Washington's Wild Legacy

GUEST VOICES: Wild Wisdom by Amy Gulick

Washington Wild Coordinates Letter on Buckhorn Mountain Mining Proposal

WILD PROFILE: Schilling Cider
My earliest memories of the outdoors were of the beach and the ocean. The size of the Pacific Ocean and its power were incredible sights as a child. Now as an adult, I have grown to love the amazing mountain peaks and old-growth forests, but I still find myself drawn back to the coast or an alpine lake.

These memories are deeply rooted in the depths of my mind and speak to the legacy that Washington State and organizations like Washington Wild have for our wild places and the impact they have on multiple generations of adventurers. Having a legacy of conservation means we are committed to the responsibility to protect and restore our most precious wild places. Seattle may be forever changing, but we can still preserve the wild lands and waters that make our state so special.

I feel people should support Washington Wild because of the unique and impactful work that we do. The act of coalition building brings together and honors the often-diverse stakeholders, giving them a voice, and thereby cementing their support. This kind of support is long-lasting, as everyone feels like their voices are heard. This also allows others in Washington to see themselves in those coalitions and see themselves as a stakeholder in protecting our wild lands. Everyone wins.

Jessica McCarthy
Washington Wild Board Member

Support our end of the year campaign with a gift of stock!
Contact Evan@wawild.org for details.
Our wild rivers and the salmon and steelhead I grew up with are a critical part of Washington’s Wild Legacy that I am committed to protecting. [Their] added capacity and expertise in coalition building, grassroots organizing, and media outreach was a game changer.”

Kim McDonald, Founder of Fish Not Gold

STATE PROTECTIONS
Washington Wild also works to protect wild places on state lands including our impressive state park system with more than 150 parks around the state and more than 125,873 acres conserved in 39 Natural Resource Conservation Areas managed by Washington Department of Natural Resources. In 2019, after a meeting with the Snoqualmie Tribe, Washington Wild got engaged in a coalition working to ban the harmful practice of motorized suction dredge mining on Washington rivers and streams because of its impact on salmon habitat and recovery. That is when we were introduced to Kim McDonald, Founder of Fish Not Gold and a leading advocate for state protections for salmon habitat.

Ten years earlier, she witnessed a man using a gas-powered suction dredge to uproot gravel and sediment on the Peshastin Creek near Blewett Pass. It looked like a steelhead’s worst nightmare. After doing some research, she could not believe that motorized suction dredge mining was allowed to take place with almost no oversight in critical habitat for endangered anadromous fish.

Washington Wild complemented the campaign to get state legislation passed to protect salmon habitat by expanding the roster of coalition supporters to more than 160 conservation, recreation, and wildlife groups as well as local businesses, elected officials, faith leaders, and Tribes. In March of 2020, Governor Jay Inslee signed into law a ban of motorized suction dredge mining on Washington rivers and streams designated as critical salmon habitat.

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Willie Frank III, Nisqually Tribal Chairman and board member of This Is Indian Country

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Over the past few years we led an international coalition that resulted in an agreement in 2022 that ended mining and logging threats in the headwaters of the Skagit River, located in British Columbia, Canada. The issue has been the potential impacts to downstream values like salmon, clean water and a healthy Puget Sound. Also at risk were impacts to tribal treaty rights, orca recovery and other cultural traditions important to Indigenous peoples. The coalition of more than 300 stakeholders worked alongside tribes and First Nations to end the logging and mining threat and gain a commitment to permanently protect the Skagit headwaters moving forward.

Through a grant from BECU, Washington Wild is partnering with This Is Indian Country, a nonprofit organization co-founded by Billy Frank Jr. to inform and educate students, researchers, decision makers and the public at-large about tribal rights, history and values. Through this collaborative effort, more than a dozen interviews with tribal elders and other tribal leaders will be produced and made available to the media and online. These oral histories will address tribal traditional knowledge that relate to impacts from climate change and other conservation challenges, as well as solutions. They will hopefully inspire additional partnerships to keep wild places, tribal treaty rights and tribal lifeways moving forward.

