

# INSIDE/OUTSIDE

CONSERVATION NEWS AROUND THE NORTHWEST

## Cascades wolves on film

On Thursday, November 1 at 7 pm in Seattle, join Conservation Northwest and The Burke Museum for a special screening of the new documentary on Washington's wolves. If you missed this



*Seeing Lookout wolves on the ridge, remnants of the pack, was a thrill. BBC*

great film on BBC or the Discovery Channel, now is your chance to see film clips from "Land of the Lost Wolves" at the University of Washington's Kane Hall. Following the film, take part in a discussion panel featuring expedition team leader Jasmine Minbashian, Bear Trek's Chris Morgan, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) wolf biologist Scott Fitkin.

## Wedge Pack update

Washington State is facing its first major test when it comes to wolf management and the wolf plan. The Wedge Pack in August were suspected of attacking cattle owned by a local rancher whose grazing allotment is on nearby national forest lands. The WDFW killed one wolf and, as of press time, planned to kill four more.

Because earlier evidence was inconclusive and experts couldn't agree that wolves were responsible, Conservation Northwest urged the WDFW to withhold their kill order. Then came two more injuries of calves and all the field experts agreed that wolves were involved. Conservation Northwest believes that the evidence is now conclusive that Wedge wolves are attacking livestock. We appreciate the efforts made by WDFW, especially the field staff, to respond to this difficult situation. Under Washington's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan, these incidents trigger management responses, including lethal removal. But we call for moderation and incremental action by the state and more effort towards a long-term solution that abates the attacks in the long run while preserving the existence of the Wedge Pack.

## Poachers pay the price

In late July, 2012, three members of the White family, from Twisp, Washington, were sentenced for their criminal roles in the poaching of wolves in the Cascade's Lookout Pack. William and Tom White were charged with killing two wolves, and the indictment states they may have killed as many as five wolves. Tom White's wife Erin is charged with conspiracy in connection with attempting to smuggle a pelt from one of the wolves into Canada.

In the sentencing, senior U.S. District Judge Frem Nielsen confirmed \$73,000 fines against William, Tom, and Erin White. He also sentenced Bill White to six months' home confinement and Tom White to three months.

Poaching was suspected after the Lookout Pack's breeding female disappeared after denning for two consecutive years in 2008 and 2009. Suspicions were confirmed in 2009, when a box bound for Canada was discovered to contain a wolf pelt.

In hopes that this will be the last such poaching episode of Washington's wolves, Conservation Northwest maintains a poaching reward fund in partnership with the WDFW.



*Convicted poacher with Lookout Pack wolf.*

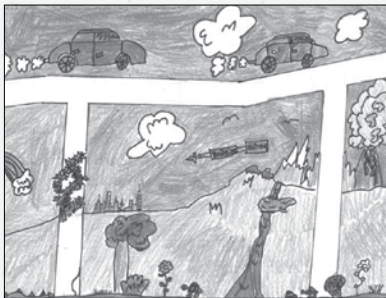
## BC hotline, 1-855-GO-GRIZZ

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has yet to put into action a recovery plan for threatened Cascades bears. Biologists suspect that North Cascades grizzly bears, shrunk to a mere handful, will recover largely through natural immigration from British Columbia. Yet we don't even know how many bears there are remaining on the BC side of the Cascades. So we've launched a new project with our BC partners asking backcountry users in BC to report potential grizzly bear sightings using a new BC

grizzly bear sightings hotline, 1-855-GO-GRIZZ. Hopefully this will help fill in the BC bear blanks and raise awareness of the plight of the southern-most grizzlies on the west coast. *See more about a grizzly bear sightings poster in the article "Road to recovery or bridge to nowhere?" on page 12.*

## Safety for wildlife, motorists

Congress has approved a two-year transportation bill giving state and federal land managers the authority needed to protect drivers and passengers from wildlife collisions and prevent wildlife deaths on our highways. The new wildlife-vehicle collision provisions address roads on federal and tribal lands, national parks, and state highways. These allow state and federal agencies to retrofit roads and create wildlife crossing structures, such as bridges and culverts along the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project and in the Okanogan Valley underpasses on Highway 97, to help protect motorists and wildlife.



*Drawings by contest winners Axel (his art shown here) and Krista will be displayed on billboards along I-90 this fall.*

Futures Art and Essay Contest. The winning students were Axel Oxholm, a 4th grader at Cedarhurst Elementary in Burien and Krista Heald, a 3rd grader at Mountainview Elementary in Yakima. Elementary students from Seattle to Tacoma to Yakima are invited to enter the contest sponsored by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition. "Bridging Futures" highlights safe passage for motorists and wildlife, helping animals, from elk to wolverines, cross the busy freeway and move safely north and south in the central Cascades near Snoqualmie Pass.

Do you see wildlife as you travel I-90? With I-90 Wildlife Watch, the whole family can take part, reporting what you see at the interactive website, [i90wildlifewatch.org](http://i90wildlifewatch.org).

