



# Calliope Crier

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to the enjoyment and preservation of the natural world. Through birding, education and conservation activities in our community, we raise awareness and promote the cause of global environmental protection.

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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

May 2019



**MAY PROGRAM**  
**PHIL FISCHER**

## The Cascades Carnivore Project with Jocelyn Akins

The Cascades Carnivore Project is a conservation research organization based in Hood River, Oregon. They are promoting the conservation of rare carnivores and their ecosystems in the Cascade Range through scientific research and collaboration with citizen scientists and other researchers. They have taken the lead on the conservation of the Cascade red fox, a rare montane fox subspecies that occurs only in the Washington Cascades. They are also documenting the natural recolonization of wolverines into southern Washington, and recently discovered the first reproductive wolverine den documented in Washington's southern Cascade Range in over 50 years and only the 3<sup>rd</sup> den in the state. Broadly, they are interested in how climate change will affect these two rare and elusive carnivores.

Jocelyn Akins leads the Cascades Carnivore Project in its effort to study rare montane and forest carnivores. She received her PhD in Conservation Genetics from the University of California Davis. She is only one of two researchers who has focused their research on the Cascade red fox.

She will be presenting her decade-long research on the Cascade red fox and wolverine.



**Wolverine (above) and Cascade red fox (left)**  
Photos from the Cascade Carnivore Project website

Mark your calendar for Thursday, May 23, at 7:00 to see this presentation at the Yakima Area Arboretum.

Visit the Yakima Valley Audubon Society's website at: <http://www.yakimaaudubon.org>



## MEMBERSHIP

JOY MCKINNEY

### Welcome New Members!

**Selah:** Anita Osterhaug and Job Rabinowitz

### Thanks for renewing your membership!

**Selah:** Joy McKinney

**Sunnyside:** Donna Homer

**Yakima:** Earl and Dorothy Derry, Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, Rick Mains



## THIS MONTH'S YVAS CALENDAR

**May 23 YVAS Chapter Meeting** at the Yakima Area Arboretum at 7:00 pm. A great program is scheduled!

**June 11 Board Meeting** at Starbucks on Summitview and 58th Ave at 7:00 pm.

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society meets on the fourth Thursday of January, February, March, April, May, August, September, and October at 7pm at the Yakima Area Arboretum, located at 1401 Arboretum Drive, Yakima, WA. Guests are welcome at these meetings. The Board of Directors meets each month except December at 7pm at locations announced in the Calliope Crier. Members may attend Board meetings; however, please notify the host because of possible space restrictions.

Printing and mailing the Calliope Crier newsletter is by far the largest expense in the YVAS budget. Starting with the August 2019 edition, the Calliope Crier will only be available electronically as an email attachment or on the YVAS website. Starting in August, there will be no more printed newsletters. To ensure that you get an email every month announcing when the Calliope Crier is on the YVAS website, please send Joy McKinney (joycatbird@gmail.com), our membership chair, an email so she can put your email address on the electronic mailing list.

## Arborfest — “A Walk in the Woods”

We survived the rain!

Spring in Yakima is frequently windy. Instead of wind this year at Arborfest, volunteers and participants alike had to brave April showers. Despite the inclement weather, Arborfest at the Yakima Area Arboretum this year was again an amazing success, though umbrellas and rain coats were in evidence. Arborfest is a free community event, celebrating Arbor Day, spring, conservation and nature. This year the theme was “A walk in the woods.” A display with photos of common birds that one might see on a walk, as well as the Audubon display with photos and information about Yakima Audubon attracted both children and adults. The big draw to our booth was button making, obviously enjoyed by the kids. They colored pictures of birds and had their artwork transformed into a button they could wear. Though the rain turned some artwork soggy, kids and Audubon volunteers persevered, and many went away with gorgeous images they could be proud of.



**The YVAS booth features button-making and always had a good crowd of enthusiastic button-makers**

Thanks to all the intrepid volunteers who made this happen!!! Our grateful thanks go to Dotty Armstrong, Bill Drenguis, Jan and Judy Gano, Phil Fisher, Denny Granstrand, Janna Hayes, Julie Kawakami, Chris Reid, Justine Repp-Faith, Richard Repp, Sarah Shippen, and Andy Stepniewski.

Please plan on helping, or bring your families to celebrate Arborfest next year, again in April !





