

VOICE of the WILD OLYMPICS

Olympic Park Associates

Founded in 1948

Vol. 11 No. 2
Summer 2003

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Negotiation Averts Legal Battle Over Snow Salmon Timber Sale

By Jim Scarborough, Chair, Olympic Forest Coalition

The northeast corner of Olympic National Forest is known for its peculiarly semi-arid characteristics, its relatively gentle, rolling hills, and a lengthy history of tree chopping. These woods witnessed early-20th century railroad logging to an ample extent, as well as the clear-cutting and commercial thinning of subsequent years. Genuine conservation has only recently become a priority for this region in the eyes of Forest Service officials, though tentative progress in this direction is presently being upset by utilitarian ideologues in the Bush administration.

In the 1990s, logging on Olympic National Forest (and other Northwest forests) slowed to a snail's pace, relative to the timber beast's unsuppressed appetite of the '70s and '80s. During this latter day period of forced, if reluctant, idle agency contemplation, the approach to timber extraction was refined to suit the times. No longer was the esthetically horrific regeneration harvest (read: nasty clearcut) politically acceptable to the masses. Instead, Olympic's new approach under the Northwest Forest Plan called for "restoration" thinning in second growth forest, ostensibly serving to accelerate the late-successional characteristics of these "overstocked" stands."

Sounds benign enough, right? Certainly the approach to timber extraction now evident on Olympic National Forest is in dramatic contrast to the bad old days. The problem, however, is that while the Forest Service liberally applies the terminology of restoration in its analysis and decision documents, the agency essentially is still seeking to get out the cut. Such is the case with the Snow Salmon timber sale, located within the Snow Creek and Salmon Creek watersheds. This sale is in some sense a summation of silvicultural trends on the Olympic National Forest in the past decade,



Site within the Snow Salmon proposed sale. Photo by Jim Scarborough.

though with a decidedly bold and aggressive character. The bad old days may indeed be over, but happy days clearly have yet to arrive.

Olympic National Forest supervisor Dale Hom signed a decision notice on April 9 for the Snow Salmon sale to proceed. Although some improvements from the original proposal were adopted as part of the final decision (including dropping two harvest units, reducing the size of a third unit, and improved standards for decommissioning logging roads), several concerns remained. The sale would still have commercially thinned 675 acres of native, second growth trees, while constructing 9.24 miles of so-called temporary roads for access. The Olympic Forest Coalition (OFCO) responded by appealing this sale to the regional forester in Portland, based on: a) anticipated and poorly assessed hydrologic damage from new road construction in two already heavily roaded watersheds; b) entry into a *de facto*, uninventoried portion of the Mount Zion roadless area; and c) likely forest stand homogenization of several harvest units, despite agency claims to the contrary.

(Continued on P. 4. Snow Salmon Sale)



Next OPA Board Meeting

Date: September 24.

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Kingston Community Center

A short walk up the hill from the ferry, white building on the right.

Please join us. OPA members are always welcome at Board meetings.

OPA Board meetings *generally* are in the Kingston Community Center on the 4th Wednesday of odd-numbered months, except no meeting in July.

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From this number you can reach any member of the U S Senate or House of Representatives.

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Fax: 202-224-0238

Seattle: 206-553-5545

E-mail: Senator_Murray@murray.senate.gov

Senator Maria Cantwell

Phone (Washington, DC): 202-224-3441

Fax: 202-228-0514

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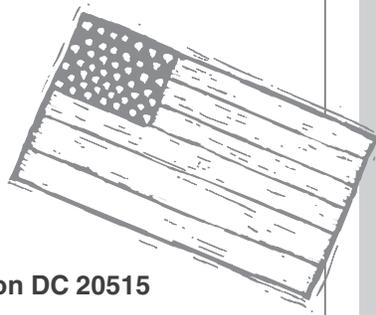
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is published three times per year by Olympic Park Associates.

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Park Floats Preliminary Alternatives for General Management Plan

In May, Olympic National Park released preliminary alternatives for its upcoming general management plan. A 28-page newsletter detailed three alternative strategies that would guide park management over the next 15 to 20 years. The document is rich in detail but lacking in a clear, cohesive vision.

“Eventually we will select a single vision for the park’s future,” says Deputy Superintendent Susan McGill, “but we are a long way from making that decision.” A preferred alternative will be released in a draft environmental impact statement sometime next year.

