

Hood Canal Environmental Council

Fall 2025

Protecting Hood Canal since 1969

Implementing NOAA's Marine Debris Program in Hood Canal (Bruce Morse)

The NOAA Marine Debris Program has launched [the Marine Debris Monitoring and Assessment Project \(MDMAP\)](#), an effort funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This initiative creates the first comprehensive assessment of marine debris across U.S. shorelines, from the Pacific Islands to the Great Lakes, while laying the foundation for long-term trend analysis.

This program offers an opportunity for Hood Canal residents to take part in combating marine debris. By engaging in community science, locals can contribute to data collection and gain firsthand experience addressing this critical environmental issue. MDMAP is designed to be accessible, with a [monitoring toolbox](#) featuring tutorials, protocols, datasheets, and even a map to identify or establish survey sites. Participation is simple. After reviewing provided resources, volunteers can head to a shoreline, collect data using standardized methods, and log findings via the user-friendly [Debris Tracker](#) Application for seamless data entry and visualization of this public database.

The collected data serves multiple purposes: informing local cleanup initiatives, supporting research, and influencing policies aimed at marine debris reduction. For Hood Canal, this means cleaner waters, healthier marine habitats, and a chance to be represented in a national effort to protect coastal ecosystems.

Join the [NOAA Marine Debris Program](#) today and make a difference! Start surveying your local shoreline and be part of the solution. For more information contact the [Hood Canal Environmental Council](#).



HCEC Website

Please visit our improved website at hoodcanalenvironmentalcouncil.org

Let us know if you have questions, ideas, want to be involved, or want to contribute money.

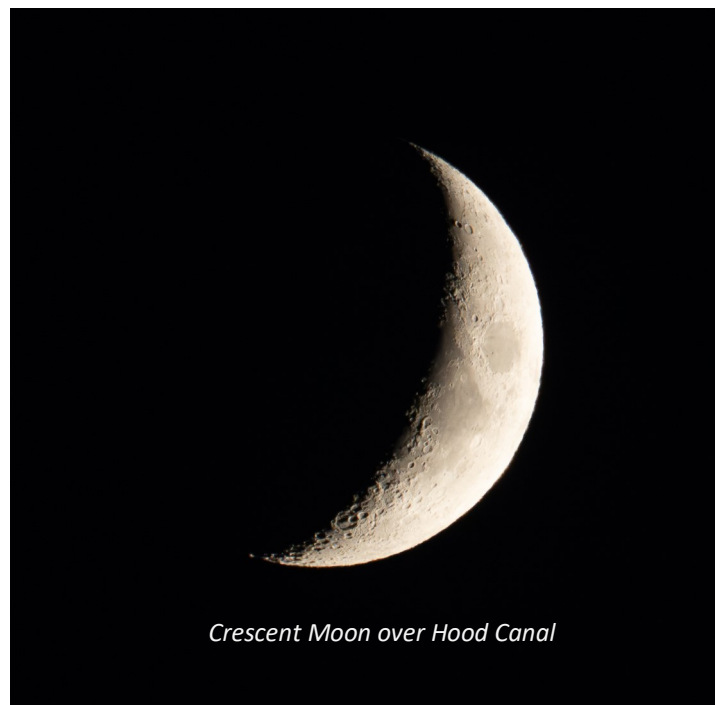
Pleasant Harbor Master Planned Resort (PHMPR)

A hearing on the preliminary plan was held before the hearing examiner on October 15, 2025 and a decision is expected in November or December.

The preliminary plat would create 150 residential lots for dwelling units for both temporary and permanent occupancy and 29 tracts for residential and commercial buildings, golf course fairways, private roads and utilities, open space, storm drainage, and park-and-ride.

View documents here: [PHMPR Preliminary Plat](#)

The Brinnon Group continues to monitor this development and to educate residents on what is happening. You may donate to The Brinnon Group at <https://www.brinnongroup.org/take-action>.



Crescent Moon over Hood Canal

Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan (Bernadette Olson)

The Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan is a strategic framework designed to guide the growth, housing, and environmental policies of Kitsap County. It is the result of many workshops, meetings and comments from the public at large, the business community, environmental organizations and the tribes. It will be used as a blueprint for the next 20 years. It was adopted on December 2nd, 2024 and became effective on April 1st, 2025.

