

# INSIDE/OUTSIDE

CONSERVATION NEWS AROUND THE NORTHWEST

## Conservation Northwest joins wolf working group

It's an exciting time for wolves in Washington as the Department of Fish and Wildlife develops a plan for conservation and management of gray wolves, who are already making their way back to historic habitat in the Columbia Highlands and Washington's Cascades. Conservation Northwest's Outreach Coordinator Derrick Knowles was recently invited to join a working group of diverse stakeholders formed to help guide the agency plan. We'll be working with hunters, ranchers, biologists, and others over the next year to identify common ground and develop a plan for managing wolves once they are recovered in Washington.

A draft wolf management plan is scheduled for completion by the end of the year, followed by a public comment period.

## Hazel Wolf Environmental Film Festival comes to Seattle



Climate change will be featured at this 9th annual film festival in Seattle March 30–April 1, 2007. The Hazel Wolf Environmental Film Network is organizing the festival with the University of Washington. Kane Hall is the festival venue.

“People are excited to hear the festival will be in Seattle this year,” said David Atcheson, festival co-chair. “The UW is so easy to get to.” In prior years, the festival was held at a Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat in Leavenworth.

The festival, cosponsored by Conservation Northwest, features a special screening **Thursday, March 29, at the Woodland Park Zoo of “Edge of Eden: Living with Grizzlies,”** a film about Charlie Russell and his work raising orphaned grizzly cubs in Kamchatka. The full festival begins the night of March 30 with a screening of “The Great Warming”—the other must-see

climate film. The film includes a segment on west coast forests and their role in the carbon cycle.

Festival tickets are available through Brown Paper Tickets. Seats are limited. For more information, visit [www.hazelfilm.org](http://www.hazelfilm.org) or call 206.624.9725.

## Flash! Bio DaVersity Code movie gets raves

In “Bio DaVersity Code,” the new Flash movie, two animal heroes, Robert Penguin and Sophie Minnow, sleuth the threats facing the world's fish, plants, and wildlife on the brink of extinction and how their loss directly affects humanity's future. The piece was created by the Endangered Species Coalition, Harvard's Center for Health and the Global Environment, Buckminster Fuller Institute, and Free Range Studios. Download it at [www.stopextinction.org](http://www.stopextinction.org), and pass it along to friends and family.

## Reprieve from machines for US mountain caribou

The last remaining mountain caribou in the lower 48 states received an extra layer of protection in a Valentine's Day ruling that allows the endangered caribou to migrate from the northern to the southern areas of their habitat, while still permitting snowmobiles in much of the Priest Lake region. Mountain caribou are one of the most endangered large mammals in North America.

“Mountain caribou—especially given the uncertainty of climate change—need to be able to move freely within their old forest habitat. The court reaffirmed that these old-growth forest dependent animals need habitat undisturbed by snowmobiles,” said Conservation Northwest's Joe Scott. Conservation groups including Conservation Northwest originally took legal action against the Forest Service in 2005, arguing that the agency's winter recreation policies threaten caribou.

Like elk and other wildlife, caribou are most vulnerable in winter when stressed by cold weather and deep snows. Snowmobiles and other recreational vehicles passing through

caribou habitat have damaged the area and put additional strains on the herd. The ruling allows snowmobiling along the edges of the designated recovery area, and several trails within the recovery area, but prohibits recreational vehicles in the most essential parts of the caribou's habitat. Approximately 90 percent of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest lies outside of the recovery zone and will not be affected.

### BC cities urge caribou recovery

In February 2007 the city of Kimberley in the Kootenay Mountains of British Columbia, Canada, adopted a resolution supporting "the strongest conservation measures deemed feasible by the Science Team for all remaining mountain caribou herds." The city goes on to say, "Kimberley relies on healthy wilderness surroundings as a magnet for tourism and amenity migration that is becoming the future of our town. Protecting caribou habitat is beneficial for grizzlies, wolverine, mountain goat, lynx, and a host of other threatened species.



*Mountain caribou need old growth, not pavement. Photo: J. M. Medig*

"Our quality of life, the long-term sustainability of our industries, and our most precious global asset—wilderness, will all benefit from the protection of mountain caribou habitat."

The city of Nelson also sent a letter to the BC government to comment on the government's recovery plan, urging the "highest level of recovery" for mountain caribou.

### I-90 Wildlife Bridges get a boost

Wildlife and motorists in the Central Cascades will soon have safe passage along the busy Interstate 90 corridor from Hyak to Easton through the work of Conservation Northwest and the I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition. A boost came when Washington's Governor Gregoire approved funding in her recent budget to support the first phase of a project that will help wildlife negotiate key freeway crossings.

