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KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
Spring 2010



KS WILD

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KS News is produced
by the KS Wild staff.



Martha McCord

SPRING HIKES

FEBRUARY 6: SOUTH CASCADES SNOW SHOE

This winter wonderland outing will hike on the Pacific Crest Trail near Brown Mountain, a young shield volcano covered with scree from lava flows. If the weather allows, great views of nearby Mt. McLoughlin can be seen. Both of Ashland's outdoor stores rent snowshoes at reasonable daily rates. Meet at Evo's Cafe in Ashland at 10am for carpools.

MARCH 6: WILD ROGUE

The low elevation Rogue River Trail makes March a perfect time for a hike into the Zane Gray Roadless Area! This old-growth forest and river corridor is the heart of our Save the Wild Rogue campaign. Meet at Evo's Cafe in Ashland at 10am, at Gooseberries Foods in Grants Pass at 10:45, or at the Grave's Creek boat ramp by 11:15.

APRIL 17: ILLINOIS VALLEY WILDFLOWERS

The Illinois Valley is home to some of the most unusual geology and diverse botany in the country, and its low elevation brings the Spring bloom earlier than almost anywhere around. Join this walking tour through botanical hotspots and examine threats from unrestricted off-road vehicle use. Meet at Evo's Cafe in Ashland at 9am, or at the coffee stand in the parking lot of the Selma Market at 10:15.

Cover Image: Bigelow Lakes is a botanical hot spot and part of the Oregon Caves legislation (see page 13). Photo by Martha McCord: marthamccordphotography.com

KS WILD'S MISSION:

KS Wild is an advocate for the forests, waters and wildlife of the Klamath and Rogue Basins of northwest California and southwest Oregon. We use environmental law, science, collaboration and education to defend healthy ecosystems and help build sustainable communities.

MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

DEEP GRATITUDE GOES TO: Rachel Aquino, Paul Brown, Ginger Cassady, Tom Pike & Megan Danforth, Clint & Mary Driver, Shelly Elkovich & Jeff Heglie, David & Carol Gasser, Brad Horwitz, Philip Krohn, Tracy Parks Lamblin, Sally Mackler, Ann Macrory, Steven & Jennifer Marsden, Katherine Mechling & Jim Gurley, Tom Peil, Tom Powell & Maud Macrory, Lundy & Fredric Reynolds, Gene Rhough, Matthew Riley, Hope Robertson, Edward & Gloria Robin, Peter & Karen Salant, Melissa Schweisguth, Lynda & Steven Sirianni, Leah Soltar and Frederick Cathey, Joyce Stahmann, Janie & Kirk Starr, Taylor & Sarah Starr, Hans Stroo, Valerie Swales, Steven Wells & Mary Cutler, Davis Wilkins & Matt Oliva, Steven & Priscilla Weaver.

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THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS: 444S Foundation, Anne K. Millis Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation, Bullitt Foundation, Burning Foundation, Conservation Alliance, Deer Creek Foundation, Environment Now, Firedoll Foundation, Heller Charitable & Educational Fund, Jubitz Family Foundation, Kenney Watershed Foundation, Lazar Foundation, Suzan R. Mackler Fund, McKenzie River Gathering Foundation, Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Patagonia, Resource Renewal Institute, Sangham Foundation, Sperling Foundation, Weeden Foundation, Wilburforce Foundation, Zephyr Fund.

PLEASE JOIN KS WILD TODAY!

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FOCUS ON OUR KS WILD FAMILY

KLAMATH (OR BRISTLY) GENTIAN - *GENTIANA PLURISSETOSA*

The Klamath Gentian is a rare and striking wildflower native to southern Oregon and northern California, where it is an uncommon resident of wet mountain habitat. This Klamath-Siskiyou endemic is a perennial herb with brilliantly colored flowers that bloom from July into September. Each flower is bright, deep blue with frilly, thread-like corolla lobes. The Klamath Gentian is included in the California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, and is a federal "Species of Concern".



Kristi Mergenthaler

COW-FREE BIGELOW LAKES BOTANICAL AREA

One of the few places to find this unusual flower is the boggy meadows surrounding Bigelow Lakes above the Oregon Caves. Though the Forest Service has long considered the Klamath Gentian of "exceptional botanical value," they have allowed livestock grazing to degrade its habitat. KS Wild crafted an agreement with rancher Phil Krouse in 2009 that removed cows from almost 25,000 acres, including the Bigelow Lakes Botanical Area. The pending Oregon Caves National Monument legislation will allow for the permanent retirement of this harmful grazing allotment.