Housing will be concentrated around Urban Growth Areas (UGA) with an emphasis on multi-family housing, townhomes and accessory dwelling units. The goal is to promote walkable neighborhoods with better access to shops, transportation and services. There are new tree canopy requirements for projects of 4 or more units to preserve green spaces.

Rural areas will remain mostly unchanged, and buffer zones will be increased to keep the ecosystem healthy. To improve water quality, wildlife habitat, and vegetation, buffers for fish-bearing streams will increase from 150 feet to 200 feet, and non-fish-bearing stream buffers will expand from 50 feet to 100 feet. Also, protection of small wetlands will be improved – one of the key changes in the Critical Area Ordinance.

Preparations against the impact of climate change are included in the plan by reducing greenhouse emission levels, preparing for sea level rising and extreme weather events. The addition of several Fire Stations throughout Kitsap County are a first step to this end.

This is just a framework. Implementation will still require accommodating various needs in the community with variances. It is important to stay focused on community good for the long term - keep the protected areas pristine and adding more protections like the much-needed wildlife corridors. More at : [20241205_Comp Plan_FINAL_Without attachments.pdf](#)

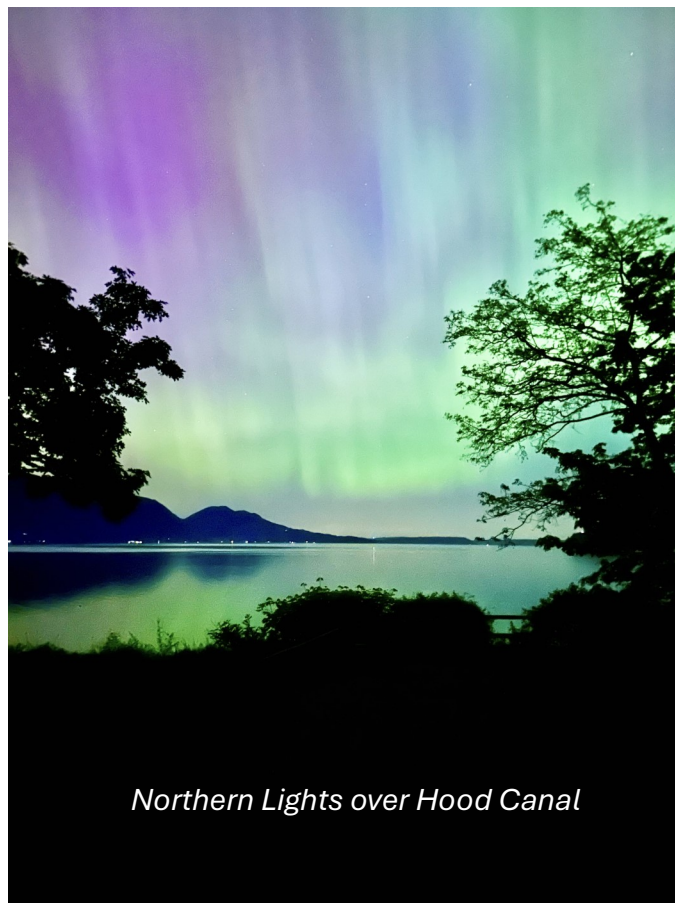
Amending the Shoreline Management Act (Bernadette Olson)

On May 2nd, 2024, the Washington State Department of Ecology started its rulemaking process to amend several chapters under the Shoreline Management Act. Since September 2024, Ecology has held five monthly meetings with the local government Sounding Board to solicit feedback on various rule-making topics such as frequently flooded areas, sea level rise and shoreline permits.

In February and March 2025, Ecology held a series of five webinars on sea level rise science, impact, models and tools, management issues and examples of adaptation planning.

Ecology wrote draft language for the updated rules to revise existing rule language and address the impact of sea level rise and increased storm severity on people's property and shoreline natural resources. This was presented at the Sounding Board meeting on June 16, 2025.