There is much to be praised in these alternatives — and more than a few items that should cause serious concern. The two options offered by the park strike out in opposite directions.

Three alternatives are presented. Alternative A, “Current Management,” is the required no-change alternative. Alternative B, “Resource Protection Emphasis,” leans toward environmental protection. Alternative C, “Visitor Opportunity Emphasis,” tends heavily toward recreational development. Eventually, a preferred alternative will be comprised of elements from all three.

Alternative B: Strongest Protection

Alternative B, which emphasizes resource protection, outlines some positive steps for protecting and restoring the ecological health of the park, including several measures recommended by OPA:

- ◆ Restore natural stream dynamics to protect the park’s wild fish stocks.
- ◆ Remove exotic plants and animals from the park.
- ◆ Reestablish extirpated species such as Pacific fisher and wolf.
- ◆ Remove motorized boats from Ozette Lake.
- ◆ Periodically restrict access to protect resources.
- ◆ Establish intertidal marine reserves.

Unfortunately, a number of key elements proposed by OPA to protect and restore park ecosystems were not included.

- ◆ No ecosystem study is recommended.
- ◆ No wild and scenic river recommendations are made for any of the park’s 13 major rivers.
- ◆ No guidance is given regarding wildfire management.
- ◆ The controversial issue of reconstructing historic buildings and landscapes in wilderness remains largely unaddressed.

The wilderness plan aspect of the management alternatives is cursory and disappointing. It is portrayed in three trail zoning options. Management of “historic structures” remains consistent throughout them (with an option to “rent” shelters and chalets in Alternative C). And key issues like minimum tool requirements are not addressed.

OPA’s request for a study to assess the Ozette Lake watershed for possible inclusion into ONP is listed as a recommendation in Alternative B — one surely to incite

strong local opposition. Similarly, this alternative recommends some rather extreme measures, like removing Sol Duc Hot Springs and Hoh Visitor Center and closing the Hoh River road. There should be loads of support for that.

Alternative C: Pro-Development Option

Alternative C, which emphasizes “visitor opportunities”, presents a number of troubling recommendations. Every developed area in the park would be expanded. Wilderness boundaries would be moved back to accommodate roads. Roads, trails and facilities would be increased.

New “historic” structures could be built throughout the park. A chair lift would be installed at the Hurricane Ridge ski area. The Obstruction Point Road would be paved, and the Quinault Lake loop road would be widened and paved.

The shopping list is exhausting, and the price tag (not specified) would be dear.

Unfortunately, the park service offers little context in which to evaluate this wide range of recommendations. No explanation of the kinds of challenges facing the park is given, nor is any rationale for the choices proffered. Without them, polarity is encouraged, and a valuable educational opportunity has been lost.

In the meantime, development proponents are making their voices heard in local media and directly to the park service. Now is the time for you to share your views of Olympic as a wilderness park, distinct from the industrial tourism that surrounds it.

A short note or email supporting a wilderness vision for the park’s future could help strengthen the plan.

Please write:

Superintendent William Laitner
Olympic National Park
600 East Park Avenue
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Or email: <olym_gmp@nps.gov> today.

For a copy of the park’s newsletter detailing the alternatives, call ONP at (360) 565-3008.

To review OPA’s vision for the park’s future, see *Olympic National Park Previews 20-Year Management Plan* in the Spring, 2003, issue of the **Voice**:

<www.drizzle.com/~rdpayne/opa.html>

For a detailed discussion, see OPA’s scoping letter on the ONP General Management Plan <www.drizzle.com/~rdpayne/opa-alerts.html#gmp>



Forest Roadless Rule Torpedoed by Bush Administration

by Tim McNulty

The most popular initiative to protect our national forests in recent years is the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. After two years of study, more than 600 public hearings, and a record breaking 1.6 million letters in support of the measure, the rule was put in place by the Clinton Administration in January of 2001.

It places 58.5 million acres of roadless lands, more than a third of our national forests including four million acres in Washington and Oregon, off limits to most logging, mining and road building. Roadless areas contain less than a quarter of one percent of the nation's timber and an even smaller fraction of oil and gas reserves. But they harbor some of the last, best wildlife habitats, undisturbed watersheds and scenic recreation lands in the West.

