SAVE THE DATE

WILD NIGHT OUT 2019

OCTOBER 10TH, 2019
AXIS PIONEER SQUARE
308 1ST AVE S, SEATTLE, WA 98104
5:00 - 9:00 PM

JOIN WASHINGTON WILD AND THE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY AS WE COME TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF PROTECTING WASHINGTON’S WILD LANDS AND WATERS.

INCLUDING

Celebrating Washington Wild’s 40 Year Anniversary

Paying It Forward:
Passing 40 years of passion for Washington’s wild places to the next generation.

40 Years of Activism:
A peak into Washington Wild’s 40 year legacy.

Land and Water Conservation Receives Permanent Funding!
Hello! As an active supporter and volunteer at Washington Wild, I am honored and stoked for the opportunity to write the intro to the Washington Wild newsletter as Washington Wild celebrates its 40th anniversary!

I began my own journey with Washington Wild three years ago after attending a Brewshed event which, after some insightful conversations, led me to become an active volunteer. Three years later, you’ll find me tabling at events, and helping bring new thoughts and perspectives to planning and strategy. I give my time and expertise to Washington Wild because I believe that big change is possible—through protection, defense, and restoration efforts that our wild lands and waters deserve.

I grew up in western Pennsylvania and lived in Southern California before making my way to the amazing Pacific Northwest. I was drawn here because of my love of wild spaces, rivers, beaches, and mountains—the places that renew, refresh, and connect us. Without the efforts of Washington Wild and many others, these areas are at extreme risk. Now more than ever, we need watchdog groups working to protect these places as more and more administrative and governmental threats are aimed at our wild lands and waters deserve.

As Washington Wild celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2019, it’s humbling to reflect on the impact made by a small group of activists and a large group of volunteers and supporters. Making legislative change to protect and defend our wild lands and spaces takes commitment, time, perseverance, and experience. Forty years is a milestone—a milestone deserving a celebration at this year’s Wild Night Out gala. Later this year, we will gather as supporters, activists, and partners to celebrate the accomplishments of the past, and look forward to the battles of the future—and have some fun in the process.

Thank you all for your continued support, encouragement, and engagement. I hope you will see us all at our 40th Anniversary edition of Wild Night Out and many other Washington Wild events and activations throughout the year. Here's to another 40 years and beyond.

Drew Albenze
“As a poet and natural history writer, my father showed me that you should take what you’re most passionate about and go all in - not just take the easy or safe route in life... As a backpacker, hiker, climber and adventurer he taught me to love the mountains, bribing me with candy and refusing to carry me on hikes after I turned 3.”

Caitlin McNulty, daughter of Tim McNulty

“Mr. Town always brought a different element to science class that made it relevant to the real world... More than anything he gave me the confidence that even a teenager can make a difference – in fact we need to.”

Rayan, a Senior at Tesla STEM High School

“Washington Wild is the organization that pushed me to share the local knowledge I have as a social studies teacher and a naturalist at a broader scale... Testifying in front of Congress and educating reporters on the Wild Sky Wilderness proposal developed my voice for protecting wild places and making a real difference.”

Mike Town, Science Teacher

with maps of the central Cascades, was an activist and award-winning science teacher at Redmond High School. His name was Mike Town.

The area being discussed was the forests and peaks of the Skykomish River Valley – a place that he knew well, having lived with his wife Meg in the small town of Sultan, where she taught science for a decade. Each year, Mike would hike up to 400 miles along the trails and ridges in the Skykomish Valley and around Stevens Pass.

Emerging from that meeting, the Wild Sky Wilderness proposal took shape under the leadership of Senator Patty Murray and Congressmen Rick Larsen, with Mike establishing as the local activist face of the proposal. In 2008, 106,000 acres of mature and old-growth forests were designated as the Wild Sky Wilderness, the first new national forest Wilderness in Washington in a quarter century.

Mike’s Wild Sky experience helped develop himself as a leader in science education, later serving as an Einstein Fellow in Washington D.C. doing policy analysis on STEM education for the National Science Foundation with Congress. Mike brought this wealth of experience back to his classroom where he worked to develop a statewide science curriculum focused on public lands, instilling the belief that, like him, his students could enact tangible positive change.

STUDENT LEADER AND CHANGE AGENT

One young man who has benefited from Mike’s experiences as a teacher and a naturalist at a broader scale... is Rayan Krishnan. Rayan clearly remembers Mr. Town’s tales of legislative battles, and local advocacy around his efforts to protect the Wild Sky Wilderness. More than once, the Wild Sky served as an outdoor classroom for Rayan and his fellow students.

Rayan recalled a lesson a few years ago, when Mr. Town expressed his frustration about newly elected President Trump’s decision to pull the United States out of the Paris Climate accords. They had been learning about the science and policy behind the accords for months, a promised large-scale solution to global climate change – a crisis his generation was going to inherit.

Mr. Town announced that if anyone was concerned about this development, they should meet him in his classroom the next day after school. The next day more than 100 kids filed into the classroom ready to make a difference.