And from the other Washington comes hope for funding to protect forest and streamside habitat near Stampede Pass, also in the I-90 Project area. The Senate Interior Appropriations Committee in 2006 allocated close to \$1 million for the purchase and protection of this land—a priority acquisition which the US Forest Service ranks fourth in the nation. The Stampede Pass parcel, passed by thousands of motorists daily, includes a historic crossing of the Northern Pacific Railroad and mile-long section of the Pacific Crest Trail.

### Freeing the Klamath

Four hydroelectric dams along the Klamath River may undergo deconstruction, leading to the largest dam-removal project in history. In January, the federal government required an upgrade of each of the dam's fish-passageways, estimated to cost \$300 million. The high price makes dam removal more enticing since it would save PacifiCorp, who manages the structures, approximately \$101 million, which it would otherwise have to invest in upgrading the dams. Biologists maintain that dam removal is the best hope for reviving the Klamath River, which runs 250 miles through northern California and southern Oregon. Prior to dam construction, the Klamath supported the third largest salmon run along the West Coast. Since the dams were built the river has experienced massive fish kills and algae blooms.

*Source: Washington Post, 1/30/07*

### Last call for western gray squirrels?

Western gray squirrels will remain off the endangered species list even though their populations face extinction in Washington State. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has refused to list the squirrel on the grounds that other western gray squirrel populations in Oregon and California are stable. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in February 2007 confirmed the agency's determination and denied protection for western gray squirrels in Washington, despite biologists' recommendations. As a result the western gray squirrel in Washington won't receive protection.

Together with other conservation organizations, Conservation Northwest had petitioned the federal agency to gain Washington's squirrel endangered status as a "distinct population segment." Surveys last summer documented fewer than 300

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western gray squirrels in the state. One of the three remaining Washington populations lives in south Puget Sound in rare oak-woodland prairie at the site of the proposed Cross-Base Highway. The others reside in eastern Washington.

### Protecting oak-woodland prairie



*The Cross-Base Highway if built would cut through this rare oak-woodland prairie west of Mount Rainier. Photo: Cross Base Highway Coalition*

Conservation Northwest and allies are taking Cross-Base Highway planners to court for violations of the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. The move is meant to protect Washington's largest fragment of remain-

ing oak-woodland prairie and to save local businesses who use the prairie, but also to encourage the Regional Transportation Investment District and Sound Transit board members to remove the controversial project from the overall package, rather than punting the issue to voters in November.

The proposed Cross-Base Highway—planned to run between Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base—would cut through rare oak-woodland prairie home to at-risk animals including the native streaked horned lark and western gray squirrel. The highway is projected to cost taxpayers \$477 million. Wasteful and controversial projects such as the Cross-Base Highway highlight the risk that a couple of bad roads can pose to a package that includes Sound Transit's expansion of light rail.

For more information, go to [www.conservationnw.org](http://www.conservationnw.org)

### Preserving the Great Bear

The government of Canada has agreed to provide \$30 million to complete the \$120 million conservation management and economic development plan for the Great Bear Rainforest on the north and central coasts of British Columbia and the archipelago of Haida Gwaii. The contribution secures an additional \$60 million promised by Canadian and US donors. The agreement, won in 2006, protects 2 million hectares—5 million

acres—of forest and introduces a new logging plan called "ecosystem-based management" throughout the forest by 2009.

### What would Zane Grey do?

A diverse group is working to secure permanent wilderness protection for one of Oregon's most scenic and enjoyed landscapes. The Rogue River watershed in the Siskiyou Mountains of southern Oregon attracts tens of thousands of visitors annually, who together contribute millions of dollars to the local economy. It provides priceless salmon and steelhead spawning and rearing habitat supporting one of Oregon's most important sport and commercial fisheries. Yet the Bureau of Land Management plans to clearcut hundreds of acres of unspoiled old-growth forest in the Rogue's Zane Grey Roadless Area, which contains designated critical habitat for the northern spotted owl and gives succor to other wildlife, including bald eagles, black bear, river otters, and Roosevelt elk.

Visit [www.savethewildrogue.org](http://www.savethewildrogue.org) to learn what you can do.

### Conservation Northwest Volunteers: Overwinter 2007

Over the winter many people bring their focus inward toward hearth, home, and family. Others are drawn to the winter wonderland of the Northwest's amazing backcountry. Conservation Northwest's deep volunteer base is as rich and textured as the snow pack on the Kettle River Range, and includes individuals who are hibernators and others who are powder hounds. It takes all kinds to keep the conservation movement vibrant and moving forward.

Conservation Northwest's staff always appreciates the selfless efforts our activists, interns, and volunteers make in support of our shared vision. It's inspiring to see what individuals can do when their passion combines with their talent in an organized effort for a cause they really believe in.

#### Highlights from this winter's volunteer efforts include:

Volunteers from Conservation Northwest and the I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition teamed up with the Wilderness Awareness School to perform **backcountry wildlife snow tracking** in the Snoqualmie Pass area. This project augments our **remote camera** efforts to document the presence of various wildlife species in areas

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where we are working to protect and restore habitat. Meanwhile, dedicated North Cascades remote camera volunteers put in the hard work required to complete a summary report of the first six years' worth of results from our camera wildlife surveys.

