



Lights and Shadows from the Dishman Hills, February, 1999

ROAD THREAT DEFEATED

County plans for building a new roadway on the southern boundary of the Natural Area across the Dishman Ridge have been taken off the table after public comments and input indicated to the engineers that the plan was not popular and that citizens did not want to sacrifice their urban natural areas to growth. A strong coalition of conservation groups, neighbourhood associations, and concerned citizens moved quickly during the short time for public comment to condemn the Southside Urban Connector as a bad plan. Other parts of the Urban Connector proposal were not well accepted by the public, many who felt that a "ring" of roads around the city would destroy too much green space, encourage urban sprawl outside the growth management area, and take attention away from the much needed north-south freeway. Parts of the proposed road system could also adversely effect Riverside State Park and the Little Spokane River Valley.

This is not the first time the proposed roadway across the Dishman Ridge has surfaced. In the mid 90's the same plan was being considered by county engineers. The plan then was withdrawn after public opinion killed it. We will be waiting when this plan comes back in the future. We continue to be amazed on how much public money and resources continues to be wasted on a road plan that cannot succeed.

NEW PROJECTS AFOOT

Soon there will be a new set of benches at the "outdoor classroom" behind camp Caro. This facility is used by educational groups that come to study the Natural Area. An old set of benches made from railroad ties were removed last fall. They were in bad shape and were beginning to fall apart. One attraction of the old benches were small tree frogs that inhabited cracks in the rotten wood; these small amphibians, however, were a distraction to the students and caused a lot of ruckus. The new benches are being made at the WA Dept. of Natural Resources workshop in Deer Park and will be made of cedar logs. The benches should appear sometime in the Spring.

We are currently working on a new set of trail signs for the Natural Area. The temporary signs we installed last summer were in response to public inquiries for directions to the ponds, featured in a August Sunset magazine article. These signs have all but disappeared, reminding us that the permanent signs will have to be cleverly designed to withstand that most ardent attempts of removal and destruction. We are seeking professional help with sign design which probably will incorporate steel, concrete, and other materials that can withstand the test of time.

SPECIAL SPRING EVENTS

Spring is near, and the first buttercups will be coming up in the forest soon. Our annual Buttercup Hike will be coming up about the third weekend in April. Also in April there is a benefit concert for the Dishman Hills by Walkin' Jim Stoltz, a folk singer who spends a lot of time wondering about the wild country of North America and has a entertaining multimedia show called Forever Wild. The performance will be on April 16th, 7:30pm, at the Spokane Falls Community College Music Building. Tickets are \$10, and are at REI, G&B, and at the door. **Tell your friends.**

ORGANIZATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving natural areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton at 747-8147 with any questions. We will have our March meeting at Opportunity Elementary School, South 1109 Wilbur, the third Tuesday of the month at 7 PM. January donations were over \$2,200, allowing us to make additional principle paydowns on the Tower Mtn. land contact.

Our thanks to you loyal supporters who are listed here: Jon Barstad, George Bourekis, Robert Burroughs, David Cole, Robert Downing, Joan Fergin, June Foote, Corinne Gillingham, Marva/Stan Geode, Claire Goudge, Don Griffiths, Izzy Hawkins, Loring Jones, Glen Kivett, Helen Lininger, Mrs. B.H. Jacklin, Bettie Maron, Marilyn Miller, Mrs. Roy Mills, Marlene Montgomery, Wilfred Moss, Ian Napier, Aroa/Frank Ohme, Elizabeth/James Parsons, Francis/June Potter, Ambrose Priestly, Tom Rogers, Lee Smith, Joan Talbot, Elmore/Pat Thompson, Robert Turner, Maurice Vogel, Grace Ward, Wanda Warren, and Jeanne Wilson.

Please use this form when sending **CONTRIBUTIONS or DUES**

All contributions are tax deductible

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO: DHNAA

E. 10820 Maxwell

Spokane, WA 99206

Your Name: _____

Please put your account no. _____

on your check

\$ _____ MEMORIAL FOR _____

\$ _____ LAND PURCHASE FUND

\$ _____ ANNUAL DUES due in January (\$10 regular, \$5 student or living lightly, \$2 to cover bulletin expenses)

New ? Renewal ? Don't list me as donor

Please tell us if this newsletter is unwanted or if there is an address mistake