



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

SEPTEMBER 1992

FALL COLORS BRIGHTEN THE HILLS

Autumn is everywhere in the Hills. Leaves are every shade from bright lemon yellow to flaming red. Ponds are completely dry and so are the grasses, some bushes and nearly every flower, the only exception being little blue wild asters. Fire danger is high. (A beer party on the County's land scorched part of an acre recently but was promptly put out, thanks to personnel of Fire Districts No. 1 and 8.

Most summer birds are gone. A migrant ruby-crowned kinglet was singing in the shrubbery at West Pond recently but other migrants seen scarce. The number of red-breasted nuthatches remains phenomenally high. We still wonder if there is any connection between this and the almost complete absence of pine white butterflies this summer. Did these birds glean the caterpillars and pupae from the pines or did parasites do the job? Possibly we missed the pine whites but if they had been there many would have been caught in spider webs as they have been in the previous years. If you have any observations of these butterflies this summer, please let us know.

Donations to the Dishman Hills project in August came to \$632.00 and interest income \$35.00. Operating costs were \$382.00 (this included \$228.00 for signs erected around our land to protect it.)

Our thanks to you who donated cash, recyclables and/or services and have given permission to be listed here: Margaret V. Bloom, Gretchen S. Brown, Joan G. Chesbrough, Verna O. Dolphin, Patricia M. Houff, Gloria J. Krebs, Karl Krogue, Helen Lininger, Rich Nelson, Ruth S. Peterson, Willene Priestley, Avis E. Ray, Tom Rogers, Mabel R. Sackett, Helen Stowell, Lawrence Thieman, Ed Tietjen, Jeanne H. Wilson and Dr. Hershel Zellman. If we missed listing you here, please let us know by calling 926-7949.

Our very special thanks to the Boy Scouts and other boys and their parents, who, under the leadership of Scout Matthew Haus of Cheney, recently completed the placing of ten heavy gauge aluminum signs on steel posts around our land informing people of the rules governing its use. The parents of many of the boys also took part in the work and our president, Lawrence Thieman, spent many hours directing the project. Unfortunately, one of the signs has already been vandalized and will have to be replaced.

We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving some of the natural areas of the Spokane area for people to enjoy and learn from.

President: Lawrence Thieman, Vice President: Tom Rogers, Secretary: Helen Lininger, Treasurer: David Lenten

Our monthly meetings starting in September will be at Opportunity Elementary School, South 1109 Wilbur, the third Monday at 7 p.m. You are cordially invited to attend.

Please send donations to our box number, shown at top of this bulletin.

ARTERIAL THREATENS DISHMAN HILLS

What has the proposed South Valley Arterial to do with the Dishman Hills? The Draft Environmental Impact Statement says that it will have a "significant" effect within Dishman Hills NRCA (Natural Resource Conservation Area) with "loss of about 1 acre of ponderosa pine forest." As a mitigation measure it suggests the county "should acquire or donate an adjacent parcel of high natural value to NRCA or other compensation."

In addition to this intrusion, the placing of the arterial can be expected to damage or kill ponderosa pines in the NRCA adjacent to it, since these trees and the lichens that grow upon them are very sensitive to damage from auto emissions. Added to this would be the noise impact upon wildlife and upon people using Camp Caro, only about a block away from where the arterial would be located. Furthermore, access to the popular Camp Caro would be made more difficult--and apparently would be completely blocked during construction.

Every person, including County Commissioner Steve Hasson-- candidate Ed Weillip also indicated to us that he was against it-- testifying at the recent hearing at University High School spoke strongly against the arterial, emphasizing the effects pointed out in the EIS and adding to them. Causing the displacement of many businesses and homes was pointed out by the owners, who suggested alternatives including the encouraging of bus use, adding another lane to the freeway and the building of a light rail line.

After the overwhelming opposition to the arterial, the question is whether it will change the County Engineering Department's and the State Department of Transportation's determination to go through with the project, to which our county commissioners had given the go ahead to pursue. It has been our experience that stopping projects such as this has had little or no success. It has been difficult to change the minds of our government officials so we urge you to write to James S. Haines, Spokane County Department of Public Works, Engineering Division, N. 811 Jefferson St., Spokane, WA 99260 and also to each Spokane County Commissioner: John McBride, Pat Mumme and Steve Hasson, West 1116 Broadway, Spokane, WA 99201 giving your much needed input. Testimony regarding the arterial will be received up to September 30. (Time is very short! We wonder if allowing this scant two weeks is a deliberate ploy to restrict further objections.) We need to flood the County Commissioners and the Project Engineer with letters. Our Board of Directors is writing to protest the arterial project. Please write at once to protect our Natural Area. Mentioning the other adverse impacts certainly would also be in order.

Please use this form when sending contributions
(Contributions are income tax deductible)

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