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Executive Director's Report



The last month has been an exciting time to be protecting forests. In early July The Lands Council learned that our litigation on the School Fire salvage project, located in SE Washington on the Umatilla National Forest, had resulted in a win for roadless areas. The appeals court ruled that no logging could take place in unroaded areas that were adjacent to "official" inventoried roadless areas or in unroaded areas that might become Wilderness some day. Jeff Juel, our new Forest Policy Director, reports on the Mission Brush lawsuit elsewhere in this newsletter, and on July 31, Jeff won an

important timber sale appeal that halts the Young Dodge timber sale on the Kootenai National Forest in NW Montana – stopping over a thousand acres of clear cuts.

We continue to make progress on new Wilderness and sustainable forestry on the Colville National Forest as part of the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition. In June, I joined Vaagen Brothers Lumber Co., Conservation Northwest and others at the Spokane Club to explain our proposals to community leaders in Spokane and gain their support for our blueprint. A big reason for our progress on the Colville goes to Tania Ellersick, our former Forest Watch Director, who has moved on to Seattle to pursue a graduate degree in forestry.

The Lands Council is very involved with the efforts of the City of Spokane to conserve water and energy in the face of climate change and rising energy costs. We have a seat on the Spokane Sustainability Task Force as well as the Regional Water Dialogue. As an important step to protect our aquifer and Spokane River, we support the restriction on mid-day lawn watering that Mayor Verner has proposed (and Post Falls has implemented). The Lands Council is part of the Washington Climate Advisory Team and just presented a set of scenarios for the Sustainability Task Force on how Spokane might fare as climate changes in the northwest. You can see those scenarios on our website, www.landsCouncil.org in the climate change section. One prediction is for more hot days in the summer, so please enjoy this year's relatively cool summer!

Remember to purchase your summer raffle tickets and we will see you at our Open House and raffle drawing on September 5th!

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Environmental Health

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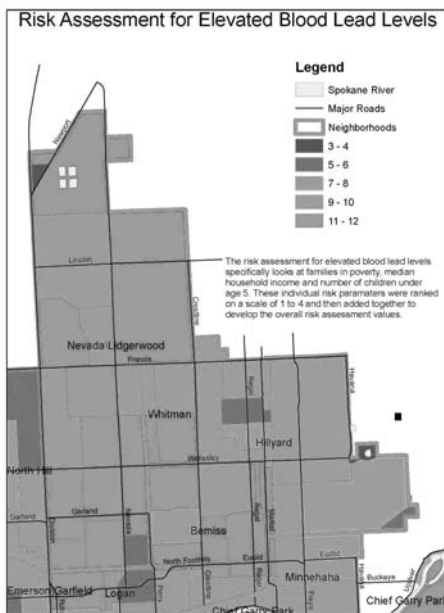
to reduce river contaminants; to use the lens of the Spokane River to frame the larger issue of links between human health and the environment; and to strengthen the diverse collaboratives of people concerned with human health and the environment, particularly across Washington State.

Over 60 people participated in the 3-hour workshop, held at the Community Building. Speakers and panelists included staff from the Washington State Departments of Ecology and Health, Spokane Regional Health District, WSU Intercollegiate College of Nursing, UW School of Public Health, Washington Toxics Coalition, Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, and the Spokane River Forum. Scientists shared what they know about toxics detected in river sediments (PCBs, PBDEs, heavy metals, etc.) and explored how these contaminants impact people's health. Health advocates and local leaders discussed how to protect the river, and how we may safely recreate on the river and use its resources. The workshop also attempted to address how we can become better stewards of the Spokane River and help clean it up, and looked at what other communities in Washington are doing to restore and "take back" their rivers.

For a workshop summary and other useful materials and links, please visit

http://www.landscouncil.org/water/spo_riv_tox_wkshp.asp.

Contact Kat at 209-2403 or khall@landscouncil.org with any questions on our Spokane River toxics outreach.



Lead Risk Assessment map for Nevada-Lidgerwood neighborhood

Keep Me Lead-Free!

