Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club
Minutes for the last meeting of the 2019 Executive Committee
Wednesday, January 28, 2020  6:30 pm

ExCom: David Eckert, Robert White, Karl McCreary, Jules Moritz, Julie Arrington, Mike Neeley-Brown (via Skype)
Present: Robert Verhoogan (outings chair), Leslie Hogan (secretary), Kim Powell (guest), Melanie Feder (member 2020 MPG Ex Com)
Absent: Susan Kropp (2019 ExCom and membership chair)

I. Welcome and announcements
   Julie noted, “This will be the last meeting of the 2019 ExCom. We will wrap up old business and then adjourn. After adjourning, the newly elected board will be installed and will present its first 2020 agenda.”

II. Secretary’s Report/Minutes (Leslie)
   Mike moved to approve the revised Marys Peak Outings Policy and Robert seconded. Passed unanimously on 9/29/19 via email.
   Robert White moved and Susan Kropp seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the September 18, 2019 excom meeting. The motion passed unanimously via email on 10/4/19

III. Treasurer’s Report (Robert W)
   A. Final report and annual submission to Chapter
   B. Request to Foundation for reimbursement
   Dave made a motion to approve the treasurer’s report made by David and Karl seconded. Motion passed.

IV. Standing Committee/Team Reports
   A. Outings (Robert V.)
      1. Peak Sports contacted Robert White about partnering with MPG on hikes. After discussion, MPG stated its willingness to join Peak Sports once MPG gets more information. Robert V. will sit down with general manager Jim Blount to learn more. Ostensibly the hikes are to include information on preservation.
      2. MPG went into executive session to review National policy on disruptive behavior and came to a consensus on an MPG policy of prevention.
   B. Membership (Susan via notes to Julie)
      Membership/transfer letters going out: Aug. - 82, Sept. - 54
There is a backlog, so there are 90 Oct. letters, 76 Nov. letters and an unyet counted number of Dec. letters to go out.

Because Susan is stepping down from Ex Com and from faithfully, diligently and graciously performing duties as Membership Chair, newly elected board member Melanie Feder offered to step into that position. Robert W. will help by providing addresses. Julie, too, will help work on the letters.

Upcoming tabling events:

March 12  Corvallis Sustainability Fair
May 30    Get Outdoors Day at Peavy Arboretum

VI. Old business

A. Elections

1. Julie thanked Jane Luther, Barry Wulff, and Marcia Shapiro for their work on the elections committee. Mike Neeley-Brown sent out the ballots and set up Balloteer

2. Paper ballots were sent to 840 members. Digital balloting was available to 2017 members via Balloteer. Thirty-one digital ballots were received. Forty-six paper ballots were returned.
   Dave Eckert received 46 votes via paper ballot, 31 from Balloteer.
   Total: 77
   Melanie Feder: 35 paper ballot votes, 28 via Balloteer. Total: 63
   Mike Neeley-Brown: 43 paper ballot votes, 29 from Balloteer. Total: 72

3. Mike suggests looking at National’s free system of sending ballots and noted that Many Rivers Group uses a business that is cheaper for printing ballots. It also checks the addresses. Mike will research to see if it stamps the ballots as well.

4. Julie reminded all hike leaders and MPG leaders in general to be alert to good prospective candidates for MPG positions while leading hikes and rubbing shoulders with members.

   Robert W. made the motion to certify the election results and Jules seconded. Motion passed.

B. Corvallis Climate Action Advisory Board (CAAB)

Julie asked for a board liaison to follow the progress of the CAAB. Melanie offered to read their minutes and report back to ExCom on the most relevant info and what there might be for MPG to take action on, and Mike said he will attend its meetings.
C. January MPG members’ party (Julie)
   1. Forty-nine people signed up to attend the Jan. 18th winter membership party.
   2. Robert W. reported on an over-large stash of surplus paper plates and other supplies from past solstice events. It was agreed he could donate them to, for example, the Drop-in Center on 4th and keep a stash for future events.