The roadless rule helped resolve a long-running controversy over the fate of these de-facto wilderness lands, an argument that has raged since the Roadless Area Review Evaluation (RARE) of the early 1970s.

But the rule has been a burr under the saddle of the Bush Administration from the beginning. On June 9 Mark Rey, former timber industry lobbyist and current undersecretary of Agriculture in charge of the Forest Service, announced revisions to the rule that would undercut protections for these threatened forests.

The new regulations will permit governors to request waivers to the rule, allowing road building and logging in wild forests. This dangerous precedent begins to shift management of national public lands, lands that belong to all Americans, to states and localities that stand to profit most from them. In Washington, Governor Gary Locke indicated he will not try to second-guess the Clinton-era rule. But we should expect a different response from the governors of Alaska, Idaho, Utah and other western states.

The new regulations also exempt Alaska's Tongass and Chugach national forests, the largest, wildest forests left in the U.S., from roadless area protections.

With a stroke of his pen, undersecretary Rey has swept aside the wishes of a majority of Americans in favor of the corporate interests of a privileged few. Now is the time for Congress to step in.

Representative Jay Inslee and Senator Maria Cantwell have introduced bipartisan legislation in the House and Senate that would implement the roadless rule in its original form.

What you can do:

- ◆ Thank Congressman Inslee and Senator Cantwell.
- ◆ Urge the rest of our state's delegation to join the majority of Americans in demanding protection for our last publicly owned wildlands.

Update On Fisheries In Olympic National Park

By Dick Goin

Lake Crescent Redd Counts as of June '03

Downstream Cutthroat in Lyre: 53 Incomplete due to high flow

Beardslee: 142

Barnes Creek: 126 Incomplete

New Shore-spawning Cutthroat: 29 Incomplete

Alga growth and crowding in what is left of the Beardslee spawning area are both very bad.

Salmon

Wild spring and summer Chinook range from poor to mediocre depending on stream.

Fall Chinook good in Hoh, moderate in Queets.



Winter Steelhead

One of the poorest years in recent memory. Heavy floods in juvenile years; habitat destruction from floods; overfishing, both tribal and non-tribal.

Park management still does not seem to grasp the fact that they have a mandate to protect species and no mandate for harvest.

Sea-run Cutthroat

No bright spots, as with winter steelhead, except that very few are caught in tribal nets.



Bull Trout

The park's monitoring program is well underway, receiving data from more than 70 fish carrying radios. The question: will the park use this study or put it on the shelf?

Snow Salmon Sale *(Continued from P. 1)*

On June 11, OFCO met with Olympic National Forest personnel to negotiate the appeal of the sale. The meeting was by and large a productive one. Based on the discussion, the agency appears to comprehend, if not fully agree with, OFCO's concerns regarding both the adverse affects of temporary roads and risks of simplifying naturally diversifying second growth stands via thinning. At the meeting's conclusion, the agency agreed to drop three additional units from the sale (one of which would have been the primary offender in compromising the integrity of the roadless area) in exchange for withdrawal of the appeal.

The elimination of these units will reduce the acreage of the sale by roughly one-third, while reducing road construction by 2.9 miles. Additionally, as part of the agreement, the Forest Service has invited a co-appellant to participate in treatment planning for a fourth unit, which features sensitive botanical characteristics.

OFCO's focus now turns to the agency's decision on how to address the massive washout on the Dosewallips road [see story, P. 7] as well as two additional commercial thinning sales (Flat and Lilly) proposed in the Skokomish watershed.

An Appreciation

by Tim McNulty, President of Olympic Park Associates

Soft-spoken with a hint of a laugh in his voice, a shy easy smile, bright mischievous eyes and a face creased with a lifetime of mountain sunlight, Ira Spring was a fixture of Northwest conservation.