DUANE MARTINEZ

Duane is a renaissance man when it comes to KS Wild. Duane moved to the Klamath-Siskiyou in 2007 and quickly applied his passion for life to his new community. He graduated from the University of Colorado with a degree in environmental design and an interest in urban planning, and worked at an architecture firm while sitting on the Board of Directors of the Boulder Green Building Guild. Lucky for us, he ventured to southern Oregon to pursue a romantic interest.



Duane Martinez

Duane has volunteered countless hours with KS Wild on a variety of projects, including: dazzling graphic design, days of dictation when a KS Wild staffer broke an arm, Annual Dinner planning and bartending, documenting the impacts of Wilderness fire suppression, and trekking the entire Siskiyou Crest to profile an ecological gem. KS Wild deeply appreciates Duane's help and we are lucky he is a part of our family. We also hope that he lands a job locally to apply his design skills so that the KS doesn't lose such a creative, smart and thoughtful man.

KS WILD PROTECTS ANCIENT CEDARS FROM LOGGING

The Jenny Creek Watershed is a little-known biological gem. Originating in the Southern Oregon Cascade Mountains and then flowing through the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument and finally into the Klamath River in California, Jenny Creek is a botanical hotspot that supports a species of red-band trout found nowhere else in the world.



George Sexton

HERITAGE TREES IN JENNY CREEK: The BLM will not log old-growth in one of the most botanically diverse areas in Oregon, thanks to KS Wild.

In 2008, the Klamath Falls Resource Area of the BLM proposed a timber sale called "Cold Onion" in which old-growth cedars providing irreplaceable critical habitat for several Spotted owl pairs would have been logged. The initial plans also called for removing trees (yarding) through wetlands, seeps and springs.

Throughout 2009, KS Wild "ground-truthed" the at-risk forest stands and prepared technical comments aimed at stopping the destructive portions of the timber sale.

By dovetailing our Spotted owl litigation strategy (forcing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect critical habitat for the owl) with site-specific engagement with the BLM, we were able to greatly improve the final composition of the timber sale.

Old-growth cedars that were marked for "harvest" will no longer be logged, Spotted owl habitat will be retained, and small-diameter white-fir trees that are encroaching in the stands (due to fire-suppression) will be thinned in 2010 to reduce fire hazard and increase forest resiliency, and yarding corridors will avoid wetlands and springs.

"The Jenny Creek drainage is one of the most botanically diverse areas in the state. The unique geological and climatic history at the apex of the Klamath and Cascade mountains in southwestern Oregon provide habitats for a large number of endemic plants." - Jenny Creek Watershed Assessment, BLM, page 22.

"The Jenny Creek Watershed has perhaps the greatest biodiversity of any area in the state of Oregon." - Ibid, page 4. *"Approximately 40 to 50 percent of the Jenny Creek Watershed has been clearcut since World War II."* - Ibid, page 32.

KS WILD AND WELC PROTECT POST-FIRE WATERSHED

The featured hike in this issue of *KS Wild News* (pages 11-12) highlights trails through the spectacular Elk Creek Watershed and the 2008 Panther Fire on their way towards the Marble Mountains Wilderness Area.

Perceptive hikers will notice all the signs of natural post-fire recovery: hardwoods will be sprouting and young conifers will be poking up throughout the forest, rare woodpeckers will be making their homes in burned snags, and the Spring wildflower bloom will be proving the adage that “wildfires bring wildflowers.”

But for the work of KS Wild, and our attorney Susan Jane Brown of the Western Environmental Law Center (WELC), instead of enjoying a recovering watershed, Elk Creek visitors (and critters) would be watching the clearcutting of logging units and the planting of dense fiber plantations.

Following the Panther Fire, timber sale planners in the Klamath National Forest proposed a 255-acre timber sale in the Bear Creek tributary to Elk Creek. Elk Creek has been recommended as a Wild and Scenic River by the Forest Service, and it is recognized as a key watershed for salmon recovery.

In late 2009, the Forest Service signed an “emergency situation determination” to prevent legal appeals of its plans to clearcut streamside forests. KS Wild’s legal team then immediately filed a lawsuit to halt the illegal logging. Faced with the prospect of a legal butt-kicking, the Forest Service attorneys wisely threw in the towel and called it a day.

