



Friends' Focus

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County Comprehensive Plan amendments rolling out soon

January - February 2007

Upcoming Events

FPC Annual Meeting
January 29, 2006
7:00 to 8:45 p.m.
Tacoma Library
1102 Tacoma Ave S.

Guest Speaker Leslie Ann Rose with Citizens for a Healthy Bay will discuss their recently completed analysis of point source pollution in the Puyallup River Watershed. The presentation will focus on the holders of NPDES or National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits in our community. Although many businesses and wastewater treatment plants are allowed to discharge pollutants legally, some are not complying with permit limits and the cumulative effects have potential risks to the health of the watershed.

A tentative list of possible Comp Plan amendments is available for review at the County Planning and Land Services (PALS). This list is a docket of individuals who have indicated an interest in submitting an application. That docket has been compiled over the past two years as individuals have come in with ideas for amendments.

The County sent application forms out in November to everyone on the docket. The deadline for submitting applications is January 16th.

If past history is any indication, many of

the proposals on the docket will never be submitted, and many applications that do get submitted do not show up on the docket, because the applicants never spoke to PALS about them prior to submitting. The most useful list will be the list of submitted applications, which will be complete after January 16th.

Applications on this list will be the proposals that will be considered by the County Council at their hearings prior to initiating amendments. Hearings will likely occur in February and March.

As in the past, Friends of Pierce County will track the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments and inform members about changes in their area that might be potentially harmful to communities.

If you would like to participate on our Comp Plan Committee, please contact Bud Rehberg at (253) 847-7807. Committee meetings will occur once a month.

**Get involved
in your
community!**

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Thank you for your support!	

White River plan to protect Biodiversity *NatureMapping, 12-06*

Biodiversity planning is a method used to identify land areas that provide for a biologically diverse representation of species. This planning method considers long-term ecosystem health and establishes a goal of maintaining adequate habitat to endure the continued viability of a diversity of species within an ecoregion.

To that end, a bioblitz was held in the lower White River area in June 2006 to verify the species predicted by the Washington Gap

Analysis Project. The project predicted 158 species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians and 123 were observed. Bird predictions were for breeding birds only; we expect to add more to that list when a winter bird count is held. The actual time spent on the Lower White River (LWR) was less than 24 hours so there may be more species than reported. The Washington Native Plant Society plant list for the Nisqually River was used as a reference and

as a result 229 species of plants were identified. Also, the list of insects may increase takes time to identify. As a result of insect identification there may be a list of over 340 species on next predicted list!

A winter bird count or mini bioblitz is being planned for the LWR in late winter.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Tracy Engels at



Vision

Communities will strive to utilize all planning strategies that balance the elements of environment, equity, and economics.

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Friends of Pierce County is a 501 (c) (3) organization.

Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Spotlight on Bunny Searls, *Membership Coordinator*

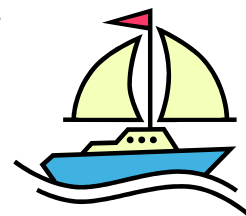
Bunny has been our membership coordinator for four years sending out renewals, and letting people know when they need to pay their dues. She has been a pleasure to work with over the years. We really appreciate all her efforts making sure our membership database is up to date.

Bunny was born in Boston and grew up there and in Long Island and Connecticut. She modeled and acted in New York and California. She was married in Denmark because her husband Hank was going to Russia to check out Russian movie studios; this required

A proclamation from the king waiving the waiting period. She has lived in WA for 18 years and was active in the Peninsula Neighborhood Assoc. for many years. She now assists her author husband, Hank Searls, in researching book topics. Hank has written 19 books and had a few turned into movies.

She sailed to Tahiti and New Zealand for three years.

Reading and sketching are her hobbies. She is involved in FPC because she "admires the work that it does, and feels it is extremely important".



Cross Base Highway update *by Melody Fleckstein*

On November 28th, 2006, Bricklin, Newman & Dold, LLP, on behalf of the Woodbrook Hunt Club, Conservation NW, Tahoma Audubon Society and the American Lake Garden Equestrian Alliance sent a 60-Notice of Intent to File Lawsuit Related to the Cross-Base Highway (State Route 704). The Notice was sent to the Department of the Interior, Federal Highway Administration, WSDOT, US Department of Transportation, Pierce County Planning and Land Services and the Pierce County Executive.

