



North Olympic Group Newsletter

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<http://www.sierraclub.org/washington/north-olympic>

Mar - Jun 2020



In This Issue

Wild Olympics Milestone _____	1
Energy Efficiency Tour _____	2
Penned Finfish Aquaculture _____	3
Monarchs in Peril _____	4
Military Exercises & Growlers _____	5
Trans Mtn Pipeline Ext. _____	6
Wood Products/TRC _____	7
PA Harbor Clean-up _____	8

Meetings & Events

Mar 14 – Celeb. of Science (Geek-out) at Vern Burton Ctr, 10 AM – 4PM in Port Angeles

Mar 18 – Storm Water & Water Quality lecture at Sequim City Hall 6:30 – 8:00 PM

Mar 26 – Excom mtg in Sequim, 1–3 PM Location to be announced.

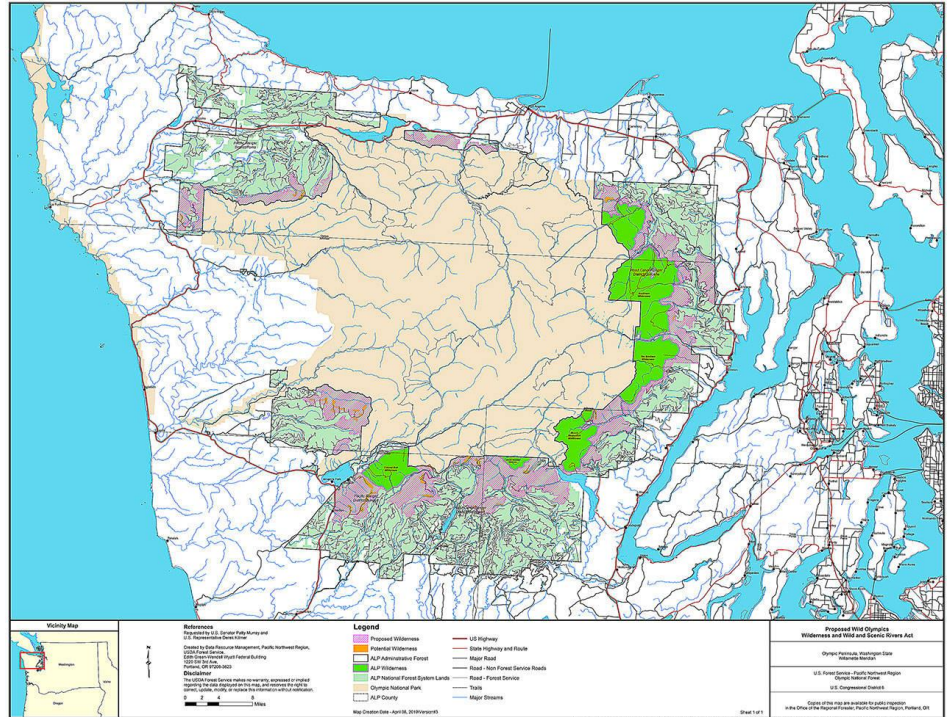
Apr 23 – Excom mtg in Sequim, 1–3 PM Location to be announced.

May 1 - 10 – Irrigation Festival in Sequim

May 7 – Public Comments on military use of parks, 9–5 PM Fort Worden

May 28 – Excom mtg in Sequim, 1–3 PM Location to be announced

Milestone Reached in Wild Olympics Campaign



On February 12, the US House of Representatives passed the Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers Act with bipartisan support. This vote, coming after years of sustained effort by Congressman Kilmer and Senator Murray, marked a historic milestone in the history of the Wild Olympics campaign, and an exciting moment for the North Olympic Group, which is a proud founding member of the Wild Olympics Coalition.

In describing this milestone event, Congressman Kilmer said: *(This is an) opportunity to protect over 126,000 acres of public land while ensuring we can keep and grow jobs in our natural resource industries and other sectors.*

When Senator Murray and I drafted this bill, we knew how important it was that no community was left behind. Tribes, sportsmen, conservation groups, timber communities, business leaders, shellfish growers, and everyone in between collaborated with me to make sure this bill puts our communities first. The bill is a win-win – helping protect and grow jobs in our region while also protecting some extraordinary natural treasures.