What resulted was a remarkable youth tour de force. As a sophomore, Rayan helped lead efforts to develop the Schools Under 2C program, which began with a challenge to have Tesla STEM High School meet the Paris Climate Accord goal of reducing carbon by 28%. As Co-President of the new youth organization, Rayan and his classmates met the goal by implementing conservation efforts in the school’s lighting, heating, and transportation methods for students.

After launching the program, they challenged other schools to do the same. Today there are 40 schools from Washington to Hawaii who have taken up the challenge.

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Conservation Voices
LIVING THE LEGACY OF BILLY FRANK, JR.
By Steve Robinson

Billy Frank Jr. was my mentor and my spiritual brother. In our years of traveling life’s path together he taught me many things. How could I not be impressed by this man who devoted his life to the survival of salmon, the Native way of life, and the restoration and protection of our natural environment? He was a warrior in the truest sense who always stood up for the traditions and legacies of his people, whether it meant going to jail or championing the principles of cooperation.

I had the honor of working with Billy for several decades as a journalist, public relations manager, and lobbyist. It was a privilege to be able to help write his story.

When I was asked to help Washington Wild and other environmental organizations strengthen relationships with local Tribes over the past few years, I was very pleased to accept. In large measure that was because of the knowledge Billy imparted to me, and the experiences we shared. There may have been a few times we differed with some environmental organizations’ perspectives, but those were dwarfed by the many times we worked cooperatively toward common objectives. These were the instances when our quest for clean and healthy water, air, land, fish, and wildlife merged and benefited from mutual support and team effort. We found camaraderie in state and federal legislative efforts, in education and the media, and grassroots fieldwork.

There are so many examples of this, ranging from the effort to retain instream flows in our rivers and the preservation of wetlands, to the prevention of oil spills and the reduction of greenhouse gases. One excellent example is the incredible cooperative effort to restore the Nisqually estuary, which has now been named after Billy in acknowledgment of his many years of outstanding leadership.

My hope is that there will be many more examples to come in the years ahead. The many challenges we all face, (e.g., threats to endangered salmon, proposed mining on our rivers, forests and mountains, and the challenge of Climate Change) cry out for such cooperation. It is especially essential in the face of the current anti-environmental federal regime. We can make progress together that none of us can make alone.

As my friends in Washington Wild have come to realize, one of the keys to success in these efforts is respect for tribal governments and treaty-protected rights. I was inspired to see Washington Wild respond to this need recently by finalizing a board resolution to create genuine empathetic understanding of tribal treaty rights and lifeways as they guide their work to protect wild lands and waters moving forward. They have learned to respect tribal heritage and protocols. They know there is no cookie cutter approach to working with varying tribes, that it is important to seek tribal support and positive tribal relations on a watershed-to-watershed basis and to respect tribal decisions, whatever they may be.

Every tribe we have met with over the past few years has appreciated these efforts to support them, and with proper follow up I believe there will be many positive outcomes.

I know Billy is smiling upon these cooperative efforts from his place at the Great Council Fire, and I pledge to always support the Native way of life, and the principles of cooperation. I believe there will be many positive outcomes.

On September 30th, 2018, despite strong public and bipartisan support, Congress failed to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for the second time in three years. This placed funding for national parks, forests, and other public lands, as well as local recreation assets including ballfields and municipal parks under severe risk. Every two years, the fight for LWCF would begin anew in Congress, and the future of the program would be in question.

However, as of March 12, 2019, Senator Maria Cantwell’s legislation to permanently re-authorize LWCF was signed into law and the future of LWCF will never be in question again! The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) supports our treasured public lands that protect ancient forests, salmon spawning streams, sources for safe and clean drinking water, and amazing recreation opportunities. More than 50 years ago, Congress made a commitment to the American public that a small portion of revenues from offshore drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf would go to natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation programs, as an offset for the depletion of public offshore oil and gas resources.

LWCF has invested $637 million in protecting the places that matter most to Washingtonians, like Mount Rainier National Park, the Olympic National Park, the Pacific Crest Trail and the Columbia Gorge, local parks, working forests, and wildlife refuges throughout the state.

“Since it was enacted 54 years ago, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped protect many of the nation’s most popular national parks, forests, and public lands. It has provided millions of Americans the opportunity to hunt, fish, hike, vacation, and enjoy the beauty of nature and our great American landscapes,” said Senator Cantwell. “It has pumped billions of dollars into the outdoor economy and provided millions of good jobs.”

LWCF is our country’s most important conservation program, supporting local economies, providing infrastructure for public health, tourism and recreation, and increasing access to the outdoors in all states and territories. It is paid for with non-taxpayer dollars, and has maintained broad bipartisan support due to its more than half-century history of successful, locally-driven conservation. In Washington state alone, the outdoor recreation economy contributes over $26 billion in consumer spending and supports more than 201,000 direct jobs. The LWCF is a key component of our nation’s robust outdoor recreation economy, which generates over $887 billion in annual consumer spending and supports 7.6 million American jobs. Additionally, this authorization has supported more than 42,000 state and local projects in communities across the country.