D. Interpretive signs on Marys Peak to honor Liz & Bob Frenkel (Dave)

The U.S. Forest Service and the Marys Peak Alliance are about to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop the interpretation plan for Marys Peak. That Plan is scheduled for completion by Dec. 31, 2020. Some implementation phases may begin prior to completion of the interpretation plan. Interpretive signage is one of those implementation phases. The MPG will be part of the development project, but without the obligations held by the Marys Peak Alliance. This is a win-win for the MPG.

E. Chapter organizing school

Chapter Chair Drew Kerr said that MPG could add how to handle disruptive behavior to the curriculum being developed for the new “organizing school.” Julie would also like to add information on how to start and manage a Section (vs. a Chapter or a Group), such as an offshoot of MPG at the coast. Adding a Section would maximize MPG’s attention to outlying parts of its large service range.

VII. Next Meeting
Julie noted that this was the final meeting of the 2019 ExCom! She thanked the assembled and the membership for everything it did in 2019 to make MPG successful.

VIII. Motion to adjourn made by Robert W. and seconded by Jules. Motion approved.

2020 Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club
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Wednesday, January 28, 2020

ExCom Present: Julie Arrington, Melanie Feder, David Eckert, Karl McCreary, Jules Moritz, Mike NeeleyBrown (via Skype)
Present: Leslie Hogan (secretary), Kim Powell (guest)

I. Election of Chair for 2020 ExCom
Motion: Robert made the motion to elect Julie Arrington as Chair. Jules gave the second. Motion passed unanimously and with thanks.

II. Election of Required Positions
   A. Motion: David made the motion to elect Mike Neeley-Brown as Vice-Chair and Jules made the second. Motion passed.

   B. Motion: David made motion to elect Julie Arrington as Group Representative to Chapter and Mike made the second. Motion passed.

III. Appointment of Positions
   ● Secretary: Leslie Hogan
   ● Treasurer: Robert White
   ● Programs: David Eckert
   ● Outings: Robert Verhoogen (as of 8/31/2020 or replacements are found, whichever happens sooner). Ken will stay on as assistant chair. Jules offered to be trained to take over for Robert. He noted that a second person is prepared to co-chair Outings with him.
   ● Membership: Melanie Feder
   ● Conservation: Julie noted that MPG needs someone to be the conservation chair so that it can participate on the Chapter conservation committee which sets the priorities for the state.


V. Chapter Executive Committee meetings and phone call (Julie)
   1. Chapter board meeting on December 14th, 2019:
      The Chapter board discussed adopting a statement to be used at meetings to acknowledge local/indigenous peoples. Julie shared with Chapter the advice Dave Eckert sent her on how to create one and the spirit in which it should be used.
   2. Chapter board meeting on Jan 25th, 2020
      Chapter Director Trevor Kaul said that the Groups are the rocks in the chapter. National is going to support Chapters more.
      The next Chapter ExCom meeting is here in Corvallis on March 22. The meetings will be shorter because there will be monthly board phone calls. Chapters ExCom wants to hike with MPG. The meeting will be from 12:00 to 3:00.

   3. Conference call with Chapter Conservation Committee 12/9/19 (Julie)
Jessica Beckett is the new Conservation and Political Director for Chapter, replacing Rhett Lawrence. She came from 350.PDX. There are some proposals on climate change that will come before this short session of the legislature. The conservation committee will set up a working group to examine them. The conservation committee will have the last say on the Oregon Sierra Club’s position on the bills. Renew Oregon has filed a ballot measure, but ballot measures are expensive and hard to pass.

VI. Standing Committees
   A. Conservation (Dave)

Dunawi Creek Project

The Dunawi Regeneration Project planted 1,450 native plants at the site in November with about 85 volunteers. Davis would like to have $500 allocated in the budget for this project in the 2020 budget to keep MPG in the co-sponsorship category. We are attempting to speed up the process for completing the project, which includes more planting, interpretive display installations and culvert replacement under the multimodal path. The original plan was for 5 years, and we just realized that the 5 years is upon us (2021). Also, a number of us who are the catalysts are now over 70 and are having various health issues. Finally, we would like to finish the project before the economy tanks again.

