

CONSERVATION BY THE NUMBERS

How would you like to live in a state where 60 to 70 percent of the lakes and rivers don't meet clean water standards; where 90 percent of the original forest, 70 percent of the original prairies, and 50 percent of the wetlands are gone; Where 30,000 acres of open space is lost each year to development which includes 15,000 acres



of forest and 2,000 acres of wetlands; and 3.1 million tons of garbage is produced each year?

Guess what? You do! We Washingtonians, and there will be millions more of us in the years to come with an estimated 120,000 new residences per year, will have to contend with these problems and live with the successes or

failures of how well we do. The State parks have about 40 million visitors per year and trail use has increased about 30 percent in the last ten years. While 84 percent of those asked say that they regularly enjoy some sort of natural space recreation, less than 2 percent of the state's budget goes to manage, protect and enhance our natural resource base. Only 17 percent of the state's shoreline is accessible to the public. How about our finned, feathered and furry friends? Nineteen species are on our state's endangered species list and half of them are expected to lose their breeding population by the year 2010. Ninety percent of them depend on forest habitat. Water supplies are stressed as growth, climate change and the increased use of ground water, 2/3 of our population now depends now on it. We are using 4 trillion gallons of water annually. There are 15,000 septic tanks installed each year and with 90 percent of our electricity coming from hydropower we are finding H2O very important.

Forest are taking the brunt of the changes of modern times and private forest are the hardest hit. Forest in the state are disappearing at about 88 acres per day with over 1/2 million acres projected gone by 2020. Forest fragmentation rates are increasing faster than population growth. Each new person prior to 1992 resulted in a little less than 1/4 acre converted to other uses, while today each new person results in the development of about 1/2 acre of forest. A "bow wave effect" extends far in the front of expanding development. It raises land prices, taxes, social and regulatory pressures that discriminates against open space uses well before the development rush. Forest owners on the average get back 1/3 the public service per tax dollar paid that a residence owner. On top of all that, the average age for forest land owner in this state is rising and is currently around 62, meaning that these lands of rising value are getting more divided by heirs who often are forced into selling to pay rising estate taxes. An estimated 1.4 million acres of forestland are sold annually to pay estate taxes.

All the numbers are not negative. The importance of conservation is becoming clearly defined as we experience the results of development. An increasing migration of urbanites to rural areas to improve their quality of life, is resulting in a growing support for

better forest management and protection of recreation areas. Our forest are serving us in many different ways. One tree absorbs approximately 13 pounds of CO2 per year, and for every ton of new wood, the forest removes 1.47 tons of CO2 and replaces it with 1.07 tons of oxygen. Support for the conservation of our natural areas is very strong in our community and the numbers show it with generous donations of time and resources.

MEETING

The Association had a joint management meeting with Spokane County Parks and Recreation and Washington Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR). The County said that they have been active in taking unauthorized campers from the northeast side of the Natural Area. The County now supports a full time Park Ranger, Bryant Robinson, who covers all of the County's conservation areas. Bryant is the one to report problems in the Natural Area and he can be reached at:

Spokane County Parks office at (509) 477-6395
 Cell at (509)998-8807
 E-mail at BROBINSON@SPOKANECOUNTY.ORG

The DNR announced that extra money was available for the Natural Area and they plan to do some trail maintenance and install some new trail signs.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have questions. We meet every other month on the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm. Our next meeting will be June 19 at board member Dave Noble's house at 5402 East DeSmet. We will be taking the traditional summer break after this meeting.

The following are our March/April donors that have consented to be listed: Veda Carlson, Nancy Cashion, Joseph Collins, Elizabeth Denier, William Eagle, Carol Ellis, Harold Fix, Don Griffiths, Mary Herron, The Hobnailers, Glen Kivett, Gloria Krebs, Mary Lentz, Jacqueline Mallereau, Shirley Marpe, Leo Middendorf, Florence Orcutt, Ambrose Priestley, Shirley Skinner, Terry Smith, Jan Strobrck, Marilyn Stedman, Ruth Stickney, Jane Thrasher, Landa Vierra, Donald Walter, Jeanne Wilson, and one anonymous donor. Thank you one and all for your generous support.

Please use this form when sending **CONTRIBUTIONS** or **DUES**
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Send contributions to: DHNAA
 3415 S. Lincoln Dr.
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