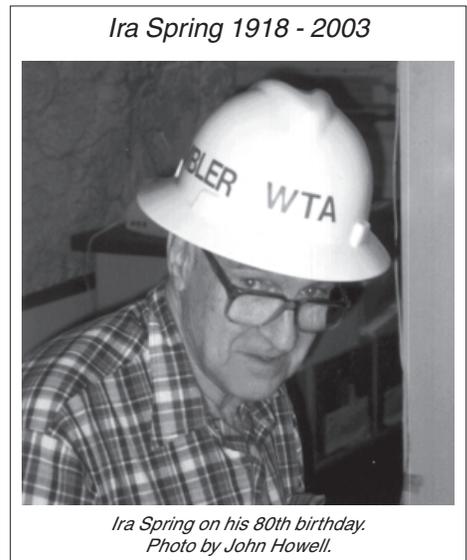
I met Ira nearly three decades ago when I first began working to save some wild corners of the Olympic Peninsula. I was new to the Northwest and new to environmental activism. Ira was a Northwest native, a respected outdoor photographer and a seasoned mountaineer. He grew up in the shadow of the Olympic Mountains and tramped across High Divide before Olympic National Park was created. When Ira spoke of his experiences in the Olympics, I was all ears.

Ira attended summer Boy Scout camp on Lena Lake in the 1920s, riding a logging railroad to the trailhead and exploring the wild country of the southern Olympics on extended backpacking trips. When we worked together on the Olympic Park Associates board in the 1970s and 80s,

advocating wilderness protection for Lena Lake and its surrounding wild country, Ira supplied a historic connection with the East Olympics. Ira's memories of hiking around a logging show to reach Lena Lake, or traversing the wild upper Hamma Hamma Valley with his fellow scouts gave me a connection with the human history of the area.

Ira always stressed that human connection to wilderness. He had first-hand knowledge of some of the early history of the Olympic Mountains, and his photographs frequently depicted human enjoyment of wild country. And in Washington, there was no greater champion of trails.

Ira believed that wildland conservation hinges on "green-bonding," getting people out to experience the beauty and wonder of wilderness so they will speak out in its behalf. A decade ago, when he received the prestigious Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Award, he quipped that he wasn't really a conservationist at all but a recreationist. And he has had some



differences with members of the conservation community, including this writer.

But we agreed on far more: the love of wild country and belief in the need to protect it. Ira's dedication to his photography and his writing have been a glowing example to me in my own work. And his lifetime spent interpreting some of the earth's most wild and beautiful places is an inspiration to all of us.

Olympic National Park Named in Wilderness Society Lawsuit

In January The Wilderness Society filed suit in U.S. District Court against Interior Secretary Gale Norton and National Park Service Director Fran Mainella. The lawsuit charges the Park Service with continued neglect and inaction regarding wilderness management in the parks. Olympic National Park is one of fifteen named in the action.

The Wilderness Society contends the Park Service has failed dismally in its responsibility to manage wilderness and potential wilderness lands under its jurisdiction. Other national parks named in the complaint include Everglades, Redwood, Kings Canyon-Sequoia and Mammoth Cave. Several national seashores, preserves, recreation areas and historic parks are also singled out.

The lawsuit charges the Park Service with failure to comply with the requirements of the Wilderness Act, the

NPS Organic Act, National Park Service management policies and enabling acts that created individual parks. "NPS has chronically failed to conduct wilderness assessments and studies, to submit wilderness recommendations, [and] to comply with wilderness management planning requirements..." according to the complaint. "The cumulative effect of this neglect is staggering."

Specifically, court documents point out that the park service has:

- ◆ Failed to conduct wilderness studies for 39 units of the National Park system;
- ◆ Failed to adopt wilderness management plans for three quarters of NPS designated wilderness areas;
- ◆ Failed to study hundreds of thousands of acres of park lands for wilderness suitability;
- ◆ Failed to forward the agency's own wilderness recommendations for

2.7 million acres to the Secretary of Interior and President for introduction to Congress; and

- ◆ Failed to adequately map 12 designated wilderness areas seriously compromising the task of management.

Olympic National Park is charged with failure to complete a wilderness management plan 15 years after 95 percent of the park was designated by Congress as wilderness. In spite of this, the Park Service continues to take actions within designated wilderness that violate the Wilderness Act, including building structures. (See *New Shelters Planned for ONP Wilderness* in the Spring, 2003, *Voice*.)

OPA is working closely with The Wilderness Society in this legal challenge. The briefing stage of the proceedings will begin this winter. We will update readers of the *Voice* as events unfold.

A Tale of Two Foresters

By Bonnie Phillips, Vice President of Olympic Forest Coalition (OFCO), and Liz Tuttle, OFCO Board.
Reprinted with permission from OFCO News, May, 2003.

