

Membership Meeting
Sunday December 2, 2007
Nature Journaling
Board Elections
1:30 pm – 3 pm
Pearsall Building
2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen

November/December 2007



The Sandpiper

New AmeriCorps education outreach and coordinators head for Grays Harbor

Our names are Kelly McDermott and Daniel Stevens and we are the new *Education Coordinators for Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge*. We want to introduce ourselves to you because of the important role the Grays Harbor Audubon Society has played in supporting wildlife and environmental education through the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge. Our hope is for the expansion of our continued partnership together through these next 10 months to promote wildlife and environmental education in the Grays Harbor County community. There are some great opportunities for us to take advantage of this year! Our main desire is to promote collaboration and cooperation with organizations and individuals in Grays Harbor County. We believe that being effective in a community means being sensitive to its needs. This requires our continuous dialogue with all of you to establish a strong sense of what can and should be done in the region. But first, a bit about us.

Kelly grew up in Chicago and moved to the Pacific Northwest to attend Evergreen State College and became interested in the diversity of this region's natural habitats. She is currently taking a year off to serve Grays Harbor County through the work at the Refuge.



Daniel was born and raised in the North Seattle area and has recently moved back to the Northwest from Chicago after completing an undergraduate degree in history. Both of us are looking forward to working with students and community members at the Refuge and in classrooms to continue promoting a sense of interdependence between the communities and the wildlife resources.

Our primary goal for this year is to develop a more comprehensive year-round education program including educational material on both Autumn and Spring migration seasons. In addition to this, we are taking steps to facilitate research and integration of local histories illustrating human influence and impact pertaining to the Bowerman Basin.

Finally, our success in this program is closely tied to volunteer support and participation each year. We are currently seeking people to help in classroom presentation, trail roving, field trip facilitation, and invasive weed removal among other things. There will also be volunteer opportunities at the Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival again with facilitation positions at the Fun

Fair activity booths. Last year's Shorebird Festival volunteers were invaluable to the festival's success, and we're looking forward to the same great turn out for 2008! The GHNWR is dependant on the dedication of its volunteers to ensure the continued success of this facility as a point of connection between people and wildlife.

If you would like more information about volunteer opportunities at GHNWR or would like to contact us, you can reach us at daniel_stevens@fws.gov kelly_mcdermott@fws.gov or call us at (360) 753-9467. We look forward to hearing from you and meeting with you, and anticipate an exciting, fruitful year!



The children of Grays Harbor schools will again be learning about the lives of shorebirds, walking the Sandpiper Trail and participating in the Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival this year. Two new AmeriCorps members, Daniel Steven and Kelly McDermott will serve as Education and Outreach Coordinators for the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge, working with teachers and students throughout the 2007-08 school year. The Education and Outreach Coordinator positions are partly funded by Grays Harbor Audubon. We look forward to a great year as they settle in with Harbor Schools and the Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival Planning Committee. Welcome Dan and Kelly!

The President's Perch



Fledging from the perch

By Jan McMillan

This will be my last visit to The President's Perch. I'll be going off the board at the end of December and turning the leadership over to the capable hands of Arnie Martin, this year's vice president. I've appreciated having this forum to share some of my thoughts and opinions with you. I still plan to be a contributor to the Sandpiper and will continue to work with R.D. Grunbaum, our editor, to bring you interesting and timely articles and inspiring stories and poetry.

Being president of Grays Harbor Audubon has been a wonderful experience for me and I've had fun along the way. I'm proud of the work our chapter has done. Some of the highlights for me have been:

- ◆ Hosting the Fall 2005 Audubon Council of Washington Conference (ACOW). The work we did together preparing for that conference helped bring us together as a working team.

- ◆ With our partners, The City of Hoquiam and the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge, expanding community participation and support for the Annual Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival.

- ◆ Increasing our membership through our 2006 membership drive, made possible with a grant from National Audubon/Audubon Washington.

- ◆ Expanding the board's understanding of our habitat land holdings through on-site visits and a presentation by our former Land Steward, Perry Spring.

- ◆ My advocacy work with both

state and national legislators and especially my visits to Washington D.C. to lobby for local issues such as spartina eradication, support for our Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge, and Doppler radar system for our Washington coast.

