

Wild Links Briefing

Washington's Cascades: I-90 and North

September 10, 2007, *agenda*

8:00 – 8:30 **Coffee and Snacks**

8:30 – 8:45 **Welcome and Introduction**

8:50 – 9:30 **Panel Discussion**

Panelists address questions on challenges to wildlife within the North Cascades, accomplishments and success stories, and ongoing efforts at the landscape level.

Panelists: Bill Gaines, Forest Wildlife Ecologist, US Forest Service
Jeff Krupka, Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Stephanie Forbes, Conservation Coordinator, Woodland Park Zoo
Denise Joines, Program Officer, Wilburforce Foundation

9:35 – 10:50 **Science Findings: Current Wildlife Studies in the North Cascades**

“Status of the north central Cascades lynx population” Gary Koehler, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

“The North Cascades Wolverine Project” John Rohrer, US Forest Service

“Small mammals in eastern Cascades dry forests” John Lehmkuhl, US Forest Service, PNW Research Station

“Monitoring the Cascades wildlife for the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project” Robert Long, Western Transportation Institute, and Jason Smith, Washington State Department of Transportation

10:50 – 11:00 **Break**

11:00 – 12:15 **Habitat Protection: Priorities and Challenges**

“Land conservation in the Okanogan” Todd Thorn, Okanogan Valley Land Council

“Habitat protection in north central Washington: Moving from a project-level approach to a programmatic strategy”
Bob Bugert, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

“Land protection in Kittitas County” David Gerth, Kittitas Conservation Trust

“The Cascade Agenda” Jill Arango, Kittitas County Conservation Director, Cascade Land Conservancy

12:15 – 1:15 **Complimentary Lunch**

1:20 – 2:30 Partnerships and Campaigns: Moving Forward with Conservation Goals

“It’s the wildlife, stupid!” Joe Scott, Conservation Northwest

“Managing fire dependant wildlife habitat without fire” Dale Swedburg, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife

“North Cascades Initiative” Cynthia Wilkerson, The Wilderness Society

“Citizen monitoring in the I-90 corridors” Charlie Raines, I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition, and Dave Moskowitz, Wilderness Awareness School

2:30 – 2:45 Break

2:45 – 3:30 Panel Discussion

Panelists from the morning’s discussion look ahead at visions for the future, critical gaps in wildlife conservation efforts, and the roles of their organization in conservation and wildlife recovery.

3:30 – 4:00 Closing Remarks

Notes

Speaker Biographies

Jill Arango, Kittitas Country Conservation Director, Cascade Land Conservancy: Prior to joining CLC in August 2006, Jill worked for the Land Trust Alliance where she served as acting director of the Midwest Office. Before moving to the Midwest to work for LTA, Jill worked for The Cascade Conservation Partnership and Central Washington University in Ellensburg. While in Ellensburg, Jill helped found the Kittitas Environmental Education Network (KEEN), which won the John Stanford Education Achievement Award at CLC's 2006 Conservation Awards Breakfast for its program involving children, educators, and the environment.

Bob Bugert, Executive Director for the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust: Bob joined the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust in May 2007, where he has worked on a number of issues related to land and water conservation and restoration, with particular focus on salmon recovery. Prior to his work with the Land Trust, Bob served for the past nine years as a policy advisor in the Washington Governor's Salmon Recovery Office. He holds MS and BS degrees in fishery and wildlife biology. Bob and his wife Carolyn have lived with their three boys in the Wenatchee Valley since 1990.

Stephanie Forbes, Conservation Coordinator, Woodland Park Zoo: Hailing from "The land of Ya'll," also known as rural, western North Carolina, Stephanie Forbes grew up surrounded by the Smokey Mountains. Spending much of her time either outside or in a dance studio, she developed an appreciation for both the nature and the arts, and she's still trying to figure out a graceful way to combine the two! At Emory University, she pursued both interests, studying biology, ecology, and dance curricula. Ultimately, her passion for animals and the conservation of biodiversity won out. After a summer internship at the Carter Center in the biodiversity group of the World Health Initiative, she went to work in the Education Department at Zoo Atlanta and shortly thereafter began working as an animal keeper. Stephanie came to the Pacific Northwest to work at the Woodland Park Zoo in 1998. As conservation coordinator she stewards the field conservation projects that the zoo supports as well as serving as a resource on conservation issues for the zoo.

