



Friends' Focus

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Upcoming Events

Pierce County Livable Communities Fair

Saturday May 17, 2008
Tacoma Dome
Volunteers needed to staff booth

Environmental Clubs

Maritime Gig parade
Walkers are welcome!
Saturday June 7, 2008
Meet at 9:00 a.m. in line

Crescent Creek Park Project Celebration

Saturday June 7, 2008
1:30 p.m.
3303 Vernhardson St
Snacks provided

Hope to see you there!

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| Thank you for your support! | |

Shoreline soft armoring better for environment

Pierce County starts its Shoreline Master Plan update in March. A task force of citizens will negotiate the details of balancing regulations that will affect the county's shorelines. Friends of Pierce County is honored to be part of this task force.

One thing that shoreline homeowners can do to help the environment is to soft armor their property rather than to use hard armoring like bulkheads.

The Washington State Department of Ecology estimates that 1/3 of Puget Sound shorelines are hard armored. The DOE states, "Scientists have found that bulkheads and other hard shoreline structures can destroy or degrade fish and wildlife habitat".

Ecology reveals bulkheads will not prevent the beach itself from eroding. Bulkheads and other hard structures can cause severe damage to nearby beaches. In fact, bulkheads can increase erosion of the beach when waves reflect off the hard structure and erode

nearby beaches. Bulkheads and rock walls can reduce erosion caused by wave action, but they may do little to prevent continued erosion and sliding of the upper bank.

Scott Douglass author of *The Tide Doesn't Go Out Anymore - The Effect of Bulkheads on Urban Bay Shorelines* states, "It has long been understood by the coastal engineering community that building a seawall along a receding shoreline will lead to the loss of the sandy beach in front of the wall".

Mr. Douglass offers, "Property owners along such shorelines that are eroding are usually faced with only two realistic choices. One, allow their property to erode. Or, two, build a bulkhead to protect the upland property. Although a well-built bulkhead will protect the upland areas from erosion by waves, it does not address the sediment deficit that was causing the erosion problem. The sediment deficit that was producing landward recession of the shoreline will be converted to vertical erosion in front of the wall. Areas in front

of the wall, which were inter-tidal or dry beach, will eventually become underwater".

Property owners have alternatives available to them that are more fish friendly, and in some cases more effective in protecting the beach they are trying to save. Every location is different and should be considered in the larger geologic picture. Consulting an expert is recommended before implementing any erosion measures.

Friends of Pierce County will spotlight its finished restoration project and soft armoring at Crescent Creek on June 7, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

Speakers will discuss soft armoring and Low Impact Development. The public is invited to attend. For more information, go to: www.shorestewards.org/resources.html.



Soft armoring with large woody debris at Crescent Creek



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 Joyce Huseby, Secretary

Joyce Huseby is our secretary for this year. Joyce was born in Hayward, California and grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area.

She went to school at St. Joseph's Elementary and South San Francisco High School and attended the College of San Mateo in San Mateo, California where she was awarded an AA degree. She obtained her paralegal certification in 1993 at Green River College in Auburn, Washington.

Joyce has lived in Washington State for 25 years including 8 years in Gig Harbor. She currently lives in Lakewood. Joyce has worked for the Tacoma Public Library System

as an Administrator for 15 years and loves her job.

Joyce is involved with Friends of Pierce County as she says, "To do what I can to ensure that the quality of life and environment in Pierce County is protected and sustained".

Joyce's hobbies include golf, gardening, and spending time with her very special pets, Winston and Maggie Mae.



More tips for a greener you in 2008

As promised in our last newsletter, we are giving some more green tips for you this year:

- **Replace your incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.** If all U.S. households replaced four incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents, we'd save as much energy as is produced by 30 power plants annually.
- **Build a Rain Garden on your property.** These can be shaped to fit your lawn and constructed with soil mixes that allow water to soak rapidly and support healthy plant growth.

Rain Gardens are relatively easy and cheap to install and can reduce flooding from neighboring property, provide habitat for beneficial birds and insects, increase the amount of water that soaks into the ground to recharge local groundwater. The Rain Garden handbook for Western Washington Homeowners gives the how to on constructing Rain Gardens. Go to: www.pierce.wsu.edu for details.



Photo: Curtis Himman WSU

Rain Garden in foreground is attractive addition to your yard.

You can't build your way out of congestion

Recently I heard "You can't build your way out of congestion" from someone that is in a position to know. This statement made me stop and think because with all the road construction projects that I have encountered this week alone, it appears that is exactly what is happening in our communities.

The Pierce County Transportation Plan maps out the County's strategy for meeting transportation needs over the next 20 years. The Growth Management Act requires Pierce County to plan for an adequate transportation network and provide services to meet future needs. This major update will be integrated into the Transportation Element of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.

The Pierce County Transportation Plan has not been updated since 1975. The County is currently taking steps to get community feedback through local interviews, and surveys.

So far, the data shows that everyone agrees that growing congestion is a problem. When it comes down to funding the problems, the agreement ceases.

One such transportation disagreement is the Cross Base Highway. As stated by the Cross Base Coalition,

"With the loss of Proposition 1 - the Roads and Transit ballot measure - the Puget Sound Region is faced with a daunting task of solving regional transportation problems with only the sketchiest of road maps".

"We believe that by looking honestly at what did not work, we can learn important lessons for tomorrow to help us solve our transportation problems".

The Cross-Base Highway Coalition formed to oppose the proposed construction of the Cross-Base Highway (SR 704). The conflict between opponents and proponents of the Cross Base Highway produced a high stakes, negotiated settlement that left everyone with half a loaf and generated additional insurmountable controversy for the Proposition 1 campaign.

The Coalition, which represents Audubon Washington, Conservation Northwest, Environment Washington, Sierra Club (Cascade Chapter), Friends of Pierce County, Defenders of Wildlife, Washington Native Plant Society, American Lake Gardens Equestrian Alliance, Tahoma Audubon Society, and Woodbrook Hunt Club poses the following question and answers:

How do we keep from repeating these mistakes in Pierce County?

We must insist on a thoroughly inclusive decision-making process for development of regional transportation proposals. We must be willing to pay for quality transit and road networks, and do so in a way that is efficient and equitable, considering the environmental impacts. An inclusive process will help us attain a transportation plan residents of the County and region can support and agree to fund.

The updated transportation plan for Pierce County should include these key elements:

- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from transportation
- Compact, pedestrian-friendly communities consistent with growth management goals
- Road value pricing to efficiently move people & goods and fund transportation options
- Wildlife habitat that is maintained and connected

The County plans to compile the public input and present to the County Community Development Committee on March 25. In December of this year, it will go to the County Council.

What can you do to make sure your voice is heard? For starters, take the County survey at:

[www. http://co.pierce.wa.us/pc/abtus/ourorg/pwu/tpp/tpu/index.htm](http://co.pierce.wa.us/pc/abtus/ourorg/pwu/tpp/tpu/index.htm)

Then watch your FPC emails for hearing dates and information.

Adapt or perish, now as ever, is nature's inexorable imperative. H. G. Wells