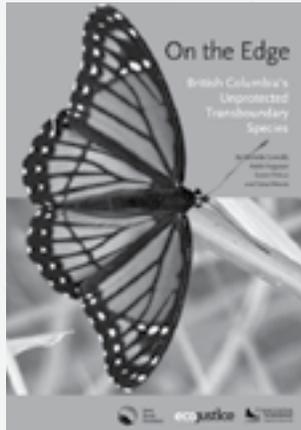


INSIDE/OUTSIDE

CONSERVATION NEWS AROUND THE NORTHWEST

BC wildlife *On the Edge*

A new Canadian-US report finds BC wildlife at risk of extinction from inadequate laws and calls for BC endangered-species protection. *On the Edge: British Columbia's Unprotected Transboundary Species* highlights the inadequate patchwork of laws and policies putting more than 1,900 species at risk of extinction or extirpation in British Columbia.



Transboundary wildlife need help.

Released by David Suzuki Foundation, Ecojustice, and Conservation Northwest, the report details how BC has become one of the last refuges for species like the grizzly bear, lynx, and wolf. Despite being home to a vast array of wildlife, very few species at risk in BC are protected under law.

The report reveals that these species need considerably more protection if they are to survive in BC, especially the 96 per cent that are transboundary species that exist in BC and neighboring jurisdictions. While several of these jurisdictions have strong species protection laws, a species that crosses the border into BC often faces serious perils.

"Wildlife does not recognize political boundaries," said Joe Scott, international conservation director at Conservation Northwest. "Species like lynx are seriously endangered in the shared habitats of the US and BC, but are only protected south of the border. Unfortunately protections for such vulnerable wildlife are more like legal dead ends than two-way streets."

The report is available online at www.davidsuzuki.org.

Spotted owl reprieve

In a win for Pacific Northwest old-growth forests, a federal judge recently rejected the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Spotted Owl Recovery Plan and sent it back to the Service for revision. Conservation Northwest and others intervened in the timber

industry lawsuit in 2008 after several professional scientific groups issued withering critiques of the Plan.

Early in the court proceedings, the Obama administration confessed legal errors resulting from political interference from former agency assistant director, Julie MacDonald, and together with Conservation Northwest requested remand and vacatur. The judge agreed, and sent the recovery plan back to the Service for revision.

The Service anticipated the court's action, and forthwith issued its revised Recovery Plan. Comments on the revised Plan are due November 15, 2010. The professional scientific groups—the Society for Conservation Biology, American Ornithologists' Union, and the Wildlife Society—are gearing up, along with many conservation groups, to make sure the Spotted Owl Recovery Plan is scientifically rigorous and will restore this famous icon of old forests.

Protecting Methow shrub-steppe

In a rousing match of political tennis, the possibility of a new Okanogan PUD powerline across pristine, unroaded state trust land has become a constitutional issue. The proposed powerline and miles of new roads would cut directly through the largest intact block of shrub-steppe habitat in the Methow Valley and degrade crucial winter habitat used by mule deer—an important food source for animals, including the local wolves.

Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark was making a good faith effort to address an easement request when the Okanogan PUD unilaterally filed a lawsuit to take possession of state property.

Citing concerns about costs to the state for managing the sprawling network of new roads and increased risks of invasive species and wildfire, Commissioner Goldmark wants to continue to



New powerline would harm mule deer. Photo: The Methow Conservancy

fight the PUD's power grab. However, despite having backed the Commissioner in a lower court case, state Attorney General Rob McKenna refused to represent the state in an appeal. Until this gets resolved, we've appealed the lower court's ruling as a "placeholder" for DNR.

The appeal of the lower court's decision on whether the PUD can condemn state trust lands will not likely move forward until the Supreme Court addresses the constitutional issues later this year. Science Director Dave Werntz said, "Commissioner Goldmark has legitimate and unresolved concerns about the Okanogan PUD's powerline, and we support his efforts to preserve wildlife habitat and protect Washington's trust lands."

Fishers going strong



Fisher family on the peninsula. Photo: WDFW

Photos recently confirmed that fishers reintroduced to the Olympic peninsula were successfully breeding. In early September, a mother and kits were photographed near a den site. Conservation Northwest initiated the recovery effort several years ago after conceiving the idea and funding a feasibility study that was conducted by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. We were later joined by Olympic National Park, who conducted the environmental analysis, and US Geological Survey, who contributed to the research and monitoring activities.

Over the last three years, we successfully released 90 fishers (50 females and 40 males) to the Olympics! While kits were also photographed last year, total reproduction is difficult to estimate because of the remote terrain and challenges with accessing den sites. Similarly, adult survival rates are difficult to estimate, as the status of some of the animals is not confirmed (e.g., no positive or negative detections) and animals with lost collars are recorded as presumed dead. In total, 23 fishers are presumed dead—some from predation (bobcats), some near roads, and some from unknown causes (too decomposed to tell). Overall, mortality is far lower than expected.