- ◆ Finally, the friendships I have made with our many members who have volunteered to do tabling outreach, helped select sites for the Birding Trail Maps, volunteered for the Shorebird Festival, led field trips, contributed to the Sandpiper, helped to rid our properties of invasive species, stood in the rain and the cold to count birds at the Christmas Bird Count and most recently, measured grasses for the Snowy Plover Habitat Restoration Project at Ledbetter Point.

Editors Note: Jan will be greatly missed as she did a spectacular job in bringing you interesting and relevant information to the pages of The Sandpiper. This editor is greatly relieved to learn that she will continue to contribute to these pages.

Grays Harbor Audubon Loses a Friend

Patrick Sullivan 1972-2007

Almost every birder in Western Washington has been touched by the birding knowledge and skills of Patrick Sullivan. He could be seen almost every day somewhere between Tacoma and Tokeland birding with his lively, red haired mom, Ruth. He and Ruth led field trips each year for our own Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival and for the Fall Audubon Council of Washington that we hosted in 2005. They also participated each year in the Grays Harbor Christmas Bird Count.

Patrick became a birder when he was just 8 years old through Bob Ramsey's Junior Naturalist program at Snake Lake Nature

Center in Tacoma. Through the years Patrick's knowledge of birds grew, as did his skill as a birder. I've heard many seasoned birders who have been birding with some outstanding bird experts say that Patrick was the most knowledgeable birder they have ever known.

Only 35 years old, Patrick lost a lifelong battle with bi-polar disease on September 19th of this year when he took his own life. When his life ended, the birding community's lost an irreplaceable friend. Our hearts are with his mother, Ruth as she grieves his loss. Remembrances in Patrick's name may be made to Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, 100 Brown Farm Road, Olympia, WA 98516. Nisqually was one of Patrick's and Ruth's favorite birding spots.

This issue of The Sandpiper is dedicated to Patrick's memory. We will miss him.

*Is there anything new
under the sun?*

*Certainly there is.
See how a bird flies,
how flowers smile!*

*Yone Noguchi
1920*

Are you interested in receiving *The Sandpiper* online? Send us your email address and we can forward the latest issue the moment it is ready to publish or visit <http://ghas.org> to view the newsletter as a color pdf file.



Nominations for Grays Harbor Audubon Board of Directors

At the December 2nd Member's Meeting we will have our board of director's election. The following people have been nominated to serve as officers and members of the Grays Harbor Audubon Board of Directors. Members may submit nominations from the floor but must have the consent of the person they are nominating.

President Arnie Martin
V.P. No nomination
Secretary Theresa Julius
Treasurer Diane Schwickerath

Board Members:
Rose DuBois
Steve Hallstrom
Dianna Moore
Linda Orgel
Renee Prine
Janet Strong

From the board members elected at this meeting the new president, with the approval of the full board, will appoint standing committee chairs (Education, Membership, Habitat and Conservation). Other committee chairs (Program, Publicity, Hospitality, Newsletter Editor, Field Trips, Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge and other committees as needed) are appointed by the President and do not need board approval.

Membership Meeting Sunday, December 2, 2007 1:30 - 3:00 pm

Pearsall Building, Aberdeen

The meeting will hold elections for members to the board of directors. Due to our inadvertent lock out last month, Dianna Moore will lead a discussion on how to begin and maintain a nature journal. The emphasis will be on the changing seasons, and what shows up when. We are all concerned with the possible changes taking place with the warming of the earth and as observers of our own areas of familiar territory we are in a unique position to help identify the changes, if any, occurring in our own back yards.

As an admitted bribe, a Nature Journal and pen will be given to the first 15 people to sign up with Dianna at the meeting.

Refreshments will be served.



Field Trips in the Works! by Dianna Moore

Have you wanted to go on a field trip but couldn't make it on a weekday? We have heard this before so we plan on trying weekends. Even if only a few show up it is well worth the trip...in fact it can be even better with just a few; less noise means more birds seen. The plan is to visit areas we know have potential for good sightings, and learn together.

Our first field trip, on Saturday, December 1st, will begin at Vance Creek County Park in Elma at 8am. From there we will check out the various ponds for waterfowl and the fields along the Chehalis River, including the Monte-Brady Loop area.