Senator Murray has introduced a companion bill in the Senate. Please contact Congressman [Kilmer](#) to thank him for his efforts and Senators [Murray](#) and [Cantwell](#) to support their efforts to ensure its passage by the Senate.



Marmot Pass

Peter F. Guerrero Studio 374 Photography

Group Executive Committee

As of January, we are governed by three volunteers, with help from our conservation committees and interested members. To contact Excom members or for more information email them at northolympicgroupsc@gmail.com

Meetings are now held on the fourth Thursday of each month. Locations will vary depending on attendance to accommodate members.

All Sierra Club members are welcome to attend.



Officers:

Chair: Darlene Schanfald
Vice Chair: Norm Baker
Secretary: Genie Mixson
Treasurer: Genie Mixson

There is room at the table. If you are interested in joining the EXCOM, contact us via the email address above.

Executive Committee:

Norm Baker
Peter Guererro
Genie Mixson
Darlene Schanfald
Bob Sextro

Newsletter Editor

Genie Mixson, Darlene Schanfald
mixsonneg@gmail.com

Complaints, suggestions, and opinions are always welcome

Interested in Energy Efficiency?



Join the April 11 tour in Sequim and witness how David Large was able to completely and efficiently energize his 2200-square-foot, zero-passive residence resulting in just about no monthly energy fees. You'll follow his path to how he was able to achieve this and learn much from his vast knowledge on energy efficiency.

The tour begins at 10 AM and will last about one hour. The tour can accommodate 12 persons. If many more people wish to join, Mr. Large will give another tour that afternoon.

RSVP to Darlene Schanfald by email: darlenes@olympus.net

Clallam Conservation District Board of Supervisors Election on Mar 12th

Clallam Conservation District Board of Supervisors have adopted a resolution setting the date, time, and location of the election to fill the expiring term of Robert Beebe. The election will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2020 from 12:00 to 7:00 pm at the Clallam Conservation District office at 228 W. First Street, Suite H, Port Angeles.

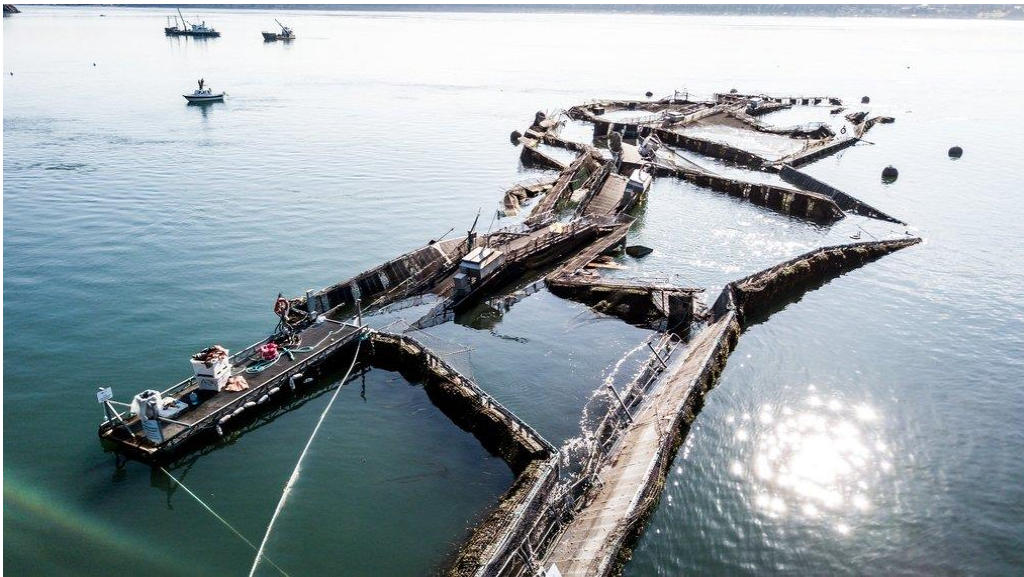
Also - We Need Help for Upcoming Elections

Our North Olympic Group needs help. During the election season we will evaluate state and local candidates by questionnaire or interview. Please contact us at northolympicgroup@gmail.com if you are interested in being part of this important team.