## Deer underpass on Hwy 97

Thousands of Washington's mule deer regularly travel in the Okanogan Valley. They journey between open lands, both public and private, to get to good quality browse and habitat on either side of the valley. Highway 97 is also a major thoroughfare traveled by people and a key transportation corridor north-south through the valley, leading to high road kill.



*Funneling mule deer to a proposed underpass on Hwy 97 would prevent deadly accidents.*  
*Jay Kehne*

WSDOT is proposing to improve the Riverside–Janis Bridge section of Hwy 97 by adding one or two wildlife underpasses. Crossings constructed under highways help wildlife safely cross under roads and can prevent, on average, 85% of all deer-vehicle collisions. Routing deer to the underpasses is done with funneling structures, including fencing, boulders placed at fence ends, cattle guards, several deer "jump-outs," and "foot-gates."

Accidents are expensive. Because of the high road kill, the savings from this 1.5 mile-stretch from Riverside to Janis Bridge adds up to over \$445,000 a year. The value of deer saved and reduced collision costs are expected to offset construction costs in as little as two to three years.

The Riverside–Janis Bridge wildlife crossing is supported by local residents, businesses, and public agencies. Every part of the proposed Hwy 97 project is subject to design coordination between WSDOT and local landowners. Already, private landowners who manage and own land along this section are all willing to allow wildlife to move across their properties to access the underpasses.

## A Lake Whatcom wildland park

Earlier this year, a Lake Whatcom Forest Preserve Park won Whatcom County Council approval, thanks to you. That approval was seconded by the Washington State Board of Natural Resources when they voted in July on a land exchange necessary to assemble lands into the right pattern for transfer into a park.

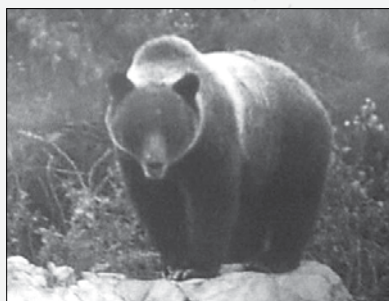
Faced by some vocal opponents, the county council called a

second public hearing on the new preserve on September 11. More than 200 people showed up to defend the new park as a tremendous opportunity to improve quality of life in Whatcom County.

The proposed Lake Whatcom Forest Preserve Park offers high quality but low-impact recreation, including hiking, biking, and camping, and provides local control of the watershed, with little impact to forestry. It creates wildlife habitat and old-growth forest for future generations.

## Grizzly bears in the Wedge

A grizzly bear was seen on several different occasions and photographed in Stevens County in “the Wedge” of northeastern



*This grizzly bear was photographed in the Wedge on August 11.*

Washington. This is the fifth distinct individual grizzly bear confirmed in the Wedge this year. Between the Kettle and Columbia rivers, the Wedge crosses over the border of Washington State and British Columbia, Canada.

## Spotted owl habitat

Twenty-two years ago, the spotted owl was listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act. Between 1985 and 2006, the owl population declined 2.8% each year across Washington, Oregon, and California. Population loss in Washington State was particularly severe, with owl numbers falling by half between 1995 and 2005. That’s a lot of loss for a rare bird to take.

To help the owl survive and recover, the US Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed nearly 14 million acres of critical habitat, including some state and private land.

Thank you for making a difference and for speaking up for old-growth during the comment period. The agency will publish a final plan for the spotted owl in the months ahead.

## Burning for butterflies

The Center of Lands Management is working to restore native prairie at the Glacial Heritage Preserve in the south Puget Sound region. The plan is to burn the prairie to remove invasive plants and help fire-adapted natives release their seeds and then, next spring, replant with native grasses and flowers (as many as 30,000 seedlings!) and reintroduce native butterflies including Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly caterpillars. The caterpillars were raised and cared for jointly by the Center of Lands Management and inmates at the Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women through the Sustainable Prisons Project.

Less than 3% of South Sound prairie remains today. Prescribed burns help restore the area to its historic condition (Native Americans in the area used to burn the prairie regularly) to recover native prairie plants and animals, including the Mardon skipper butterfly, Mazama pocket gopher, western gray squirrel, and horned lark.

## Ecological appropriate thinning

A new report calculates the amount of timber and jobs created through restoration thinning in national forests west of the Cascades. *Ecologically Appropriate Restoration Thinning in the Northwest Forest Plan Area: A Policy and Technical Analysis*, authored by Oregon conservationist Andy Kerr, addresses the Northwest Forest Plan area of western Washington, Oregon, and northern California. The area encompasses much of the range of the endangered northern spotted owl.

According to the report, selectively logging younger trees in an ecologically appropriate way could send 44% more federal timber volume to local mills and result in more than 2,700 new timber jobs, all while keeping mature and old-growth forests intact.

The report was jointly released by Conservation Northwest, the Geos Institute, the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, and Oregon Wild. Consulting



*Old-growth forests undergo a natural thinning process; younger monoculture forests get a head start with restoration thinning. Erin Moore*

forester Derek Churchill conducted the technical analysis and modeling for the report. Churchill worked for several years as a forester on staff with Conservation Northwest.