## CONSERVATION

### STAN ISLEY

# Yakima Basin Integrated Plan update

April's conservation article focused on permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. As related last month, part of this omnibus bill (Public Law 116-9) also moves forward various elements of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. The article below details specifically how this law will advance the Integrated Plan, written by Yakima Valley Audubon Society member Stan Isley, US Bureau of Reclamation/WA Dept. of Ecology water conservation specialist.

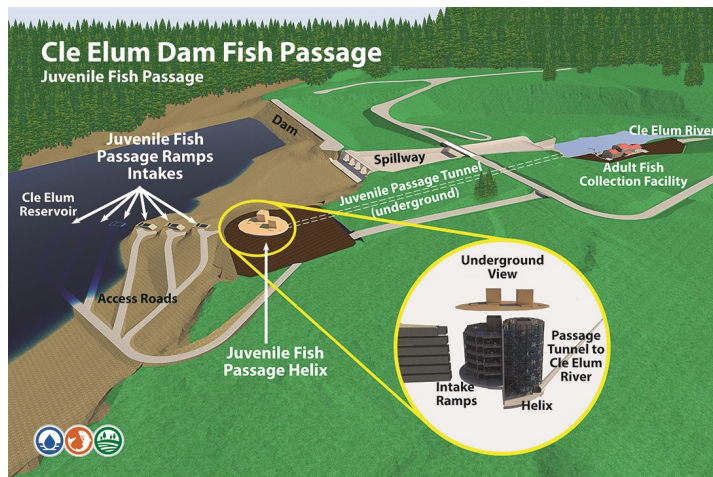
"In a nutshell, the many champions of the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (including me) are thrilled with the enactment of P.L. 116-9, and its authorization of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan (YBIP or Integrated Plan).

Highlights:

- ◆ Washington State authorized the YBIP under state law in 2013.
- ◆ Federal authorization now is finally in place with the enactment of P.L. 116-9, authorizing implementation of the Initial 10-year Development Phase, and authorizing development of plans for both the Intermediate, and the Final, 10-year Development Phases.
- ◆ The Initial 10-year Development Phase (Phase I) conditionally authorizes the Kachess Drought Relief Pumping Plant and the Keechelus to Kachess Pipeline projects, to be funded with private irrigation district funds.
- ◆ Phase I authorizes groundwater recharge and aquifer storage and recovery projects in the Yakima Basin.
- ◆ Phase I authorizes enhanced water conservation projects throughout the entire Yakima River Basin, with the goal of conserving an additional 85,000 acre-feet of water in Phase I, and conserving a total of 170,000 acre-feet of water over the YBIP's three phases.
- ◆ And Phase I authorizes \$75 million for Yakama Nation/Wapato Irrigation Project water conservation projects.

This much-anticipated federal authorization for the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan now allows the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to fully participate in all elements of the Integrated Plan with the State of Washington, the Yakama Nation, and the members of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (YRBWEP) Workgroup. This federal legislation authorizing the Integrated Plan is a product of the basin-wide collaboration between stakeholders that

has taken place since the first Workgroup meeting that was held nearly 10 years ago. The Integrated Plan is an ecosystem restoration initiative that builds on the work that began with the YRBWEP Phase II legislation that was enacted in 1994.



**Part of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan is the Cle Elum Dam Fish Passage**

YRBWEP and Integrated Plan goals include implementing projects, several under construction and currently being implemented, that will:

- ◆ improve the security of the Yakima River Basin's irrigation water supply in drought years;
- ◆ improve tributary stream flows in the Yakima Basin for the benefit of fish and wildlife;
- ◆ provide fish passage at the Federal storage dams in the Yakima Basin;
- ◆ provide water for municipal, industrial, and domestic

water supplies in the basin; and,

- ◆ restore and maintain self-sustaining, harvestable populations of salmon and other fish in the Yakima River Basin.

From my perspective, this legislation, and the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan in a broader sense, provide a once-in-a-career, or even a once-in-a-lifetime, opportunity to restore the fish and wildlife and habitat conditions in the entire Yakima River Basin, while at the same time providing for a secure water supply for our basin's important off-stream water uses. This Integrated Plan:

- ◆ will secure the irrigation water supply for existing irrigated acres in the Yakima Basin, NOT for any expansion of the number of irrigated acres in the basin.
- ◆ will restore healthy fish numbers, and restore fish habitat in this basin, where our Yakima Basin salmon populations have been sliding towards extinction for many decades as a result of human modification of their habitat throughout the entire river system.
- ◆ has near-unanimous support among the many water managers, water users, and water stakeholders in the Yakima River Basin.

