

## Board Meeting Summary

Astoria, OR, December 3, 2006

*By Charlotte Persons*

Here are highlights: (1) Ann Musche reported on a \$15,000 grant application to National Audubon Society written jointly by Grays Harbor Audubon Society, Willapa Hills Audubon Society, and the Washington State Departments of Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife. The grant will be to improve habitat for streaked horned larks—habitat also used by snowy plovers. At the end of January we should find out if the application is successful. Volunteers will be needed to remove beachgrass and to mark, monitor, and protect nesting sites. (2) Now that Discovery Coast Audubon Society has been officially recognized, the WHAS Membership Committee will be sending a letter to all WHAS members in Pacific County to explain that they can elect to be members of Discovery Coast, WHAS, or both chapters. The Membership Committee will also use a \$782 grant from Audubon WA to develop flyers, book marks, and other outreach activities. (3) The WHAS board is considering changes to the bylaws. When finalized by the board, these will be sent to all members for a vote—they include a new date in March for the annual meeting. (4) A non-profit group, Neighbors for Livability (NFL), has formed to protect Cowlitz County neighborhoods from damaging commercial and industrial development. The WHAS board approved \$500 in matching funds to NFL to help retain a lawyer to fight against the ethanol plant proposed near homes in Longview. This was after the board decided that the WHAS mission statement does cover this kind of action. (5) A Brainstorming Group was formed to think of new ways to improve WHAS as an organization. Contact Margaret Green if you would like to be a member. The next board meeting will be before Jan. 15.

### Proposed Wetlands Changes Put Habitat at Risk!

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has proposed reissuing and modifying 44 nationwide wetlands permits and adding six new nationwide permits. Additionally, the Corps has edited 27 general conditions. The cumulative effect is a weakening of existing regulations, which could lead to loss of important wetlands and bird habitat. Your comments on these proposed changes are needed today.

The Corps' existing 100-year floodplain general condition has been gutted, leaving only local and state requirements to restrict development in these sensitive areas. The Corps previously independently safeguarded these areas. Under the new condition, if there are no state or local requirements, development would be wholly unrestricted in these floodplains.

Additionally, a new permit would allow for discharges of dredged or fill material resulting from surface coal mining into waters of the United States. The cumulative effect of these permits could result in large-scale destruction of waters and streams in Appalachia.

Many birds on the Audubon Watchlist, such as the Swainson's Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Kentucky Warbler, depend on small streams in the Appalachians for food and nesting. Productive streams are the primary food source for these birds. Additionally, these birds nest within the low vegetation surrounding these streams. Eliminating this food source and habitat would jeopardize these already depleted species.

Please ask the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to protect wetlands and associated habitat. Ask them to reconsider re-issuing and modifying these permits and general conditions. Send in your comments today: [http://www.audubonaction.org/campaign/corps\\_nwp](http://www.audubonaction.org/campaign/corps_nwp) . It's quick and easy and will help protect wetlands!

### Crossing Paths With Wildlife in Washington Towns and Cities

*Sent by Helen Engle*

The fall 2006 edition of "Crossing Paths with Wildlife in Washington Towns and Cities" newsletter is now available for viewing and downloading at:  
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/crospath>.

"Crossing Paths" is a quarterly newsletter for Washington residents enrolled in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary program and others interested in urban/suburban wildlife.

This edition features an update from WDFW Director Jeff Koenings on avian flu monitoring, coyotes as potentially dangerous wildlife, and other information.