Forester One:

OFCO and Friends Meet With Olympic Forest Supervisor

Concerns for changes to the Northwest Forest Plan as well as threats by the Bush Administration to weakening environmental rules and regulations provided the impetus for a March 17, 2003 meeting between Olympic Forest Supervisor Dale Hom, Olympic Forest Coalition (OFCO) Board members, and representatives from Olympic Park Associates, the Sasquatch Group of the Sierra Club, Alpine Lakes Protection Society, and Evergreen's Protecting Washington Wildness program. Issues discussed and views expressed included the following:

- ◆ **Categorical Exclusions: Small timber sales without analysis.** After concerns expressed by environmentalists that the Olympic National Forest may use categorical exclusions (CEs) (and loss of citizen comments and appeal rights) for small timber sales on the Forest, Dale Hom said he was not planning on using CEs for this purpose as it would be a breach of public trust.
- ◆ **Healthy Forest Initiative (HFI -- a Bush Proposal).** Hom also stated that the Healthy Forest Initiative is not appropriate on the Olympic National Forest since this is not a fire-prone area nor are major insect outbreaks a factor.
- ◆ **Upping the Cut.** We asked about the 10 million board foot (mmbf) probable sale quantity stated in the Northwest Forest Plan and our concern that the Olympic might be planning an increase. Hom stated that 10 mmbf was not a hard target and that the Olympic had often sold less than 10 since the Plan went into effect. He also stated he did not like to look at these as timber sales but rather as "improving the landscape" by thinning in late successional reserves. He does NOT see a major increase.
- ◆ **Forest Stewardship Contracts.** These will be mandated for national forests; the agency is waiting for further direction before implementation. (**Note:** Although this is a benign sounding name, most environmentalists call this "goods for services": that is, an entity does something good for the forest in exchange for logging marketable trees.)



We left the meeting feeling that the management of the Olympic National Forest was in good hands although we had concerns that Bush appointees above Dale might have other thoughts.

Forester Two:

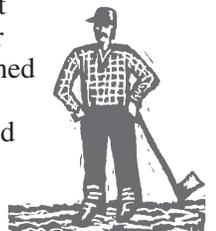
New Regional Forester Talks to Community of Forks and Gives a Different Message

Unfortunately, Dale Hom's new boss, Regional Forester Linda Goodman, gave a very different message regarding management on the Olympic National Forest. Liz Tuttle went to the meeting held in Forks and brought back Goodman's message.

- ◆ **Healthy Forest Initiative.** Goodman stated she was "very excited about what Bush is trying to do with the Healthy Forest Initiative and all." Although she stated that the HFI does not apply from the standpoint of fire (except on the Northwest corner), she felt that other aspects of the HFI do apply and will assist in "actively and appropriately" managing the forest.
- ◆ **Categorical Exclusions.** She felt that categorical exclusions for small timber sales were positive and would allow forest managers more freedom without environmental oversight or challenges.
- ◆ **Upping the Cut.** She wanted to see the cut level on the Olympic National Forest go up beyond the current 10 million board feet. She was also excited that changes to the Northwest Forest Plan would "free up managers to "actively and appropriately" manage streamside buffers.

In summary:

Goodman appears to contradict most of the important commitments made sincerely by Olympic Forest Supervisor Dale Hom. Liz reports that Goodman seemed "very excited" about a lot of anti-environmental proposals coming from the Bush Administration; we, however, find nothing to get excited about as we listen to her message. We are deeply concerned that this Bush Administration appointee may overturn the good intentions of the Olympic National Forest staff.



USFS Dosewallips Road Washout Repair: Going Down A Road to Nowhere?

*By Ted Labbe, Habitat Biologist, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, and OFCO Board.
Reprinted with permission from OFCO News, May, 2003.*

In early January 2002, a large rainstorm hit the northeast Olympic Mountains melting snow packs and resulting in record runoff to area rivers. On the Dungeness River, with nearly 80 years of stream flow monitoring, the largest ever-recorded flood occurred. Just “over the hill” from the Dungeness, Brinnon old-timers living along the Dosewallips River claimed the flood on their river surpassed even the epic flood of 1949. Kayaking down the Dose in the weeks following the flood, I observed organic debris deposits in trees and on riverbanks 10 feet above the normal base flow river level.

