

Update on WHAS Conservation Issues

By Charlotte Persons

Coal-gasification Plant in Kalama—An article in The Daily News in September announced that the consortium, Energy Northwest, has applied for a permit, and that Cowlitz County PUD plans to get some future electricity from the plant. Please stay alert for future calls for comments.

Copper Mine at Mt. St. Helens—Email 10/17 from Ryan Hunter of Gifford Pinchot Task Force: “You may have heard about the recent court ruling reinstating the 2001 Roadless Rule. In a recent federal court decision, a federal judge found that the Bush administration illegally repealed protections for nearly 60 million acres of pristine national forests lands, thus reinstating the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. The suit brought by four states, including Washington, and twenty conservation groups was a historic victory for America’s roadless forests. Not only that, but it also provides added protection to the Tumwater Inventoried Roadless Area, which overlaps with the lease area boundary for the proposed Mount St. Helens mine. This roadless protection will make it difficult, if not impossible, for the mining company to construct an open pit mine at the site, but there is some legal uncertainty at this time as to how it would apply to an underground mine, so, needless to say, we can’t stop fighting!” Please stand ready to write comments as the public comment period will probably begin in December or January when the next stage of the application process is initiated.

Liquid Natural Gas Receiving Terminal at Bradwood, Oregon—Fifty people marched across the Rainier Bridge to Longview on October 14 to protest this facility. The protest was organized by Landowners and Citizens for Safe Community. A full press report can be read from The Daily News files at tdn.com. Be ready to join future action against this facility.

Ethanol Plant in Longview—The siting of this plant is terrible. It is half a block from houses in a residential area and in the Mint Farm Industrial Park, designated “light” industrial in the Comprehensive Plan and in its original EIS. WHAS wrote comments to the Department of Ecology asking that an EIS be required because of problems with emissions and wetlands mitigation. This request was denied. WHAS board has voted to no longer be involved in this issue because there appear to be no environmental issues that affect habitat. Our mission statement does not include

anything about “environmental justice” issues. However, a small, non-associated group called Neighbors for Livability, is continuing to fight the siting. Contact John and Margaret Green at 360-575-9238 or jgreen2317@aol.com if you would like to help.

Who to Call about Dead Birds

Avian influenza (bird flu) and West Nile virus are attracting a lot of attention recently. Both involve birds and have human health implications.

Avian influenza is a viral illness commonly found in birds. Most strains of the virus don’t seriously affect birds and don’t affect people at all. However, one strain, called Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI H5N1) can kill both birds and people. It can be transmitted directly from birds to humans.

West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne disease that affects a wide variety of animals, including birds and humans. Birds can serve as a reservoir for the disease and often die from it. Most people, after being exposed by an infected mosquito bite, have either no symptoms or very mild flu-like symptoms. However, susceptible people, especially small children and the elderly, can develop devastating or even fatal symptoms.

So who do you call if you find a dead bird(s) that hasn’t died from any obvious cause? Here are the phone numbers. **Don’t handle the bird. If you feel you must, use protection (rubber gloves, etc., sealable plastic bag).**
Washington 800-606-8768
Oregon 866-968-2600

Volunteer Opportunity – Christmas Bird Count Compiler

We need a Christmas Bird Count compiler. This person compiles the information from all three of the Christmas Bird Counts sponsored by WHAS and sends it to the National Audubon Society. Alan Richards will help the new volunteer to learn the job in 2006, with the goal of that person being the compiler in 2007. Please contact Alan Richards at mrm@willapabay.org, 360-484-7119, if you are interested.