

# THE MILLER BAY GUARDIAN

Volume 11, Issue 1

November 2011



FOMB President, Paul Dorn

## State of the Bay

### Miller Bay Needs Our Help!

By Paul Dorn

Almost everyone appreciates the beauty of the sapphire waters and emerald forests that surround and embrace us. That's usually the reason we give for calling this place home. We are so lucky to live in this part of the world and it's easy to take for granted. But we shouldn't take it for granted. The streams of the Salish Sea were all drinking water pure since time immemorial until recent decades. The plentiful salmon, shellfish, and wildlife that supported the Suquamish and other Coast Salish people have vanished in many cases, or become "off limits" because of pollution. The Friends of Miller Bay (FOMB) is an organization of people that care about Miller Bay and want to help bring back the health of the Bay for all of us that live here now and for our children's future. The FOMB can use your help, either directly, by rolling up your sleeves on one of our work parties, or indirectly by becoming a member. Your dollars will be put to very efficient use on projects and land acquisitions.

The present state of Miller Bay didn't come about as a result of an evil plot or deliberate plan to cause harm. Mostly it's the story of European civilization exploiting the riches of the land. Logging, fishing, and agricultural activities were the order of the day, an order that we understand much better in hindsight. Miller Bay habitat is home to many more species than we ever imagined. The FOMB believes that preserving and restoring habitat should be the priority wherever possible. The terrestrial landscape allows water to sink

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## Annual Meeting Presentation

### MILLER BAY: PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Thursday, Nov. 17, 2011 7- 9 PM

Suquamish House of Awakened Culture

By Dick D'Archangel

Every year, on the occasion of the Friends of Miller Bay annual meeting, we present a entertaining and informative program for our members and the general public. This year we have an array of guest speakers who will share their knowledge of the natural and cultural history of Miller Bay..

The presentation includes the following topics:

- ◆ *Hidden Treasures: the Streams of Miller Bay* by Jamie Glasgow, Wild Fish Conservancy.
- ◆ *Miller Bay Shellfish Restoration and Protection Progress* by Eva Crim, Kitsap County Health District.
- ◆ *Olympia Oyster Restoration* by Betsy Peabody, Puget Sound Restoration.Fund.
- ◆ *2011 Miller Bay Bird Observations* by Fay Linger, Kitsap Audubon Society.
- ◆ *The Suquamish Cultural Connection to Miller Bay and the Salish Sea* by Rob Purser, Jr., Suquamish Fisheries.

As you can see, this year's program is extremely relevant to our mission and to the interests of the community. I am looking forward to it and hope you will attend. Please bring your friends, there is room for everyone. And if you haven't yet participated in an event at the Suquamish House of Awakened Culture, this is a excellent opportunity to visit this impressive venue.



Suquamish third graders release chum salmon.

**Urgent: Join Friends of Miller Bay for 2012 FOMB. This is your only reminder to join or renew your membership!** FOMB is the only organization dedicated to protecting Miller Bay.

An application and envelope is enclosed.

## FRIENDS OF MILLER BAY

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Dick & Nancy D'Archangel

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*(Continued from page 1)*

into the ground, providing both our drinking water and maintaining the summer low flow in our streams, a balance we can maintain by being careful stewards of our water use. The aquatic landscape metamorphosis is especially pronounced in Miller Bay with the change of each tidal cycle. The tide flats are like superman changing in the phone booth with each new surge of water. Join us on a kayak trip to learn a little bit about this remarkable rhythm.

Or join us on one of our beach seining events to see the myriad variety of our finned friends. Surf smelt and sand lance spawn on the beaches we walk upon. Olympic Community College's Life on the Edge class is shown beach seining this year on Nooschkum's "little spit". This annual class field trip helps monitor changes in Miller Bay fish populations over time. The students also measure water quality and take extensive field notes to write up on their final report. Most students are keen observers of the food chain in action after watching diving kingfishers and ospreys, or the patience of the stalking great blue heron.

Or would you like to help out the Suquamish Elementary third graders release the chum fry they raised at school? This event occurs every spring. You can help the students explore the connections between the forest shade and cool water, the thick forest vegetation and the clean gravel, and how, by dying, the salmon give their rich nutrient blessing to the watershed to nourish their young the next spring. Stop by the Cowling Creek Center and walk down to the creek. The adult chum salmon

are returning from their 3 to 5 year ocean journey to complete one of nature's most remarkable cycles. This



OC Students beach seining at Nooschkum

is a November event. Don't be alarmed if you see a pile of bear feces – they have to eat too. When nature is at her healthy best, there's plenty of food to go around.

