

OVCBCHW

Legislative Report

June 30th, 2012

Dave Sunde

Let's start with some good news. The House voted in favor of the Highway Bill 373-52. The Senate then voted for the bill 74-19 What's left is for the President to sign it.

We are already off and running on making sure the state doesn't opt out on the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), which we expect to not be difficult. This includes educating the Governor candidates on RTP for upcoming years as well. We should be good to go for now, but expect that there is much going on behind the scenes (our ED has his work cut out for him).

Next we need our BCHW RTP grants to rate high so we can use some of the \$\$\$ we saved!! If they don't rate high, well I know whom we should be throwing pies (or pulaskis) at. (Not forgetting that there are many other RTP grant applications from the agencies and other nonprofits that benefit us as well, but it is always more personal when it is your own. And our advocacy efforts from our state will ultimately save trails in many others.)

We are continuing to monitor the Sportsmen's Heritage Act. About 273 House members gave this bill their blessing. BCHW and BCHA have not come out either for or against this bill. There have been dozens of amendments some of which were soundly defeated and some added to the bill. We will continue to watch this and see what the US Senate does and then what happens in the conference committee if it does in fact pass the senate which at this time is doubtful.

Congressman Rick Larsen introduced legislation Wednesday, June 27th to save the Green Mountain forest fire lookout in the wilderness near Darrington. Larsen told The Daily Herald that the lookout is an important part of the Glacier Peak

Wilderness for both recreation and history. A federal judge in Seattle ordered the Forest Service to remove the lookout after the group Wilderness Watch was successful earlier this year in a lawsuit that said the agency violated the Wilderness Act by using a helicopter for restoration. The lookout on top of the 6,500-foot peak was originally built in 1933. No longer used as a fire lookout, it was restored in 2009 and remains a hiking destination. The lookout is on state and national registers of historic places. This is an evolving event that we are watching.

We'll keep everyone updated on these and upcoming issues with email and website articles.

Ride often and ride safely. Have a good summer as soon as it gets here.