BREAKING NEWS! THIS FIGHT AIN’T OVER

Just prior to going to press, we learned that the Klamath National Forest has once again proposed to clearcut the recovering forests in the Elk Creek Watershed. Rest assured that KS Wild will continue to fight to protect wildlife habitat and water quality in this key watershed.



Lesley Adams

BIG TREES AID FOREST RECOVERY : Old-growth trees are critical to recovery after a fire, providing forage and habitat for many species, and assist in soil stability.

to race through portions of the Elk Creek watershed. Even this higher severity portion of the burn provided many resource benefits. Perceptive hikers will notice the increase in rare woodpecker populations, the post-fire profusion of wildflowers, and the increased amount of large wood in the creek, which contributes to pool formation and aquatic habitat.

Shortly after the burn, the Forest Service unveiled plans to clearcut the recovering post-fire old-growth forests and establish fiber plantations in their place. KS Wild halted this illegal salvage logging plan in 2009. See page 3 for details.

It is important to remember that Elk Creek requires fire periodically in order to maintain its astounding biodiversity and heterogeneity. Fire is the spark that allows the forests of the Klamath-Siskiyou to support such diverse plant and animal populations.

WILD WILDERNESS

From the charming Sulphur Springs Campground, the Elk Creek Trail gradually works its way up the watershed through the burn, crossing numerous tributaries and climbing around several unstable “earthflows” and slides. With each step the mountain views become more impressive.

The backcountry and hiking options are almost limitless; to the West the giant old-growth forests of Rainy Valley lead to Rainy Lake, and the base of the Marble Rim; to the East a trail climbs steeply to the little-visited Tinker lakes and meadows; and to the South the Granite Creek trail follows a glacier-carved cirque to even more meadows and lakes.

This is wild and rugged country. Good maps, provisions, and self-reliance are a must. A little gumption and planning will be rewarded with access to a backcountry paradise.



George Sexton

OUR MARBLE PARADISE: The Marble Rim is a breathtaking centerpiece in a vast Wilderness that offers endless opportunities to experience wild nature.

WESTERN WILDERNESS CONFERENCE: BERKELEY, CA

KS Wild invites you to join us April 8-11, 2010, at the University of California, Berkeley for the Western Wilderness Conference. We will present our proposal to establish a Siskiyou Crest National Monument alongside many of the nation’s most effective wildlands advocates. We will discuss proven strategies to strengthen environmental campaigns, meet with like-minded activists and discover surprising new allies.

FEATURED HIKE:

ELK CREEK, MARBLE MOUNTAINS

The Marble Mountains Wilderness Area is justifiably popular; hikers, backpackers, botanists, geologists and equestrians flock to the alpine lakes and wildflower meadows while Pacific Crest Trail “through hikers” marvel at the old-growth forests that extend as far as the eye can see. Visitors are drawn from around the world to view sights like the iconic Marble Rim.



George Sexton

THE TRAIL LESS TRAVELED

While the word is out that the Marbles are a “can’t miss” destination, the Wilderness is so vast, and the location so remote, that there are still a lifetime’s worth of backcountry wildlands waiting to be explored. The Elk Creek Trail offers a gorgeous starting point for these adventures.

Reached by taking the Indian Creek Road (FS 16N05) south from the town of Happy Camp for 1/2 hour (following signs) to the trailhead at the Sulphur Springs Campground, the Elk Creek Trail provides year-round, un-crowded access to the North side of the Marble Mountains.

A SPECIAL WATERSHED

Elk Creek has been designated by the Forest Service as a “key watershed” for salmon and steelhead recovery. The cold, clear snow-fed water of Elk Creek provides crucial thermal refugia for at-risk Coho and spawning habitat for the salmonid runs that make their way up the dangerously warm Klamath River. The protected wilderness headwaters of Elk Creek are a vision of what the unspoiled watersheds of the West have to offer: old-growth forests, clean water, fish habitat, and a recreational wonderland.

THE RETURN OF FIRE

In 2008, summer lightning ignited the Panther fire. For months the fire crept around the remote edges of the Wilderness, far away from homes or structures, and the Forest Service wisely allowed the flames to reduce the accumulation of surface and ladder fuels in the watershed. Then, in early October 2008, a freak windstorm caused the fire

SIX RIVERS NATIONAL FOREST LOGS KARUK SACRED SITE

After an extremely difficult negotiation process, the Karuk Tribe of California, KS Wild, and a number of our friends and allies entered into an agreement with the Six Rivers National Forest to proceed with a fuels reduction timber sale around the town of Orleans on the Klamath River. Our agreement called for small-diameter thinning, protection of old-growth trees, maintaining canopy closure, retention of hardwoods, multiparty monitoring, and the protection of sacred sites. A “win-win,” right? Wrong.