And to the few opponents of the Integrated Plan, I ask: "What are you protecting by opposing the Integrated Plan, an ecosystem restoration program developed over the last decade for the Yakima River Basin? Don't think you're protecting something in this 'broken river system' by opposing

**Conservation continued on page 4**



## FIELD TRIPS SCOTT DOWNES



**June 1 (Saturday)**-Wenas Area. Jeff Kozma will lead a trip to the Wenas area to look for birds in a variety of habitats. We will be going to areas such as Wenas Lake, Hardy Canyon, BBQ Flats, and Umptanum Road to bird in riparian areas, shrub-steppe, and ponderosa pine forest. Some birds we will try to find are Yellow-breasted Chat, Bushtit, MacGillivray's Warbler, Pygmy Nuthatch, Lazuli Bunting, Veery, and an all-time favorite, the White-headed Woodpecker. We'll meet at 7:00 AM in order to carpool. We'll plan to be back to Yakima by 4:00 PM.

Bring a hat, binoculars, lunch, sunscreen, and plenty to drink. We will be on foot, at times on trails and also "bushwhacking" (off trail) through ponderosa pine forest, so wear appropriate and sturdy foot wear. To sign up and get the meeting place, please contact Jeff at [jcr\\_5105@charter.net](mailto:jcr_5105@charter.net) with "Wenas Trip" in the subject line or at 509-406-1049. The trip will be limited to a maximum of 15 people.

**June 8 (Saturday)**- Teanaway Basin, Kittitas Co. Scott Downes will lead a trip to the Teanaway Basin in Kittitas County. Come explore the forested habitats of the Teanaway, where forests are mixed with riparian streams and contain a great variety of breeding songbirds. Expect most of the breeding songbirds found in the mid-elevation areas of Kittitas County. Bring a hat, binoculars, lunch, sunscreen, and water. The trip will be a combination of road birding and walking trails so wear appropriate and sturdy foot wear. Drivers should have the Discover Pass. We'll leave Yakima at 6:30 am and return around 4:00 pm. To sign up and get the meeting place, please contact Scott at [downess@charter.net](mailto:downess@charter.net)

**June 15 (Saturday)**-Woodpeckers. Teresa Lorenz will lead a trip in the Wenatchee National Forest, focusing on woodpeckers, especially White-headed Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker. On this trip we typically also see lots of forest songbirds such as Western Bluebird, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cassin's Vireo, Western Tanager, Townsend's Warbler, Hammond's Flycatcher, Red Crossbill, Mountain Chickadee and Pygmy Nuthatch. We might (depending on snowpack and interest of the group) visit higher elevations to try for American Three-toed Woodpecker, Clark's Nutcracker and Pika. Meet at the carpool lot at the junction of Highway 12 and Highway 410 at 7 am. To sign up, email Teresa at [teresajlorenz@gmail.com](mailto:teresajlorenz@gmail.com).

**June 22 (Saturday)**- Wild Horse Wind Farm. Scott Downes will lead a trip to Wild Horse Wind Farm near Vantage. This trip is a combination birding and wind farm tour. We'll join Nicholas Mejia with Puget Sound Energy on a tour of the wind farm where participants will get to learn about the facility and explore inside the turbines. Mixed with the wind farm tour, we'll be able to bird the shrub-steppe habitat there, where shrub-steppe species such as Sage Thrasher, Sagebrush Sparrow and Loggerhead Shrike are found. Following the wind farm tour, we'll do a few birding stops on the way back to Yakima. Bring a hat, binoculars, lunch, sunscreen, and water. Wear appropriate and sturdy foot wear. Drivers should have the Discover Pass. We'll leave Yakima at 6:30 am and return by 3:00 pm. To sign up and get the meeting place, please contact Scott at [downess@charter.net](mailto:downess@charter.net).

## Conservation continued from page 3

the Integrated Plan. Such 'protection' will simply ensure we never restore our once impressive Yakima River Basin salmon runs, and will ensure that in drought years our local economy will continue to suffer serious economic losses in the agricultural sector and in the many agricultural-support businesses throughout our basin. The Integrated Plan isn't perfect, but on balance it will improve the Yakima Basin's natural environment, its stream flows and fish and wildlife numbers; and it will also improve water supply security for our basin's irrigators and secure our basin's economy against drought-year monetary losses." I again ask Inte-

grated Plan opponents: "What are you protecting? What do you think you're protecting?" You are 'protecting' a 'broken river system' and opposing the much-needed ecosystem restoration that the Integrated Plan will provide our Yakima River Basin. I encourage everyone to support our Yakima Basin Integrated Plan.