If you like fresh air and trees, you'll really like the opportunity to start a new forest from scratch. Suquamish Tribal staff Deb, Sam, Gene, and Steve (all shown) helped out last spring on a Surface and Storm Water Management grant project that paid to remove a culvert and build a bridge. This native vegetation planting took place on the Great Peninsula Conservancy's Cowling Creek Forest Preserve. The FOMB is working on another project grant for 2012. We're also considering a suspension bridge on a remote section of trail to cross a steep ravine. We're looking for donations and labor for this iconic bridge. Donate the supplies needed to build the bridge and we'll name the bridge after you.

The annual FOMB meeting on November 17<sup>th</sup> will be an opportunity to meet your neighbors that live in the watersheds around Miller Bay. You can listen to what the Wild Fish Conservancy, Kitsap Health Department, and Puget Sound Restoration Fund have learned in the past year. Rob Purser will put this all into perspective when he speaks on the importance of Miller Bay and the Salish Sea to the Suquamish people. On behalf of the board, we extend a hearty welcome for you to join us at our annual meeting. Learn about what's going on. Get involved. Miller Bay needs you!



Reforestation at culvert removal site at the CCFP.

*"To conserve and preserve the waters, wetlands, wildlife habitat, timberlands, undeveloped land, and scenic space in the areas around or near Miller Bay, Washington." - Friends of Miller Bay Mission Statement*



## Cornell University helps us

### Celebrate Urban Birds

By Nancy D'Archangel

On June 4th and September 17th, the Cowling Creek Center was hopping with young, and not so young, bird watchers. They were participating in "Celebrate Urban Birds" a program of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology granted to the Great Peninsula Conservancy and the Clear Creek Task Force.

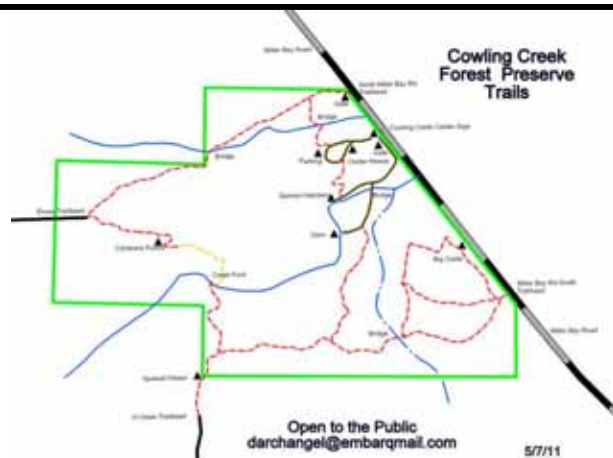
Friends of Miller Bay helped supply volunteers who assisted the children in various learning and craft activities, including making bird feeders and planting sunflower seeds.

An experienced and avid birder, ten year old Andrew Westphal, led groups into the woods on bird observation walks. The participants learned how to record their results and how to become citizen scientists, sending data from their own backyards to the Cornell Lab.

Kitsap Audubon, the Master Gardeners, and Jim Trainer were also there with informational displays.

Bird watching is not something you can do in front of a computer screen. Your smart phone, like your bird book, may help you identify a bird or a birdcall, but you have to (in most cases) go outside, walk around and observe to enjoy bird watching. And there are about 10,000 species of birds in the world so you won't run out of new birds to look for very soon.

We plan to sponsor these events again next year, and hope we can help introduce you, or a child you know, to bird watching and ornithology. Watch the calendar on our webpage for future event dates.



### Work Parties

Friends of Miller Bay schedules work parties three or four times a year to do various projects. Trail clearing, and repair; eradication of blackberries, laurel, knotweed, etc; and replanting native plants are perennial needs. New trails, bridges and signposts are projects motivated volunteers could undertake.

If you would like to be notified about upcoming parties and other events, please give us your email address when you renew your membership. We will also publish events on our website calendar.



The Fearsome Foursome: Bob, Dick, Lori and Sharon.



