



Lights and Shadows from the Dishman Hills, May, 1997

VALLEY COUPLET APPROVED

The private automobile has won again! County Commissioners' approval of the Valley Couplet, which will endanger the Dishman Hills Natural Area, is a temporary, expensive, and destructive solution to how to save two to three minutes commuting time for citizens going downtown and back. We feel that the County failed to give the Natural Area's value to the community proper weight; they do not appear to be very good at balancing development with preservation of our Natural Heritage. It will be challenging for us to fight future development south of the Couplet, directly adjacent to the Natural Area. A heavily travelled arterial next to open land will create a strong temptation to rezone this area for commercial development.

AFTER THE ICE STORM

In the aftermath the November 96 Ice Storm, the question arises as to how to deal with fallen trees. The east slope of the Hills has quite a jumble of them. Concern abounds over increased fire hazard, bark beetle infestation, and trees that represent a falling hazard. The Department of Natural Resources has agreed to monitor the Hills closely this summer any appearance of the dreaded bark beetle, and take some remedial action if they appear. City, County, and State personnel have been working to identify and remove dangerous trees on the edge of the Natural Area where they could do additional damage to property. It will be up to you, the users of the Dishman Hills to prevent fire. In the last 40 years, there have been several fires, all human-caused. While there are signs of lightning strikes on several large pines, all the fires in memory have been started by careless use of open flames. Please be careful and encourage others to be careful.

ORGANIZATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving natural areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton at 747-8147 with any questions about the Association. Our monthly meetings are at Opportunity Elementary, South 1109 Willbur, the third Tuesday at 7 PM, **You are cordially invited.**

We thank the following April donors who have given permission to be listed here: Stephen Barratt, Margaret Bloom, Esther Browing, Alan Carlson, James Conaty, Lupito Flores, Clarissa Henderson, Marva Goede, Mr./Mrs. Kenneth Gudgel, Jerome Harrington, Dennis Keen, Helen Lininger, Kathy Moore, Carl Milton, Pope, Connie Porter, Francis/June Potter, Willene Priestly, Linda Queen, Jan Reynolds, Tom Rogers, Marjorie Rozell, Spokane Floral Assoc., St. Maries Garden Club, Kristin Stewart, Teppan Foods Inc., Jane Thrasher, and Jeanne Wilson.

HILLS GREEN IN MAY

The Dishman Hills are green and lush, thanks to over twice normal rainfall in April. While early Spring flowers, except for shooting stars and serviceberry, have set seed, bright balsamroots wave in the breeze. The little white plumes of death camas are increasing and a few ragwort and prairie smoke flowers are appearing.

Water level is high in the ponds, but tadpoles appear scarce. There are a few dragonflies darting over the ponds, and whirligig beetles describing circles on the surface.

Robins seem to be the most common birds, some taking advantage of still remaining puddles on the trails, gathering mud for nest building or simply bathing. A solitary vireo sang in the Enchanted Ravine, and a chirping sparrow, a few chickadees and a nuthatch were spied along the trail to the ponds. A pair of quail probably will nest again.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

This is the busy season for our association and we could use some volunteers to cover all the bases. Here are some places to help:

- 1) Weed pulling - we would like to get together to pull some noxious weeds early in the season. Call Tom Rogers, 926-7949.
- 2) Mailing list check - the mailing list is being worked over and we are doing it by telephone contact. Call Helen Lininger, 535-8586
- 3) Newsletter articles - we always need some interesting articles on any aspect of the Natural Area. Call Mike Hamilton, 747-8147.

We sure could use help in trail patrol, grant writing, membership drives, fund raising, etc; in short, if you want to help just call us.

Please use this form when sending **CONTRIBUTIONS** or **DUES**
All contributions are tax deductible

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO: DHNAA
E. 10820 Maxwell
Spokane, WA 99206

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