My idea is to become a better birder by going out more often. It's that simple. So if you would like to come along, give me a call: Dianna Moore, 360-289-5048, or e-mail me at dlmoor2@coastaccess.com All skill levels are welcome. Dress appropriately for our changeable weather and bring a lunch and drinking water just in case we can't break away before lunch. I hope to see you there!



Grays Harbor Christmas Bird Count

by Dianna Moore

It's that time of year when citizen-scientists across the country gird their loins for the annual Christmas Bird Count, much to the amusement of those who like to stay warm and dry. Thousands of hardy souls don weather-appropriate clothing, clean their binoculars and scopes, pick out a few bird identification books to take with them, and sally forth to identify and count the birds they see from dawn until dusk. It takes a real dedicated individual to do this, and we are hoping you are one of them. This year is especially challenging because we don't have Patrick Sullivan to find his usual rarities; he seldom missed one or two surprises for the day. That means we will have to prove ourselves worthy of his memory...do our best to make him proud of us!

This year's count will be held on Saturday, December 29th, so mark your calendars and plan on spending a day helping out with this important survey. It's more important than ever! Contact Dianna Moore at 360-289-5048 or e-mail at dlmoor2@coastaccess.com Thanks!

Snowy Plover Habitat Recovery Project: A Brief Update

from Dave Hays, WDFW

“We sprayed the plots the week of October 22nd after a hectic covering exercise to protect the natives. The weather cleared and we were able to fit it in with the WDFW spartina crew. We’re going back in December to see how it went. The next step is figuring out how to remove the dead dunegrass. Mowing, burning and disking are all possibilities this winter.

The October storm opened up the plots a bit. I am hopeful that future storms this winter will help change the landscape to benefit the plovers. “

Thanks for this update, Dave. We will continue to follow progress and hope our volunteers will be able to help with some of the winter work as well.

Priorities for a healthy Washington 2008

Last year the environmental community achieved unprecedented success with passage of all four of the community’s priorities: Clean Air/Clean Fuel, Save our Sound, \$100 Million for Wildlife and Recreation Programs and Eliminating Toxic Flame Retardants.

This year we’re going for another 100%! After meeting together to come to agreement, the environmental community adopted the following priorities for 2008:

1. *Washington Climate Action:* Our state has set goals to reduce global warming pollution, and now it’s time to make these goals a reality. Responsible limits on climate pollution will establish Washington as a strong leader in the clean energy economy, increase energy independence, create good new jobs, and deliver a better future for our children.

2. *Local Solutions to Global Warming:* This approach will help local governments make responsible plans about where we live, how we get around, and consider how those choices can reduce global warming pollution. With the dramatic population growth expected in our state, we must make responsible decisions – now – so we can reduce driving and promote efficient, livable communities.

3. *Evergreen Cities:* It is time to stop losing the trees and forests in our cities. Keeping existing trees and planting new ones enhances quality of life for people, increases property values and gives us cleaner water and habitat for birds and wildlife. This proposal will help Washington’s cities be evergreen.

4. *Local Farms-Healthy Kids:* This effort addresses two major challenges facing our state: concerns about the diet and health of our children, and the well-being of our small and mid-sized farms. By getting more locally grown produce into our schools and food banks, we can improve children’s health and create new thriving markets for our farmers.

The environmental community will be hitting the halls of the State Capitol in Olympia on Wednesday, January 23rd to lobby our state legislators on these priorities. For more information on Environmental Lobby Day or if you would like to join the Grays Harbor delegation please call Jan McMillan at 360-268-1004. We will organize car pools so that we’re walking the walk!



Fred Hill Pit-to-Pier a really bad idea

By Gene Bullock

Fred Hill Materials (FHM) has proposed an automated pit-to-pier gravel loading facility on the Hood Canal that will allow it to ship gravel worldwide, from San Francisco to Singapore. FHM says an industrial marine port on Hood Canal would bring more jobs to Jefferson County.

The proposed pit-to-pier (P2P) is opposed by virtually every state and local conservation group (including the Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee), U.S. Congressman Norm Dicks, U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell, county commissioners in Jefferson and Kitsap counties, area tribal councils, and the majority of voters in Jefferson County. Previous Jefferson County commissioners who favored the P2P were voted out of office and replaced with commissioners who oppose it. In subsequent polls the majority of Jefferson County voters consistently oppose the P2P. Public hearings draws overflow crowds and testimony runs about 20 to 1 against P2P. The commander of the Bangor Naval Submarine Base has voiced serious concerns about allowing commercial shipping in the narrow waterway to threaten unimpeded access, security and the safety of the Hood Canal Bridge.