Lots to report on the lead front! Our three outgoing and dynamic summer interns—Sean Hackett, Katie Salisbury, and Beth Mort—have been going door-to-door all summer in targeted, at-risk neighborhoods to pass along information on childhood lead poisoning to families. We identified these “high-risk” areas by compiling data on age of housing stock, median household income, families in poverty, and presence of kids 6 and under into GIS software and producing detailed, color-coded maps (see sidebar). Numbered, street-level “block group” maps guide our daily door-to-door outreach. Generally, we spend approximately two weeks covering as many block groups as possible in an assigned neighborhood. We then conclude with a blood lead screening event at the local community center. Thus far, we have covered the Hillyard, Nevada-Lidgerwood, East Central, Chief Garry Park, and West Central neighborhoods. Our goal is to engage in conversation with families; however, if nobody is home, we leave them educational packets. In addition to passing along information on the health effects, exposure pathways, and prevention of childhood lead poisoning, we assist families in accessing home lead abatement resources and free/low cost health care providers, and advertise aforementioned upcoming Lands Council blood lead screenings.

What else is going on? As fall approaches and kids return to school, our environmental health staff expect to continue conducting blood lead screenings at Head Start and Early Head Start facilities and other day care centers throughout the city. We are also hoping to begin a partnership with the Spokane Mental Health Child and Family Services program to conduct blood lead screenings on-site, and are planning a provider outreach campaign on exposure pathways and risks of childhood lead poisoning in Spokane. In conjunction with Community-Minded TV, we are in the process of putting together a 30-minute documentary of the work we are doing together with the City of Spokane, SNAP, and others to reduce childhood lead poisoning. Stay tuned for the DVD release early next year!

Please visit http://www.landscouncil.org/water/reducing_lead.asp for more information and updates.

Screening Update:

Total number of kids screened so far: 106

Number of kids exhibiting elevated blood lead levels: 0

Screenings Held This Quarter: Northeast Community Center (2), East Central Community Center, Hillyard Festival

Upcoming Events: Southeast Day Care Center, CHAS Immunization Clinic (Aug. 20th), West Central Community Center (Aug. 26th, Sept. 4th)

Built Environment

As you may remember, our year-long 2007 environmental health assessment ranked the “built environment” (as it relates to people’s physical health) as one of the top environmental health priorities in the county. We have spent the past several months interviewing folks in Spokane who work on some aspect of the built environment in an attempt to begin to establish our community partnership, which we are able to do thanks to an EPA CARE (Community Action for a Renewed Environment) grant. Our project aims to create a sustainable, collaborative, problem-solving community partnership to address issues relating to the built environment in order to enhance our natural environment and improve people’s physical health in Spokane County.

Initial input from those interviewed suggests that current “built environment” activities in Spokane can be grouped into three broad issue categories: 1) active transportation; 2) “green” building and energy efficiency; and 3) land use. These categories are comparable to the top four areas of concern that we found in our environmental health survey conducted in 2007 (outdoor air, toxins, water, and built environment).

The Lands Council and the Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) held a ½ day “Built Environment Forum” in June. The purpose of this forum was to gather everyone together, discuss (in small groups) each of the three issue categories and brainstorm targets with measurable indicators, and develop community-wide goals, solutions, and action plans. We also discussed health impact assessments (see below) and collaboration with the City’s Sustainability Task Force on built environment issues.

We are currently in the process of putting together this community partnership and devising goals, objectives, and tasks. Together, we hope to encourage implementation of smart growth best practices and help ensure that natural places are protected. We would like to deter urban sprawl, which has a negative effect on our forests, water, and wildlife. We hope to improve public transit and promote active transportation (e.g. walking and biking) in an effort to decrease automobile pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, safeguard air quality, and improve people’s physical health. We would like to see more green building and energy efficient projects take place in Spokane. Green building promotes the recycling and re-use of existing products, which reduces the consumption of natural resources such as

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Water Watch

Upcoming Fall Restoration Projects

With the success of the Earth Day Restoration Projects that The Lands Council has done for the last two years, we are expanding our restoration efforts to include two fall restoration projects this year. Mark your calendars for Saturday September 27th and Saturday October 4th as the days to join with us to help restore native vegetation on the Spokane River and Hangman Creek.

Campion Park Restoration – September 27th – 9 a.m. to Noon.

Our Campion Park restoration planting day will focus on planting more than 100 native trees and shrubs along Hangman Creek near Campion Park.



Lands Council volunteers at River Restoration April 2008

Parking is limited for this project, so we strongly recommend car-pooling to the restoration site.

Sandifur Bridge Restoration – October 4th – 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

The Sandifur Bridge planting project will be in conjunction with the Spokane River Cleanup project.

We invite individuals and groups to come

participate in the planting early in the morning at Sandifur Bridge and then wander over for food and fun while working to clean up trash along the Spokane River and Hangman Creek in High Bridge Park.