Finfish Aquaculture Controversy Continues

By Darlene Schanfald

In 2018, Cooke Aquaculture's Cypress Island net pens collapsed. The major escape of Atlantic salmon spurred Senators Kevin Van De Wege, Senator Kevin Ranker and Representative Mike Chapman, into action that leads the WA State Legislature to outlaw future raising nonnative fish in pens. The finfish companies can continue until their permits terminate.



The 2018 legislation also required that WA State Departments of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Ecology, and Natural Resources send a written report to the Legislature describing the steps these agencies will take to improve oversight of net pens. Last year, without the three agencies having produced the required report, WDFW approved Cooke Aquaculture's redistributing thousands of its Atlantic salmon from some pens to others.

In this legislative session, to ensure funding and that the marine finfish aquatic farmers are held financially responsible for inspections, Senator Van De Wege moved Senator Christine Rolfes' SB6613 language through his Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee. The bill requires that "the rules must provide for the recovery of actual costs incurred for required inspections, monitoring, and compliance testing by the department."

In February 2020, four non-profit organizations* jointly sued WDFW for permitting steelhead farms in the marine waters of Skagit and Kitsap counties. These genetically modified fish are not considered "native" by some. The major concern is these huge feedlots --- their water-sediment pollution, fish diseases, and the potential escapements --- interfere with protecting the **wild** steelhead (listed as "threatened"), salmon, and the orcas.

In response to WDFW's request for comments on a Mitigated Determination of Non Significance, (MDNS 19-05) regarding raising sterile all-female triploid rainbow trout/steelhead at existing marine net pen sites in Puget Sound, the Washington State Chapter of the Sierra Club requested that WDFW "begin the process to update the underlying January 1990 Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (FPEIS) on Fish Culture in Floating Net Pens. This would allow the Department to make recommendations based on new or updated science that has been discovered regarding this issue over the last 29 years." Also recommended is that WDFW begin an EIS process for Land-based Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) to reduce or eliminate the impacts to the marine environment caused by net pens.

* Wild Fish Conservancy, Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Food Safety, and Friends of the Earth

Migrating Monarch Butterflies in Serious Decline



According to the Xerces Society: “Once millions of monarchs overwintered along the Pacific coast in California and Baja, Mexico – an estimated 4.5 million in the 1980s. But by the mid-2010s, the population had declined by about 97%, and starting in 2018, monarch butterflies had tough seasons in their migratory and breeding grounds in the western states. In the past two years, the annual Xerces Western Monarch Thanksgiving Count showed that the population hit a new low: In both 2018 and 2019, volunteers counted under 30,000 monarchs—less than 1% of the population’s historic size.”

In light of their precarious situation, the recent murders of two Mexican environmentalists seeking to protect the Monarch’s winter breeding grounds is particularly disturbing. Unfortunately, the intimidation and murder of environmental activists globally is on the rise according to Global Witness:

More than three people were murdered each week in 2018, with countless more criminalized, for defending their land and our environment. Calls to protect the planet are growing louder – but around the world, those defending their land and our environment are being silenced. More than three such people were murdered on average every week in 2018, with attacks driven by destructive industries like mining, logging and agribusiness.

We can do a lot at home by paying attention to our consumption habits. Do we buy products containing palm oils from palm oil plantations that have replaced rainforests? Do we use woods that are not sustainably sourced? Do we consume foods that were grown on lands that once supported greater biodiversity? You get the picture – we need to make conscious decisions in how we live and we also need to demand that corporations do the same with their supply chains.



And, in case you’re feeling angry and frustrated by the growing violence against environmentalists worldwide, consider supporting organizations like Global Witness who are actively working to address the issue: <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/>



North Olympic Group Newsletter

Explore, Enjoy, Protect the Planet

Mar – Jun 2020

Page No: 5

Oppose Military Exercises in Washington State Parks

In 2015, Washington State Parks issued a 5-year permit allowing the Navy to occupy five parks for training exercises. The permit expires April 30th. The new permitting process is moving fast and with little public notice.