Photos by Mary Zabiński



## Shoreline Hearings Board Decision

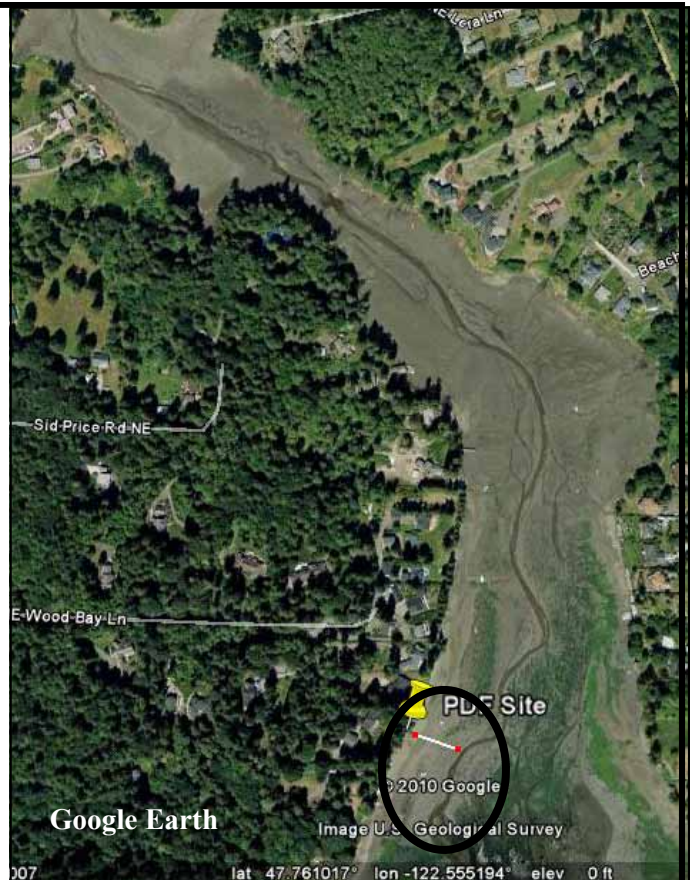
### MB Dock Appeal Update

By Stafford Smith

In last year's newsletter I described how FOMB and its neighborhood allies had just completed a two-day hearing before the state Shorelines Hearings Board and were breathlessly awaiting its Solomonian opinion. The decision arrived in mid-December and it was, well, a disappointment to say the least. It settled nothing and provided only vague and confusing hints as to its underlying rationale.

The SHB decision remanded the White/Conrad dock application back to Kitsap County for further review but didn't really say which questions were or were not to be revisited. So the County filed a motion for reconsideration, asking the Board to clarify its opinion. But the resulting "clarification" only muddled the waters further. Even though the County and FOMB had provided the Board with ample evidence supporting the County's decision to limit the dock length to 50 feet, the SHB's rearticulated remand order essentially gave the County little choice but to approve the proposal at 125 feet as requested by the applicant. The decision had become in effect a reversal masquerading as a remand. In justifying it, the SHB pounced on our status as intervenors rather than appellants (we appeared in support of the County's decision) as a pretext to ignore most of our testimony and arguments.

After some further discussion, FOMB and the other neighborhood dock opponents decided earlier this year to challenge the SHB decision in Kitsap County Superior Court. And that's where matters currently stand. The legal issues we have raised are pretty technical -- having mostly to do with whether the Board's remand order is adequately supported by its findings and conclusions. We also have attempted to open a discussion with the Whites and Conrads to determine whether we can agree



Proposed Pier-Dock-Float Structure Site

to simplify the court review process, including providing some opportunity to explore options for settlement. As of this writing no such process has been agreed upon.

From FOMB's perspective the biggest obstacle to an amicable agreement is the concern that approval of the White/Conrad dock at a length greater than 50 feet may create a precedent for granting other long dock applications in the narrow upper part of the bay.

## Miller Bay Kayak Tours

All ages welcome and no experience needed!

### Includes:

- Tour of Grover Creek Salmon Hatchery
- Kayak lesson
- Paddle with jumping salmon on a guided tour
- Stable double kayaks
- All safety equipment
- Locally smoked salmon snack
- Paul Dorn, will speak and paddle with us on most Saturday tours in Miller Bay.

### When:

- October 9-November 30
- Join a tour 10-1:00 on Saturdays and Sundays
- Schedule a tour any time for groups of 4+.

### Where:

- Regularly scheduled tours are up Grover's Creek on Miller Bay (near Indianola between Kingston and Suquamish, 10 minutes from Poulsbo).



- Group tours are also available in Silverdale's Dyes Inlet (to Chico Creek, the most productive salmon stream in Kitsap).

### Meet:

- At Grover Creek Salmon Hatchery: 23175 Indianola Rd NE, Poulsbo, WA 98370.

### Cost:

- Reg. prices: Adults: \$49, Youth under 17: \$39, Own boat: \$40
- \$5 off for Friends of Miller Bay (use discount code FOMB when registering on-line)
- SPECIAL RATES for scouts, schools, groups, military and clubs

- TEACHERS & SCOUT LEADERS PADDLE FREE with groups

### For more information:

[OlympicOutdoorCenter.com](http://OlympicOutdoorCenter.com) > Tours and Getaways  
[programs@kayakproshop.com](mailto:programs@kayakproshop.com) (360) 297-4659.



## Join Friends of Miller Bay

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

### **FOMB Memberships (Make check to FOMB)**

- ☐ I include \$25 for a one-year membership.
- ☐ I include \$100 for a one year Conserving Membership
- ☐ I include a \$ \_\_\_\_\_ gift.

