire world is 50. The Bullitt Center EUI is 16 - an 82% reduction in energy use. To put this into even more perspective, the *Seattle 2011/2012 Building Energy Benchmarking Analysis*, showed that hospitals and supermarkets had an EUI of 305⁵.

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A Visit to the Bullitt Center

(Continued)

This was one of the most fascinating interesting tours we have ever had. Sometimes projects of this magnitude look and feel like a bad science experiment with vision and cost beyond the remotest possibilities. But this was one of the most stunningly beautiful, livable, environmentally sustainable buildings we have ever seen. Costs to build were 28% more than conventional but there will be payback from energy and city services in a very few years without even considering the social and educational value. Finally, the Bullitt Center was just awarded The World Architecture News Most Sustainable Building Award for 2013.

All environmentalists owe it to themselves to see and to appreciate the Bullitt Center. Above all else, it clearly demonstrates that buildings can be truly green and sustainable. The tour guide was extremely knowledgeable. We informally toured the entire building hands-on and were encouraged to share and discuss anything and everything.

Tours are by reservation only, cost five dollars, start at 4 PM Tuesday through Saturday and make a visit quite memorable.

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4. Miller, K. 2014. *Seattle Buildings on Track for Major Energy Savings* – <http://wacleanetech.org/2014/01/seattle-buildings-on-track-for-major-energy-savings/#sthash.H8fUBcN8.dpuf>
5. Marcacci, S., 2014. Seattle Energy Benchmarking Finds \$90 Million Potential Annual Utility Bill Savings. <http://theenergycollective.com/silviomarcacci/327476/seattle-energy-benchmarking-finds-90-million-potential-annual-utility-bill-sav>

Two Pictures Are Worth a Thousand Words



before



after

Tar Sands Oil Site - Alberta, Canada

Biochar Presentation and Demonstration

The Sequim Organic Gardeners group will be hosting a biochar presentation and demonstration at 10:30 to 1:30 on April 1st, 2014 at Norm and Peggy Baker's residence. The address is 3789 Lost Mountain Road in Sequim.

This is a brown bag lunch affair since attendees will hear a presentation before lunch and a demonstration of how to make biochar immediately after lunch. Attendees will have the opportunity to sign up for a biochar experiment to see if biochar performs as hoped in their personal garden soils. All attendees who sign up for the experiment will take a 1 pound bag of biochar home. Biochar increases plant productivity, but according to the current science, only in about 50% of available soils used for plant production. Here is an opportunity to see if your garden soil performs better with biochar. It most assuredly does in my personal organic garden. Of course, you will also receive directions on how to use and test biochar properly. Remember, if you want to receive a sample of biochar for a test of your personal garden soils, please let Norm Baker know well before the April 1 date since the biochar has to be prepared.

Biochar is nothing more than charcoal produced from woody waste. Its principal use will be to sequester carbon back into the ground to fight climate change. Another equally important use is to increase the productivity and sustainability of vegetable gardens and agricultural land. In addition there are numerous environmental benefits to using biochar and incorporating it into our soils.

Interested people should contact Norman Baker before April 1 confirm attendance.

Norman Baker, 360-683-8046, ntbakerphd@gmail.com



THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST COAL PROJECT

is threatening the global environment on a scale greater than the Keystone Pipeline, but most people have never heard of it.

On **April 25th** the Magic of Cinema at Peninsula College in Port Angeles is showing the film "**Momenta**".

The film is a product of the Momenta Project, a movement to educate, raise awareness, and activate communities to stop all proposed coal exports in the Pacific Northwest. The documentary shares the stories of people living along the coal export trail and the coal project's environmental impacts.

Maier Performance Hall (E-130), **Peninsula College**, 1502 E. Lauridsen Boulevard, Port Angeles; **April 25** at **7:00 PM**; General admission is **\$5.00** (free with student ID).

Thank you to the Magic of Cinema and the Surfrider Foundation Olympic Peninsula Chapter who are co-sponsoring the film.

Ecology Proposes a No-Discharge Zone for Puget Sound

by Peter Guerrero

Ecology is proposing to designate all of Puget Sound a no discharge zone. Currently, Coast Guard regulations prohibit the discharge of raw sewage within 3 nautical miles of shore. However, if a vessel contains a treatment system that allows for the minimal disinfection of sewage, then discharge is currently allowed in Puget Sound. Ecology is proposing the no discharge zone because it is concerned that these treatment systems are inadequate.

Ecology has a voluntary agreement with large cruise ships that have agreed to discharge only at sea. Absent this voluntary agreement, large cruise ships would be allowed to discharge treated sewage in the Sound. The designation of Puget Sound as no-discharge zone would allow Ecology to enforce the existing voluntary agreement with large cruise ships.

The existing voluntary agreement does not apply to small cruise ships, container ships and tankers, and smaller commercial vessels such as tugs and fishing boats, all of which would be covered under the new designation.

A line is drawn from Dungeness Spit to Discovery Island Lighthouse to define what constitutes inland waters. Ecology's proposed no discharge zone does not extend west of this line, comprising the vast majority of the Strait of Juan de Fuca from Dungeness Spit to Neah Bay. Shipping channels in this area are more than 3 nautical miles from shore and Ecology also believes shellfish in this area are not as vulnerable to contamination, a dubious assumption.

To find out more and to comment see:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/nonpoint/CleanBoating/nodischargezone.html>



Sponsored by the Olympic Climate Action (OCA) group of Port Angeles, Plant-for-the-Planet ambassadors Michael Foster and his daughters, Zoe and Stella, visited four Clallam County schools between February 18 and 21.

