

## Beaver Program

The beaver program has been busy this year!

Among other activities, we have already implemented five relocations in 2015. Joe is actively engaging Washington state beaver projects, agencies, and stakeholder groups to shape policy of nuisance beaver management and wildlife significance (trapping regulations, and forms of non-lethal management of beaver cases other than trapping such as flood control and tree protections).

A statewide beaver working group is beginning to take shape, as we are up to as many as seven relocation projects statewide. We had our first meeting in April of this year. It is safe to say that Washington is leading the country in implementing the applications to the science behind the holistic benefits of beavers to our forests, streams, and natural resources. This movement has really started to take shape thanks to the legislation of the beaver bill in 2012, reinforced by the media savyness of The Lands Council, which has carried over and fueled other beaver projects worldwide. Now, we are perhaps the most diversified beaver project globally - significantly involved with live trapping, policy work, research, public relations, and implementation of other non-lethal beaver management strategies in nuisance situations.

Our field season officially begins this month, when we will implement the second phase of official beaver ecosystem monitoring pilot study, with funding from the National Forest Foundation. We have taken an innovative and unique approach to analyzing beaver ecosystems for habitat and ecosystem benefits: quantifying wetland vegetation and amphibian communities as indicators of ecosystem status (i.e. the potential for water storage, carbon storage, and valuable habitat features). We hope to make some conclusions on comparing human made wetlands with beaver engineered ecosystems. This will be our second official year of data collections, with a target of 30 sites or more from both seasons. 



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## SAVE THE DATE for our upcoming events:

### Friday Open House

Join us at The Lands Council for a Friday Open House on Friday, June 12th from 5-7 pm on the Saranac Rooftop Deck.

### Membership Renewal

July 1  
Renew your annual membership as a valued member of The Lands Council!

### Paddle the Hanford Reach

August 1 and 2  
Join Mike Petersen, the executive director of The Lands Council, and John Koskellej, noted mountain climber and author, to support the Save Mt. Spokane Coalition on this guided kayak-trip of the Hanford Reach.

### 3rd Annual Mt. Spokane Old Growth Hike

July 18  
Join us for our 3rd Annual Old Growth Hike on Mt. Spokane. We'll hike about 7 miles round trip from 10:00 am to 3:00 or 4:00 pm. Bring your own lunch and water.

### First Friday Open House

October 2  
Join us at The Lands Council for a First Friday Open House on Friday, October 2nd from 5-7 pm at The Lands Council.

### 5th Annual Reforest Spokane Day

October 24  
Help us plant over 1,000 trees with 200 volunteers on Saturday, October 24th from 9 am to noon. 

September 19  
The Spokane River Clean-Up is a positive,

### 13th Annual Spokane River Clean Up!

high-energy gathering that affirms a sense of stewardship and community pride for the Spokane River and the trails and natural areas along its banks.

### Picnic with the Beavers

September 27  
Join The Lands Council for an afternoon of fun, learning activities, and a beaver hike!



# SUMMER 2015

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## Project SUSTAIN



SUSTAIN STUDENTS PLANTING AT SHAW MIDDLE SCHOOL

School's almost out already! The 2014-2015 school year saw many Project SUSTAIN highlights, including tours of Heron Pond Farms, the Young Living Lavender Farm, the Spokane County Water Resource Center, and the Spokane County Fish Hatchery; snowshoeing adventures at Mt. Spokane State Park and Lookout Pass; a BLM-sponsored native plant garden on Blackwell Island in Coeur d'Alene; a fish habitat and riparian restoration project on Benewah Creek with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe; hiking at Liberty Lake County Park and Deep Creek Canyon; and numerous service learning projects involving tree planting, watering, weeding, and herbivory control on Fish Creek/Twin Lakes, Rock Creek, and Hangman Creek.

This school year, with grant support from the Washington Foundation for the Environment (WFFE), we've taken Project SUSTAIN a step further and have taught the Roots of Success environmental literacy and

green job readiness curriculum to students at MEAD Alternative HS. This is the same curriculum that we teach at the Geiger Corrections Facility as part of our Green Sleeves program, but is tailored for high schools and youth programs. Roots of Success connects youth and adults who come from communities heavily-impacted by poverty, unemployment, and environmental problems with environmental and STEM-based (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) careers and postsecondary education. We're working to get this course approved to be offered for credit from the Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS).

Incorporating more Spokane River, watershed, aquifer, and toxics content into Project SUSTAIN has been another focus this year. This spring, we taught a Spokane River in-class and field unit to 45 students in the Shaw Middle School Blended Learning Program. We also worked with five Post Falls HS sophomore honors biology students to create a mobile, interactive, touch-screen educational kiosk on Spokane River toxics. Look for this "pop quiz" game—translated into both Spanish and Russian—in various locations near the Spokane River this summer!

Lastly, our partnership with the University of Idaho's Waters of the West program continues. Our north Idaho schools completed a year-long local water resources unit called "The Confluence Project." Students participated in a water quality and water quantity field trip, a water-related service learning experience, and a culminating youth water summit at the University of Idaho in Moscow in April, at which they presented findings of individual research questions studied during the year and at which they were exposed to life on a college campus.