Motion: Marys Peak Group will allocate $500 to fund native plants to be planted at the Dunawi Creek Regeneration Project in November 2020.

Robert made the motion and Karl the second. Motion passed.

The Elakha Alliance

The Elakha Alliance is dedicated to the reintroduction of the Oregon Sea Otter and the reestablishment of its coastal habitat. Dave Eckert met with Peter Hatch of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians and Bob Bailey, retired manager, State of Oregon Coastal Management Program on January 20th to discuss how the Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club could assist the Elakha Alliance in its mission. Elakha is the Chinook Wawa word for Sea Otter, which is essentially non-existent in Oregon Coastal areas. See [https://www.myowf.org/elakhaalliance](https://www.myowf.org/elakhaalliance) and [https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/OOST/Documents/Elakha_Alliance_Brief.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/OOST/Documents/Elakha_Alliance_Brief.pdf)
The Elakha Alliance would be interested in MPG sponsoring the following:

1. Coastal hikes starting in June, during which they provide the interpretation as it relates to Sea Otter ecology and reintroduction. They recommend an initial hike from some point north of Yaquina Head to Otter Rock and Marine Reserve.

2. Sea Otter presentations in Lincoln County in which they provide the presenters and find the locations in different communities.

3. Members to attend their Oregon Sea Otter Symposium in Newport on October 5 & 6th. They are particularly interested in S.C. members who are willing, available and capable of helping to support Elakha activities. There will be some symposium fee charged.

**Motion:** Marys Peak Group will collaborate with the Elakha Alliance to lead hikes, provide presentation and participate in the upcoming Oregon Sea Otter Symposium on October 5 & 6. Any funding for these programs will require a separate motion at a future date.

David made the motion and Robert W. the second. Motion passed.

**Garfield Elementary School Native Arboretum Destruction**

In 2013-2014, we planted our 4th Schoolyard Native Arboretum at the Garfield Elementary School on Garfield Avenue. This was planted in two sites on the schoolyard. The one along Garfield Avenue was the most successful as they were the easiest to water in the summer. The trees are growing well and look great, as they are beginning to create an arboreal street feel at the front of the school. Unfortunately, the School District will be removing and destroying all but one or two of them to install a new and expanded parking lot at the front of the school adjacent to the street. The plan has received full approval and is moving forward. David has been in consultation with a school district staff person to try to move forward with some sort of positive outcome. One suggestion from the staffer is for us to work together to plant new trees on the school property, like we did at the Corvallis School District when they destroyed all of the vegetative buffer along their portion of Dixon Creek. David’s recommendation is that we agree to collaborate with the school to plant a similar number of native trees elsewhere on the property, but that the school district fund the purchase of the trees. MPG covered the costs for the first trees and they never told us the trees would be removed. David had to contact them when he suspected they were going to do so when he read through the site plan.

**MOTION:** MPG will partner with the Corvallis School District to plant native trees on the Garfield Elementary Schoolyard to replace the ones they are destroying that we planted in 2013-2014, so long as the School District funds the
purchase of the new trees.

David made the motion and Robert W. the second. Motion approved.

B. Programs (Dave)

Spring Liz & Bob Frenkel Hiking and Environmental Spring Lecture Series
We are co-sponsoring this series with the Corvallis-Benton Public Library and the Friends of the Library. This co-sponsorship means that we don’t have to pay $75 per night rental fee to the Library and that the Library will aid in publicity. Presentations begin at 6:30.

February 20 – New Hiking Trails Near Corvallis by Ken Fitschen. Sierra Club Outing Leader Ken Fitschen will present new trails in the MacDonald Forest as well as in the Starker Tree Farm properties. He’ll also include 3-4 lightly-used trails that he’s enjoyed within an hour’s drive of Corvallis. The main focus will be on trails built in the MacDonald in the last 2 years along with those being completed in 2020-22. These new trails offer options for beginners, moderate, or long-distance hikers.