Check out this link below, for the text of P.L. 116-9, which includes authorizations for an amazing list of good stuff, including wilderness designations, etc."

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/47>

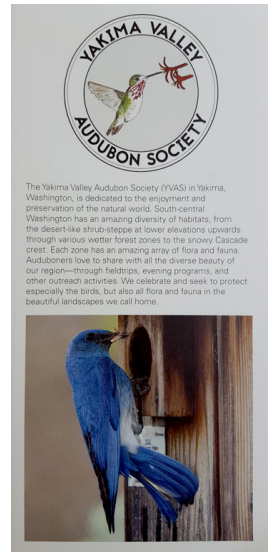
## YVAS creates a membership pamphlet to help publicize our organization

How many times are you out in the field, at work, at an educational event, or staffing an Audubon booth and folks query us about Yakima Audubon? You tell them about field trips, monthly programs, classes, Birdyak, the website, but wonder whether they are going to remember. A beautiful picture may help.

Sensing a need for a handout "advertising" the Yakima Valley Audubon Society, your chapter has just finished printing an informational pamphlet (pictured here) describing our organization, its events, and contact information. Thanks to Denny Granstrand and Kathryn Blair for the graphics work, to Karen Zook for the photo of a Mountain Bluebird at a box on the bluebird trail, and to all the board members who offered their suggestions.

You are welcome to take some with you to give out to prospective members. These pamphlets will be available at monthly chapter programs, or you can contact any board member to get a supply.

— Ellen Stepniewski —



## YVAS treated to personalized field trip to Sunnyside WRA

A seldom-seen gem was opened to a Yakima Valley Audubon field trip on April 26. Noel Ferguson, the assistant manager of the Sunnyside Wildlife Recreation Area, invited a group of Auduboners to the refuge and personally escorted us around. The birds did not disappoint.

The Sunnyside Wildlife Area is on the north side of the Yakima River northwest of Mabton and encompasses Giffin and Morgan Lakes, numerous large ponds and "rice paddies", fields that can be flooded when water is available that resemble rice paddies. There are extensive dry areas that are popular with upland game hunters.

In spring, the main draw for birders are the rice paddies. That is where we spent most of our time and we were not disappointed. There were many ducks and shorebirds in the flooded fields, many offering close views. There were 12 species of waterfowl including Cinnamon Teal, Redheads and Ring-necked Ducks. The shorebird list included the spectaculars: Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets, and the more difficult to identify: Least Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Snipe and Lesser Yellowlegs. The Black-necked Stilts put on quite a show, with about 60 making an appearance. Virginia Rail and Sora were also seen, though they mostly stayed secluded in the reeds and cattails. Yellow-headed Blackbirds are always fun to see, and to hear their unique song. We counted 78 of them!

A big surprise, for me anyway, was found in a small group of Russian olive trees on the walk to the rice paddies. Two Nashville Warblers, one Yellow-rumped Warbler and one Ruby-crowned Kinglet were spotted as they searched the trees for food. Two Common Yellowthroats were nearby and flew into the trees a couple of times.

Visitors are not allowed to drive into the refuge but there are two ways to access the dirt roads through the refuge. One parking lot is at Holaday Road and Snipes Pump Road. A short walk west gets you to the refuge headquarters. Following a dirt road

south out of the headquarters buildings area takes you to the rice paddies, which is about a 3/4-mile walk one way. A second parking lot is at the south end of Midvale Road. Walk west from the parking lot to Giffin Lake, after walking around the gate across the dirt road, then you can do a loop which goes south from the lake, west past the rice paddies, north back to Giffin Lake, then east back to the parking lot. The first section south of Giffin Lake is frequently flooded, so if you go that way be sure to wear shoes you can get wet or high boots. Seeing birds on Giffin Lake is difficult because of high cattails and reeds.

We appreciated Noel Ferguson giving us such an intimate introduction to the Sunnyside Wildlife Recreation Area. It is another wonderful place to bird in Yakima County!



**Black-necked Stilt flying over the rice paddies**  
Photo by Mike Roper



## USDA Forest Service and Partners are seeking a community vision for recreation

Cle Elum and Naches Areas—In the cold, clear waters of the Cle Elum River, an angler tries her luck catching trout as early morning steam rises into the air. Far to the south over several forested ridges, a group of motorbike enthusiasts are unloading their trailers in preparation for a day out on the Cub Creek trails in the Little Naches area. These scenes and hundreds more unfold each day across the Upper Yakima Basin.

