

*Membership Meeting
Sunday December 4, 2011
Tales From the Fill*

*Connie Sidles
1:30 pm – 3 pm
Pearsall Building
2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen*

November/December 2011



The Sandpiper

Proposed Wind Power Facility Terminated

Radar Ridge Wind Power Project would have been located in the center of a key area for Marbled Murrelet conservation

Seattle Audubon applauds the recent decision by four local Public Utility Districts to immediately terminate the ill-conceived Radar Ridge Wind Project proposed for development on state forest lands in Southwest Washington. The project site is located in the center of an area identified as the best place for providing much-needed high-quality nesting habitat for Marbled Murrelets, a seabird listed in 1992 as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).

“This decision is a major victory in the ongoing work to restore critical habitat for Murrelets,” said Shawn Cantrell, Executive Director of Seattle Audubon. “The key for any wind power project is appropriate siting, and the Radar Ridge project was proposed in absolutely the wrong location.”

Seattle Audubon is the leading conservation organization opposing the Radar Ridge project, pressing federal and state agencies to deny approval for this project. Numerous other groups have also worked to stop development of wind turbines on Radar Ridge, including Columbia River Alliance for Nurturing the Environment (CRANE) and the Willapa Hills and Grays Harbor Chapters of the Audubon Society.

In 2007 Energy Northwest proposed developing a wind energy facility on state trust land at Radar Ridge. It would have included up to 45 wind turbines over 3,000 acres of forest lands. Four participating utilities from Grays Harbor, Pacific, Mason and Clallam counties provided most of the original financial investment for the 80 megawatt project. In 2010, Grays Harbor Public Utility District voted to not invest any additional funds into Radar Ridge, citing opposition from environmental groups and the uncertainty of the project receiving the necessary permits.

The unanimous decision last week by the four participating utilities to immediately terminate the Radar Ridge Wind Project was announced in an update prepared for the Energy Northwest Ex-

ecutive Board and posted on the agencies website. [http://www.energy-northwest.com/boardMeetings/downloads/2011/November/EB%20mtg%2011-2011%20\(Baker%20-%20EBS%20Update\).pdf](http://www.energy-northwest.com/boardMeetings/downloads/2011/November/EB%20mtg%2011-2011%20(Baker%20-%20EBS%20Update).pdf)

“Terminating the proposed Radar Ridge project is a recognition of the huge problems associated with trying to build a major energy facility in critical habitat for an threatened species,” said Cantrell. “The fundamental problem with this project was its location. While Energy Northwest tried to find ways to lessen the project’s impacts on Murrelets, in the end, none of the well-intentioned mitigation measures proposed could overcome the issues of siting the project in the wrong place.”

Radar Ridge is centrally located within an area known as the Nemah Block. A 2008 state-commissioned Science Report identified the Nemah Block as the single best place to restore Marbled Murrelet habitat on state managed lands.

As part of a 1997 Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that allows timber harvest on public lands in areas potentially impacting threatened wildlife species, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) committed to “make a significant contribution to maintaining and protecting marbled murrelet populations in western Washington over the life of the HCP.” The Science Report highlighted the pressing need for substantial habitat restoration across much of the DNR-managed land base in order to achieve the HCP’s conservation objectives.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service noted in its June 2009 Marbled Murrelet 5-Year Review that “murrelets may be highly vulnerable in localized areas from energy development and production ... include[ing] direct mortality from strikes, as well as loss of habitat and fragmentation and impacts to reproductive success through changes in prey base, marine habitat and disturbance.”

Seattle Audubon recognizes the significant threat to birds and bird habitat posed by climate change, including threatened species. The organization supports well-designed, appropriately-sited renewable energy projects as a critical step in reducing carbon emissions. Seattle Audubon was an active participant in the development of the Washington Depart

continued on page 4

The President's Perch



By Arnie Martin

More dust up

After having read the President's Perch about a Hoquiam coal export terminal in the September-October Sandpiper, some of you may be wondering "what can I do to oppose this? You could begin by handwriting the text from the on-line petition at: <http://climatesolutions.org/nw-states/washington/no-coal/no-gateway-for-coal-to-china/view> and after signing it with the information requested at the website, addressing it to:

Peter Goldmark
Commissioner of Public Lands
Department of Natural Resources
1111 Washington St. SE
PO Box 47001
Olympia, WA 98504-7001

Commissioner Goldmark will have the ultimate responsibility for requiring a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the coal export terminal, and for its final review prior to construction.