We're hosting a get-together for volunteers from this year's remote camera and tracking efforts, and for folks interested in learning about volunteering for our remote camera programs in 2007. Please join us Tuesday, March 27 in Seattle. RSVP to Jen Watkins: [jwatkins@conservationnw.org](mailto:jwatkins@conservationnw.org) or 206.675.9747 x203.

Our **Conservation Action Team** program has matured into a varied line-up of venues to learn more about our campaigns and ways to help keep the Northwest wild. Please visit [www.conservationnw.org/calendar](http://www.conservationnw.org/calendar) for details:

—Bellingham: Friends of the North Cascades meets the 3rd Tuesday of every month, 6:30 pm; focus: grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades

—Olympia: The Oly Conservation Action Team meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month, 6:00 pm for a potluck dinner; focus: monthly campaign topics

—Redmond: Volunteer recruitment luncheons are held once per quarter at noon on the Microsoft campus; focus: organization-wide overview of volunteer opportunities

—Seattle and Tacoma: Monthly Conservation Action Team meetings will resume in late spring.

Our **outstanding interns** continued to do stellar work for our core programs, from planning our exciting Columbia Highlands book events to surveying wilderness campaigns to tabling with our allies at the Mountain Caribou Project.

Volunteers from Conservation Northwest joined activists from many other organizations to participate in several **lobby days at the state legislature**, including: Stop the Cross-Base Highway Lobby Day, Transportation Lobby Day, Cascade Agenda Lobby Day, and Priorities for a Healthy Washington Lobby Day.

This winter Conservation Northwest volunteers gave of themselves, as always. And the organization gave back to them as well, with our annual **volunteer appreciation** month. Highlights of the month were four fun volunteer appreciation events in communities across the state. A dozen folks enjoyed a snowshoe in the sunshine at Mount Baker's Huntoon Point followed by a relaxing time at the Mountaineers' Lodge at Heather Meadows. Two dozen met for dessert and wildlife photography at the gallery of Patrick Reeves in Bellingham. And a small group met for a tour of the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma.



*Doris Ferm volunteers every Friday at Conservation Northwest.  
Photo: Erin Moore*

But the highlight of the month was the two-day snowshoe and ski trip, co-hosted by the Spokane Mountaineers at their Mount Spokane chalet. Two days of alpine adventure with a fun evening of dinner, prizes, and merrymaking in between...no wonder almost 50 people participated! Watch for our volunteer appreciation month next winter.

### **Many volunteers keep the Northwest wild. Thank you!**

Todd Bailey, Harvey Berman, Paul Brookshire, Peggy Bruton, Colby Chester, Mark Christiansen, Terry Clark, Travis Coletti, Steve Cross, Rich Curtis, Carolyn Dobbs, Angel Drobnica, Josh Davis, Hannah Dewey, Ryan Farncomb, Doris Ferm, Brenna Forester, Russell Fox, Kyle French, Wendy Gardner, Doug Goodall, Codi Hamblin, Ryan Harried, Nick Hartich, Michael Hinkel, Thomas Holz, Laura Hurson, Roger Iverson, Betti Johnson, Katie Rose Buckley Jones, Rachel Kahn, Kristen Kerns, Amber Knox, Henry Lagergren, Jeff Lambert, Flora Leisenring, Sue Madsen, Alisyn Maggiora, Erika Malone, Clover Martin, Ken Mondal, Sylvia Moss, Clover Muters, Yuki Nakajima, Greta Olson, Jenny Otto, Tony Napoletano, Erik Peterson, Noni Pittenger, Irene Potter, Renée Redekop, Yonk Reinemer, Susan Rhodes, Nathan Rice, Carole Richmond, Henry Romer, Leslie Romer, Willow Rudiger, Kristina Schoonmaker, Neil Schoonmaker, Gina Smith, Donna Snow, Kim Stanford, Judy Soicher, Kathryn Stratton, Abby Sussman, Jim Tuttle, Holly Weiler, Mark Snider, Mark Walker Rhodes, Angela Wallis, Nathan Wilfert

To learn about volunteering at Conservation Northwest, please visit [www.conservationnw.org](http://www.conservationnw.org) or contact us:

**Bellingham:** Rose Oliver, [rose@conservationnw.org](mailto:rose@conservationnw.org) or 360.671.9950 x10

**Western Washington:** Hudson Dodd, [hudson@conservationnw.org](mailto:hudson@conservationnw.org) or 800.878.9950 x26

**Spokane:** Crystal Gartner, [crystal@conservationnw.org](mailto:crystal@conservationnw.org) or 509.747.1663

**Eastern Washington:** Derrick Knowles, [derrick@conservationnw.org](mailto:derrick@conservationnw.org) or 509.747.1663