Plant-for-the-Planet is an international youth organization that hopes to plant one trillion trees worldwide by 2020. Plant-For-The-Planet is organized by children who work for a better future on earth and are now the official Tree-Counters for the United Nations Tree campaign.

The organization also conducts Plant-for-the-Planet Academies where children learn the causes and effects of the climate crisis and how we can solve it. Children teach other children to act as Climate Justice Ambassadors, who plant trees, talk to leaders, conserve energy and inspire people to act now for their future.

Watch this amazing video www.youtube.com/user/PlantForThePlanet for an introduction to the organization.



Navy seeks expansion of sonar and explosives testing in vast NW Training Range

The U.S. Navy is seeking a new permit from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to increase their sonar and explosives training in the Northwest Training Range Complex (NWTC) in an area approximately the size of Montana that stretches from the Olympic Peninsula, south to Mendocino County in California, and includes all of Puget Sound, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, parts of the Strait of Georgia, U.S. inland waters along the coast and, in a new expansion, areas of the inside passage in Alaska.

Under a proposed new 2015- 2020 permit outlined in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)—this vast area would see an increase in the number of “takes” of endangered killer whales, harbor porpoises and other threatened marine mammals. A “take” is not necessarily a lethal take but rather an instance of harm great or small that under the new EIS would be allowed to exceed the previous permit number of 650,000 takes. Non-lethal harm ranging from hearing loss to extreme avoidance and behavioral changes could occur repeatedly to an individual animal. The cumulative impacts are unknown.

EarthJustice, a non-profit public interest law organization representing a coalition of environmental groups (InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, Center for Biological Diversity, Friends of the Earth, Friends of the San Juans, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), and People For Puget Sound), recently won a very significant court ruling regarding sonar testing in the NWTC. The lawsuit led the Federal District Court in October 2013 to demand that the NMFS use the best available science that has come forth since the initial 2010-2015 permits were issued, and for this new science to be reflected in all future and current permits to the Navy.

The NMFS has developed additional mitigations since the ruling. They established Mitigation Zones around Navy ships that are actively testing sonar or dropping explosives—in which they charge the Navy itself with the task of spotting nearby marine mammals and voluntarily postponing their tests or moving their location. Here is a link to their press release about the changes:

http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2013/20131114_mmpa.html. Presumably these guidelines will apply to the NWTC.

In the DEIS the Navy has declared the cumulative impact of repeated harmful events as “small” and “negligible” and that “compared to the potential mortality, stranding, and injury resulting from commercial ship strikes and by-catch, entanglement, ocean pollution and other human causes, the potential for mortality, strandings, or injury resulting from Navy training and testing activities is estimated to be orders of magnitude lower (tens of animals versus hundreds of thousands of animals).” (Executive Summary ES7).

Earthjustice lawyer Steve Mashuda says this about the Navy’s assessment that testing has negligible effect, “Just saying that other activities also harm marine mammals cuts the other way. In the instance of the southern residents, we are down to 80 or 81 killer whales in that critically endangered population. If one of them is harmed or killed by a ship strike for example that just means that it becomes all the more imperative to make sure that we are all doing what we can, and that includes the Navy, not to harm the next one of the remaining 79.”

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Navy seeks expansion *(continued)*

Mashuda mentioned that one particular video speaks volumes about the kind of response whales exhibit in the face of sonar levels characteristic of these tests. Here animals are seen taking extreme avoidance behaviors from an event deemed to have reached an estimated 165 decibels. 140db is enough to cause permanent human hearing loss. Decibel levels are logarithmic. Though the exact operating volume that the Navy exercises can reach is classified they are widely regarded to reach 235 decibels. In comparison last year's 12th man at a Seattle Seahawks game record is 137 decibels. Here is a link to the videotaped USS Shoup incident in Haro Strait.

<http://earthjustice.org/blog/2012-january/groups-demand-that-navy-change-sonar-testing>

Sierra Club NOG believes, as do many, that in addition to the MFS guidelines for cessation of testing in the presence of whales and marine mammals there should be critical areas set aside from all testing, especially in regards to the Southern resident orca populations in the South Sound. Marine sanctuaries as well should be just that - a sanctuary from this extreme disruption of the sound-based life of these animals.

In a recent interview on KPTZ Radio out of Port Townsend Navy DEIS Specialist Liane Nakahara responded when asked why are there not southern Puget Sound sites designated to be free of testing. She replied "Training here allows us to keep our sailors and our assets, our ships and our aircraft close to the home port itself so sailors aren't too far away from their families. It cuts down on fuel costs. Essentially we are saving money and reducing fuel emissions in the long run. Plus the Northwest provides the diverse environment that we need to train realistically so that sailors are ready to go before they actually have to deploy." Clearly convenience, topographical details and fuel savings are not cause for any harassment of marine mammals that might ultimately lead— animal-by- animal—to possible extinction.

The DEIS document covers an enormous amount of potential problems with these Navy activities. Other resource categories that might be affected by Navy activities that are also discussed in the DEIS include fish, sea turtles, birds, marine invertebrates, sediment, water quality, marine habitats and vegetation, and cultural resources.

In short the Navy must be required to:

- Schedule training to avoid times of the year when sensitive species are present in critical biological areas along this vast stretch of coast, including in places like the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary on the Washington coast or biologically rich waters off of the Oregon and Northern California coasts.
- Develop and incorporate better techniques for detecting marine mammals in training areas before exercises begin.

Public Comment Period:

The window for public comment period is now until March 25. Comments may be sent by email on the Navy link for the Draft EIS at <http://nwtteis.com>. In addition we suggest copies of your comments be sent to your Members of Congress. The North Olympic Group will be carefully reading the DEIS and finishing our comments for the March 25th deadline in the next few weeks and will send them out with a sample letter soon.