



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

From the

DISHMAN HILLS

MARCH 1996

HIKE WELL ATTENDED

Thirty-five Dishman Hills fans enjoyed our thirtieth anniversary hike March 10. The weather was cool but pleasant for the two hour jaunt. Buttercups were abundant and a few grass widows had appeared. A Red Crossbill egg shell on the trail indicated that these birds had nested there already--they are known to nest as early as January! This is the first solid evidence of their nesting there--usually they nest higher up in the mountains. East pond was mostly ice-covered yet, so no tree frogs were singing.

Mike Hamilton, our president, led the trek and informed the hikers about the geologic history of the Dishman Hills area. His summary follows: The Dishman Hills area is underlain by very old (1.5 to 2 billion year old) metamorphic rocks consisting mostly of schist and gneiss. The bedrock has undergone fracturing and folding and several episodes of metamorphism related to regional tectonic pressures, heat from granitic intrusions and pressures of deep burial. In places fractures are filled with quartz and mica veins. The only prospecting in the Natural area involved a one-to-two foot wide quartz vein that probably was suspected of having gold.

This area was part of the ancient Rocky Mountains that formed the western edge of the North American continental accretion about 100 million years ago. Since then the global plate tectonic has resulted in the addition of about 300 miles of terrain to the western edge of the continent.

DISHMAN HILLS GEOLOGY

About 15 million years ago the central parts of Washington were flooded with basalt emanating from deep cracks in the Earth's crust in the southeast corner of the state. This basalt or lava filled in valleys and lapped up on the hills in the Spokane area. At times lakes formed in the area due to rivers impounded by basalt accumulating to the west. These lakes resulted in small deposits of shale and siltstone which are often sandwiched between layers of basalt. The Dishman Hills were on the very edge of the basalts and lake deposits and any amount of these rocks was removed by erosion.

The present topography is largely a result of large floods during the Glacial Age about 12,000 years ago. Large lakes that formed in Montana behind the ice lobes of continental glaciers drained catastrophically after ice dams, weakened by climatic warming broke. The floods scoured the Spokane areas up to an elevation of about 2500 feet. The lower Dishman Hills were stripped of soil and formed into a terrain of pothole lakes, hummocks, ridges and gullies.

ORGANIZATION PURPOSE STATEMENT

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 members (in addition to officers): Francis & June Potter and Ray Staley. All serve without pay and we have no paid employees. We strive to keep expenses at a minimum.

Monthly meetings are held at Opportunity Elementary, South 1109 Wilbur on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. You are cordially invited.

DONATIONS DROP IN FEBRUARY

Donations to our Dishman Hills-Tower Mountain project dropped to \$461 in February, nearly half of which was for memorials. Office and bulletin expenses were \$126.48 and property tax, \$22.55.

Our thanks to you who donated during February and have given permission to be listed here: Laura Ackerman, Rita Cencich, Virginia Danke, Frances V. Davis, Donald/Pauline Hagan, Addie Haynes, the Hobnailers, Maxine Leszykowski, Janice G. Mahoney, Helen E. Lininger, Joy Peterson, Francis/June Potter, Avis E. Ray, Tom Rogers, Iris K. Scheel, Linda J. Siverts, St. Mary's Garden Club, Joan Talbot, Whitworth Belles Garden Club and Bernadine Willrich. If we missed listing you, please let us know at 926-7949. Again MANY THANKS!

BUTTERCUP HIKE COMING IN APRIL

We invite you to our annual Buttercup Hike Sunday, April 21. We start at Camp Caro, S. 625 Sargent Road at 1:30 p.m. We guarantee many buttercups plus other flowers.

In February the printer failed to turn out over a hundred bulletins. We apologize. We are working on the problem.

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