



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

FEBRUARY 1994

JANUARY DONORS LISTED

Contributions totalled an excellent \$1,193.26 during January. The financial statement for the month is not yet ready.

Our thanks to the following who contributed cash and/or services during the month and have given permission to be listed here: James C. Banta, Lu C. Benjamin, Lola J. Dolphin, Mary Floy Dolphin, R. W. Downing, Florence L. Edwards, Mary M. Eller, Carol L. Ellis, Virginia R. Featherman, Virginia F. Godfrey, John R. Gorman, Nicolin J. Gray, Morio Haye, Michael Hamilton, Hobnailers, LeRoy Hook, Wanda L. Johnson, Gloria J. Krebs, Yvonne Lakel, Ray W. Liberg, John C. Lorang, Janice G. Mahoney, Mrs. Roy R. Mills, George E. Moon Jr., John B. O'Brien III, Ambrose Priestley, Shirley J. Schneider, S. Schrimshire, Mrs. S. M. Talbot, Ed Tietjen, Jeffrey J. Warner, John L. Warner, June A. Warner, Whitworth Belle Garden Club, Shirley Williamson, Jeanne H. Wilson and Mary L. Wright.

The specter of the South Valley Arterial is still alive. The final Environmental Impact Statement is essentially the same as the Draft Statements, destroying an acre of the Natural Area and coming so close to its northern edge that auto emissions would damage or kill the pines and possibly other plants, and traffic noise would affect wildlife. Of course it would cause the displacement of much affordable housing and create air and noise pollution for other homes next to it.

We urge that you take a few minutes to write a brief note to the County Commissioners opposing this harmful project. Their address: West 1116 Broadway, Spokane, WA 99201. Please send a copy of your note to the Spokane Valley Business Association, which is questioning the adequacy of the final environmental impact statement. (The arterial would hurt the business community along Sprague Avenue, as it would divert traffic away from it.) Address your copy to the Association, c/o Dick Behm, E. 9405 Sprague Avenue, Spokane, WA 99206.

A two mile loop into the Dishman Hills last Tuesday found no buttercups yet, but we expect them to be everywhere on our Buttercup Hike in April. Birds were scarce, as they have been all winter but a bright Red Crossbill, a Red-breasted and a Pygmy Nuthatch were working Douglas Fir cones for seeds. A Raven was heard and Canada Geese honked far overhead--Spring is on the way.

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: Michael Hamilton, Vice President: Tom Rogers, Secretary: Helen Lininger, Treasurer: David Lentes, Board of Directors: Omar Carroll, Michael Hamilton, Francis Potter, June Potter, and Ray Staley.

Our meetings are held every third Monday at 7 P.M. at Opportunity Elementary School, South 1109 Wilbur. You are cordially invited to attend.

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

WHEN IS A NATURAL AREA NOT A NATURAL AREA?

If a natural area is to be one, it should have as little human impact as possible. While we do not propose the ultimate, the exclusion of people, we do want the human impact to be kept to a minimum. Entering on foot and staying on trails is what we insist on for the land our association owns in the Dishman Hills Natural Resource Conservation Area. Representatives of the Department of Natural Resources had the same in mind--protection of the resource--when we met with them and representatives of Spokane County. The people at the top of the DNR apparently haven't yet given this idea the official stamp and Spokane County Commissioners haven't made up their minds.

Mountain bikers continue to use the area, even where it is prohibited on our land, grooving the paths, furthering their erosion and in some places widening them as they attempt to avoid the mud they have caused. Horses have chopped up the trail on the west side of the County land. Someone has stolen another of our signs saying that foot traffic only is permitted.

It has been suggested that creation of snags, by blasting off the tops of some trees, should be done to favor woodpeckers, which are scarce in the Hills since the forest there is mostly too young to produce snags naturally. We believe that a natural area should be allowed to produce snags at its own rate, in other words, to be natural. (A recent trip into the Hills found a few dead pines on which a woodpecker was digging in the bark for wood-boring insects.) Also the fear was expressed that Douglas fir might displace the ponderosa pines. We don't share that fear for we note that the pines are holding their own very well on the drier soil, the firs thriving only in moist ravines.

A forest managed for lumber production amounts to cutting down nearly all of the old growth trees, favoring young trees, and sometimes cutting down all trees (clearcutting) replanting with species desired for lumber. Elimination of diversity of trees and other plants surely reduces the diversity of animal life. And an area of nothing but young trees, while providing hiding places, contributes little or nothing in the way of nesting sites or food.

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

Account No. **09310**

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\$ _____ Student or Living Lightly (\$5)

\$ _____ To cover bulletin expense (\$2)

_____ Check here if you do NOT want your name listed as a donor.