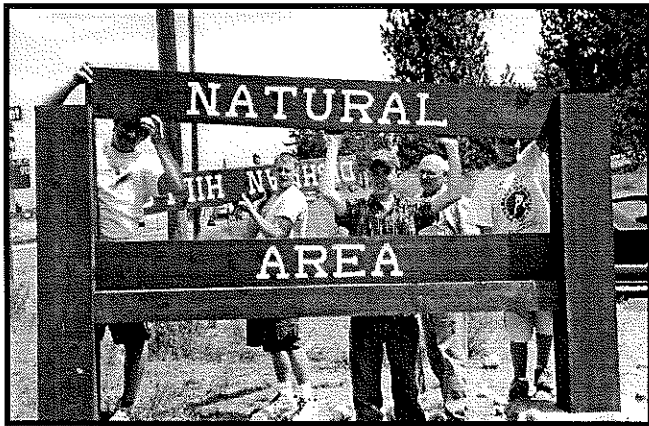


LIGHTS and SHADOWS

from the
Dishman Hills

JULY 2004

SIGN OF THE TIMES



The north entrance of the Natural Area off Sargent Rd. is now marked by a fine, new sign. This was a Eagle Scouts project by Forrest Duba and volunteers with support from the Dr. Arthur Kirk Memorial Fund. The project will be, hopefully, the first step in the improvement of this corner lot. We would like to fence the back side of the lot to protect the Natural Area from 4-wheel drive motor traffic off Appleway Blvd that are entering the area; some big rocks would keep the same traffic from driving across the field. The healthy crop of knapweed (a noxious weed) on the lot should be dealt with, and a little landscaping couldn't hurt. We are once again reminded of the tremendous value of community support. Long-term support from such groups as the Scouts, Spokane Mountaineers, Hobnailers, Rotary clubs, many local garden clubs, Inland NW Land Trust, Audubon Society and many more has made just about every thing we have done possible.

EDGECLIFF

The Edgecliff trail begins at the end of 8th Ave off Park Rd. on the west side of the Natural Area. Edgecliff is the old name for the tuberculosis hospital, now a retirement center, that you overlook to the north as you head up the trail. The path follows a steep, old roadbed up the hill. You will be stepping over rocky ledges of metamorphic rock that contain mica crystals that sparkle in the sunlight. At the "T" intersection go left and continue to climb on the winding road. See if you can find the old house site which is marked by a rock-lined well, but be careful not to fall in. At the next intersection a right will take you to the East and West ponds. These two "pothole" ponds have no inlet or outlet and are dry in the late summer and fall. They are sensitive ecologically, so just look and enjoy without bothering the pond bottoms. There is some poison ivy along the trail here. Notice how different the vegetation is in the two ponds and how different the pond area looks from the rest of the forest. From here one can reverse to return to the trailhead or continue east to connect with the Pond Loop and the Birch Hollow trails to make a interesting and scenic loop back to 8th Ave. This choice also provides some wonderful vistas, first of the Spokane Valley to the northeast, then later of Spokane to the west. A slight detour up Birch Hollow will reward a hiker with a trek through a green tunnel of vegetation up a little canyon that was carved by glacial flood waters thousands of years ago. Either way, the hike can take about an hour with extra time depending on your stops and distractions.

ISSUES

The Dishman Hills once again steps up to participate in current events. With the retirement of John Roskelley and Kate McCaslin from County politics, we, with a number of other conservation groups, thought it would be a good idea to invite the candidates running for the commissioner positions in November for a hike and chat in the Hills. We hope all will participate and share their views on issues important to us such as public recreation space, conservation of natural areas, natural scenery, and the Conservation Futures program. This will happen either in late August or in September, and the Lights and Shadows will be there to report back on the details. Any ideas about questions to ask, send them to the editor at the Corporate address.

The Spokane area appears to be going through some painful times of growth while trying to implement new growth management plans, and accommodate developments in established communities. The Association is currently working with a number of community groups that are concerned with proposed subdivisions to their neighborhoods. Our experience with the issues surrounding both public and private development can be shared to support open space, natural scenery, and neighborhoods that embrace their natural setting.

ORGANIZATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have any questions. We meet every other month on the third Tuesday at Opportunity Elementary School, S. 1109 Wilbur, in the teacher's lounge, 7pm. Since we are on our summer break the next meeting will be September 21.

The following are our June donors that have consented to be listed: Addie Haynes, Merry & Bill Herron, Glen Kivett, Maxime F. Leszczykowski, Bettie Maron, Gloria & Don Nicol, Shirley Skinner, Jeanne Wilson, and two Anonymous donors. Thank you summer supporters!

Destroying species is like tearing pages out of an unread book, written in a language humans hardly know how to read, about the place where they live.

Rolston Holmes - American Philosopher

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