March 19 - New Hikes in NW Oregon- by Bill Sullivan
Renowned Oregon Hiking author and lecturer, Bill Sullivan is back to present his latest book with incredible new hikes in Northwest Oregon. Get there early to get a copy and find a good seat.

April 16 – Planning Tips & Gear Choices for Your Next Hiking/Backpacking Trip - by Irene & Armand Schopy
Irene and Armand have been hiking together for over 19 years and Marys Peak Group Hike Leaders for 12 years. They enjoy everything from short local hikes to multi-month backpacking trips. They will lead you through hiking planning strategies, including choosing a route, food prep, permits, and gear decisions. Tales from the trails will be interwoven with their recommendations for a successful hiking season.

May 21 - The Elakha Project - Restoring Sea Otters to their Native Oregon Coast Habitats by Peter Hatch, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Bobbi Hall, OSU Professor Emeritus, Bob Bailey, retired, The Oregon Coastal Management Program
Peter, Bobbi and Bob present the amazing lives of Oregon Sea Otters and The Elakha Alliance, which is an informal association of tribes, universities, agencies, organizations and individuals committed to restoring these vital keystone species to Oregon's coastal waters. Sea Otters came close to extinction in Oregon, damaging coastal health to this day. No Motion

B. Champinefu Lecture Series (4th Season) The theme this Fall will focus on Kalapuya skills and techniques for using plants for food, daily use items and tools. The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde will again provide the topics
and speakers. We will again be in the Majestic Theater. David will raise funds again from our sponsors to fund the lectures. The presentation dates are all on Wednesday at 7:00 pm for October 7, November 4 and December 9.

C. 13th Annual Earth Day Tour – Wednesday, April 22, 2020

*City Three Waters Systems Tour* – Partnering with the City and the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition’s Water Action Tea, we will tour portions of the City’s tapwater, stormwater and wastewater systems. We need at least 2 outing leaders for this tour, as there are simultaneous bike and carpool tours.

D. 13th Annual Urban Creek Tour – 2020 – *Oak Creek Tours* - Partnering with the City, OSU, Marys River Watershed Council, Starker Forests, Benton Soil and Water Conservation District, the Greenbelt Land Trust, the Corvallis Audubon Society and the Water Action Team, we will tour Oak Creek and 6 of its tributaries. We need outing leaders to lead 2-4 hikes between April and June.

VII. New business

A. Corvallis Sustainability Fair and Town Hall March 12 (Dave)

Every year since 2008, the MPG has sponsored and managed a table at the Sustainability Fair and had a great reception. The table experience is best appreciated by the public and provides the greatest responses when the presentation is interactive with the public. Perhaps the most successful presentation was a regional and state map. The public was asked to use push pins to mark their favorite hiking trails. Table location is determined by registration date. David recommends that we order a 6’ foot table for $80. We also need at least 2-3 people to staff the table. Julie, Mike, Leslie and Karl volunteered to staff the table.

**Motion:** Marys Peak Group will allocate $80 to pay the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition to reserve a 6-foot table to provide our presentation to the public at the Sustainability Fair on March 12th.

**Motion by David and second by Mike. Motion approved.**

Part 2 - Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Sponsorship (RW)

MPG has also been a Sponsor of the CSC Town Hall. The amount contributed has been $150. The funds are allocated from our Education Account while the table at the Sustainability Fair is from “Membership.” We need a few people to table at the fair.

**Motion:** MPG donate $150 as a sponsor of the CSC Town Hall.

Mike made the motion and Robert the second. Motion carried

B. Political (Dave)

* Benton County Commissioner Endorsements for November 2020
Two Benton County Commissioner seats are up for election this November. The MPG historically endorses candidates for this position as it is in our Group region. Other Commissioner positions are open in other Counties within our region. I recommend that we begin the process early to develop our evaluation and endorsement procedure and timeline, so we are prepared. Also, I recommend that we ask a few of our Linn County and Lincoln County members whom we know and whom we trust for their Sierra Club-oriented judgement for help in endorsing those local County Commissioners. Before we endorse, we must have a vetting process, as we have done in Benton County. By doing this process, we may be taking another step (along with the Elakha Alliance project) toward fulfilling our mission of reaching MPG service counties beyond Benton County.