We are also excited to announce that we have received a \$5,000 grant from REI that will allow us to continue our restoration planting projects. Next year we look forward to working on both of these sites in the spring and fall and possibly expanding our efforts to other areas of the Spokane River and Hangman Creek that are in need of revegetation. We will also be continuing our native plant transitional nursery on top of the Saranac Building where we nurture bare-root seedlings donated by the Spokane County Conservation District for use during restoration planting projects.

Please contact Brian at, (509)209-2408 or bwalker@landscouncil.org, for more information.

Community Engagement

Mission Brush Update

On July 2, the Ninth District Court of Appeals en banc panel issued an opinion on the Mission Brush timber sale, Idaho Panhandle National Forests. The 11-judge panel reversed the Preliminary Injunction that a 3-judge panel of the Court granted us a year earlier, allowing the sale to go forward while the U.S. District Court of Idaho considers our full case for Summary Judgment. The case continues to be closely watched around the region and beyond, due to controversies regarding the question of how much deference the courts ought to grant the Forest Service's choice of scientific methodologies used to support forest management decisions.

Yet the opinion may have the effect of escalating, rather than resolving, such controversies. The writer of the Court's opinion was Judge Milan Smith—brother of Oregon Senator Gordon Smith (R), a strident timber industry supporter in Congress. Judge Smith himself made a very political statement as a member of the 3-judge panel in this case last year, stating that “the pattern of some courts within our circuit to occasionally hand down over-broad injunctions based upon incorrect constructions of federal law has substantially contributed to the decimation of the logging industry in the Pacific Northwest in the last two decades.” Unsurprisingly, Judge Smith's latest opinion was inconsistent with long-established principles, including Supreme Court opinions expressly rejecting the kind of blind deference he would like to grant the agency—in issuing environmentally questionable timber sales on national forests.



Mission Brush Project in Idaho
Panhandle National Forest

To appreciate the flawed nature of this decision, it is only necessary to consider the language of its central holding: “We hold that the Forest Service must support its conclusions ...with studies that the agency, in its expertise, deems reliable.” In other words, it is Judge Smith's belief that the Forest Service alone—not the Courts, and certainly not the public—may determine the adequacy of the scientific methodologies the agency uses! As stated by our attorney in this case, Tom Woodbury, when you allow a federal agency alone to determine whether it's complying with law, you end up with chaos.

Whereas the timber industry and the Forest Service have made statements to the effect that this decision will open the doors to less agency oversight, some environmental attorneys aren't so sure the case sets any new standard for scientific review by the courts. From a Missoulian article, Earthjustice attorney Tim Preso dismissed logging advocates' description of the ruling as significant, stating that the ruling reaffirms the basic principles of rational, common-sense science that federal laws have long required. Natural Resources Defense Council attorney Niel Lawrence said that the opinion relies on ordinary, ho-hum standards of agency review that are pretty unexceptional. Even Julia Riber, litigation coordinator for the Forest Service, said the ruling gives agencies greater deference, but that their decisions must still be supported by good science and meet federal environmental laws.

Ironically, on a positive note a different part of the opinion might have an even more lasting effect. It refines the Court's interpretation of National Forest Management Act requirements for assuring viability of wildlife species populations on national forests within the Ninth Circuit, ruling that the Forest Service “must both describe the quantity and quality of habitat that is necessary to sustain the viability of the species in question and explain its methodology for measuring this habitat.”

In the Mission Brush case, and for the Idaho Panhandle National Forest as a whole, the Forest Service has been unable or unwilling to do just that, and we look forward to making that point in the U.S. District Court of Idaho as the case proceeds toward final conclusion.

For more information about this case please contact Jeff Juel, Forest Policy Director, at jjuel@landscouncil.org or (509)209-2401.

Staff News and Thank Yous

Welcome Caitlin, our new AmeriCorps member!

Caitlin Jones is the newest face around the halls of The Lands Council. As an AmeriCorps staff member, Caitlin will be responsible for coordinating The Lands Council's



volunteer network as well as a variety of community outreach projects. Growing up in Eastern Washington, Caitlin was introduced to both the magnificence of the outdoors and the imperative need to protect its beauty. While attending Gonzaga University, Caitlin studied Political Science, Spanish and Environmental Studies. She hopes to combine all three areas of study into a career in environmental law. Outside of work, Caitlin enjoys musical endeavors, windsurfing, snowboarding, gardening and outdoor exploration.



Thank you to Beth, Katie, and Sean - our amazing summer interns!

Beth, Katie, and Sean have been the best team of interns that The Lands Council has seen in a long time! Watch for these three in the future! Here is a bit about Beth, Katie, and Sean.