*Please mail this form and your check to Friends of Miller Bay, Box 37, Suquamish, WA 98392*

### **Cowling Creek Forest Preserve Donations (Make check to GPC/CCFP)**

- ☐ I would like to donate \_\_\_\_\_ to the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve.
- ☐ Please contact me about a gift of securities.

*Call the GPC office (360 373-3500) for a credit card donation.*

- ☐ **Put me on your email list (no membership required!).**

### Friends of Miller Bay Event

## Indianola Summer Event

By John Nelson

We enjoyed a very interesting event in Indianola on July 28. About 70 people attended and heard presentations by Fay Linger, a Master Birder with Kitsap Audubon; Paul Dorn, Suquamish Fisheries Biologist; and Jay Zischke, Suquamish Finfish Program Manager.

Fay described the bird survey currently underway, which identifies species of birds present on the bay throughout the year. The count for Buffleheads has been second only to American Wigeons, prompting FOMB to adopt a new logo featuring a handsome Bufflehead drake.

Paul presented new information about mapping Miller Bay streams, and the tie-in with environmental protection and fairness to property owners.

Jay told the story of the Indianola Waterfront Preserve Estuary Restoration Project and the rationale for replacing the culvert under William Rogers Road with a bridge.

A display of historic photographs of Miller Bay, collected and mounted by Teresa Dwyer, was a focus of interest and conversation.

Refreshments and delicious snacks were another focus of attention as a beautiful summer evening on Miller Bay was enjoyed by everyone.

The event was sponsored by Friends of Miller Bay and the Indian Bay Association.



Event organizer, Teresa Dwyer readies display boards.

### *Birds (Continued from page 6)*

south of the Agate Pass Bridge. A small group of them (5) surprised us one morning as they cruised the channel into the bay. Common Mergansers were observed in two substantial groups of 63 and 51, in November 2010 and January 2011 respectively. The rest of the time they were absent. The Red-breasted and Hooded Mergansers were few in numbers and of scattered occurrence over time, accounting for all three species of Mergansers. Green-winged Teal were present in the more sheltered locations.

During spring and fall migrating Caspian Terns and Dunlins were seen, and in the summer months there were a few resident Mallards and Canada Geese.

Of the birds which frequent the sand bars, shorelines, pilings and piers we counted Great Blue Herons, Double-crested Cormorants, Caspian Terns, Killdeer, Glaucous-winged Gulls, Mew Gulls and California Gulls. Seen on the bay but not observed on our count days were Bonaparte's Gulls. We also kept track of the Bald Eagles, Ospreys, Kingfishers and American Crows. Summer nesting birds are the Killdeer, known to nest on the Indianola spit, and Canada Geese in locations around the bay.

In all we saw a total of 32 species of birds. This should be considered a beginning tally of the species that frequent the bay as further observations may easily turn up others.

Many thanks to the Baumuellers, Lindsays, Simmons, Burnetts and Mr. Friezel for allowing us access to their property for this survey. Participants on count days were: Fay Linger, Nancy and Dick D'Archangel, Don McPherson, Niki Questor, Barbie Brookings, Diane Bressler, Kathy Dickerson, Carol Haskins and Ernie Linger.



PO Box 37  
Suquamish, WA 98392

## Special Presentation: *MILLER BAY: PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE*

Suquamish House of Awakened Culture

November 17, 2011 7 -9 PM

### Miller Bay Bird Survey

By Fay Linger

A year has flown by and the survey of bird species of Miller Bay that begin in October 2010 is now complete. We had a great time and managed to get through most of the survey days without experiencing really terrible weather. The ducks don't seem to mind, but we do.

As expected in the Puget Sound area, the majority of the birds we saw were winter migrants. From November through April we observed Canada geese and 15 species of ducks. American Wigeons, (among them 3 Eurasian Wigeons), accounted for the greatest number of individual birds, followed by Mallards and Buffleheads. Both Barrow's and Common Goldeneyes were recorded with the latter being somewhat more numerous. All three species of Scoters were seen in small numbers, the Surf, the White-winged and the Black. The Black Scoter is not a common bird in the county and more likely to be seen



Fay Linger & Don McPherson—Photo by Nancy D'Archangel

See *Birds* (Continued on page 5)

### The Bay

My place where I can;  
Be a kid,  
Be me,  
Cry,  
Jump victoriously,  
Or just think.

Trudging up the driveway,  
Into the woods,  
Or into the grassy yard.

The Dock, where I can;  
Swim  
Boat,  
Wait,  
Watch,  
Be.

My Grandparents' house,  
Right on Miller Bay,  
I know this,  
No doubt,  
Is *my* special place.

-Emma Saas April 8, 2009

From *Beachside Buoys: A Tidal Wave of Poetry* By Emma Sass