David will contact Jules when it is time to construct questions to pose to the county commissioners. Leslie will attend with the aim of questioning Linn Co. Commissioners.

Electrifying Building Codes for City of Corvallis - Page 51 of the Jan/Feb Sierra Magazine has an article about “Electrifying Building Codes” (different name in on-line magazine) – In California, Gas is the New Coal.


A number of Cities in California are requiring that new development require electric over natural gas utilities, combined with requiring that new development is “solar ready”. A few Oregon cities are considering this code change. And, the National Office of the Sierra Club is promoting such policies. According to the article, the Loma Prieta Chapter advocated for San Jose to develop a ban on Natural Gas for new buildings. The reasons for electric over natural gas are:

1. Natural gas in buildings is a major contributor of methane in our atmosphere. (Natural gas is 86X more potent than carbon dioxide)

2. Natural gas relies on fracking which is destroying the ecosystems throughout the U.S.

3. Natural gas is a primary cause of fires during earthquakes

4. Natural gas is a major cause of asthma in both children and adults

To make the transition for new buildings to electrify must be accompanied by on-site solar systems to make the electricity more sustainable. Unfortunately, requiring fully
functional solar systems on all new buildings will be heavily fought by developers, ultimately resulting in a loss. Proposing all new buildings be built solar-ready is a battle more likely to win. The cost is much lower to the developers and is generally a type of code more likely acceptable to City planners. Solar-ready buildings have roofs that are built to hold solar panels and facing in the most efficient directions for solar access. The wiring for solar panels, inverters and batteries are built into the original building design. The reasons for solar-ready new development are:

1. It dramatically reduces the cost of placing solar panels and systems on the building by the owner.
2. It ensures all new development is ready for the shift in energy technologies.
3. There is little extra financial burden on developers.
4. Solar energy will compensate for any additional utility costs associated with transitioning from gas to electricity.

**Motion:** Marys Peak Group will research the recommendation by the Sierra Magazine article on Electrifying Building Codes, consult with National Headquarters and develop draft language to the City of Corvallis to pass building codes that will require new buildings to use electricity rather than natural gas for energy supplies and to require all new buildings are built to be “solar ready.”

David made the motion and Mike the second. Motion approved.

David will lead this project with the help of others.

C. Letter to new Dean of Forestry: Julie will write a letter to the new dean of forestry to introduce MPG to him.

D. Facebook policy: Karl requested that this issue be tabled for the next meeting due to lack of time left in the meeting to adequately address the issue.

E. Invitation from Willamette Valley Great Old Broads for Wilderness to co-sponsor a talk by Francis Eatherington on 3/20. Julie said that, again due to time constraints, MPG ExCom will continue the discussion on-line.

VIII. Next meeting: April TBD

IX. **Motion to adjourn made by David and the second by Jules.** Motion approved.
8:45 p.m.

Letters exchanged as part of an ExCom email discussion Nov. 13-Dec. 12, 2018:
Integrated Invasive Plant Management for the Northwest Oregon District
DOI-BLM-ORWA-N000-2018-0002-I:A

Dear Public Land User:

The Northwest Oregon District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-ORWA-N000-2018-0002-EA) of its proposal to expand and update its existing District-wide integrated noxious weed management program. The purpose of this letter is to notify you of an opportunity to review and comment on the analysis of the effects of that proposal.

The Environmental Assessment and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for this proposal are available on the BLM’s ePlanning website: https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do (use text or map search) or you may request a printed copy using the contact information provided in this letter.