## Get out and get wild

While we are busy working inside to conserve wildlife and habitat, our friends at Washington Trails Association (WTA) help get you outside working for wildlands. This summer we cooperated with WTA on a variety of trail work parties and hikes in northeastern Washington's Kettle River Range and Selkirk Mountains of the Columbia Highlands.

Outdoor fun doesn't stop just because the summer does! Conservation Northwest and WTA have all kinds of trail events and hikes to welcome back fall. Check out our event calendar at [conservationnw.org/getinvolved/calendar](http://conservationnw.org/getinvolved/calendar) and join us.

## The generosity of supporters

Conservation Northwest supporters this year took part in The Seattle Foundation's GiveBIG, donating \$21,000 to keep the Northwest wild. You raised a record-breaking \$248,000 at our "Hope for a Wild Future" auction, where we showed a sneak



*At our annual "Hope for a Wild Future" auction. Tim Chandonnet*

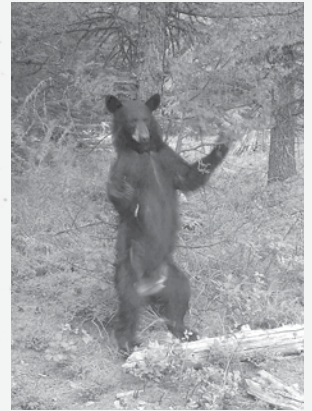
preview of the new film, "Land of the Lost Wolves." You also took action for Whatcom's water and Puget's prairies, renewed your memberships, hosted art fundraisers, volunteered, and more. Thank you!

## Recognizing volunteers and interns

We keep the Northwest wild with the generous help of volunteers and interns. Volunteers help in the Seattle and Bellingham offices, at our annual *Hope for a Wild Future* auction, on the citizen wildlife monitoring and Hwy 97 safe passage projects, for

the Columbia Highlands, and more. **Thank you!**

**Volunteers:** Joel Anderson, Prentiss Andrews, Roger Bean, Denise Beardslee, Doug Beeman, Sara Brooke Benjamin, Marcus Bianco, Beverly Breckenridge, Robert Briggs, Paul Brookshire, Tom Bugert, Luci Bull, Curtis Bull, Jan Carlson, Richard Champlin, Timothy Chandonnet, Colby Chester, Miranda Ciotti, Cathy Clark, Jenn Coe, Kellene Collins, Laura Cooney, Jane Cover, Roger Crafts, Nancy Curry, Kathryn Davis, Kyle Dewey, Robby Dillon, Jason Elder, Trent Elwing, AJ Engebretson, Michelle Engebretson, Peder Engelstad, Samantha Everett, Doris Ferm, Andrew Forcier, Lauren Foster, Fred at Cascade Vocational Services, Jay Friedman, Chris Galbreath, Crystal Gartner, Drew Gaylord, Genelle Gibson, Kayla Haas, Andrew Haeger, Michael Havdra, Richard Hernandez, Tristan Higgins, Ron Hill, Michael Hinkel, Kari Hiser, Amy Houser, Laurel Kaminski, Joseph Kiegel, Fred Koontz, Matthew Kuhar, Charlene LaCoursiere, Sam Lacroix, Cynthia Lambarth, Sandi Lauer, Julia Leach, Edward Lisowski, Peter Loft, Ariel Logan, Chad Maurer, Taylor McDowell, Peter McGlenn, Alexandria Molina, Rick Moore, Lindsey Moyer, Tom Murphy, Lori Nicholl, Kendall Norcott, Ayako Okuyama-Donofree, Rose Oliver, Larry O'Neil, Katherine Owen, Nicolas Pinel, Geoff Praeger, Rekha Ravindran, Paul Reed, Melissa Reitz, Katie Remine, Susan Rhodes, Jacob Richardson, Ray Robertson, Laurie Ross, Elizabeth Rothman, Erin Ryan, Gemma Ryan, Paul Ryhajlo, Allen Sayigh, Julie Sayigh, Shannon Schelinder, Susanne Seales, Jay Shepherd, Gabe Showalter, Anna Simpson, John Soklaski, Kelly Staples, Ron Stepchuk, Sarah Stewart, Tom Stonehocker, Brian Torrell, Amanda Trail, Benjamin Trail, Ted Tsui, Robin Turnblom, Pieter Van Winkle, Ken Vanden Heuvel, Jack Vinella, Lee Wales, Ele Watts, Michael Webb, Sharon Welch, William Whipple, Megan Whiteside, Bruce Williams, John Williams, Keri Young, Kelli Young-Beach



*Black bear back scratch, taken by remote camera at Alligator Ridge in northeastern Washington.*

*Photo: Conservation Northwest. See our Flickr site for more!*

**Interns:** Aaron Theisen, Mallory Millay, Genevieve Shank, Danna Bowers, Jamie Sandberg, JoAnna Coffey, Emily Chudek