The notice of intent letter raises three sets of issues: violation of the Endangered Species Act, violations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and violations of the federal section 4(f) requirements. The notice states "The ROD, FEIS, and the 4(f) evaluation contained in Chapter 5 of the FEIS for the proposed Cross-Base Highway are inadequate under the ESA, NEPA and 4(f)."

The Crossbase Coalition is very excited to have Bryan Flint once again heading up the fight to stop funding for this destructive and unnecessary road. The current estimate for the crossbase highway from WSDOT is now \$453 million dollars. Almost a half-a-billion dollars for 6 miles of asphalt for an east-west connector to facilitate the urban sprawl of east Pierce County! The coalition will continue to fight funding for the project, along with the Sierra Club which is also fighting new road projects, and Transportation Choices Coalition, which is asking that all roads be fixed before any new roads are built, their battle cry is "Fix It First."

The Crossbase Coalition will be making public comments at the RTID board meeting in Seattle on January 12th chaired by Pierce Co. Councilman Shawn Bunney. Contact Krystal Kyer at Tahoma Audubon Society at (253) 232-9978 for more information.

Director's Report - 2006 wrap up and a look ahead

Looking back on 2006, we had a good year in terms of getting work done.

We secured over \$116,000 for the Crescent Creek habitat restoration. Friends of Pierce County hired a contractor to construct two observation decks and install soft armouring along bank erosion areas. The City of Gig Harbor will finish up the project with funding allotted by the city council to install Low Impact Development Trails, and plant native vegetation along trail and near decks.

We coordinated efforts among several schools and environmental clubs and HarborWildwatch to construct a watershed float, color salmon and other Puget Sound sea life to be carried by children in the Gig Harbor Maritime Gig parade.

We testified against overly dense subdivisions located in areas without adequate infrastructure and amenities.

We requested that geoduck farming operations conduct environmental studies to understand all impacts from these activities.

We asked the County to consider the cumulative effects from numerous docks built on the waterfront.

We helped citizens get informed and strategized to testify on developments in their neighborhoods.

We supported higher school impact fees and asked for the appointment of a task force to really look at the issue of school impact fees, and transportation impact fees; we supported efforts of other organizations opposing the Cross Base highway.

We signed onto FutureWise's appeal to Superior Court trying to save Pierce County farmland.

We met with all County Council members, county staff and the County Executive to ask for support for Sustainable Pierce County and secured \$120,000 over two years for a county-wide sustainable practices inventory.

We served on task forces from Buildable Lands, the Solid Waste Advisory and attended various other meetings during the year.

We attended meetings as a partner in the Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance.

We raised over \$3,000 and had a very fun time at our second auction held at the Snake Lake Nature Center in Tacoma.

In 2007, we will track Comprehensive Plan amendments and follow up on the issues listed above that are still not resolved.

We are also planning to coordinate environmental clubs at three local schools so that students get hands-on training in environmental education by taking them into the field to do sampling and planting of streambanks.

Thank you all so very much.

May you have a wonderful 2007.

We cannot do it without you!



Thank you to our 2006 funders, partners and friends!

Friends of Pierce County offers a huge thank you to the following businesses, organizations, local and federal governments and individuals for donating generous amounts of money and time to the Crescent Creek habitat restoration project:

A huge thank you to the City of Gig Harbor who allotted \$39,000 to this project

in this year's budget. A big, big thanks to Starbucks Coffee gave \$15,000 towards our Crescent Creek Restoration project. A huge thanks to the National Fish and Wild Foundation and Pierce County.

We owe big thanks to these businesses: Artifacts, GeoEngineers, LifeFocus Landscaping, Home Depot, McClendan's

Hardware, Wiltermood Consulting, Cascadia, Ambia, Peninsula Light, IE Group, Terry Nettles, PE,. Our partner organization here in Gig Harbor, Harbor Wildwatch for helping us with educational signs. Thanks to our generous donors: who gave time and money

Merita Trohimovich Pollard and Chuck Meachum.

If we all worked on the assumption that what is accepted as true is really true, there would be little hope of advance. - Orville Wright