Beth Mort graduated from the Evergreen State College in 2001. There she studied the taxonomy of plants and fungi. She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Eastern Washington University. She serves on the Pedals2People board, a local bicycle non-profit and occasionally gets to do rare plant surveys with Rare Care of Washington. Growing up just outside of Spokane near Tum Tum, WA, she has always had a close connection to the outdoors. Her family and friends are extensive and unendingly generous. Her husband is her truest love. Her interests are too broad and some too strange to list here. It is her life long journey to understand the human animal and how uniquely we interact in our community and environment – both built and natural. There is no greater pursuit than realizing our inexorable connection to the wild – no matter how and at what cost we attempt to distance ourselves.

Katie Salisbury grew up north of Spokane in Nine Mile Falls, Washington. Katie just completed her bachelor's degree in Religious Studies at Willamette University in Oregon and was glad to spend the summer home with friends and family before she heads to Yale Divinity School to seek an MA in religion in the fall. Working with The Lands Council has given her great exposure to nonprofit work and has been a wonderful chance for her to get out of her books and into the streets, through talking with people about their own health and its links to the health of this planet we all share. She really enjoyed staffing Farmer's Markets, attending TLC events, door-to-door lead and river outreach, and getting to know her fellow interns and the TLC staff! Katie considers Spokane her home base, so she looks forward to keeping up to date on The Lands Council's future activities as she pursues her passions (currently comparative religious studies and Christian morality in today's context) wherever they lead her.

Sean Hackett has a degree in Political Science from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. While attending Fort Lewis, Sean's academic focus was on environmental policy and he was active on campus and throughout the community; serving on the board of directors for the Fort Lewis College Environmental Center (a student run organization) and working as an intern for Wild PAC (a political action committee dedicated to electing leaders at the local, state and national levels who have proven to be leaders in protecting public lands.) He will be attending Gonzaga University School of Law in the fall and will pursue a concentration in Environmental and Natural Resources Law. He is new to Spokane and is thrilled to be working at The Lands Council as it has helped him to familiarize himself with some of the top priority environmental issues confronting the Inland Northwest.



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Welcome Karolina!

The Lands Council Development Director Amber Waldref and husband Tom Flanagan welcomed their first child on May 12, 2008—Karolina Elizabeth Waldref Flanagan. Mom, Dad and baby enjoyed a beautiful summer together and are gearing up for getting back to work!



Baby Karolina

Built Environment continued...

Continued from page 4

water and forests. Energy efficiency cuts costs, reduces waste, and promotes resource conservation.

Kat and Nicole attended a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) workshop sponsored by the San Francisco Department of Public Health in July. A health impact assessment is a combination of procedures, methods, tools, and processes by which policies, plans, programs, and projects are evaluated as to their potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population. An HIA should result in a better-informed decision with respect to health. In conjunction with the SRHD, we hope to conduct rapid HIAs to evaluate the health impacts of various policies and projects. These HIAs will hopefully guide our group decision-making and policy recommendations, as well as policy decisions being made by the City Council.

Visit http://www.landsCouncil.org/water/built_environment.asp for more information and updates on our built environment work.

If you have expertise in these areas, or an interest and willingness to contribute, please contact Kat, Environmental Health Program Director, at khall@landsCouncil.org, 209-2403 or Nicole, Environmental Health Program Assistant, at npowell@landsCouncil.org, 209-2404.

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TLC Summer Raffle!!!

Tickets on sale now.

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Prizes

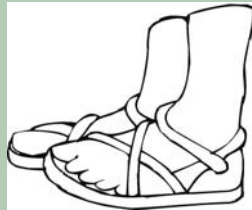
***1st Prize:** Two Adult Season Ski Passes to 49 Degrees North



***2nd Prize:** \$500 shopping spree at Mountain Gear



***3rd Prize:** (1) gift certificate for a pair of Chaco Shoes and (1) gift certificate for a pair of Chaco Flips



To purchase tickets or find out more about our drawing event, call Kristi at 209-2851 or visit our website, www.landscouncil.org!

Upcoming Events for 2008:

* Friday, September 5th – TLC Quarterly Open House & Summer Raffle Drawing

- o Sponsored by Mountain Gear
- o Ira Gardner - guest artist
- o Last chance to get your raffle tickets!

*Saturday, September 27th - Campion Park Restoration

* Tuesday, September 30th – Business Partner Breakfast at Greater Spokane, Inc.

*Saturday, October 4th - Sandifur Bridge Restoration

* Friday, November 7th – TLC Quarterly Open House

- o Jillian Foster - guest artist

Visit www.landscouncil.org/ events for more information about upcoming events!