For ongoing action and participation explore more at: [SMA Rulemaking](#)



Northern Lights over Hood Canal

Kitsap Conservation Forum

(Phil Best)

HCEC representatives attended a Conservation Forum on June 26, 2025, sponsored by the Kitsap Environmental Coalition, to propose actions to protect natural areas in Kitsap County. Also attending were representatives of Bainbridge Island Land Trust, City of Bremerton, Kitsap County, Friends of Newberry Hill, Legacy Forest Defense Coalition, Friends of Miller Bay, Washington Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR), Kitsap Environmental Coalition, and others. Proposals focused on: (1) protecting Green Mountain recreation area and securing maintenance funding; (2) improved forest management practices with public notice and involvement, and with particular attention to the urban/rural interface; (3) wildlife corridors recognition, mapping and protection; (4) analysis of commercial subtidal and intertidal aquaculture practices in Hood Canal, including research on environmental impacts and an update of the DNR harvest management plan; and (5) partnerships and collaborations to maximize joint efforts, including creating jointly accessible online data. See more at the KEC website:

<https://www.kitsapenvironmentalcoalition.org/>

Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) Amendments

(Phil Best)

The Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) covers 24.5 million acres of federally managed lands in California, Oregon, and Washington, including the Olympic National Forest. The NWFP, adopted in 1994 to address threats to threatened and endangered species while also contributing to social and economic sustainability, is now being amended. A draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) evaluating proposed amendments to the NWFP was prepared by the US Forest Service in 2024 and publicly commented on in 2025. HCEC signed onto a detailed 26 page comment to the DEIS submitted by a coalition of environmental groups throughout the planning area spearheaded by Bird Alliance and Audubon chapters in Oregon, Washington, and California (See [NW Forest Plan](#)). It states “HCEC supports activities that protect the environment, water quality, and the quality of life in the Hood Canal watershed which includes the eastern boundary of the Olympic National Forest.”

(continued next column)

The comment from HCEC and others states: “[W]e are now extremely concerned that substantial negative impacts will occur from the significant increase in logging proposed under the NWFP’s Alternatives B and D. We recognize four critical flaws:

1. Alternatives B and D abandon the NWFP’s focus on protection and preservation of habitat for threatened and endangered species. The NWFP put an end to over a century of unsustainable timber harvest and shifted focus toward recovery of endangered and sensitive species (e.g. Marbled Murrelets, Northern Spotted Owls, Red Tree Voles, salmonids), aiming to balance restoration of habitat with harvest in a more holistic way. Without this balance, species will once again be at grave risk.

2. All proposed alternatives presume that thinning and logging across moist and dry forests within the planning area will reduce wildfire risk and therefore provide greater “adaptation” and “resilience.” We provide scientific literature that refutes that presumption and calls for a more nuanced approach.

3. None of the alternatives provide recommendations that align with Climate Smart objectives—an approach that moves forest management towards carbon storage and sequestration goals and natural climate solutions strategies.

4. The plan myopically focuses on the economics of timber production with little or no consideration of other increasingly important economic drivers, including recreation and ecosystem services.”

According to the Forest Service website at [Pacific Northwest Region | Northwest Forest Plan & Amendment | Forest Service](#) they are reviewing over 3,400 comments. Given the attitude of the current administration favoring timber harvest over environmental concerns, we do not have much hope that the NWFP amendments finally adopted will be any improvement over the existing NWFP, and will probably be a big step backward.



Morning sculling on Hood Canal

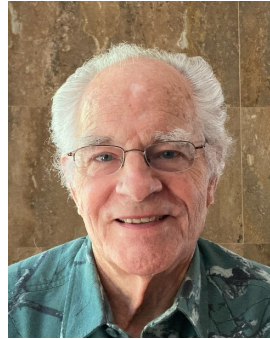
MEET THE HCEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Donna Simmons
HCEC Director

Donna's longtime environmental activism began in the early 1970's with concerns about unsustainable timber harvesting in the Olympic National Forest, resulting in the creation of the Wonder Mountain Wilderness and Special Management Recreation Area in the upper Skokomish watershed. Donna served on the Washington State Ecological Commission 1984-1992 where she helped to create the Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC) in 1986. There, she headed the Public Education Program, later serving as the Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director.

To protect water quality and related natural resources in the Hood Canal watershed, Donna has served on the Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group board, the Water Resource Inventory Area 16 Committee, the Mason County Conservation District Board of Supervisors, and the US Forest Service Citizen Advisory Board. She was also employed for 2 years by Long Live the Kings on salmon recovery issues. She has received awards for her many years of work from HCCC, the Washington State Department of Fisheries, Washington State, Trout Unlimited, and the PNW Region USDA Forest Service. Donna served as HCEC President for several years until 2024.