Perhaps as important as the EIS is to inform others of the impacts that a coal export terminal would have on the local environment and on the Grays Harbor Wildlife Refuge. This could be accomplished by attending Hoquiam City Council meetings, Port of Grays Harbor Commissioners meetings, and speaking at other public forums. Education of the public regarding the current planning and construction that is already underway to allow the construction of a coal export terminal at the Port's Terminal 3 is the best way to exert pressure on both the City of Hoquiam and the Port to abandon their current plan.

The primary pollutant from coal dust is a product of bacterial action in wetlands on the dust, resulting in the formation of methyl mercury, a form of mercury that is readily taken up by organisms, such as fish, crabs, etc. The concentration of mercury that results gets higher as many of the contaminated lower animals are eaten by higher predators, such as shellfish, birds, marine mammals, and humans. The harmful effects of mercury on tissues have been demonstrated too many times to ignore: the fishermen of Minimata, hat makers during the 18th & 19th century, etc.

While looking at information on the internet

relating to coal conveyors, I stumbled upon this quote from a company called Patol Ltd. (www.patol.co.uk/pdf/Coal-Conv-Gline.pdf) which makes fire detection equipment: "Some types of coal have the ability to self combust under certain conditions. One of the worst of these is Powder River Basin (PRB) coal which can self ignite even in very small quantities and in very short time periods." This characteristic of PRB coal will require that conveyor fire detection equipment be installed and automatic sprinkling systems be installed and properly maintained. Other similar websites (search "coal conveyor fires") state that infrared monitors must be installed to continuously check stored coal piles and automatic sprinkler systems must be used to prevent self-ignition.

One of the worst problems of such a facility is the damage to the locale caused by the dust on the land and the noise, as demonstrated by export terminals in Seward, Alaska, Delta, British Columbia, and Newport News, Virginia. The causes of this visual and noise pollution can be dramatically seen in the photographs of Paul K. Anderson (<http://www.paulkanderson.com/#!/coal-and-the-american-west/vstc1=shipping>).

By far the worst problem of locating an export terminal at the Port of Grays Harbor Terminal 3 is that the sites rail loop would be adjacent to the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge (across Paulson Road). The noise from the shifting in and out of the coal open-top cars will disturb nesting waterfowl on that end of the refuge, and the visual pollution from strings of intermittently moving cars will be certainly not be welcoming to tourism that may be attracted to the refuge. The trains will be visible from Paulson Road as well as from portions of SR-109.

Now, having given the near-term problems that may result from a coal export terminal, let's consider the folly of shipping millions of tons of coal from west coast ports to China. The Chinese are building several coal-fired power plants a week to serve their growing industries. While the Powder River Basin coal is fairly low in sulfur content, burning it in those power plants will add countless tons of carbon dioxide to our atmosphere. Contrary to what climate change deniers say, there is a clear linkage to atmospheric CO2 levels, as CO2 prevents the transmission of infrared energy, causing a heating effect, much as does the glass in a greenhouse. Latest evidence shows that 9 of the 10 warmest years in recorded historical records were during the past dozen years.

continued on page 4



Here's looking at you kid

Membership Meeting *More Tales from the Montlake Fill*

Many of you came to our October 2010 meeting featuring author Connie Sidles as she read from her book, "In My Nature: A Birder's Year at the Montlake Fill." She has graciously agreed to return for our December 4th general meeting to read from her new book, "Second Nature: Tales from the Montlake Fill." In the rush of modern life, in the chaos of a world that is often in crisis, where can you find peace of mind? Connie finds it in nature. If, like her, you're searching for a haven that gives you respite from care and insight into human nature, then come with her as she takes you on a journey into the wilds of a natural area set in the heart of a city. This book is illustrated with nearly 90 photos by some of our best photographers. Connie will have copies of the book available...if all goes well with the shippers.

Connie Sidles is a master birder and board member of Seattle Audubon Society. She is also a nature writer and has authored a previous book about the Montlake Fill, "In My Nature." The Fill is a 75-acre natural area in Seattle, and a former dump. It is Connie's favorite place to bird, and proof to her that while we humans often mess up the world, we can also make it beautiful.

Please join us on Sunday, December 4th, at 1:30PM at the Pearsall Building, 2109 Sumner, Aberdeen. Refreshments will be served.

After the meeting

Following the membership meeting, we all should consider moving at 3:00 PM to the Central Elementary School (310 Simpson Ave) to provide support to the revised proposal for the Wild Olympics at the congressional open house jointly sponsored by Senator Murray and Congressman Dicks.

We should provide as much support as possible to this latest effort to bring sanity to the discussion about the protection of these important watersheds.



