Partial MINUTES MONTHLY MEETING GREAT OLD BROADS FOR WILDERNESS

CASCADE VOLCANOES BROADBAND FEBRUARY 21, 2023

Mc Mennamin’s Kennedy School

In attendance were: Linda B. Linda S., Laurie, Barb F, Barb M, Darlene, Cheri, Carolyn, Trish, June, Bondi, Roseanne, Joanna, Ellen L, and our guest speakers Kris Sclafani and Leah Schrodt

Laurie led us in a meaningful land acknowledgment, and welcomed all. We introduced ourselves and where we live.

GUEST SPEAKERS: We had the pleasure of hearing a very thorough and stimulating presentation by US Fish and Wildlife Lead endangered species biologist Kris Sclafani and colleague Leah Schrodt, Interpretive Lead, Conservation Communication Specialist and Diversity Change Agent. Kris’ focus in on the streaked horned lark, listed as a threatened bird under the endangered species act, which turns 50 years old this year.

Leah has been doing this work for 26 years. She explained the difference between state vs federal fish and Wildlife departments. They are both under the U.S. Department of Interior. Of interest is that money from the purchase of fishing and hunting licenses from U.S Washington State Fish and Wildlife goes towards conservation efforts.

Leah has worked with zoos as a which can be a way to engage a diversity of people that might not have easy access to the outdoors and wilderness. It’s a start…even moving into the issues of climate change.

The focus is on strategic communication, for example re-introducing the sea otter, which has been absent in our region for many years.

Refuges are preventive with focus on migratory birds. Their staff work with refuge managers.

Kris has been working in this field for 15 years, including USACE, the last 4 years with USFW. She discussed her work in protecting streaked horned lark, which is a skylark and songbird that nests in prairies. This bird can be sited in manmade or “manufactured” sites like airports (no tall grass) or dredges. Also seen in the Willamette Valley refuge. Kris commented that they have had some excellent partners in their efforts, and McCord base/JBLM assisting to encourage the survival of the bird. Kris reports they have also worked with Greenbelt Land Trust and CREST.

Kris noted that keystone species are critical in saving entire ecosystems, and protecting these species is high priority.

Under Biden, there’s been an overhaul of regulations.

Lastly, Leah gave us an example of how she educates and engages folks using cards with photos and information on what we can do around our homes and in the community to mitigate climate change. We can use our own lived space experience.

We discussed possibility of our Broads teaming up with Leah to be trained on using her educational cards when we table for instance. Laurie to follow up next week.

Darlene noted that she had created a letter to the Department of Forestry and sent it off. The letter recommends saving more old growth and leaving salvage trees while limiting road building in the region.

Laurie provided updates on the Chehalis Dam project. The Local Actions NonDam Alternative (LAND) mission is to develop a comprehensive assessment for a non-dam alternative to flooding in the Chehalis floodplain. The LAND committee has researched the non-dam solutions and found these actions to be comparable with the Dam alternatives in flood retention benefits. The LAND recommendations include both structural and nonstructural strategies costing $1.9 B. The structural actions include waterflow diversions, expanded levees, as well as plans to relocate, protect, and raise structures. The nonstructural actions include creating natural floodplain management to restore fiver flows and increase flood retention. 700ft-wide diversion structures and over 20 miles of new levees and expanded levees are also included in the structural components. The Chehalis Board has the final decision and they will purport their recommendations in April, 2023.

Laurie updated the group about the proposal to develop a Scottish style golf course at the Westport State Park. A public meeting was held in December 2022, and public comments are being sought <https://www.parks.wa.gov/1161/Westport-Light-Sate-Park-Planning>. Comments are due March 6, 2023.

Barb noted that March 10 is the Tree Planting at Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge. Register with Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership for this free, fun event.

The Public Interest Environmental Law Conference will be held March 2 – 5 in Eugene. Sign up for this free event: <http://pielc.org/pielc-cle-registration/>

Barb Micky is hosting a book group “Birdology” at her home on March 30 at 4 – 6 pm at her home in Portland. Please email her at earthcarebam@gmail.com if you are interested.

Author Craig Romano will be the speaker at Heathen Brewery on Wednesday, March 8 at 6pm Vancouver. Cost is $10. Register <https://secure.mshinstitute.org/np/clients/mshinstitute/eventRegistration.jsp?forwardedFromSecureDomain=1&event=3129> and help support our partners at Mt. St. Helens Institute.

Barb shared an opportunity to view the film “TeAta” and potluck at the home of Linda Buckley on Friday, March 31 at 4:30pm. The event is currently full but the waitlist is open.

Roseanne discussed the annual campout to be held at Camp Morehaven August 10 – 13, 2023. A bike ride, hikes, sing along, and concert are in the planning stages. Stay tuned!

The regional Dry Falls Broadwalk is currently planned for April 13 – 17 at Dry Falls, Wa. The event is currently full but the waitlist is open.

Two National Broadwalks are being offered and registration opens Monday, Feb. 27.

<https://www.greatoldbroads.org/event/honor-avi-kwa-ame-broadwalk/>

<https://www.greatoldbroads.org/event/molok-luyuk-broadwalk/>

Submitted by Linda Buckley and Laurie Kerr

2/25/23