This spring, a new survey will be available for public land users near and far to tell the Forest Service and partners the types and locations of important outdoor recreation activities they enjoy in western Kittitas and Yakima Counties.

“This online recreation survey is really about helping us better understand how you use your public lands,” explains Cle Elum District Ranger Michelle Capp. “We want to work collaboratively across land management areas and in partnership with all recreation groups and users to enhance communities, natural resources, and recreation experiences for visitors and residents.”

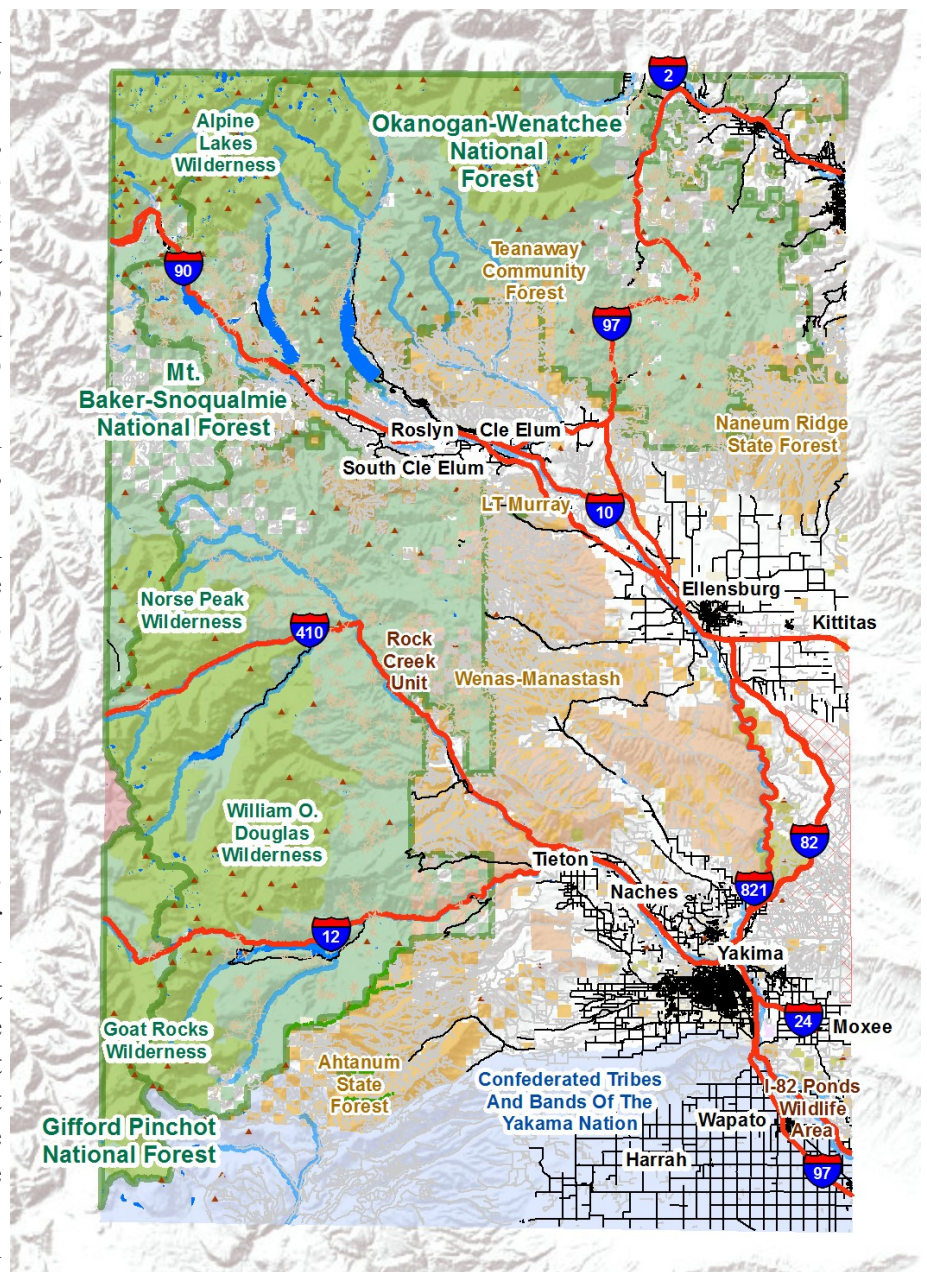
To accomplish this, the USDA Forest Service has partnered with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Central Washington University, and a growing coalition of land management agencies (WDFW, DNR, and others), county and cities, and recreation groups to form the East Cascades Recreation Partnership (ECRP).