2011 Grays Harbor CBC

by Dianna Moore

It's that time of year again when my thoughts turn to the annual counting of the birds, a Christmas tradition I have taken to heart. Each year I am both pleased and overwhelmed by the response I get from the people who want to participate, but also a bit disappointed because so many are from out of the area and not local. This year I am asking for more of you who know your own neighborhoods to step up and make sure your birds are counted. If you are not comfortable in your knowledge of birds, we have plenty who are, and we can pair you up with a more experienced birder if that will get you out in the field.

The Christmas Bird Count is an invaluable tool in tracking birds on the move due to climate change and identifying species at risk. This year marks the 112th count, a remarkable achievement. Last year 2215 CBC's reported to the compilers, breaking the previous year's record of 2160. Those numbers represented 62,624 participants including the 9,774 watching feeders in their yards. Yes, you can sit in the comfort of your warm, dry home to count the birds at your feeder(s), but you would miss all the camaraderie and excitement of "the hunt".

So come join us on Friday December 30th; do it for the birds, and do it for yourself. You will be glad you did. If you would like to join us, please let me know. We have 10 count areas and some of them are quite large, so we can use all the help we can get. You can e-mail me at

dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
or call me at (360) 289-5048



The Land Steward Team

GHAS' Habitat Committee is seeking a few good members to perform an important and enjoyable job on a regular basis. The incredible wildlife lands that GHAS has amassed over the years need a little nurturing, a little stewarding, by caring individuals. This involves visiting each of them periodically, ideally 3 or 4 times a year, to see how they are doing.

A steward would check for vehicle trespass, broken gates, trash or other human disturbances. Also a steward might look around to observe any invasive plants and how rampant the infestation is. Regular visits can yield their own rewards. A steward may enjoy a peaceful walk in the woods, knowing that the gorgeous wildlife habitat will always be there, protected for the fish, birds and animals far into the future. A steward would be welcome to bring along a friend for company and an additional observer.

Did I mention Birds? Stewards would be most welcome to do some birding and are urged to record their findings for other chapter members and for the record. In the future these records could become valuable information on Grays Harbor County's bird populations.

GHAS Habitat Committee members will train you, will visit the property with you the first time and supply you with a helpful monitoring form on which to record your observations. If you are even slightly interested in more information, in helping care for our properties through your "eyes-in-the-woods," in enjoying a day out in these amazing habitats, please email or call

Arnie Martin at arnold6.martin@comcast.net
(360) 612-0437

Steve Hallstrom at letusfarm@earthlink.net
(360) 273-9280

Janet Strong at strongjan@centurytel.net
(360) 495-3950.

Perch continued from page 2

We cannot afford to risk having further increases in global temperature, as our state and local budgets do not provide for building dikes around the Harbor due to rising sea levels – something that even huge cities such as New York City are beginning to contemplate. Even minor changes in sea level will cause greater problems to our infrastructure from our winter storms, especially those that occur during high tides. Remember that the elevation of downtown Aberdeen and Hoquiam is only in the 14 to 20 foot range. We don't want to have repeats of the flooding that occurred during the flooding of December 1933 in Hoquiam (see [http://www.jonesphotocollection.com/Obj6599\\$7565](http://www.jonesphotocollection.com/Obj6599$7565)).

Please consider speaking out locally and statewide against the construction of such a destructive installation as a coal export terminal on the Harbor. Similar promises of additional "family-wage" jobs have not provided as many jobs as were advertised, with many of them filled by those from outside the Harbor.

Radar Ridge continued from page 1

ment of Fish and Wildlife's 2009 Windpower Guidelines and is directly engaged in the permitting processes for numerous proposed wind power projects in the state.

"The direct environmental harm caused by this proposed project, including impacts to Marbled Murrelets, far outweigh the benefits that it would provide in other areas such as reduced carbon output," Cantrell noted. "There are significantly better locations to site renewable energy projects than Radar Ridge."

This article was a press release from Seattle Audubon

GHAS Mission

The mission of the Grays Harbor Audubon Society is to seek a sustainable balance between human activity and the needs of the environment, and to promote enjoyment of birds and the natural world

Franz's Corner
The poetry of birds
contributed by Franz Schneider

These poems are from Harold Enrico's book A Second Earth. He is considered by many to be poet laureate of Grays Harbor. Harold retired in 1985 from Grays Harbor College, moved to Roslyn, Washington with his wife where he passed away in 2008.

