


LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

F A B I M

THE DISHMAN HILLS



November 1978

DISHMAN HILLS DEVELOPMENT APPEAL GOES BEFORE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS NOVEMBER 27

DO WILD THINGS HAVE ANY RIGHTS?

Should some natural communities be preserved? In the case of the Dishman Hills-Tower Mountain Area "Yes" is the answer of many individuals, several non-profit organizations and branches of county, state and federal government.

On the other hand, a few individuals believe the best use of the area is for development, primarily for rather expensive residences. Understandably, people would like to live in such a beautiful area, enjoying relative seclusion and pleasant views, so they build. Others build for the profit to be made. In either case, the natural community is disrupted, "loved to death" in the first instance, "wring to death" in the second.

Through all this conflict, the things most affected, the first, the wild inhabitants, have never been asked their opinion. Should they have even one vote? Have they any rights? Do we humans have any obligation toward them? A strong trend in present-day thinking says we do.

In the Dishman Hills-Tower Mountain wild community are several plants rare to the state and even the Northwest. Their destruction alone would likely not imperil the rest of the system, except that much more of the wild community would be destroyed along with them. As plants are destroyed, animals that depend upon them also disappear. Reducing the diversity of plant and animal life makes the whole life community less stable, more vulnerable. Manmade communities have carried this to extremes. Notoriously teetering, they require great inputs of energy to maintain, energy to keep out unwanted (Please turn to page 2)

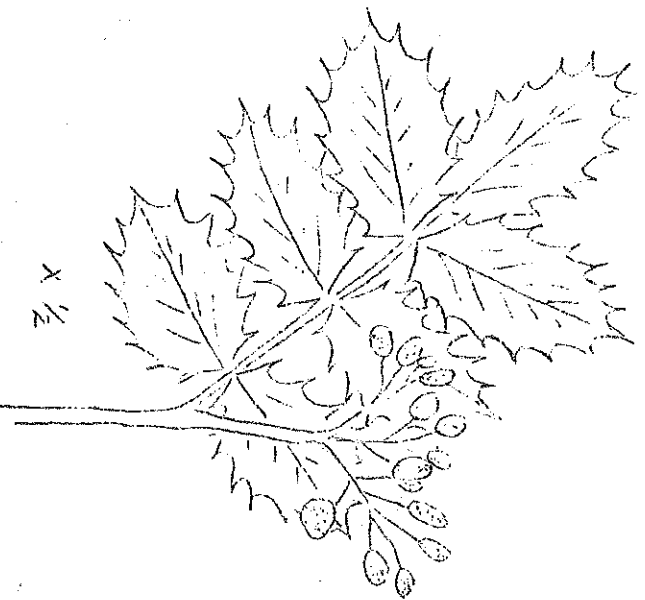
Peter Rayner's appeal to Spokane County Board of Commissioners regarding "The Meadows" development adjoining the Dishman Hills will be heard Monday, November 27 at 1:30 p.m. at the Court House. Rayner's project at the south end of Park Road was rejected, with all "No" votes and one abstention, by the County Planning Commission this spring.

Opposition to the development is being led by our association, with tremendous support by residents of the area. Thus far well over 1000 signatures against the project are in hand, thanks to you Dishman Hills supporters and many more have been gathered by people living in the area adjacent to the area.

Our association and area residents are concerned over the effect that the placing of some 134 rather large housing units in a quite dense pattern will have upon the wildlife community of the Dishman Hills-Tower Mountain area. In addition The Nature Conservancy, Spokane Audubon Society, Spokane Chapter of Washington Environmental Council, Washington Pativie Plant Society, Spokane County Parks and Recreation Department and Washington State Department of Game all are interested in seeing the entire area preserved. Information is being assembled for presenting the area for protection under the Unique Wildlife Ecosystem program being conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Other important concerns are for the resulting traffic congestion on a dead-end road, high noise and air pollution levels, danger to the water in existing wells and to the aquifer and poor access for fire protection.

Attorney Frank Conklin will present arguments against the development as will representatives of DHNA and the citizens of the area. The latter raised the funds for attorney fees.



The holly-like leaves of Oregon grape, often tinged with red, contrast happily with Winter's snows in not-too-dry openings in the woods in the foothills around Spokane. In Spring its yellow flowers brighten forest paths and later produce clumps of frosted-blue fruit, which can be made into jelly. We have two species, a low-growing one, Berberis repens, and a taller one, B. aquifolium. The latter is used as a cultivated ornamental, but the shorter species makes an attractive ground cover. Both are completely hardy and require little or no watering or care.

Do wild things have rights? (cont.)

Kind of plants and animals, energy to plant, water and fertilize the desired but usually poorly adapted species. Such are lawns, playing fields, croplands and zoos. Some of these, we believe, are necessary, expensive though they be. The questions comes down to how many such artificial communities are necessary, desirable and affordable.

The bulldozer of development forces the soaring red-tailed hawk, nesting atop the tall pine, from its hunting ground and tempts the coyote, deprived of its mouse-supplying meadow, to raid the chicken yard. Wary deer are pushed from their feeding and hiding places. And neighborhood children--and adults--find it harder to reach open places to roam, and more opportune to clog the streets or watch passive commercialized entertainment.

Families--and developers--who profess to love the wild places, would best show their regard for them, not by living in them, destroying their wildness, but by guarding them zealously, visiting them carefully, treading softly upon the earth. Then these wild places could help us to be, as a western poet wrote, "as free as the hawk that rides the breeze, as true as the hoss between my knees."

DISHMAN HILLS ENTRUSIASTPS -----

DISHMAN HILLS NATURAL AREA ASSN., INC.
E. 10820 Maxwell Ave., Spokane, WA 99206
Phone (509) 926-7949

A non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of some of the natural environment of the Spokane area for people to enjoy and learn from.

Helen E. Lininger, president
Thomas H. Rogers, vice-pres. & editor
Bernice Ammons, secretary
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Monthly meetings are at Kiwanis Camp Caro, S. 625 Sargent Road, Dishman. Board meeting is at 7 p.m. and general meeting is at 8 p.m. the fourth Wednesday. You are cordially invited to attend both.

Bouquets to Gravel Grubbers (cont.)

conservation chairman for the club, and Florence Lowell, president, presented the gift under the pines at Camp Caro. This generous donation is really twice as good as it looks, for it will be matched by the anonymous donor who has agreed to do this up to a total of \$5000 given by December 31.

WE NEED YOUR PRESENCE AT THE HEARING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27 at 1:30 pm. at the court house. We would like to have you speak up but you need't say more than