The Navy is seeking to expand the number of parks from 5 to 29, with a 72-hour occupation and 8 visits per year at each park. This involves camping outside designated campsites, hiding in foliage in camouflage, using weapons that contain plastic paint ball capsules that can cause considerable harm to the unprotected public in an accident, and using submersible craft or land vehicles to come onto beaches and hiding to “observe” park visitors—you and I.

While we honor our service personnel and support their training, Washington’s State Parks should not be used as military reservations. Our state parks are visited by millions of residents and tourists and are a huge economic stimulus to local community. If our parks become military training grounds, local businesses will suffer the consequences. Please voice your opposition to the Navy’s proposal to use our parks for military training by using this [State Parks comment link](#).

Attend this local meeting to demand a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), including impacts on local communities and businesses. And, here’s how to speak out to oppose this misguided plan:

Attend the May 7 Meeting at Ft. Worden State Park in Port Townsend

Sign the [petition](#)

Write and/or call your [state legislators](#)

Call and/or write the [Governor](#)

COER Files Preliminary Injunction

In mid-February, the grass roots group *Citizens of the Ebey’s Reserve* (COER) filed a motion for a preliminary injunction, asking the court to roll back the Navy’s EA-18G “Growler” practice missions at Outlying Field, Coupeville, to pre-2019 levels. This would limit the take-off and landing exercises to 6,100 annually. This action will be in effect until the court reaches a decision on the merits of their pending federal lawsuit. The new additional Growler operations would be moved to one or more environmentally suited off-Whidbey locations previously used and available to the Navy.

***** **NOTICE** *****

**Beginning July 2020, the North Olympic Group newsletter
will be published on a quarterly basis. (July, Oct, Jan, Mar)**

Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion

After years of controversy, and being stopped by court order, the Trans Mountain Pipeline was bought by the Canadian government. The (second) expansion line was cleared for construction in June 2019. The Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion will run a nearly parallel line to the existing 1953 pipeline. It will more than double the capacity of the existing oil transport from Edmonton, Alberta, through British Columbia to Vancouver. When it is completed, it can deliver 890,000 barrels of crude oil per day to the



Salish Sea, threatening to increase tanker traffic seven-fold. Follow this [link](#) for a visual Trans Mountain oil tanker journey through the Salish Sea. It illustrates the challenges of these very large ships threading the route along the coastline and among the islands.

Remembering ‘Silent Spring’

I recently received an impassioned email about the state of our environment that I thought was worth sharing. It came after the reader listened to a [reminiscence](#) of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*.

“It is so sad that we still haven’t learned our lessons after more than 60 years. I can’t talk about it without crying.

Everywhere I look, I witness human stupidity in our relationship with our planet. It used to be so beautiful in so many ways. Now so many people are disconnected with the natural world that they can’t recognize that the planet as we knew it is dying. All that far too many know is city life with a few trees, flowers, and bushes in specific places, and no “invasive” animals beyond cats or dogs. And heaven forbid we see a fly or a bee! After all, we know such disagreeable critters bite or sting with intent to do us harm. How could they possibly be beneficial?

I have neighbors who believe wild plants, aka “weeds” have no place in their lawn or garden, and go all out to kill them off. They don’t bother to see the beauty of the form, or the color patterns of the leaves and flowers. Remember blowing all the little “fairies” off dandelions?

I believe overpopulation of the human race is a large part of the problem. The more crowded we become, the less we can see of our world. And the unfamiliar becomes terrifying because we can’t understand our place is to be among all of this - not apart from it.

Enjoy what you can of the world, while you can.”

Wood Products vs. Natural Forests

In an age where climate change is threatening our way of life and the futures of our children, it is saddening that our legislators are promoting SB6355 and HB2528, which will make the crisis worse. They overlook the amount of time that it takes trees to grow. That would be 40-60 years!

Contrary to the bill's assertions, the Paris Accords **do not** counsel us to log our forests more aggressively. Just the opposite. Article V of the climate agreement asked us to set aside large stretches of forests as carbon parks to absorb CO2 from the atmosphere. These bills violate that central premise.