Picking up after the flood on the Dosewallips, folks soon discovered that part of a road was missing! Ten miles upriver, a 300-foot long road section and a portion of the hillside above it had been completely washed out. As an important travel corridor serving a National Park trailhead and the busy Elkhorn and Dosewallips campgrounds, the USFS quickly initiated plans to remedy the loss.

Forest Service staff soon realized no easy solutions existed. The road could simply be closed and the upstream road section converted to trail, but certain influential area residents feared road closure doomed the recreation-based local economy. Another option to construct an upslope bypass around the washout would disturb protected spotted owl and marbled murrelet habitat. The final option, reconstruction of the road in its former location, jeopardized threatened salmon habitat.

One year and two environmental assessments later, Hood Canal District Ranger Dave Craig issued his recommendation to rebuild the road in its former location – now entirely occupied by the river. The preferred alternative of road reconstruction is clearly at odds with ecological conditions outlined in the EA and the agency’s own mandates to protect wildland ecosystems and natural processes. Under this alternative, a section of the river would be filled and the outer meander bend heavily armored to prevent future road erosion. To “replace” lost ecological functions, the USFS is proposing constructed logjams downstream of the washout.

Recent studies of the river indicate that erosion of river-adjacent bluffs is critical to the recruitment of habitat-forming spawning grav-

els and large wood to the river. Many of these bluffs – like the one across which the USFS is proposing to rebuild the road – have been armored to protect downstream homes and infrastructure, cutting off natural erosion and material recruitment to the river, and preventing channel migration that creates and maintains fish habitat. In addition, historic wood cleanouts and riparian logging have robbed the river of raw material for logjams, which are important safe-havens for fish. As a result of these changes, biologists currently believe that the availability of large wood and spawning gravels are key limiting factors for salmon in the river. These habitat factors would be incrementally degraded by the Forest Service’s preferred alternative of road reconstruction.

Visitors to the washout site can still observe a line of angular rock threading up the middle of the present-day river channel that marks the toe of the old rock-armored roadbed. The volume of material exported from the site by the flood is striking, and the power of the river to literally eat a whole road section is awe-inspiring! A casual observer driving downstream from the washout can see other locations not unlike the washout site where future river-road collisions are imminent. Shouldn’t such events

(Continued on P. 8, Dosewallips.)

What you can do:

Write Olympic National Forest:
David Craig, District Manager
Olympic National Forest
Hood Canal Ranger District
PO Box 68
Hoodsport, WA 98548

- ◆ Tell them your reservations with their preferred alternative to rebuild the Dosewallips Road at the washout.
- ◆ Tell ONF that you are concerned about impacts to threatened salmon populations, and the aquatic ecosystem.
- ◆ Tell them you would also oppose construction of a road bypass that would needlessly disturb upland forest environments.
- ◆ Support road closure at the road washout and a road-to-trail conversion above the washout and ask them to investigate the OFCO-proposed idea of a Dosewallips Loop Trail that would benefit the local community and economy.





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Sally W. Soest, Editor

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Please mail to:

Laura Zalesky, Membership Chair
2433 Del Campo Drive, Everett, WA 98208

(Dosewallips, continued from P. 7.)

give us pause to consider the wisdom of re-building the road and make us wake up to the potential for other washouts?

In spite of the Forest Service's lofty "ecosystem management" goals, the reality is that imperiled critters and their habitats don't vote. As a result, day-to-day USFS operations often ignore important environmental conservation concerns in the name of doing projects that purportedly benefit local, economically-distressed rural communities. In this sense, it is critically important to recognize and support the work of groups like Olympic Forest Coalition that elevate and speak for ecosystem conservation concerns. OFCO's recent letter to the USFS on the Dose washout is a wonderful example of the group's leadership

role in this arena.

In the letter, OFCO Chair Jim Scarborough suggests an original and creative solution that would address the needs of both natural and human communities in the Dosewallips watershed. Jim noted the wonderful potential for creation of a loop trail to the natural landmark of Dosewallips Falls, just upstream of the washout. Such an idea might serve as "mitigation" for the loss of upriver recreation opportunities and the appeal of this idea is that it may even represent an improvement over the former end-of-road recreation opportunities, while protecting the integrity of the Dosewallips River.

OFCO awaits a decision from the Forest Service on this important issue.