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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

December 1983

LIFE IS STIRRING IN THE HILLS

The first of this winter's bird censuses in The Nature Conservancy's preserve in the Dishman Hills December 14 revealed a flock of chickadees, both black-capped and mountain, along with a few redbreasted nuthatches and a golden-crowned kinglet. No evidence was found of ruffed grouse. A coyote track was seen but no tracks of cottontail rabbits or mice. Maybe it will be slim pickings for coyotes this winter! Time will tell.

Juncos have left the Hills. A flock comes to get handouts of bird seed each day in my back yard, along with pink-tinged house finches, house sparrows, a feisty song sparrow and, occasionally, California quail. This cold weather has really increased their appetites!

WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH THE GARBAGE?

Spokane County is developing a solid waste management plan, since the present "sanitary landfill" sites are rapidly becoming full and additional land is increasingly expensive. The irony of the situation is that most of the things that go into the dumps are recyclable right now. The principal materials that present problems now for recycling are dirty paper, scrap wood and plastics. The paper and wood could be used for fuel, provided it doesn't add to air pollution, or used to generate electricity. Plastic appears to pose the most difficult problems. Most of it does not decompose in a landfill and creates toxic fumes when burned. To our knowledge only the two liter plastic pop bottles are recyclable in the Spokane area. Earthworks Recycling, N. 737 Napa, takes them, along with some other materials. Portland,, by contrast, has several companies that buy plastics.

Why are we concerned with the solid waste problem? It is an ecological truism that everything is connected to everything else. Dumping our discards wastes useable materials, costs not only money but also land which might better be used for other purposes. Illegal dumping and littering mess up our parks, highways and wild places, including the Dishman Hills. We must take seriously Will Rogers' remark, "The trouble with land is that they don't make it anymore," and better protect what we have left.

Our monthly meetings, December through March, will be held at Riverview Terrace Retirement Apartments, E. 1801 Upriver Drive, in the library on the basement floor. The January 25 meeting will be the annual meeting for election of directors and officers.

Spokane Audubon Society meets at Riverview Terrace Retirement Apartments, the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.--no meeting this January, however. The public is welcome.

Washington Native Plant Society meets in the meeting room at Manito Park each third Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. The January meeting will feature demonstrations on how to start native flowers from seed. Members will be encouraged to take the seeds home to grow for sale in the Spring. The public is invited.

DISHMAN HILLS PURCHASE OFFER MADE

We have made a proposal to the owners for the purchase of the 140 acres in the Dishman Hills just south of The Nature Conservancy's 80 acre Nature Preserve. Many hours of careful research and preparation went into the proposal. We are now awaiting their reply.

Before we enter into any contract for the land, we would like to get some feeling as to how much monetary support we can depend on from the Spokane community. While it is too early to know how much money we will have to raise, we would greatly appreciate your giving serious thought as to how much support you could give. If we reach an agreement with the owners we can then be specific about the amount needed and how much time we would have to raise it. In the meantime we would like to hear any ideas you have. One thing is certain; we will have to keep adding to our present land fund, which stands at about \$60,000. Our grateful thanks for your past support. Please keep the donations coming; we'll have addition to the natural area yet!

The potential for money raising for the land fund by collecting recyclables is nowhere nearly exhausted. Prices are very good now for aluminum, newspaper, cardboard and white and colored ledger. Computer printout paper brings \$90 a ton. Glass bottles and jars are a cent a pound. Check the yellow pages for recyclers or contact us. We can usually arrange to pick up your recyclables. Every cent we get for them goes to the land fund; we don't even take our gas money out of it. To give an idea of what can be done, your bulletin editor has hauled about \$400 worth of recyclables this year. Of course this would't have been possible without help of all you dedicated people who have saved those recyclables for us. Keep up the good work!

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)

_____ Your account number above your address.

Please make checks payable to Dishman Hills Natural Area Association and mail to David E. Lentes, Treasurer, P.O. BOX 141561, Spokane, Wa. 99214. Many Thanks! To reduce expense, no receipt or acknowledgement will be sent unless requested.