Bill Gaines, Forest Wildlife Ecologist, Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests, US Forest Service: Bill feels fortunate to have worked with many extremely capable scientists, managers, and members of the public during his 23 years with the Forest Service. Except for a short time with the Caribbean National Forest, he has spent his entire career living, learning, and working in eastern Cascades environments. Bill's jobs have included working as a research ecologist with a consulting firm, as a district wildlife biologist on three different ranger districts, and as a forest wildlife biologist. Bill has also worked on international projects in Pakistan and Ecuador. He received both a BS and MS in Biology from Central Washington University (1983, 1987) and a PhD in Wildlife Science from University of Washington (2002).

David Gerth, Executive Director, Kittitas Conservation Trust: Kittitas Conservation Trust works to protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in the Upper Yakima River Basin. KCT is a Kittitas County based land trust that holds conservation easements on more than 4,000 acres of premier riparian and upland forest habitats. The Trust also works to enhance instream flows using market-based strategies.

Denise Joines, Program Office Director, Wilburforce Foundation: Denise is the program officer for the Northwest/Southwest ecoregions of Wilburforce Foundation, dedicated to creating a network of protected core reserves, corridors, and buffer zones across western North America that will support ecologically effective landscapes and viable wildlife populations.

Gary Koehler, Wildlife Research Scientist, PhD, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife: Gary has spent his professional life studying carnivores around the world from the African lion and South China tiger to cougars, bobcat, lynx, marten, wolverine, and black bears in the Pacific Northwest. He is currently conducting research on lynx in Okanogan County and is principal investigator of cougar research and education outreach in Kittitas County, known as Project CAT (Cougars and Teaching).

Jeff Krupka, Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist, US Fish and Wildlife Service: Currently stationed at the USFWS Central Washington Field Office in Wenatchee, Jeff oversees the program that evaluates project effects to threatened and endangered species in an eight-county area. Some of the key issues include hydrodam relicensing, fish passage barriers and aquatic/riparian habitat effects, harvest of spotted owl habitat, wildfire and forest health, and a variety of issues related to roads and the implementation of recovery actions. Jeff has worked for 15 years as a biologist and a technician for the US Army Corps of Engineers, US Forest Service, and the USFWS, in Oregon, Michigan, and Washington. He received a BS in Wildlife Science from Oregon State University in 1994.

John Lehmkuhl, Research Wildlife Biologist, US Forest Service: John works out of the Pacific Northwest Research Station, Wenatchee Forestry Sciences Lab. He has a PhD in Forest Resources from the University of Washington, and his current research and management interest is the integration of forest wildlife and disturbance ecology.

Robert Long, Research Ecologist, Road Ecology Program of the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University: Robert was recently hired to coordinate wildlife monitoring in the central Cascades of Washington State in association with Washington DOT's I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project. His research interests include landscape permeability for wildlife, wildlife survey design, and carnivore ecology. He is an adjunct faculty member in the Biology Department at Central Washington University.

Charlie Raines, Cascade Checkerboard Project Director, Sierra Club: In addition to a position he has held for the past thirteen years, Charlie works on forest conservation for the Cascade Land Conservancy as director of strategic implementation. He is also campaign director for the I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition, and director of lands and public funding for The Cascades Conservation Partnership. Raines has thirty-five years experience in environmental issues, mostly as a volunteer for the Sierra Club, including four years as Northwest regional vice-president and four years as chair of the Club's Ancient Forest Campaign. He also headed the Club's successful campaigns for the Mount St. Helens National Monument (1982) and Washington Wilderness Act (1984). Raines has been employed as an energy conservation and environmental specialist by the City of Seattle (1981-93) and the federal government. He continues to work as a professional artist. Raines is on the boards of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition. Other appointments include the Western Washington Cascades Provincial Advisory Committee (1995 to 1998), Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission (1996-2000), and the Advisory Council to the director of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (1988-1993). Charlie earned degrees in biology and art from the University of Puget Sound. He is a lifelong resident of Puget Sound country.