As radio collars are beginning to fail (they are ephemeral),

future monitoring efforts will switch almost entirely to remote cameras and hair snag stations to track the reintroduced fishers. Hair snag stations will allow DNA analysis to determine lineage and reproduction. Conservation Northwest volunteers will continue to assist the Olympic National Park and Forest Service in establishing camera stations.

Washington's fisher recovery plan identifies three recovery areas: the Olympic, Cascades, and Selkirks. While it seems likely that the Olympic reintroduction effort has been successful and will require no further releases, Conservation Northwest would like to continue recovery efforts elsewhere in the state when resources become available.

Piece of climate CAKE



The Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange, or CAKE for short, went live this summer. The resource was developed by EcoAdapt and Island Press to create an innovative community of practice and a comprehensive online resource for all things related to climate adaptation. Says founder and climatologist Lara Hansen, "During our time working in the field, we have seen a need for creating a comprehensive online adaptation resource that would link examples of successful adaptation efforts, to the data used to plan them, to the people who implemented them. CAKE fulfills this need." *Learn more at www.cakex.org.* Dr. Hansen also participated in the Wild Links conference Conservation Northwest hosted in Seattle this October on climate change adaptation and wildlife.

Teamwork for Blanchard Mtn

In September, Conservation Northwest teamed with the Department of Natural Resources and the Blanchard Strategies Group to host a BBQ on Blanchard Mountain, southernmost outpost of the Chuckanut Range of the Cascades. We were joined for the afternoon by Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark, Skagit County Commissioners Ron Wesen, Sharon Dillon, and Ken Dahlstedt, and former state Senator Harriet Spanel.

The pulled-pork was excellent and as the clouds parted we reveled in the views of the San Juan Islands and Skagit Valley.

The BBQ was a chance for the Blanchard Strategies Group to discuss the progress made in the Blanchard Strategies Agreement. This agreement was duofold. It promised to protect a core area of about 1,600 acres of the popular riding and hiking area. It also pledged that everyone would work together to secure legislative funding of about \$12.5 million to purchase replacement lands to reduce sprawl near Blanchard while providing trust beneficiaries with ongoing revenues from timber.

The effort to raise money has been well received by legislators who like the strong support from a diverse group of interests. While we scaled our requests down out of respect for the budget impacts of the recession, we have been successful in raising \$5.5 million, funding two purchases with a third looking likely. During the 2011 legislative session, we'll be working together to seek the remaining funds to finish this project.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Goldmark has proposed that the core of Blanchard be designated a natural resource conservation area, which will make the protection more permanent and honor the unique biological characteristics of the mountain. This fall, the Blanchard Advisory Group will start meeting to discuss management details.

Native grasslands of Cross-Base

With the statute of limitations about to expire, Conservation Northwest joined Tahoma Audubon, Woodland Hunt Club, and American Lake Gardens Equestrian Alliance in filing a lawsuit against the Cross-Base Highway and seeking a stay of proceedings. Once a stay is granted (currently supported by all parties), the project will remain on hold until more than \$500 million dollars in construction money becomes available, if ever.

The Cross-Base Highway would bisect the largest remaining intact oak-woodland prairie in Puget Sound. Less than 3% of our state's oak woodland prairies remain, and the Cross-Base Highway would flatten 162 acres and fragment 1,600 acres of habitat that Pierce county considers "the most biologically and ecologically rich areas remaining in the lower elevations of Pierce County."

Conservation Northwest and partners have long fought to keep this remarkable piece of prairie safe for endangered and at-risk wildlife that find a home there, including streaked horned lark, Mazama pocket gopher, western gray squirrel, water howelia, and mardon skipper and Taylor's checkerspot butterflies. Oregon spotted frogs, another endangered species, were recently reintroduced to the area.



Taylor's checkerspot butterfly on the oak-woodland prairie. Photo: Dana Ross

This summer, a new prairie species, *Plantago patagonica*, was found on Johnson Prairie at Fort Lewis volunteer seed collector, Doug "eagle-eye" Whitlock. He only found one plant, which had set seed, but volunteers

are already searching the area for more. There has only been one collection of this native grass on the west side of the Cascades in Washington, made 122 years ago (1888) on Yelm Prairie by the botanist Charles Vancouver Piper. Local biologists Mary Linders and Rod Gilbert today consider this plant a potential annual larval host for the endangered Taylors checkerspot butterfly.

Fond Farewell to Walkin' Jim

Walkin' Jim Stoltz, long-time, powerful advocate for wild lands, passed away this summer from cancer. While on this earth, he walked thousands of miles of trails, including the Pacific Crest Trail, fundraising for conservation groups (and Conservation Northwest was one), with his guitar on his back and an unshakable belief in "keeping it wild." Walkin' Jim wrote many songs beloved by children and adults and gave of his time in countless ways. Indeed, for many, his voice *is* the voice of wilderness. He will be sorely missed and long remembered.

The amazing work of interns

Communications intern Mindee Shrull (Bellingham office) came to us as a marketing major at Western Washington University. She updated our North Cascades Grizzly Bears Facebook page and kept our friends and fans engaged. Her favorite part was learning more about grizzly bears while applying her knowledge of marketing and networking using social media. Thank you for helping keep the Northwest wild, Mindee! She says, "Having lived in the Northwest my whole life and being a lover of the outdoors, working for an organization that helps to preserve our region was an excellent and rewarding experience. The knowledge I've acquired I will use throughout



Aaron
Theisen



Mindee
Shrull



Amanda
Edwards



Katie
Ross

my professional and personal life.”