Don Seavy
HCEC Director & Treasurer

Don Seavy was born in Seattle, grew up in Los Altos, California, and fell in love with the salt water while spending summers at his grandparents' in Lakebay, Washington. These summer experiences influenced his career choice.

Don earned his PhD in Zoology with a minor in Oceanography from Oregon State University in 1977. He taught majors Biology, Marine Biology, Oceanography, and Natural History at Olympic College, Bremerton for 40 years. He created a learning community, Life on the Edge, that included himself and two other professors. He taught Natural History and the other two colleagues taught their disciplines. Each year different colleagues chose to participate, so in addition to Natural History there was a variety of disciplines offered such as geography, geology, chemistry, interpersonal communication, and art. They integrated the three disciplines with lectures and a field trip once a week.

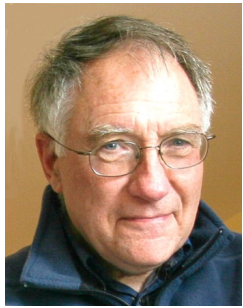
Don and his wife, Barbara, have been living off the grid in the middle of a beautiful forest south of Seabeck for more than 30 years. This has been an exponential learning curve. The benefits of living in nature far outweigh the challenges of living off the grid! Don has two sons who reside in Northern California and Seattle.



Sleeping young whale drifting past Hood Canal buoy



Sunset on Hood Canal



Phil Best
HCEC Director & President

Phil Best grew up in Silverdale, attended Olympic College, obtained a JD degree from the University of Washington, worked for the Washington State legislature, then started his legal career in Bremerton. While in law school, Phil married Karen, a high school classmate, and they moved to Seabeck in 1967 to raise their family.

In 1969 Phil helped create the Hood Canal Environmental Council in recognition of the ongoing need to protect Hood Canal from developments such as the proposed dredging of Stavis Bay for a marina south of Seabeck. Phil worked with Gary Cunningham and others to create the Kitsap Land Trust (which later merged with three other land trusts to form the Great Peninsula Conservancy) to permanently protect special places through agreements by willing landowners. He has focused on environmental law and community involvement and served as Kitsap County commissioner (1995-1998).

Phil is grateful for the enthusiastic work by many willing community members, including the other HCEC directors, who help protect Hood Canal. As he wraps up his legal career, he enjoys travels with Karen, their "Fjordheim" retreat on Hood Canal, boating and photography. He currently serves as president of HCEC and editor of the newsletter.



Mike Beaulieu
HCEC Director

Mike grew up in the outdoors of Washington State and British Columbia, graduated from Washington State University, received his commission from the US Navy's Aviation Officer Candidate School in July 1986, and served all over the world, including tours or deployments in the US, Japan, Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. He has a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy, is former Commander, Defense Contract Management Agency, Aircraft Propulsion Operations and retired as Captain from the Navy in 2015.

Mike, along with his wife Pam and their kids, lived and recreated in many beautiful places during his Navy adventure, and always made time to be outdoors. He realizes that our natural areas are at risk of changing in profound ways as once pristine natural habitat shows increasing signs of stress from careless individuals, poorly thought out regulations, and relentless population growth. It's no longer possible to pick up loved ones on a Friday afternoon, and head into the backcountry without a campsite reservation, obtained weeks in advance!

Mike is a Director and former Secretary of HCEC, and also volunteers on the Citizens Advisory Group of the Hood Canal Coordinating Council to help advance a shared vision to protect and recover Hood Canal's environmental, economic, and cultural well-being.



Karen Best
HCEC Director

Karen's parents exposed her to camping and hiking, so she has always loved nature and the outdoors. She worked two summers at Paradise Inn on Mt. Rainier. She graduated from UW School of Nursing, was a Public Health Nurse in Seattle, and later taught Sexuality Education and AIDS Education in Central Kitsap.

As Phil Best's spouse, Karen Best became involved at the inception of HCEC when their second daughter was newborn in 1969. While leaving the environmental matters mostly to Phil, Karen has "picked up the pieces," writing thank-you notes for contributions, preparing newsletters for mailing, and delivering newsletters to businesses around Hood Canal for distribution to customers who happen by. Karen also serves as "chief listener" and sometimes "suggestion contributor."