Output Limited only by Worldwide Demand

Fred Hill maintains a mineral lease on 23,000 acres of forestland (about 35 square miles) owned by Pope Resources. The P2P would include a four-mile conveyor to a nine-story loading pier and 1,000-foot mooring dock.

It can deliver 6,500 tons per hour. Why so tall? The P2P is

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***Pit 2 Pier continued
from page 4***

designed to be capable of loading two Panamax ore ships a day. These 750-foot ships are the size of NATO aircraft carriers and can hold 65,000 tons of gravel. "Panamax" is the maximum size allowed through the Panama Canal.

FHM spokesmen have said the P2P will make the company competitive worldwide. With 35 square miles of mining potential and a pier designed for loading tens of millions of tons per year (current output is half a million tons), FHM's objective is to open the door to a scale of strip-mining and commercial shipping operations limited only by worldwide demand and the availability of large enough ships and barges.

Critics say it is impossible for FHM to achieve this without endangering the Hood Canal Bridge and seriously harming the Hood Canal and its watershed.

Hood Canal Bridge: The Hood Canal Bridge is the gateway and sole lifeline to the Olympic Peninsula for many commuters, businesses and tourists. Disruption of traffic and the possibility of an accident would threaten far more than the few jobs FHM says it will add. FHM claims it can avoid bridge closures by towing barges under the east end of the bridge. To demonstrate, FHM towed a smaller empty barge at slack tide on a windless day. Critics say this is hardly realistic, because the P2P expects to load several 20,000-ton barges a day. These 400-foot barges are larger than a football field. A heavily loaded barge at the end of a tow line is hard enough to line up with a narrow opening on a windless day.

But commercial shipping does not occur only after midnight on windless days at slack high tide.

It seems obvious that ships and towboats that transit the bridge four to eight times a day will insist on using the center span and repeatedly closing the bridge to traffic.

Because of the narrow opening and the necessity of shipping under all conditions of wind and weather, many believe the risk of disabling the bridge is just too great. The impact on the regional economy would be devastating!

Environment: In addition to marring the scenic beauty of the Hood Canal with spreading industrial blight, there is the fragile health of the Hood Canal to consider. The P2P would operate around the clock, about 300 days a year, with multiple tugboats and barges queued up and idling. Diesel exhaust has been identified as one of the major sources of air pollution in the Port of Seattle.

Besides diesel exhaust, the P2P would introduce airborne dust, light pollution, noise and the increased likelihood of fuel spills and the introduction of alien species and other accidental contaminants. FHM claims the conveyor will operate as quietly as a refrigerator. But those who have witnessed ore loading on the Great Lakes know the rumble can be heard for very long distances.

Gravel washing operations use huge volumes of water. It is inconceivable that large-scale strip mining would not threaten groundwater and aquifers or create silted runoff that could smother eelgrass beds, shellfish and marine habitat.

The "Truck vs Barge" Argument

One of Fred Hill's main arguments is that shipping by barge is more environmentally friendly than shipping by truck. Yet, according to their own estimates, the P2P would not reduce local

truck traffic at all. Nor would it reduce truck traffic from the port of delivery to the point of use. This specious argument just shifts attention from FHM's ultimate goal, which is to increase their scale of operations from the current 690 acres to something on the order of 35 square miles, all within the Hood Canal watershed.

Fred Hill has also offered to donate sand for beach restoration. Critics say that dumping more sand on an eroding beach does little to correct the conditions causing the erosion. The new sand washes away, smothering nearshore marine habitat.

Although the decision will be made in Jefferson County, the adverse effects will be felt by residents of all three counties that share the Hood Canal. Fred Hill's decision to push ahead with permitting and construction of its pit-to-pier facility puts company profits above the health and welfare of a precious natural resource already seriously threatened by human activities along its shores.

Gene Bullock is Conservation Chair for the Kitsap Audubon Society. He is also active in Kitsap Conservation Voters and West Sound Conservation Council.