This group has the goal of developing a community-lead vision for the future of sustainable recreation in the Upper Yakima Basin. As a first step, the ECRP wants to know where people currently go to recreate, what draws them to these areas, and what challenges and opportunities they see for enhancing recreation across the basin.

“It’s important for us to hear from

all users. Whether you like to drive the forest roads, hike every day, camp with your family, hunt, and fish annually, or value these areas from afar, it is important that we develop a shared understanding of all the existing recreation uses across the Upper Yakima Basin,” said Capp.

The Upper Yakima Basin Recreation Survey will be open through January 2020 to collect input from all seasons of recreationists and takes 5-10 minutes to complete. The survey is available online at: <https://www.gis.cwu.edu/geog/ecrp/>.



### Yakima Valley Audubon Society Membership

Join/renew my annual membership to) the Yakima Valley Audubon Society to receive 10 issues of the Calliope Crier and all chapter benefits. National Audubon membership and Audubon Magazine are not included.

Yakima Valley Audubon Society Membership.....\$ 25.00 per household  
 YVAS Senior (62+) \_\_\_\_ OR Student Membership \_\_\_\_ (please check one).....\$ 15.00 per household  
 Yakima Valley Audubon Society Life Membership .....\$ 500.00 per household

New Member       Renewing Member  (please check one)

In addition to my membership payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_, my check includes an additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 I do not want to receive any solicitations or communications from NAS (please check if applicable)  
 I prefer to read the Crier online and not receive my copy by mail (please check if applicable)

Please make any corrections to your contact information as needed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form and your check payable to: YVAS Membership, P.O. Box 2823, Yakima, WA 98907

**If you have any membership questions, contact Joy McKinney at [joycatbird@gmail.com](mailto:joycatbird@gmail.com).**

### **2019 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD**

President	Bill Drenguis ( <a href="mailto:bdrenguis@gmail.com">bdrenguis@gmail.com</a> )	965-5808	Membership	Joy McKinney ( <a href="mailto:joycatbird@gmail.com">joycatbird@gmail.com</a> )	
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<b>Standing (Voting) Committee Chairs:</b>			Bird Reports	Denny Granstrand ( <a href="mailto:dgranstrand@gmail.com">dgranstrand@gmail.com</a> )	952-2550
Bluebird Trail	Richard Repp ( <a href="mailto:bbirder247@aol.com">bbirder247@aol.com</a> )	965-1134	Social	Nan Ide	952-9765
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			YVAS Email	( <a href="mailto:birds@yakimaaudubon.org">birds@yakimaaudubon.org</a> )	
			YVAS Facebook	( <a href="http://www.facebook.com/yakimaaudubon/?fref=ts">http://www.facebook.com/yakimaaudubon/?fref=ts</a> )	



# Wenas Campground – New changes, same great birds

Last fall/winter, DNR made significant road improvements both to Audubon Road and the main track running through the campground due, in part, to a future timber sale on upper Hog Ranch Road. The roadbed through the camping area has been raised significantly and a deep ditch created off the right (creek side) shoulder.

Within the camping area, motorized vehicles are restricted to green dot roads of which there are two, Dry Creek Road and the main track through the campground. Dry Creek Road has not been altered and remains in rough condition.

The entire creek side of the road has also been posted to prohibit camping, tents as well as vehicles. Vehicle camping is permitted within 100 ft of the two green dot roads and inner tracks designated as a “Camping Spur”.

As a result, the only access/activity on the creek side of the road will be on foot. These changes will enhance flora and wildlife fauna (birds included) as well the health of Wenas Creek.

With the popular Memorial Day Wenas Campout fast approaching, the organizing committee of that event is asking that campers make sure vehicles are parked in a manner that will not hamper others looking to camp along the internal dirt roads. Birders should follow campout signs and look for camps sporting pink flamingos for assistance or questions.

With mutual cooperation and consideration, the campground will continue to thrive as a premier birding and recreation location.

— Richard Repp —



Part of the large "rules" sign along Audubon Road detailing user activity on DNR land, including limiting vehicles to Green Dot roads only. Vehicle camping or parking prohibited more than 100 feet from a Green Dot road unless the access is signed as a "Camping Spur."

## Coming Attractions:

May 23 Chapter Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

June 1 Wenas area field trip

June 8 Teanaway area field trip

June 15 Woodpecker field trip

June 22 Wild Horse Wind Farm field trip