The timber corporations have peddled their "science" that it's better to cut down trees and store the wood in products, rather than in forests. They funded the junk science which has been discredited by independent scientists. According to "Environmental Research Letters": "A re-examination of the fundamental assumptions underlying these projections indicates long-term mitigation benefits related to product substitution may have been overestimated 2 to 100-fold." Link to report: [ab1e95](#)

Our remaining time to deal with climate change at a meaningful scale is running out. SB6355 and HB2528 will increase carbon emissions and take time and resources away from the efforts of the good people who are working to mitigate climate damage.

As for jobs, the timber industry could help employment in local communities by ending the export of raw logs to China. The timber industry's own estimates show that the 90 MMBF of raw logs being exported out of the Port of Port Angeles by timber companies cost our community 720 high paying jobs a year. Fix that problem.

New Shooting Range Ordinances Passed

The Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) unanimously passed two new shooting range ordinances at the conclusion of 5 hours of deliberations during their meeting on Monday, February 24th. The new ordinances are vastly different than the 2018 versions which the Growth Management Hearings Board invalidated in early 2019.



The BoCC followed their Planning Commission's recommendations that **all new commercial shooting ranges be located indoors in commercial and industrial zones** and not be allowed in Jefferson County forests. The commissioners carefully scrutinized the proposed ordinances to clarify language and eliminate previous loopholes that had been exploited by Fort Discovery Corporation in 2018 when the company began building an outdoor paramilitary training center at Tarboo Lake without environmental review or obtaining permits.

The Tarboo Ridge Coalition, which appealed the 2018 ordinances, will meet with the County and the Growth Management Hearings Board in late March to discuss whether the current effort complies with the Washington State's Growth Management Act.

Let's Get Port Angeles Harbor Cleaned Up

By Darlene Schanfald

Removing hazardous wastes from the Port Angeles Harbor is one of the Washington State Department of Ecology's (Ecology) highest priorities when it comes to cleaning up Puget Sound. However, more and more, Ecology is choosing to cover up rather than remove hazardous wastes. They are choosing "institutional controls," which are little more than fencing and signage. They consider this to be sufficient means of protecting the public. These steps will save the polluters money in the short term, but leave Port Angeles and our marine system in perpetual harm.



Local agencies and citizens have told Ecology that this is unacceptable.

Contaminants left in the sediments, soils and probably the beach sand are: heavy metals, phenols, phthalates, dioxins, PCBs, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) and woody debris. Any one or a combination of these can affect a range of serious health disorders such as respiratory problems, cognitive impairment, autoimmune diseases, seizures, diabetes, heart attacks, leukemia, reproductive development problems, skin disorders, hepatitis, and the list goes on. And what disorders are the marine life experiencing? These hazardous wastes need to be removed.

A few years ago, the Port of Port Angeles elected to do a thorough cleanup of its property located in the central portion of the Harbor that held the former KPly/PenPly mills. That way the job was done and they could rent out that property.

Leaving mounds of highly toxic soils and covering up sediments with a few feet of sand and letting nature take its course does not well serve our community or natural resources. Constructing fences around the properties, putting up warning signs, telling boaters to stay away from certain areas should not be options. These steps might pencil out in Ecology's cost-benefit ratios for the polluter and for the short term, but does not account for the long-term health and economics of the community and certainly not the marine ecosystem.

Two recent webinars on institutional controls have been held. One, ([a908](#)) focused on the former Rayonier Pulp Mill site. The [other](#) focused on Institutional Controls with Peter deFur and Cliff Villa.

The Western Port Angeles Harbor sediment cleanup covers approximately 1,160 acres and has multiple Potentially Liable Persons (PLPs). These include the City of Port Angeles, the Port of Port Angeles, Nippon, Georgia-Pacific and Merrill & Ring.

Currently, Ecology is accepting public comments through March 16, 2020 on cleaning up hazardous wastes in the western portion of the Harbor, including around the former Nippon Mill area. You can find information about the RI/FI and Amendment [here](#).

We will want to encourage our members to comment and will be sending out talking points in March.