Until 2016, the BLM managed the Northwest Oregon District as two districts: the Salem District, which included the Tillamook, Marys Peak, and Cascades Field Offices; and the Eugene District, which included the Siuslaw and Upper Willamette Field Offices, as well as the West Eugene Wetlands. Available invasive plant treatment methods have varied by field office, and include manual (e.g., hand-pulling, digging, grubbing, solarization), mechanical (e.g., mowing, tilling or disking, string trimmers, propane torch), seeding and planting, prescribed fire, biological control agents (generally insects), targeted grazing, and herbicides (primarily glyphosate).

After reviewing the analysis contained in the EA and FONSI, I have identified Alternative 3 as my preferred alternative because it would:

- Broaden the scope of the program to provide for management of non-native invasive plants in addition to the noxious weeds currently managed on the District;
- Increase the herbicide active ingredients available for use to more effectively manage invasive plants across the District;
- Provide for additional non-herbicide control methods, including weed barrier mats and propane torch spot treatments, to be used when effective or practicable; and,
- Allow management of aquatic invasive plants.

Your comments on the proposed expansion and update to our invasive plant management program are an important part of the decision-making process. To assist in timely consideration
of comments, please provide comments by December 13, 2018, using one of the methods identified below. To be most helpful, please make any comments on the EA and FONSI as specific as possible. My interdisciplinary team will review all of your comments and will respond to the substantive comments received.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment — including your personal identifying information — may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Ways to Submit Comments or Request a Copy of the Document:
- ePlanning: https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do (use text or mapsearch)
- Email: blm_or_invasive_plant_ea_comments@blm.gov. Subject: Northwest Oregon Invasive Plant Management EA (OR 932)
- FAX: (503) 375-5622 Attn: Northwest Oregon Invasive Plant Management EA
- Mail: Northwest Oregon District BLM, Attn: Northwest Oregon Invasive Plant Management EA, 1717 Fabry Road St., Salem, OR 97306

Questions about the project may be directed to Claire Hibler, Project Lead, (503) 375-5677, Paschita Paulice, District Environmental Planner, (541) 683-6976, or may be sent to blm_or_invasive_plant_ea_comments@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Jose Linares
District Manager, Northwest Oregon

P.O. Box 863
Dear Mr. Linares:

The Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club thanks the Bureau of Land Management for forwarding to us the administrative decision for invasive plant removal on Marys Peak. During the recommended implementation of that decision, we ask that the BLM staff and contractors remain fully aware and respectful of the Federally-designated Scenic-Botanical Special Interest Area (SBSIA) that extends above the 3,000 foot elevation of Marys Peak. Application of Round-up and other herbicides, as well as biological controls, can have both known and unknown impacts upon the native plants, lichens, fungi, insects, and soil microorganisms. Additionally, there are potential impacts upon the humans applying the mitigation technique and the general public who visit these sites. We encourage the BLM to do no further harm to the already heavily-impacted public lands and to provide further attention throughout the entire implementation process to the current and future health and environmental integrity of the Marys Peak SBSIA.

Sincerely,

Julie Arrington
Chair, Marys Peak Group Executive Committee
Sierra Club

Marys Peak Group, Sierra Club
Dear Mayor Traber and members of the Corvallis City Council:

The Executive Committee of Marys Peak Group, Sierra Club, was disappointed to learn that the Climate Action Plan (CAP) is not mentioned in the Corvallis Strategic Operational Plan (SOP) that will be discussed at the January 24th Council meeting. None of the recommendations that the Climate Action Advisory Board (CAAB) made on November 30, 2018, are included in the SOP.

We believe that we must act now to reduce the impact of climate change and do all that we can to make a difference. We, therefore, urge you to adopt the recommendations of the Corvallis Climate Action Advisory Board and include them in the City’s Strategic Operational Plan. These include hiring a full time climate action person to help accelerate the implementation of the Community sections of the CAP. The CAAB also urges the Council to integrate climate action into all city plans and to report to the council on the progress of this step. The final recommendations are to revise two existing SOP measures so that the municipal and community greenhouse gas inventory is updated every two years and to integrate the climate action goals into the Regional Economic Development Plan.

Sincerely,
Julie Arrington, Chair
Marys Peak Group Executive Committee
Julie.seahorse@gmail.com
541-730-0065