

Local Conservation Issues.....

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Proposed Copper Mine at Mt. St. Helens:

WASCCC voted unanimously for a resolution against this project. Ryan Hunter of Gifford Pinchot Task Force led field trips during July and August for conservationists, local city officials, and the staff of federal senators and representatives that showed “on the ground” the threats that mine development poses to local rivers and wildlife habitat. Castle Rock and Kelso city councils voted for a resolution against the mine, and Ryan plans to bring similar resolutions to Vader and other local communities. Public forums in Portland and Olympia at the end of August will broaden the audience aware of the issue. Do your part to oppose the mine by writing comments when the draft Environmental Assessment for exploring the lease area comes out this fall.

Liquid Natural Gas Receiving Terminal at

Bradwood, Oregon: In June WHAS Board approved WHAS joining an application for “intervener status” with the Federal Energy Resources Commission. This step cost no money as we applied with a group of non-profits headed by Columbia Riverkeeper. Having “intervener status” does not commit WHAS to joining any future lawsuits, but failing to get that status would prevent WHAS from doing so. An encouraging development is that Representative Brian Baird sent a letter asking FERC to look at the effects on an entire region when siting LNG terminals.

Proposed Ethanol Plant in Longview: Ethanol is an additive that makes vehicles burn gas more cleanly, but each plant needs to be planned responsibly. WHAS Board approved comments to the Washington Department of Natural Resources asking DNR to require an Environmental Impact Statement. The comments expressed our concerns, especially (1) emissions, in combination with those of the ethanol plant in Clatskanie already under construction, may exceed permitted amounts; (2) no plan exists to reduce greenhouse gases by capturing and selling CO2 emissions (for soda pop or other uses); and (3) the planned site (by 32nd Ave. and Washington Way in the Mint Valley Industrial Farm) will border a residential area, and may disturb residents with its noise and pollution. DNR’s decision will come out this fall.

Initiative 937 “Renewable Energy”

By Charlotte Persons

Thanks to the hard work of many volunteers, this initiative got enough signatures to be on the November ballot in Washington. This initiative will push the public and municipal utility districts to have 15% of all electrical energy come from conservation, solar, wind, and biofuels by the year 2020. Currently only 1% of Washington’s energy comes from these sources. As our population increases, so do energy needs, and not much more can be squeezed from hydropower projects.

If passed, this initiative will prevent the need for so many new fossil-fuel electricity plants that will contribute to global warming and ocean acidification. This is especially critical for us—right now our part of the Lower Columbia region is slated to become the energy center for the Northwest! In Cowlitz, Columbia, and Clatsop counties there are proposals for two gas-fired plants, two coal-gasification plants, and an LNG terminal. While our area is exposed to both more danger and more pollution, the energy generated by these plants will be transmitted to other parts of Washington and Oregon, and even to California.

In a time when we need to be vigilant against so many environmentally unfriendly proposals, it is wonderful to have a pro-active project that will directly affect greenhouse gases. You can help Washington State join the eleven states which have passed similar proposals. Please go to www.yeson937.org or call the Seattle office of Yes! On 937 at (206) 283-3336 to volunteer to make phone calls or to distribute materials to voters.

Do you have favorite original wildlife photos or interesting and/or amusing short stories about birding or other wildlife encounters that you would like to share?

We would be happy to print them in the *Whistler*. Copyrights will be acknowledged. Digital photos are preferred, but we can scan film photos if necessary. Please send them to Al and Diane Clark, *Whistler* editors, Box 102, Cathlamet, WA 98612 or email to alan_c_clark@hotmail.com.