Many thanks, as always, to our sponsors—Itron, Inc., STCU, Pura Vida High Performance Builders, Avista, and the University of Idaho—and to the wonderful teachers at Lake City HS, Post Falls HS, St. Maries HS, On Track Academy, Eagle Peak School, MEAD Alternative HS, The Community School, and Shaw Middle School for a wonderful school year! ☺

## Coal & Oil Update

The legislature is in Special Session, but the Governor's Oil Transportation Safety Bill passed out of regular session and was signed by him a few weeks ago. Unfortunately, the bill was weakened in the last few days by the oil and rail industries - but it's a good start. This bill gives a public disclosure method of oil transported through our state, makes sure transporters have insurance for oil, and develops a financial response for a worst case scenario spill. The bill extended the barrel tax to railroads but pipelines were left out. The Utilities and Transportation Commission also got more inspectors for rail.

But this bill is just a mere beginning of dealing with the increase of Bakken oil in our state, carried by BNSF. We also have tar or oil sands oil from Alberta carried by UP and in pipelines. We need to be vigilant and highly active - and that is why the newly named Stand Up To Oil campaign was formed several months ago.

With the potential of three oil facilities in Gray's Harbor, two in the Vancouver Area, Targa Sound near Tacoma, and a refinery on the Columbia -plus the five oil refineries we already have - there is a lot of oil coming into this state. Just this year, five trains carrying oil have caught on fire in North America.

Hearings for the proposed Vancouver Energy Facility and the Longview coal exporting facility will be held later this year in Spokane. Gear up for action by reading about coal and oil on our website and taking action on our alerts. Our upcoming newly-designed website will have a page just for coal and oil. Also, please come to the Spokane Coil (coal and oil) Forum on June 23rd at 7:00 pm at the Gonzaga University School of Law Courtroom. Look for an alert in your email! ☺

## Welcome our new summer crew leaders



### Maureen Thompson, Beaver Ecosystem Crew Leader

Maureen Thompson has just returned as our beaver ecosystem crew leader. Maureen received her Bachelors degree from The Evergreen State College in 2009 and is currently working on a Masters in

Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Oklahoma State University. Long time migratory field biologist and on-again, off-again Washington resident, she has experience in many areas of wildlife research and has studied taxa from lichen to leatherbacks. She was drawn to Spokane by its disarming good looks, unique plant assemblages, and the active beaver community. She is looking forward to a summer of sharing her love and knowledge of northwest natural history with the beaver ecosystem monitors. ☺



### Casie Schennum, Site Maintenance Volunteer Crew Leader

Casie Schennum will be leading our riparian reforestation maintenance volunteer crews this year.

She earned her bachelors degree in Environmental studies from Gonzaga. She has worked previously leading forest and trail maintenance crews with the Washington Conservation Corps. Additionally she has worked in a lab for EPA analyzing bioremediation capacity of algae. In her spare time she enjoys being a jazz singer and spending time running in fields with her dog Bebe. ☺

## Thoughts from our Executive Director

by Mike Petersen

The Northwest's dry and sunny spring has been good for hiking and biking, but snowpack's and river flows are far below normal. This could make for an interesting summer and nearby forests could see more wildfire than usual. I have been invited to a meeting of the Senate Resource and Energy Committee and Senator Maria Cantwell, in Washington DC, where a small group will discuss National Forest policy and challenges to restoring our forests. This is a follow-up to a recent meeting in Spokane where timber and conservation groups met to discuss forest management and Wilderness legislation. I am excited that the Lands Council will be part of these national level discussions.

I will be joining John Roskelley on

a special Hanford Reach canoe trip and fundraiser for our efforts to protect Mt. Spokane. Spaces are limited for these special trips with the renowned mountain climber and river runner. Two dates are available - August 1st or 2nd. Please email me at mpetersen@landscouncil.org if you are interested in joining us. A special thanks to the Spokane Mountaineers, who recently joined the growing list of groups and individuals who are challenging the Mt. Spokane ski area expansion in court. If you have never seen this beautiful, but threatened forest, join us for our 3rd Annual Mt. Spokane Old Growth Hike on July 18th.

What is bio-remediation and what does it have to do with the Spokane River? The Spokane River Toxics Task Force conservation groups, dischargers and agencies are working hard to reduce PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls) flowing into the river. PCB's are coming from

old transformers and contaminated soils, but also from new sources that are inadvertently produced in some industrial processes such as paint production.

Last year we built storm gardens in the Shadle Park neighborhood, using biochar to help trap pollutants like PCB's. This year we are exploring the use of a special type of fungi that can actually break down PCB's! To cultivate these special fungi we are setting up a cultivation area inside the Ash Street Workforce Training Station - a newly renovated building that the Fulcrum Institute is renovating. Stay tuned as we grow this fungi, and test this exciting new bio-remediation technique over the coming months.

Mike Petersen | Executive Director

# Friday Open House

Join us at The Lands Council for a Friday Open House on Friday, June 12th from 5-7pm on the Saranac Rooftop Deck.

Come meet the staff and board members that make up The Lands Council and learn more about our programs and work protecting and revitalizing the Inland Northwest forests, waters, and wildlife.

Light drinks and snacks provided.



Sponsored by: Pura Vida High Performance Builders  
Saranac Rooftop Deck - 25 West Main Avenue

