



# LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

October, 1982

## WHAT CAN A NATURAL AREA TEACH?

A natural area such as the Dishman Hills is not just a luxury or a place to enjoy quiet, unspoiled nature. It is a classroom that can teach us basic principals of survival. You can call that ecology (or economics) if you wish. Perhaps the biggest principle is that any area has a limit to the number of living things, humans included, that it can support satisfactorily in the long run. Exceed this limit and a variety of disasters can happen: food supplies may become exhausted and starvation result; living space, including shelter and homes, may not be sufficient; toxic by-products of life may poison the air, water and soil; soil itself may lose its fertility and/or erode away, and individuals may become so crowded together that disease easily runs through the population, or individuals irritate and even attack each other.

Another basic lesson to be learned is that all materials, since their supply is limited, must be continuously recycled back into the ecologic (economic) system so they can be reused. Plants grow, are eaten by animals and eventually are returned to the system as carbon dioxide, water and compounds of nitrogen and other elements (fertilizer) as the result of life activities and decaying wastes and bodies. The same applies to the animals. Thus these materials again become available for a new cycle of life.

A third important principle is that everything is connected to everything else in our ecologic (economic) system. If one kind of plant or animal disappears, others that depend upon it for food or shelter will have to turn to other sources, or else will disappear if they cannot make the change. Thus a whole chain of destructive events may be started. These interrelationships have aptly been called the "web of life." Damage to one part causes another part to weaken and sag and may even bring about the destruction of the entire web (ecologic or economic system).

It follows that in any system there is eventually a point where some sort of stability must come to it, where the various kinds of plants and animals attain some kind of balance in their numbers. No species can continue to expand at the expense of the others with out disastrous results, endangering the entire system including the species that for the moment appear to be highly successful.

How well is our human economic system following these fundamental principles? What are your thoughts on this?

## RECYCLING CONTINUES TO PAY OFF

Recyclables continue to be an important source of funds for the Dishman Hills project. In past years they have brought in about \$1000 a year, thanks to the efforts of you who have saved paper, aluminum, bottles and other materials.

Newspaper continues to rate first as a money raiser. Although prices are lower than before the recession, they still remain good. The best price we know of is \$40.00 a ton, at Specialty Insulation, E. 2626 Trent.

Some recycling centers take other kinds of paper also. For example, Spokane Recycling Products, W. 3407 Main, takes "white ledger" (good quality, non-slick, white, printed or written on one side only; some "junk" mail and envelopes without windows can qualify); "colored ledger" (like white but printed on both sides and can include colored paper), and green and white computer paper. These pay more than newspaper. Each kind of paper must be kept separate.

Glass bottles are bought by some centers. Sort them as to color.

Recycling centers are multiplying like rabbits in the Spokane area, a most encouraging sign! Look in the Yellow Pages for a center near you. We suggest you check out prices before you haul.

## MORE LAND FOR DISHMAN HILLS?

The addition of 140 acres to Dishman Hills Natural Area appears, at long last, to be possible. Part of Balfour Park in Opportunity will be put up for sale October 15, according to A.D.(Sam) Angove, Spokane County Parks and Recreation Department superintendent. He expects to use proceeds from the sale to acquire the Dishman Hills land. Balfour park is rapidly becoming surrounded by commercial development and apartments. Part of the park will be retained as a small playground, however.

Whether our association will need to assist financially is unclear. At any rate, we are continuing to seek additions to our land fund to buy other desirable areas in the Hills. Meanwhile the money is in high return bank deposits. We thank you for your generous past contributions to the land fund and encourage your continuing donations.

## MANY GROUPS USE DISHMAN HILLS

A variety of children's and adults' groups visited Dishman Hills Natural Area for instruction and recreation during the last year. Foremost were elementary school classes. We gave several showings of a slide program on the Hills, emphasizing soil formation and its relation to the plants and animals, to one fifth grade and all fourth grade classes at University Elementary. Then their teachers, Bill Marchand, Ms. Hemingway and Holland and Jim Rigsby hiked the children to the Hills to see the real live things, assisted by us. We also worked with Trent Elementary School principal Bill McCrory and teachers Nancy Deishl, Dick Haag and Ken Paulson and assisted them on a field trip for their classes to the Hills.

A Girl Scout troop held a day camp at Camp Caro in the Hills this summer. Spokane Audubon Society, Washington Native Plant Society and The Nature Conservancy each sponsored field trips into the Hills.

In August, Fayette Krause and botanists Reed Schuler and Shelley Evans of the Nature Conservancy visited the Natural Area and were very much impressed by its quality and diversity. They recommended further study of the plants. Reed's special interest is sedges, a difficult group, the species of which we haven't been able to identify, and Shelley is particularly interested in lichens, so we can look forward to filling in some gaps in our knowledge of the plants.

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving some of the natural environment of the Spokane area for people to enjoy and learn from. Our monthly meetings are at Kiwanis Camp Caro, S. 625 Sargent Road at 7:30 p.m. the fourth Wednesday. You are cordially invited to attend. For further information and for slide programs and guide service into the Dishman Hills call us at 926-7949.

Please use this form when sending contributions to save the Dishman Hills and the Tower Mountain corridor. Your dues and/or gifts are income tax deductible.

\$ \_\_\_\_ Annual dues (\$5) New? \_\_\_\_ Renewal? \_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_ Land purchase fund

\$ \_\_\_\_ In remembrance of \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_ Bulletin expense fund (\$1 or more)

Please make checks payable to Dishman Hills Natural Area Association and mail to David E. Lentes, Treasurer, E. 10922 23rd Spokane, WA. 99206. Many Thanks! To reduce expense, no receipt or acknowledgement will be sent unless requested.