



DISHMAN HILLS ? AREA

What exactly is the Dishman Hills Natural Area? It's an urban forest, a NRCA, an Ice Age artifact, a partnership management area, a community initiative, a State Priority and Species Habitat, a native plant refuge, a Washington Natural Heritage Site, and much more.

With all these designations, one wonders how all these titles fit into about 520 acres. To start with, just gazing at the Dishman Hills one sees that it is a forest, and one that's being surrounded by urban growth. Less obvious are the historic roots of the topography of the lower Dishman Ridge. Special landforms were formed by massive floods during the last Ice Age that resulted when large glacial lakes in Montana rapidly drained and passed this way on their way to the Pacific Ocean. The scoured landforms here are listed as Glacial Flood artifacts for the proposed Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail supported by the National Park Service.

Entering the forest, hikers have no problem understanding why this is a special place for native plants, just look down. The forest floor is carpeted by dozens of different looking plants that comprise a diverse ecology that has labeled this forest as an important native plant refuge. The outstanding biodiversity here has captured the attention of the Washington Natural Heritage Program, resulting in the State joining us with land purchases and management support. In addition, the presence of rare and threatened plants and animals has triggered special protection for the Natural Area from the States' Priority Habitat and Species Program.



Quite invisible to the visitor is the unique management partnership that has been assembled to take care of this place. The three land owners, DHNAA, Spokane County, and the State, have produced one joint management document for the rules and guidelines for stewardship of the entire Natural Area. We also have agreed to manage the Area as part of the Natural Resource Conservation Area (NRCA) Program. This designation places the Dishman Hills into a statewide system of 83 conservation areas that are committed to preserve our native ecosystems while providing public access for education, scientific research, and recreation.

At the center of all these hats our Natural Area wears is a deep, long lasting commitment of our community to save the Dishman Hills in its natural state for future generations to enjoy as we do today. Volunteers and donations have built this Natural Area one piece at a time over four decades, and the job is not yet done. We are endeavoring to add several more titles to the collection, including: animal migration corridor, a path to Tower Mountain, and the connector to conservation areas to the south. Maybe the most important of these titles for the Natural Area is that it's just a wonderful place to take a walk on a warm summer day. To reconnect with nature this close to home is an irreplaceable asset.

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

Under the category of wonders of modern times, pocket size electronics are becoming part of our outdoor experiences in the Natural Area. Many now use GPS units that spot satellites to tell us fairly accurately where to go or where we have been. New applications are being demonstrated in "apps" (application) such as Leaf Snap. This app will allow you to snap a picture of a leaf on your smart phone and then receive a identification of the species of that tree back on the phone. While their database is mostly eastern U.S. trees, give them a few years, and we will probably be able to ID all the plants in the Natural Area in between phone calls.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have questions. Our board meets every month on the third Tuesday. Our next meeting is August 16th, 7 pm. We meet at the Moran Prairie Spokane County Library, 6004 South Regal St. Visitors are always welcomed.

The following are our Junedonors that have consented to be listed: Joyce Alonso, Chris Baldini, Jon Barstad, Claire Carter, Diane Casey, Nancy Cashion, Joseph Collins, Celestra Frost, George Girvin, Michael & Claudia Hamilton, Larry Hatch, Harry Hendron, Bea Lackaff, Cynthia Langlois, Dave Lill, Margaret Mortz, Bob Ordner, William Peterson, Robin Redman, Shirley Schmidt, Jan Strobeck, Norma Trefry, Lawrence Thieman, Babetta Velategui, Karl & Kris & Peter Wolbach, and 4 anonymous donors. Thanks for getting dues in on time.

I think that I shall never see
 a billboard lovely as a tree
 Perhaps, unless the billboard falls
 I shall never see the tree at all.
 Ogden Nash, " Song of the Open Road," 1933

YES, I want to help protect our natural areas in the Spokane Region

Enclosed is my tax-deductable donation of :

- \$ 15* \$ 25 \$ 50 \$ 100 Other _____ * annual dues, due by June 30

Gift is a Memorial for: _____

Name: _____ Acc. No. (see address) _____ Please don't list me as a donor

Please return this form along with your check payable to DHNAA

I would like to receive my Lights & Shadows online My email address is: _____