Karen and Phil use their Hood Canal home now for a retreat for all the family, 4 kids, 11 grandkids, and 9 great-grandkids, instilling a love for Hood Canal and its creatures. Hood Canal is one of the most beautiful places in the world---a best-kept secret. Yet we want all to know how special and relatively healthy and teeming with life she is, fragile and needing our care, wise decisions, and involvement.



Bruce Morse
HCEC Director

Bruce has a MS and Ph.D. in Forest Entomology. His professional career focused on developing software products and delivering solutions that integrated spatial and database technologies affecting government, utilities, telecommunications, and aviation. In retirement, Bruce continues to apply his skills to collaborate and improve large, complex programs and organizations.

Bruce retired to Gig Harbor from Denver, Colorado in 2020 and has been active in conservation ever since to preserve the natural beauty of Puget Sound. He volunteers with the following organizations and projects: Tahoma Bird Alliance Board and Chair of Conservation Committee; Washington Department of Natural Resource's Eelgrass Restoration and Monitoring program; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Mussel Toxicology study; Pierce County Oyster Restoration project; Key Peninsula-Gig Harbor-Island (KGI) Watershed Council Co-Chairperson; Gig Harbor History Museum Researcher and Archivist; Burley Lagoon Heritage Alliance; and HCEC Board.

He and his wife, Beth, live on Burley Lagoon and have two married daughters, Jessica in Boise, and Sarah in Portland.



Cormorants looking for nefarious activities



Janet Wold
HCEC Director

Janet Wold has a Masters degree in Aquatic Entomology and Fisheries and brings to HCEC over five decades of leadership in natural resource management, aquatic science, and public land stewardship. Her career with the USDA Forest Service spanned from field biology to executive leadership, culminating in her role as Forest Supervisor of the 898,100-acre Stanislaus National Forest adjacent to Yosemite National Park. Her work has included fisheries research, stream restoration, hydropower coordination, collaborative watershed initiatives, and leading interdisciplinary teams of engineers, biologists, planners, and public affairs specialists. Since retiring in 1997, Janet has continued to serve as a volunteer and board member for environmental organizations, including HCEC. Her deep knowledge of Pacific Northwest ecosystems, combined with her passion for public service and environmental education, make her a vital contributor to the Council's mission of protecting Hood Canal's ecological integrity and cultural heritage.

Janet and her husband live at Squamish Harbor just southwest of the Hood Canal bridge in Jefferson County, where she keeps an ever-watchful eye on activities of interest to HCEC.

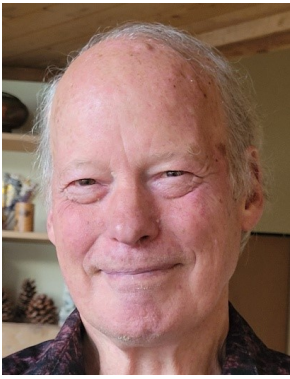


Terry Reeve
HCEC Director

Terry Reeve is a Seabeck native, University of Washington grad, Peace Corps volunteer in South Korea, and managed commercial salmon processing on the Yukon River.

On behalf of the University of Alaska, Marine Advisory Program (MAP), Terry engaged in quality training for Yukon River commercial fishermen to help fishermen learn how to increase the quality of their fish, and worked with salmon fishermen in Alaska to direct market their catch. He served as coordinator and planner for the Quinhagak ecotourism/archeology project in southwestern Alaska, which involves birding, tundra walks, village visits, and participation in archeological digs on the Kuskokwim River in Alaska.

Terry is now retired back home at Seabeck, where he resides with his wife, Youn-hee.



Paul McCollum
HCEC Director

Paul McCollum's experience with and knowledge of native tribes has proven very valuable to the HCEC board. From 2007 until retiring in 2022, he was director of the Natural Resource Department of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe. Previously he worked in Alaska as a fisheries biologist and then as a consultant to remote Native Village Councils, helping them to fight the oil industry and other environmental threats to their villages.

He adopted and raised 3 children from Nepal and helped to support several Nepali orphanages and projects concerning women and children.

With a very supportive tribe, he led the fight to secure a \$20 million cleanup of Port Gamble Bay from what Washington State had first proposed as a \$1 million project. Paul greatly admires the Port Gamble S'Klallams for their deep caring about Mother Earth and climate change.



