

COMMUNITY TURNS OUT

High Five Everybody! From toddlers to octogenarians, families, students, neighbors, hikers, and conservationists, everybody but idlers turned out for Service Day on the sunny morning of April 09 to work repairing, restoring and creating at the Dishman Hills Natural Area. After three hours work, we gathered on the lawn at Camp Caro to share pizza and pop, listen to the good-timey music of Wild Bill & the Free Range Chickens, and enjoyed the satisfaction of our common efforts, and significant achievements.

Here's what 340 volunteers can do in three hours: We built a fence around the new winter parking lot off Appleway, and a trail from there to Camp Caro. A test plot for weed control was prepared and the open areas along Appleway were planted with native grasses and baby pines. Several garden beds were prepped for a native plant garden. An illegal dumpsite along a closed road was cleaned up, the road blocked with a new gate, and trees, shrubs and wildflowers were planted to restore the area. Trail maintenance work and trash pickup was completed throughout the Natural Area. A special effort was required to rebuild a bridge, and correct drainage issues and remove downfall at Goldback Springs. "Good Job!" to everyone one who participated, especially Carol Christensen of REI and Jeff Lambert of DHNAA who provided leadership for the Service Day. Also, many thanks to the other sponsors and partners including Spokane County Parks, WA. Dept. of Natural Resources, Embroidered Sportswear, Wake-up Coffee, Pizza Rita, Wild Bill & the Free Range Chickens Band, Dishman Dodge, American West Bank, Lands Council, Spokane Mountaineers, Gonzaga University, Sunflower Society, Backcountry Horsemen, Zip2Water, and S.C.O.P.E. A special thanks also to Kop Construction for the fabrication and installation of the new gate at the former illegal dumpsite. *Our Future*

Maybe the best accomplishment was having so many people show up to support and protect the Dishman Hills, showing how this urban forest is valued by our community. Even better yet, lots of kids participated by planting, and sowing wildflower seeds. They are the seedlings of the responsible hikers, birdwatchers, trail bike riders and others who will be advocating, fundraising, pulling knapweed and planting native grasses here in decades to come.



CONT.

But wait – isn't this a "Natural Area"? Then why do we need to work so hard to keep it "natural" Isn't that ... unnatural? While the incursion of knapweed, or the occurrence of litter and vandalism, may be (unfortunately) normal, these activities degrade a Natural Area. A Natural Area is different from a park in that it exists for itself, creating it's own magic spell through the inter-action of eons of geologic processes on it's unique set of micro-climates, expressions of water, and the vast diversity of life from invisible micro-organisms to mega flora and fauna. Humans visiting a beautiful and refreshing Natural Area will hopefully experience a sense of gratitude, and personal responsibility to leave no degrading traces of their visit.

The DHNA is even more valuable to us urban dwellers as the price of gasoline rises. This lovely refuge is a bike ride or a drive of only minutes, rather than hours, away from our homes. This quick and easy accessibility, however, also creates an on-going need to keep the DHNA picked up, to pull the invasive plants, and to maintain signs, bridges and trails.

The "Dream Trail", that will hopefully extend and protect recreational opportunities and a native plant and wildlife corridor south to connect with the Iller Conservation Area and Big Rock, urgently needs our financial support as well. What did you save by not driving for hours to get away into nature? Donate a little of that savings to support the Dream Trail. If we all pitch in, we can create a future where those little kids helping on Service Day can bring THEIR kids to the Dishman Hills and walk the Dream Trail. It's something real and meaningful that we can do to thank those children working so hard to plant trees and flowers, and to make the world a better place for us all.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have questions. Our board meets every month on Tuesday. Our next meeting is June 14th, 7 pm. We meet at the Moran Prairie Spokane County Library, 6004 South Regal St. Visitors are always welcomed.

The following are our April donors that have consented to be listed: The Access Fund of Colorado, Travis Alexander, Andrew Ashmore, Nancy Cashion, David Cole, Elizabeth Deniro, Elaine Edwards, Gonzaga University, Glen Kivett, Jean Koch, Cynthia Langlois, Bettie Maron, Kerry Masters, Leo Middendorf, Brian Miller, Bill Mortz, Vicki Myers-Canfield, Brooke Nicholson, Chris Polito, Elaine Wimpy and one anonymous donor. Thanks spring supporters.

YES, I want to help protect our natural areas in the Spokane Region

Enclosed is my tax-deductable donation of :

\$ 15* \$ 25 \$ 50 \$ 100 Other _____ * annual dues, due by June 30

Gift is a Memorial for: _____

Name: _____ Acc. No. (see address) _____ Please don't list me as a donor

Please return this form along with your check payable to DHNAA

I would like to receive my Lights & Shadows online My email address is: _____