

03/28/09 Combined Board meeting minutes

Meeting Open – Stu Earnst

Treasurer's Report and Correspondence presented by Kathy Earnst

It was noted Walker Valley is getting close to the end of the 5 year contract and will be in need of re-negotiation soon.

The subject of maps came up with over \$800 income having come in from sales. Ed said we were out of the B/W and will need color soon. Has small revision updates and when GPS and other items are added to the revisions, the maps will be formally updated. Motions were made and the vote passed to order 50 B/W and 100 color maps.

Old Business – Ed Thomas and Bob Pattie

It seems Okanogan and Wenatchee Forest Services are going to change the status of roads in the Cle Elum area with access seemingly unchanged at Red Top. The process is somewhat like DNR where all roads will be considered closed unless posted "open".

Bob Stoehr of the Wenatchee office is accepting input of what roads are being used for what purpose as was pointed out to him the proposal to post "open" at every jog in the roads for rock hounding would be an endless feat.

The Mineral Council has been invited to work with the two entities and attend hearings.

The form is due by May 9th for input – see Bob Pattie for more information and input.

Bob pointed out there are 32 areas managed as wilderness in Washington (public lands we cannot use) 36%, 16 million of the 42 million acres in WA, "owned" by the state.

With the Omnibus Bill passing it was noted "casual collecting" (amateur collecting) will be allowed without need of a permit under the laws of the land you are collecting on.

New Business

It was pointed out that the dates for the West side meetings are published incorrectly/conflicting with actual dates for this year. Will be corrected.

Ed will be looking into whether we can go above Hamilton, at the cedar ponds, up to the impact crater for jade hunting (and beryl?)

Mt. Higgins is reportedly good to go for July 19th.

At George, it should be noted the first diatom pit is closed. Economically the company is looking at closing the second pit (where material can be slim depending on where they are digging on any particular day). Be advised both pits may be chained closed in the near future, and if so, access is considered as denied with chained/gated enclosures.

There was talk of BLM giving permits to local organizations, clubs, to have use of land plots. Will look into that further. Any thoughts, or any word on that? – See Ed Lehman.

Nominees to fill Board positions:

The Eastside Board was further configured to nominate Ed Thomas as President, leaving Ed Brandstoetter as 2nd Vice President, and Leigh Klettke will still accept the Secretary position.

Trustees for the Westside – Bob Pattie, Ed Lehman, Bill Moser and Gordon Lyons.

Trustees for the Eastside – Dave Mastin and Diana Rose. Wagonmaster position remains open.

MEETING ADJOURNED (the new room is horrible for sound – apologies in advance for anything dictated in error). Submitted by Leigh Klettke

Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009

by Bob Pattie

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (H.R. 146/S.22) was passed in Congress on March 24, 2009 and then signed by President Obama. The Act is made up of many individual actions by the various states and their representatives in Congress. This package of bills will protect two million acres (2,000,000) of Wilderness and 1000 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers, and prohibit new oil and gas development on 1,200,000 acres of public land in Wyoming. This is in addition to the Wilderness Areas that have been designated in the past.

This act is about 1200 pages long with many different sections and subsections. There are 15 major sections (Titles) and they cover various departments and organizations in the federal government. Title VI- Department of the Interior Authorization and one of its subsections, "Subtitle D – Paleontological Resources Preservation" (starting with Section 6301) is of special interest to fossil and rock collectors. (1) Casual Collecting is defined- The term "casual Collecting" means the collecting of a reasonable amount of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources for non-commercial personal use, either by surface collection or the use of non-powered hand tools resulting in only negligible disturbance of the Earth's surface and other resources. Section 6304 (2) Causal collecting Exception – The Secretary may allow causal collecting without a permit on Federal Land controlled or administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Forest Service, where such collection is consistent with the laws governing the management of those Federal Land and this subtitle. (page 478 of 1248)

The Altmire amendment was added to the Act before it was passed in Congress, it was added at the end of Title V as Subtitle E – Effect of Title, Section 5401 and it states (a) Effect on access for Recreational Activities – Nothing in this title shall be construed as affecting access for recreational activities otherwise allowed by law or regulation, including hunting, fishing, or trapping. Subtitle D – Effect of Title, Section 8301, this wording is the same as section 5401.

Additional information provided with the Act was a set of questions and answers regarding the Act. One question stated that this bill will harm amateur paleontologists and rock collectors. The answer; This is not true, any collecting that amateur paleontologists and rock collectors can legally do today will still be permitted under Subtitle D, (discussed above). Additional note on this question, "The Forest Service currently does allow causal collecting by amateur without permit, but there is not anything formally recognizing this activity. We see that this act will allow this activity which is a good thing for the casual collector." Section 6311 (93) states that nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to Apply to, or require a permit for casual collecting of rock, mineral, or invertebrate or plant fossil that is not protected under this subtitle.

This information is available on the internet, the particular file that I have been using is: <http://s22.w-w-h.org>. There are a number of sites that have this information you can just type in Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009.

When is enough, ENOUGH?

by Bob Pattie

I am asking this question as I review the latest variety of so called "Public Lands" bills to protect our public lands. The more I read about our public lands the more I question the definition of public, is it something for the general public or is it for those that agree with the current political views of special interest groups. With this article, my intent is for each of you to decide for yourself what a recommended approach is to the Public Lands usage and to take whatever action you feel appropriate. I will try to give you enough information to at least get you starting in reviewing the available information.

In this article I will list the various activities that I have heard about in the last couple of weeks.

Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009—This is a government bill that has passed congress and sign by President Obama in late March. This is a combination of many bills that our senators and representatives have submitted the last couple of years and they didn't pass individually. It adds to the Wilderness areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers and other protected areas. It does have some good words on casual rock collecting in some of the rest of the BLM, and FS lands. I have written a separate article on this Act.

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest – The Okanogan and Wenatchee are working together on a Travel Management Plan for their forests. They are in the first stages of developing and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the designation of the many roads and trails in these two national forests. They are looking for any comment from the public that should be considered in the writing of the EIS. You can e-mail your comments to: okawen-travel-management@fs.fed.us. They are looking for specific roads and trails that we use to get to our collecting sites. They have maps on their web page that will help determine the areas for inputs. The person in charge of this project is Bob Stoehr and is located in the Wenatchee office.

You should be aware that Senator Patty Murray and Congressman David Reichert have introduced a bill that would add more than 22,000 acres of Wilderness adjacent to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness area. It would also designate parts of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt rivers as "Wild and Scenic". The map I have seen regarding this area, places some of the wilderness area along I-90, which I question if this really falls under the "untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain" definition of an Wilderness Area. These two individual, last year got the Big Sky Wilderness area near Index and supported the Omnibus Bill and now looking to place more land under the protection of the Federal Government.

Earlier this year the Department of Natural Resource (Washington State Land Management) passed their new Recreation and Public Use rules. This new set of rules effects the roads and trails we travel on to get to our collecting sites. It also states that a permit is needed if more than 25 individuals are using a particular site.

Cedar Ponds Field Trip Report

As you can see there was a good turn out of people that showed in spite of the rain. At least I think so. There was a really long caravan. There were several people from other clubs, includ-ing one from Gig Harbor. Several good sports, club members, directed traffic through Mon-roe. Parking was a bit tricky with so many cars. That "easy" hike is maybe for young people. Old people need to take there time going up hill. Next time Denny is going to blow up the gate so we can drive up. On the way up I found an agate with pinkish/reddish hue to it and I found one fossil on the way up (and another on the way down). Digging was great! It seemed like everyone was getting good specimens. One small group hit the "mother lode." They were sharing with everyone. Which was really nice. RC.

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