John Rohrer, Wildlife Biologist, US Forest Service: John has worked as a wildlife biologist for the Okanogan National Forest, Methow Valley Ranger District, since 1991. His current projects include the wolverine project; monitoring lynx distribution; improving wetlands with beaver relocations; monitoring survival of relocated, nuisance rattlesnakes; and managing invasive plant species. John received his BS in Wildlife Ecology from University of Arizona 1982 and his MS in Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University in 1990.

Joe Scott, International Conservation Director, Conservation Northwest: Joe serves on the board of directors of the Endangered Species Coalition, an alliance of 400 national and grassroots groups working for a strong Endangered Species Act. He is also a member of the Environmental Chamber of the Forest Stewardship Council International (FSC). Joe heads up Conservation Northwest's endangered species and grizzly bear programs but his primary focus is a collaborative campaign with Canadian conservation groups working to protect the globally unique Inland Temperate Rainforest and its poster child, the endangered mountain caribou. Conservation Northwest's mission is to protect and connect old-growth forests and other wild areas from the Washington Coast to the BC Rockies. He is primary author of reports including *Greening the Trade in Trees: Solutions to the US-Canada Softwood Lumber Dispute* and *Mountain Caribou: Staring at Extinction*. Joe holds a BS in Finance from Boston College.

Jason Smith, Environmental Manager, I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project, Washington State Department of Transportation: Jason has worked for many years on transportation projects at regional and local scales involving unique environmental mitigation and interagency partnerships. This I-90 Project allows WSDOT the opportunity to combine many design-related challenges in transportation, conservation, and habitat connectivity. Jason's job is to make sure that WSDOT meets its commitments and establishes achievable performance expectations as part of the environmental analysis, design, and post-construction of the project.

Dale Swedberg, Wildlife Area Manager, Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife: Dale has worked for the WDFW, and its predecessor agencies, since 1976 as a tech aide, game biologist, wildlife control agent, and fish and wildlife officer. After becoming manager of the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area in Okanogan County, he developed a passionate interest in fire as a keystone process in wildlife habitat and ecosystem dynamics. He manages about 20,000 acres of fire-dependent wildlife habitat and has found this to be a daunting task without fire as one of the tools. Upon learning about prescribed fire councils in Florida and their accomplishments in promoting the understanding, acceptance, and use of prescribed fire, he began working on the formation of the North Central Washington Prescribed Fire Council. In collaboration with many other organizations, over time the NCW PFC will be the single voice representing many interests demanding that, after 100 years, fire be put back into ecosystems thirsting for the quenching effects only fire can offer. Dale received a BS in Wildlife Management (1972) and an MS in Environmental Science (1981), both from Washington State University.

Todd Thorn, Board President, Okanogan Valley Land Council: The Okanogan Valley Land Council works to enhance wildlife, fish, agricultural, and forestry values in the Okanogan Valley by accepting and overseeing conservation easements received from private land-owners, creating public educational opportunities for people interested in land conservation issues and projects, and assisting private land-owners who wish to preserve family lands for future generations.

Cynthia Wilkerson, Washington Program Manager, The Wilderness Society: Cynthia manages The Wilderness Society's wilderness and public lands conservation work throughout Washington State, bringing over ten years experience in the conservation field in Washington, British Columbia, Florida, and California. Her diverse skill-set includes solid scientific training in ecology and conservation biology, strategic planning, facilitation, leadership, and creation and implementation of comprehensive conservation programs. Prior work includes founding a non-profit biological research organization in the mid-coast of British Columbia; forest economic research and outreach at the University of Florida; and work in the California office of Defenders of Wildlife where she developed and managed the California Desert Program, worked on regional conservation and transportation planning, and covered carnivore conservation issues including the Channel Island fox and Pacific fisher. Ms. Wilkerson holds an MS in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida and a BS in Ecology and Conservation Biology from the University of Washington.

Notes