Now this program is permanently protected. Washington Wild members sent over 300 messages to elected officials in support of this LWCF. Thank you to each of you helped permanently protect this important conservation program – your voice made a difference.
Wild Profiles

LEILANI BALAIS
Washington Wild Volunteer

Leilani grew up on the West Coast and later went on to study psychology at Pacific Lutheran University, graduating in 1999. Today she works for Tacoma Arts Live, managing community relations and the organization’s event booking software and rental facilities with their Operations department.

After moving to Washington in 1989, Leilani’s appreciation for local wilderness deepened through her love of hiking. “I know it’s really grueling, but if I want to train for something intense, Mailbox Peak is my go-to trail...I can push myself to hike it faster or approach it differently so it’s a unique challenge. A lot of people don’t like it because there’s no view, but sometimes hiking isn’t about the views, it’s just about getting out there.”

Leilani first encountered Washington Wild at a Brewshed® Alliance event in 2017. A year later, Leilani signed up for her first volunteer shift and later went on to become a regular volunteer for Washington Wild. Leilani cites the variation in opportunities and advocacy as the driving force for her continued commitment to Washington Wild. “There are very hands-on organizations that do trail work and also strict political advocacy organizations, but I don’t necessarily want to do either of those exclusively. I like that Washington Wild has a good balance of both. The activities you can get involved in are really varied; you can watch a film, or hear an expert speak, or do a community clean-up, or just have beer, and still learn about and help our wild places. It’s a small intimate setting where you really get to know the people that are part of the organization.”

Washington Wild is deeply grateful to Leilani and her enthusiasm for protecting our wild lands and waters. Be sure to say hello next time you see her at an event!

Learn more about Washington Wild and our supporters at wawild.org

NORM WINN
Former Board President/Founding Member of the Legacy Society

We could not publish our 40th Anniversary newsletter without mentioning Norman Winn. A now retired environmentalist, attorney, and enthusiastic mountain climber, Norm and his late wife, Karyl, moved to Seattle in 1967 in pursuit of high alpine outdoor adventures among the rugged peaks of Washington State. In his words, “I moved to Washington to mountain climb.” In the years following their move to the Pacific Northwest, Norm became a recognized and highly respected name within conservation and outdoor recreation circles. His love for alpine climbing led him to become a highly skilled climber lead within the Seattle-based Mountaineers Club, climbing and leading on such peaks as Liberty Bell, Eldorado Peak, Mt. Shuksan, Mt. Rainier, Glacier Peak, and many more. Norman is a true man of many talents with everything that Norm did for wild spaces in Washington State, it was only a matter of time before Washington Wild took note. Those talents found their way into our board, and Norm agreed and from 1990 – 1993 he served as Board President of The Mountaineers Club during the mid-seventies, and a member of the conservation division for three decades. His efforts culminated in some spectacular successes, including successfully lobbying for both the Alpine Lakes Wilderness bill and the 1984 Washington Wilderness bill.

With everything that Norm did for wild spaces in Washington State, it was only a matter of time before Washington Wild would knock on his door. And sure enough, in the late 1980’s, Washington Wild co-founder, Karen Fant approached him. She asked for him to not just join the organization, but to take the helm as Board Chair and assist with a search to hire the first Executive Director of Washington Wild. Norm agreed and from 1993 to 1995 he served as our Board Chair.

When asked why he continues to support Washington Wild, Norm will tell you the story of the bipartisan work he did to ensure the Wild Sky Wilderness bill passed. He will tell you about Washington Wild transcending party lines in order to protect Washington State’s precious wild lands and waters. He will tell you that as a founding member of the Karen M. Fast Conservation Legacy Society, he hopes that Washington State will one day be known as the state that got conservation right. Norm carries the pride of his work with him every day, and Washington Wild is honored to have Norm as a member, mentor, and ally.

Learn more about Washington Wild and our supporters at wawild.org

Conservation Updates

BILL TO PROTECT WILD RIVERS, SALMON PASSES STATE SENATE!

Important legislation that would protect water quality, and fish habitat in Washington from the unregulated practice of motorized suction dredge mining has passed the State Senate! Currently, the practice of removing gravel from rivers to locate trace amounts of minerals is allowed without oversight, tracking, or accountability in rivers and streams designated as Critical Habitat for salmon under the Endangered Species Act. This practice threatens to unravel the millions of dollars that have been invested in salmon recovery and watershed restoration throughout the state. Washington Wild played a leadership role in this victory, coordinating a letter signed by more than 70 conservation, recreation, and wildlife groups and local business supporting the legislation.

We look forward to seeing the bill pass the house to ensure that our fish, water quality, and orca are protected.

PERMANENT PROTECTION SECURED FOR THE METHOW HEADWATERS!

Thanks to your support, advocacy, and dedication, the Methow Headwaters are now permanently protected from industrial-scale mining! In March, legislation securing a permanent ban (or withdrawal) of 340,079 acres in the Methow Headwaters from new mineral exploration and mine development was passed as part of a broad public lands package. Nestled on the east slope of the North Cascades, the Methow Valley and Headwaters region of Washington is one of the state’s most popular destinations, offering exceptional recreation opportunities. The Methow Valley is home to diverse wildlife, and is the source of cool, clean waters for farmers, residents, and fish. This would not have happened without a united community of supporters standing together!