Washington Wild has been making a concerted effort to listen and understand how Tribes are working to protect some of the same values we care about. A key element is recognizing the Tribes’ status as sovereign nations, understanding the importance of their lifeways and looking at conservation through the lens of treaty rights for hunting, fishing and gathering. Tribal treaty rights are the law of the land as defined in the United States Constitution and Tribes strive to protect them for the benefit of future generations.

To that end, Washington Wild’s board passed a resolution in 2019 to support tribal treaty rights and lifeways after consulting with leaders from the Tribes. This document helps guide us as we work to achieve our mission and appropriately engage with Tribes on conservation issues.

Four years later we worked alongside U.S. Senator Daniel J. Evans to pass the Washington State Parks Wilderness Act of 1988 which protected most of Rainier, Olympic and North Cascades National Parks as Wilderness areas. Decades later we led local coalitions to advocate for and designate the Wild Sky Wilderness near Stevens Pass in 2008 and pass the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Additions and Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt Wild and Scenic Rivers in 2014.

When we are not leading efforts to protect Wilderness areas and Wild and Scenic Rivers, we are following others’ lead and doing our part as a coalition partner. In 2014, following a threat to develop a new mine in the Methow Valley, Washington Wild joined the Methow Headwaters Coalition to help oppose mine development and seek a 370,000-acre ban on mining in the beautiful Methow Valley. A local leader in this incredible coalition effort was the Methow Valley Citizens Council which has been working to raise a strong community voice for the protection of the Methow Valley’s natural environment and rural character for 45 years.

“The Methow Valley is truly one of the best examples of Washington’s wild legacy and so are the mix of people who call this incredible place home,” said Jasmine Minbashian, Executive Director of Methow Valley Citizens Council. “The Methow Headwaters Campaign was a great example of how Washingtonians can come together to protect our wild places.”

“I grew up with the salmon and steelhead I grew up with are a critical part of Washington’s Wild Legacy that I am committed to protecting.” said Kim McDonald, Founder of Fish Not Gold.

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**WASHINGTON’S WILD LEGACY**

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**WHAT'S NEXT?**

Washington Wild is playing a leadership role in supporting pending legislation now in Congress to protect 126,000 acres of new Wilderness on Olympic National Forest and more than 460 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Olympic Peninsula as part of the Wild Olympics. When this legislation becomes law it will move Washington past Arizona to rank 4th of states with the most Wilderness.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Washington State ranks 5th of all 50 states with 31 federally designated wilderness areas comprising 4,485,137 acres.

**Seattle, Washington**

Seattle, Washington ranks 1st among the 25 most populous cities in America with 3.6 million acres or protected Wilderness within a 100-mile radius.

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<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>WILDERNESS</th>
<th>ACRES</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Seattle, WA</td>
<td>3,600,380 acres</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Phoenix, AZ</td>
<td>1,390,263 acres</td>
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<td>3. Denver, CO</td>
<td>1,322,096 acres</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. San Diego, CA</td>
<td>958,803 acres</td>
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The Three Stooges. Only we’re not laughing. The shadow shapes shifts into a black bear, who swings her head from side to side and stands her ground. We stand still. The only sounds are our three racing hearts. And then faint scraping. The sow looks up as two fuzzy cubs claw their way down the tree looking wide-eyed over her back. The cub’s nose with mom, who escorts her trio away from ours. We notice a dark shadow beneath an alpine hemlock. But when we emerge near the tree line and spy a dozen Roosevelt elk bedded down in the forest. Their brown hides and branched antlers meld with the surrounding trees. Farther down the trail I notice a dark shadow beneath an alpine hemlock. But how can there be a shadow in fog? The shadow moves, I halt, and my two pals rear end me, resembling a scene from The Three Stooges. Only we’re not laughing. The shadow shapes shifts into a black bear, who swings her head from side to side and stands her ground. We stand still. The only sounds are our three racing hearts. And then faint scraping. The sow looks up as two fuzzy cubs claw their way down the tree looking wide-eyed over their shoulders at us. On the ground the cubs touch noses with mom, who escorts her trio away from ours.