Editor's note: There are plans to have a pro-con discussion of this project at the December 12th meeting of the Grays Harbor Community Alliance 6 PM Carpenters Hall.

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



Ocean Shores Weatherwax property endangered

The 120-acre Weatherwax parcel has long been a hidden treasure in Ocean Shores for birders and nature lovers alike. It is the only un-platted property left within the city limits. With nearly a mile of undisturbed shoreline on Duck Lake, there is nothing like it on the North Coast.

The 3 natural portions of this property provide one contiguous eco-system which supports an incredible variety of birds, animals and vegetation.

On the East side the tall trees provide roosting spots for Great Blue Herons (fifty sited at one time), Eagles, Hawks and Owls in addition to extending the wild life corridor through the center of Ocean Shores for the larger animals who live here.

The point, a favorite spot for birders, provides hunting ground for our great horned owls and is a favorite birthing spot for deer and other small animals.

The Western Portion is forested with original growth spruce, cedar and fir forming a canopy under which huge ferns and mosses grow. A forested wetland completes the far Western portion of the Eco-system.

In total the 120-acre Weatherwax property in Ocean Shores hosts a huge variety of native species and serves as a protected resting area for migrating birds. Over 50 varieties of fungi have

been identified, plant species ranging from the ordinary to the extra-ordinary abound and wild-life flourishes in the midst of this totally platted peninsula.

The current city administration sees little of this, but does see dollar signs at the thought of being able to create more tiny lots. Its current plan is to sell the Point (8 acre center portion)



for development of 26 waterfront homesites, destroying both the shoreline and all habitat existing on the Point. Then in order to create more commercial property down town (have you been to Ocean Shores lately?), they plan to move 5 holes of the golf course to the Forested Wetlands portion of the Weatherwax! They claim that they will 'work around' the wetlands, but can you imagine the destruction to the eco-system that this represents?

Ocean Shores Citizens for Balanced Growth are working hard to preserve this pristine eco-

system in its entirety. Altering any portion of it will have irreversible impact on the whole. Please take a minute to learn more about this incredible property and our efforts at www.weatherwax.info.

*A true conservationist
is a man who knows
that the world is
not given by his fathers
but borrowed from
his children.*

John James Audubon

Shorebird Festival dates set for next year

Mark your calendar

The 13th Annual Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival will be held the first weekend in May (May 2-4.), 2008. The date has been moved to May because of the tides – it won't do to have low tides during daylight viewing times! We are looking forward to another stellar event – spectacular birding with hundreds of thousands of shorebirds soaring and swooping, great field trips, an exciting guest lecturer, yummy dessert night, and a delicious dinner and awesome auction. Plus, there will be vendors selling nature and birding products and exhibitor displaying their informative programs. And don't forget the school poster contest and fun fair for Grays Harbor kids of all ages!



Birders get special treatment

The Grey Gull Motel in Ocean Shores offers a discount to birders staying with them and the discount is good year round. They also welcome birders to use their parking lot for Ocean Shores birding events.

The Grey Gull is a member of Grays Harbor Audubon and is located at 651 Ocean Shores Blvd. NW, Ocean Shores on the Washington Coast.

GHAS Board of Directors

Rose DuBois	532-4067	dub@techline.com
Ann Haarer	268-1004	ann27jan@aol.com
Steve Hallstrom	273-9280	toltfarm@jps.net
Theressa Julius	537-4386	tmjulius@tss.net
Arnie Martin	612-0437	arnold6.martin@comcast.net
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Dianna Moore	289-5048	dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Linda Orgel	648-2476	ldotorg@olearycreek.com
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Dean Schwickerath	495-3101	dschwick@techline.com
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Janet Strong	495-3950	strongjan@copper.net
Gary Utter	269-0157	kngutter@coastaccess.com

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Membership	Ann Haarer, 268-1004 ann27jan@aol.com
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Education	Janet Strong, 495-3950 strongjan@copper.net
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Other Audubon Contacts

GHAS voice mail	(800) 303-8498
State Audubon	(360) 786-8020
National Audubon	(212) 979-3000
GHAS Website	http://www.ghas.org

Please Fill Out and Mail Back

**ANNUAL GRAYS HARBOR AUDUBON
CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

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**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.

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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!

The Sandpiper

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