When logging began in late 2009 the Forest Service did not abide by a single one of our agreements.

Without notice, logging commenced that removed old-growth trees, targeted hardwoods, significantly reduced canopy closure and trashed a medicine trail sacred to the Karuk people.


So in December of 2009, the Karuk Tribe and the Klamath Justice Coalition successfully blockaded the illegal logging and brought national attention to the Forest Service’s unjust behavior.

KS Wild is working with our friends on the Klamath to identify legal remedies to ensure that the Six Rivers National Forest does not profit from its “lies for logging” ideology. Unfortunately, there is no legal remedy that can repair the damage that has already been done to sacred sites, forest ecology and the public trust.



Klamath Justice Coalition

DESTROYING SACRED SITES: The Forest Service did not implement an agreement made with the Karuk Tribe and KS Wild to protect old trees and sacred sites, prompting a blockade of the sale in December 2009.



DRINK COFFEE, SUPPORT ROGUE RIVERKEEPER ON MARCH 2ND

Evo’s Coffee Lounge in Ashland is once again supporting KS Wild by naming Rogue Riverkeeper as the beneficiary of their monthly “giving day.” Evo’s donates \$1 of every purchase on the first Tuesday of each month to a designated non-profit organization. Rogue Riverkeeper will benefit from every purchase made at Evo’s on March 2nd. Please support your local coffee shop and your Rogue Riverkeeper by purchasing coffee and yummy baked goods, and bring a friend along!

MINER GONE WILD

If you read the Fall 2009 issue of *KS Wild News*, then you may remember the miner who illegally bulldozed through threatened Coho salmon habitat in Sucker Creek, dug mining pits in a riparian reserve, logged streamside old-growth trees and diverted two feeder creeks to facilitate his gold fever. The miner was arrested and convicted because such action is illegal, even when one doesn't have the patience to wait for agency approval or when they don't believe in environmental laws.



Lesley Adams

PAYING FOR THE CLEAN UP: After being found guilty in court, the miner filed for bankruptcy, leaving the U.S. taxpayer to foot the bill for restoration.

Well, he's back. After being found guilty of illegal mining on Forest Service lands and leaving jail, he filed for bankruptcy to avoid the financial responsibility of remediation at the site. As a result, the Forest Service, funded by the U.S. taxpayer, remediated the site. Now, the miner has moved his mining equipment a few miles downstream to BLM forests next to Sucker Creek where he hopes to continue trash-ing Coho habitat and public lands.

While the Forest Service concluded that the mining would harm Sucker Creek and endangered species, thereby making an Environmental Impact Statement necessary, the BLM is proposing a smaller, less rigorous environmental analysis of a nearly identical proposal, despite the significant impacts and the miner's illegal mining history.

Sucker Creek provides some of the most important Coho habitat in the Rogue Basin, and is listed as water quality impaired under the Clean Water Act. The Illinois River Water Quality Management Plan acknowledges mining as a major cause of these water quality impairments, which are lethal to salmon: "On the main stem of Sucker Creek, mining is responsible for the greatest reduction of stream shade. Mining operations include placer mining within the channel and floodplain of Sucker Creek."

KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper are intently engaged in the BLM process to approve this operation and will do all we can to protect the Coho of Sucker Creek from reckless mining. Visit www.kswild.org/mining to learn more and take action.

"Sucker Creek is a high value salmonid fish watershed...Sucker Creek is a very high priority for protection and restoration, one of the most important anadromous fish watersheds in the Rogue River basin." - Sucker Creek TMDL and Water Quality Management Plan, page 13.

Outdoor Gear and Outfitters

Ashland Cycle Sport
Ashland Mountain Supply
Bauer Fly Wheel
Cascade Designs
Eagle Creek Travel Gear
Eagle Optics
Echo River Trips
Ex Officio
Go Lite
Keen
Kokopelli

Momentum River Expeditions
Montrail
Northwest Nature Shop
Osprey
Patagonia Clothing
Rogue Valley Runners
Thermal Tracker Paragliding

Restaurants, Lodging, Groceries and Cafes

Amuse
Ashland Creek Inn
Ashland Food Coop
Brother's Restaurant
Café Mam/Royal Blue Organics
Dagoba Chocolate
Downtown Coffee
Geppetto's and Ron Roth
Mix Coffee Shop
Noble Coffee
Shop 'n Kart
Standing Stone Brewing Co.
Woodsmen Hotel



www.scotthardingphoto.com

Special thanks to auctioneer Derek V. the knitters of the Rogue Riverkeeper afghan: Holly, Leah, Max, Michelle, Mori, Samuel, Shannon, Shelley and the Websters staff

Jewelry, Art, Photography...