Tanuj Bansal
HCEC Director

Tanuj Bansal recently added Hood Canal as a residence, with his wife Kim, driven by their love for nature, mountains, salt water and everything else Hood Canal has to offer, including oysters, crabs and shrimp. Tanuj is an AI and Cloud marketing executive. He is also actively bringing his professional skills to HCEC as a new board member. Tanuj has an MS in Engineering from Case Western Reserve University, and an MBA from University of Michigan. He loves to hike and is an avid book reader/listener. As the only non-retired member of the board, Tanuj has found time to write blogs, attend board meetings, and propose new ideas.



Bernadette Olson
HCEC Director & Vice President



BOO! - In Boyce Creek in Guillelot Cove county park near Seabeck, reflections from a water strider's water ripples create a skull image on the creek bottom.

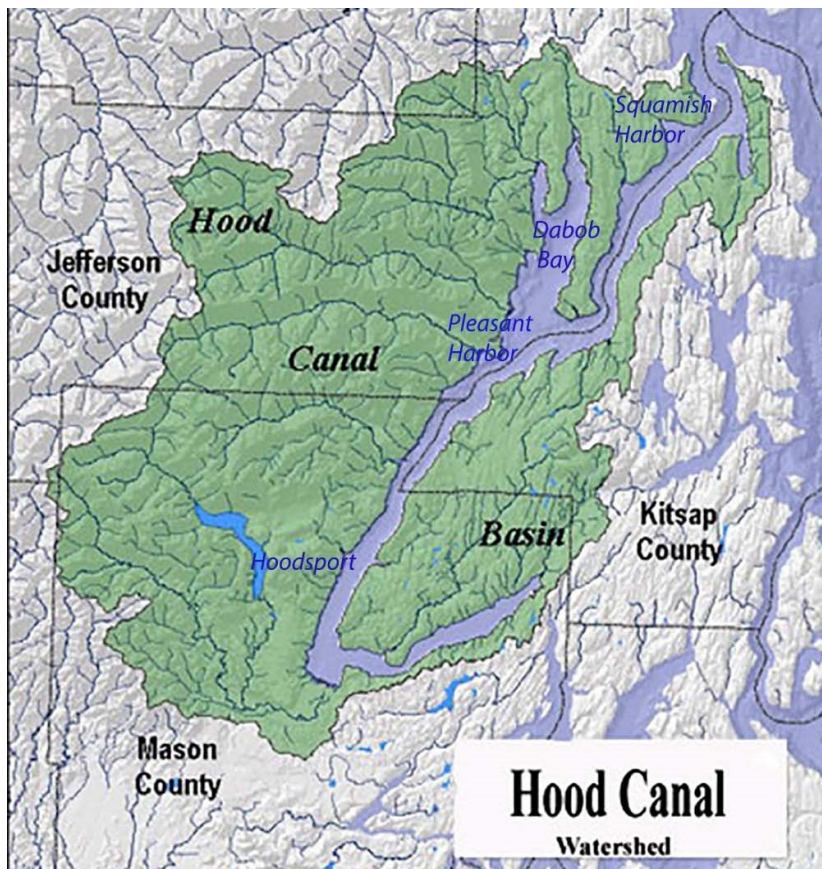
Bernadette Olson is originally from France, and resides with husband Ron in the Nellita-Holly area. She was a liaison representative from the Holly area to the Board and investigated timber harvesting near Holly. She has followed and evaluated for the HCEC Board the proposed Shoreline Master Plan revisions for Kitsap, Mason, and Jefferson counties; reported on a proposed commercial geoduck farming at Harding Creek; delved into Seabeck Heron Rookery issues; and is helping save a salmon stream at Holly (among other things). Bernadette has an Electrical Engineering degree, working in the field for 12 years, and is co-founder of holography company Laser Reflections. She volunteers on the construction crews for Habitat for Humanity. Her loves are backpacking, gardening, trail building, and kayaking. She loves everything "Hood Canal" including the cockles and piddocks!

Hood Canal Environmental Council

PO Box 87

Seabeck, WA 98380

hoodcanalenvironmentalcouncil.org



HOOD CANAL ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL YEARLY MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

Individual \$10 _____

Family \$30 _____

Group \$100 _____

Contributions in any amount are welcome

NAME

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HOW I CAN HELP

Please send this coupon and your check payable to:
HCEC, PO Box 87, Seabeck, WA 98380

OR GO ONLINE AT

hoodcanalenvironmentalcouncil.org