It’s been more than three decades since I hiked that ridge in the Daniel J. Evans Wilderness in Olympic National Park, and yet that memory is as fresh as a spring rain. It was my first backpacking trip in my new home state where I became smitten with wild country. Every year since I’ve explored the backcountry in many parts of Washington as well as Alaska. My early trips followed a similar pattern—5 days or so, enjoying every moment, and craving pizza, ice cream, and a hot shower toward the end. I learned that everything I really needed in life I could carry on my back. Over the years, my trips increased in duration and I stopped craving creature comforts. I learned to ditch the clock and live by the rhythms of rivers, the wind, and my body. I traveled when the weather was good. I ate when I was hungry and slept when I was tired. Each time I returned home, I noticed a shift in my outlook on life.

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Over 20 years ago, Barbara Stein and her then partner, now wife, took a trip to go camping on the Olympic Peninsula. As they drove past all the clear cuts visible from route 101, she was appalled. “At least they weren’t hiding what was happening, but I wanted to find a way to channel my outrage and pain. I understood that clearcutting did not just represent a loss of trees (and create a visual blight on the landscape) but that with it comes erosion, pollution of waterways, loss of wildlife habitat, and a multiplicity of other negative impacts that arise from environmental destruction—to say nothing of the loss of enjoyment and feeling of rejuvenation that results from being in unperturbed wild places.”

As luck would have it, not too long after she returned home, a door to door canvasser introduced her to Washington Wild, which was known as Washington Wilderness Coalition at the time. As she continued to learn more about our organization, she felt our message to be compelling and continues to feel the same way today. “While its name may have changed, its work has remained the same! Excited to partner again with Washington Wild.”

Over 20 years, Barbara Stein has continued to partner with Washington Wild, along with an in-person party at their cider house in Fremont, the “Keep it Wild” campaign was a huge success and the results were amazing. After running the campaign through the month of June, Schilling Cider presented Washington Wild with a $10,000 check from none other than the mighty Pacific Northwest Sasquatch!

“One of our passionate sales reps came to our marketing team wanting to give a portion of Schilling sales to Washington Wild. We took her suggestion to heart and went straight to work,” says Creative Director Amanda Pearman. “We at Schilling believe in pristine outdoor spaces and wilderness. We believe in leaving no trace. We believe that our fun shouldn’t come at the expense of our wild friends. We believe in being stewards of sustainability and using our platform to give back to causes that need our support. We want others around the PNW to rally behind this "Keep it Wild" cry. Supporting a cause that we care about in places that we care about. Giving people an opportunity to give back in an incremental way. Educating people about how they can get involved in protecting the PNW’s outdoor and wild spaces through Washington Wild.”

“With such impressive results and shared love for our wild places, it sounds like the ‘Keep it Wild’ campaign is here to stay,” said Colin Schilling, Schilling Cofounder and CEO. “I really want to give a hats off to our marketing team for bringing the ‘Keep It Wild’ campaign to life! Excited to partner again with Washington Wild next year!”

### Conservation Updates

#### WILD OLYMPICS BILL PASSES HOUSE

On July 14, Washington Wild cheered a major bi-partisan vote in congress, which helped advance public lands legislation, including the Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The bill, which is sponsored by Senator Patty Murray and Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA-06), passed with a number of other public land bills as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). If it passes in the senate later this year, the legislation would permanently protect more than 126,500 acres of Olympic National Forest as wilderness and a total of 464 river miles – as Wild and Scenic Rivers.

#### WASHINGTON WILD COORDINATES LETTER ON BUCKHORN MOUNTAIN MINING PROPOSAL

On September 5, Washington Wild sent a letter to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) undersigned by 17 conservation and recreation organizations outlining concerns for a proposed exploratory drilling at six sites on federal land near Buckhorn Mountain in Okanogan County. The letter called for an environmental assessment because the scoping letter fails to consider the cumulative impacts of past efforts to exploratory drill or lease in areas adjacent to Buckhorn mine.

#### WILD NIGHT OUT 2022 raises more than $75,000!

After going virtual for the past 2 years, Wild Night Out was back in person and a huge win for our organization. The event raised over $75,000! It was wonderful to see so many of our supporters in person who care passionately about protecting our wild places. Congratulations to our award winners, Amy Gulick, Bill and Sue Cross and The Watershed Pub and Kitchen!
Fundraising goal: $90,000

HELP US REACH OUR END OF YEAR FUNDRAISING GOAL BY DONATING TODAY!  
Donate now at wawild.org/donate