Ashland Custom Framing
Aubyn Heglie
Bohemia Gallery and Framing
Cabaret Theatre
Elegant Bug
Gallerie Karon
Gathering Glass Studio
Scott Gibbs
Heart and Hands
Houston's Framing
Mori Ink
Nimbus
Nubius Organics
Oregon Shakespeare Festival
Paula Fong Illustrations
Rising Sun Jewelry and Gems
Scott Harding Photography

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE ANNUAL DINNER VOLUNTEERS!

Michelle Adams, Selene Aitken, Autumn, Keeley Bittner, Jan Brotman, Frank and Stella Bungay, John Burton, Regina Castellon, Holly Christensen, Maria Clementi, Geronimo Diaz, Dan and Sarah of Downtowne Coffee, Forrest English, Megan Ferhman, Deborah Fox, Erika Geisen, Ann Haynes, Jeff, Rowan and Aubyn Heglie, Melanie Jessee, Johnny, Rob and Linda Joseph, Maria Kelly, Dana Kristal, Kathleen Mahoney, Danielle Mancuso, Duane Martinez, Melyn, Zac Miller, Mori Ink, Michael Moss, Ben Niver, Matt Plocklin, Max and Bronson Samel-Garloff, Cate Schoenharl, Melissa Schweisguth, Silas, Spindle, Sprig, Lauren Taylor, Liza Tran, Tyson, Derek Volkart, Daniel Wise, Carrie Zoll

THANKS FOR MAKING OUR ANNUAL DINNER A WILD SUCCESS

KS Wild's 5th Annual Dinner and Auction on September 26, 2009 was another success, thanks to the generous support of our community. After expenses, we raised nearly \$16,000 to support our conservation work and had a lot of fun in the process! We deeply thank everyone who makes this event one to look forward to year after year.



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 Thompson Creek Organics
 Trees of Antiquity
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 Nature Spirit Herbs
 Paddington Station
Sweetgrass Natural Fibers
 Sunday Afternoons
 Soundpeace
Tropical Salvage

FORESTS AND A CHANGING CLIMATE

The importance of forests in climate regulation was at center stage in the international climate negotiations that recently took place in Copenhagen. While the international talks failed to produce a binding agreement to reduce emissions, progress was made to reduce deforestation and enhance carbon sinks in developing countries. There is hope that the momentum behind this program will produce results in 2010, even absent a larger climate treaty.



Lesley Adams

CLIMATE REFUGE: The Klamath-Siskiyou has been successful in past climate changes.

Here in the U.S., we need to do our part by protecting forests and letting trees grow so that they can store more carbon. Older forests, such as the native forests we have left in the Klamath-Siskiyou, store vast amounts of the primary greenhouse gas – carbon dioxide – in tree trunks and in forest soils. Federal agencies have not yet embraced forest conservation to maximize the potential for carbon storage. Simultaneously, agencies should also focus management on making forests more resilient to anticipated climate changes, such as promoting restorative thinning that better align forests with natural fire cycles.

As the climate get warmer, land managers need to think about how species and ecological systems will adapt to a new climate reality. The Klamath-Siskiyou region was wildly successful at adapting to past climate changes, as evidenced by its extremely high levels of biological diversity. Every species and biological community that exists in this region is a testament of successful adaptation to past climate shifts. With species like juniper and sage from the Great Basin adjacent to coastal cedars and giant sword ferns, this region holds promise for many species that may be forced to relocate due to changing temperatures, light or rainfall.

The Siskiyou Crest, in the heart of the KS along the Oregon and California border, could be a critical "climate change corridor" or "climate refuge" for adaptation because it is where dozens of ecological systems converge. Due to so many gradients in elevation, temperature, and rainfall caused by its geographic location and geological makeup, the Siskiyou Crest can allow species to migrate between habitat extremes such as the hot deserts in Nevada to the rainforests of the Pacific Northwest. For more information, visit www.kswild.org/climate_and_the_ks

Save the Date for our 2010 Annual Dinner: September 18th



STORMWATER POLLUTES ROGUE RIVER

As the winter rains arrived, the Rogue River received an annual influx of pollutants. Stormwater run-off is among the top sources of water contamination in the country. Our drinking water supplies, fishing waters and swimming spots are fouled by uncontrolled pollution when rainwater washes over city streets, parking lots, and suburban lawns, picking up toxic chemicals, disease-causing organisms, dirt and trash and overload local streams and wastewater treatment systems.