VERTIGO

*Four hawks sweep the light with perfect wings
Above the canyon's farther lip. Deer drowse
On Meagre blades. A katydid sings and sings
Its desiccated old lament upon
A mullein stalk. A thread of smoke, a mile
Away, climbs perpendicular a while,
Then veers west. A doe, shielding her fawn,
Clatters behind a bush as we drive past
Up to the bare bones of the Eocene,
Black fire-made rock broken with early green.*

*We stop and step out into the blast
Of unobstructed wind, clutch at the car
In vertigo before a sheer abyss.
No bird weeps that air. Black rocks hiss
With all that winds. And we know where we are*

LAKE QUINAULT

*Revolution and revelation amount to the same thing;
tally out to three soft-shelled eggs
squashed by the female's breast
in every golden eagle's nest.*

Cold winds scoop up golden air.

*A tall owl on the trail stoops to whisper in my ear.
Regal winds wrap the lake in less than regal clouds.
Elk tracks end at the fern edge.*

*Our car grinds past the last clearcut to the last ridge,
chain saws snarling.*

*The nature trail winds on and on to terrestrial paradise.
The owl, tall as a fir, blinks at the trail-end*

*St. John (Muir), the eagle
skims the lake on imperial wings.*

GHAS Board of Directors

Cecelia Boulais	273-9280	letusfarm@earthlink.net
Steve Hallstrom	273-9280	letusfarm@earthlink.net
Arnie Martin	612-0437	arnold6.martin@comcast.net
Dianna Moore	289-5048	dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Mary O'Neil	533-9833	deed2et2et@yahoo.com
Linda Orgel	648-2476	ldotorg@olearycreek.com
Diane Schwickerath	495-3101	deananddiane@gmail.com
Lynn Smith	(253) 267-9850	sylviasmith6057@msn.com
Janel Spaulding	538-4212	jspauldi@ghc.edu
Janet Strong	495-3950	strongjan@centurytel.net

Chapter Officers

President	Arnie Martin 612-0437 arnold6.martin@comcast.net
Vice President	Mary O'Neil 533-9833 deed2et2et@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Diane Schwickerath 495-3101 deananddiane@gmail.com
Secretary	Janet Strong 495-3950 strongjan@centurytel.net



Committee Chairs

Conservation	Janet Strong, 495-3950 strongjan@centurytel.net
Education	Vacant
Field Trips	Dianna Moore 289-5048 dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Habitat	Steve Hallstrom 273-9280 letusfarm@earthlink.net
Hospitality	Linda Orgel 648-2476 ldotorg@olearycreek.com
Membership	Dianna Moore 289-5048 dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Newsletter	R.D. Grunbaum, 648-2476 rd@olearycreek.com
Program Chair	Dianna Moore 289-5048 dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Publicity	Vacant

Other Audubon Contacts

GHAS voice mail	(360) 289-5048
National Audubon	(212) 979-3000
GHAS Website	http://ghas.org

Please Fill Out and Mail Back

**ANNUAL GRAYS HARBOR AUDUBON
CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

If you would like to join Grays Harbor Audubon Society (GHAS), please fill out the form below, **make check payable to Grays Harbor Audubon Society** and return it with your check to:

**Grays Harbor Audubon Society
P.O. Box 470
Montesano, WA 98563**

Chapter Memberships include a subscription to *The Sandpiper* newsletter. All Chapter Memberships above the Sandpiper category provide financial support to our Chapter. The Grays Harbor Audubon Society is totally self-supporting.

Name _____ **Date** _____

Address _____

City _____ **State/Zip** _____

Phone Number _____ **E-Mail** _____

- Heron \$25.00
- Pelican \$50.00
- Falcon \$75.00
- Eagle \$100.00
- The Sandpiper* subscription only \$15
(Fixed or limited income membership or *Sandpiper* newsletter only)

- I am renewing my membership
- I am a new member

To join National Audubon or renew your National Audubon Membership, call 1-800-274-4201.

If your newsletter is stamped with **Last Issue-Please Renew**, be sure to fill out the Membership Form above and send it in to keep your membership active and keep receiving the newsletter! Thanks!

News & Editorial

send materials to
P.O. Box 1044
Westport, 98595-1044
or email to
rd@olearycreek.com
Copy deadline ongoing

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More Tales from the
Montlake Fill
Connie Sidles

Inside this Issue

Radar Ridge Ends	1
Pres. Perch more coal	2
Membership meeting	3
2011 GHCBC	3
Land Steward	4
Perch continued	4
Radar Ridge cont.	4
Franz's Corner	5
Board & Officers	6
Member Application	7

How Do I Know When My Membership Is Due?

*For those of you on email, we
will notify you via email of
your upcoming renewal date.
If we have mailed your copy,
look in the upper right hand
corner of your label and it will
give you your renewal date!*

The Sandpiper

P.O. Box 470
Montesano,
WA 98563