Membership intern Amanda Edwards (Bellingham office) studies at Huxley College of the Environment, with an emphasis on disaster reduction and emergency planning and a minor in geography. She was instrumental in registering guests and helping prepare for our annual auction. Amanda said it was a highlight to meet members and put the faces to the names. Her attention to detail was a skill put to good use, as she learned that simple tasks are often more complicated than they first appear. Many thanks for all your hard work, Amanda! Says Amanda, “Being an intern here at Conservation Northwest has allowed me to see how much hard work, coordination, and passion goes into protecting wild places every day. I am

glad to have had the opportunity to contribute. I hope that wherever my career leads me in the near future that it will be at a place that truly cares about their mission like they do here!”

Outreach intern Katie Ross (Bellingham office) is an environmental studies major with a minor in business at Baylor University in Texas. Katie’s internship started with her wearing a bear’s head costume in front of 300 auction guests selling raffle tickets—she was a natural. Katie managed the content and photos on our Washington’s Wolves Facebook page which gained over 100 fans within its first month. She also created a display board for doing outreach in Whatcom County about the Lake Whatcom Forest Preserve and provided education in the community on this important issue. Thanks so much, Katie.

Outreach intern Aaron Theisen (Spokane office) has graced us with his hard work, smart skills, and energizing good humor. He has interned with Derrick Knowles on the Columbia Highlands Initiative, including spearheading the Adopt a Wilderness program, mobilizing volunteers, and speed hiking the Kettle Crest Trail. He helped create and is key correspondent on the Columbia Highlands Facebook page. While at Conservation Northwest, he was inspired to take wing on his own as a free-lance professional writer and editor after working for several years with a genetics firm in Spokane. Many thanks, Aaron! May you live long and prosper.

Interested in being a Conservation Northwest intern? Go online to www.conservationnw.org/get-involved to check out our program.

Volunteers: Thank you!

Office helpers

Alyssa Fritz, Doris Ferm, Natassja Noel, Olivia Moulton, Susan Rhodes

Event volunteers

Abby Lund, Amanda Edwards, Andrea Faste, Angela Marie, Carrie Stengel, Cecilia Biosca, Chelsea Updegrave, Crystal Gartner, Dorothy Miller, Elizabeth Rothman, Emily Cordz, Harvey Berman, Jace Bylenga, Jennifer Moore, Joanne Polayes, John Perreault, Katie Ross, Kit McGurn, Mark Turner, Matthew Cohen, Meagan Johnston, Paul Reed, Rachel Kahn, Rose Oliver, Sandi Lauer, Steve Anthes, Travis Coletti, Wendy Arness, Wendy Reilly

Columbia Highlands grassroots volunteers

Brooke Nicholson, Craig Volosing, Ellie LaRocca, Jason Nicholson, Jon Isacoff, Karen Stevenson, Kerry Whitsitt, Lianne Anders Ristow, Mary Lou Saffrenek, Peter Gebhard, Steve Llewellyn, Tom May

Columbia Highlands hike leaders

Dinah Reed, Frederic Dugenet, Holly Weiler, Kathleen Griener, Ken Vanden Heuvel, Leif Jakobsen, Mark Turner, Nathalie Ellis, Sue Coleman, Walt Hunner

Columbia Highlands trail work volunteers

Bill Way, Denise Beardsley, Frank and Olivia Moulton, Jan Carlson, Jane Baker, John Magoteaux, Leif Jakobsen

Wildlife monitoring project volunteers

Alan Kearney, Allison Lee, Amy Gulick, Amy Tsui, Anna Petrie, Bill Whipple, Bill Young, Cathy Craver, Cathy Macchio, Chantal Argyle, Charissa Wateb, Chris Lee, Corbin Powell, Debby Welsh, Don Maroney, Ed Scullywest, Erik Ryznar, Federico Prado, Frankie Allen, Gretchen Callan, Gretchen Fritsch, Guthrie Schrengohst, Jenny Maida Young, JJ Rice, Julie Clinton, Kari Hiser, Karlee Hill, Kelly Staples, Kerrie Murphy, Kim Des Rochers, Larry O’Neil, Laurel Kaminski, Lauren Christensen, Liz Snair, Mark Smaalders, Matt Sommer, Matt Wurdeman, Maureen Corlas, Megan McGinty, Mike Pagan, Mike Webb, Neil Vargas, Patrick McGowan, Paul Balle, Paul Brookshire, Paul Ryhajlo, Paul Zoba, Pete Peterson, Peter McGlenn, Quyen Tran, Robin Callan, Saralynn Finn, Shawn Morris, Spenser Bednavik, Stefan Knorr, Sue Madsen, Tana Beus, Tom Murphy, Tracy Durnell, Trent Elwing, Valerie Marquis, Yinghua Zhang