File photo

WINTER WATER POLLUTANTS: Stormwater washes over streets and construction sites, picking up pollutants and contaminating waterbodies.

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is authorized by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement the Clean Water Act in Oregon. Central to this law is a permit program that sets parameters for pollution flowing into our waters. Stormwater, similar to toxic metals and hot water, is regulated under this permit program.

In 1999, the EPA finalized a rule for stormwater permits to extend from large cities to small towns. This rule was supported by extensive studies that demonstrated a clear link between urban development and the contamination of waterbodies. Under that rule, some municipalities in the Rogue Basin were placed into what became known as the “MS4 Phase II” program, which includes urban development and construction sites. Medford, Central Point, Talent, Phoenix and Ashland have all made progress in reducing stormwater pollution under this program, but unfortunately several municipalities in the Rogue Basin were not included.

Stormwater pollution is particularly problematic at construction sites. It is generally acknowledged that erosion rates from construction sites are much greater than from almost any other land use. The Rogue Basin is one of the fastest growing regions in the state. Grants Pass and Eagle Point had a 20 and 36 percent change in population, respectively, from 2000 to 2005, whereas Oregon had a 6 percent average. This level of urban development should most certainly be regulated under the stormwater program.

The Clean Water Act is public-friendly in that community members have tools to implement and strengthen the protections of the law. The stormwater permit program allows for the public to petition for additional inclusions into the program. Rogue Riverkeeper submitted petitions to DEQ in January requesting that Grants Pass and Eagle Point be included in the stormwater program due to their size, status as an urbanized area, and pollutant contributions to the Rogue River. DEQ has six months to respond to our petition, and we hope to have these municipalities covered by the stormwater permit by the 2010/2011 rainy season.

LNG FIGHT HEATS UP

On December 17, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) voted 3-1 to approve the controversial Jordan Cove Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal and Pacific Connector pipeline in southwest Oregon.

The dissenting opinion was given by Chairman Jon Wellinghoff, stating in part, “I believe that there are reasonable alternatives that would more efficiently, more reliably, and in an environmentally preferable manner meet the projected energy needs of the markets that the Jordan Cove Project is intended to serve. I am also concerned about specific characteristics of the Jordan Cove Project. Therefore, I conclude that the Jordan Cove Project is not in the public interest, and I respectfully dissent from today’s order.”

Rogue Riverkeeper and KS Wild, along with a coalition of environmental groups and community advocates are being represented by Susan Jane Brown and Jan Wilson of the Western Environmental Center (WELC). WELC filed an appeal of FERC’s decision in January and is prepared to file suit against the project if the appeal is denied. Governor Ted Kulongoski also appealed the decision on behalf of the state of Oregon.

If built, the project would import foreign fossil fuel in the form of LNG to be used primarily in California. The project includes an import facility located in Coos Bay, as well as a 235-mile pipeline that would cross the Coos, Umpqua, Rogue and Klamath watersheds before connecting to an existing pipeline at the California border.

The project is replete with problems, including: 1) The LNG terminal threatens Coos Bay residents with a catastrophic accident, should there be a leak or terrorist attack on the facility or tankers; 2) Pipeline construction would destroy habitat for coho salmon, spotted owls and other species; 3) The project threatens water quality in the Coos, Umpqua, Rogue and Klamath watersheds; 4) The pipeline would clearcut hundreds of acres of remaining old-growth forests on public lands; 5) The project would handcuff the West Coast energy grid to fossil fuels coming from politically unstable countries including Russia, the Middle East and elsewhere; 6) The project would displace investment that could support cleaner alternatives such as renewable energy; and 7) Project developers would use eminent domain to seize private property for the Pacific Connector pipeline.



Francis Eatherington

SOMETIMES MITIGATION ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH: This mitigative plastic barrier was overwhelmed by sediment from the construction of the 12-inch Coos Bay pipeline in 2007. The proposed LNG pipeline is 36 inches and 235 miles long, crossings hundreds of salmon-bearing streams.