



Friends of the Hidden River

From: John Schmied, Vice President, Friends of the Hidden River (206) 714 4742

To: Friends of the North Creek Forest

Subject: Conserving North Creek Forest

We at Friends of the Hidden River strongly support the conservation protection of the 64 acre North Creek Forest north of UW Bothell Campus along the I-405 corridor.

It is very important to consider preserving the intact fragments of viable ecosystem in our area. These corridors are key to ensure clean water filtering. Studies have shown that forested areas filter, cool and slow water flow. North Creek is experiencing continuous, systematic degradation by surge run off. The water flow from the urbanized areas upstream north and east of the 64 acre parcel is being channelled into the levees in the lower North Creek. The channelized flow accelerates in these areas, reworking the stream bed, uncovering and destroying the salmonid redds. The surges also carry vast quantities of silt into North Creek driving silt into the salmon and trout redds. Thus it is very important to keep the 64 acre parcel intact to prevent even more damage.

Beyond water quality our area needs to preserve what cover and wildlife corridors we have, not just for salmon, but for other wildlife, like Pileated Woodpeckers, that our area is prized for.

Third, this area can provide a key environmental educational base for learning. For example, the 64 acre forested area abuts the Canyon Park Junior High School Outdoor Environmental Learning Center. This Center, created two years ago, is providing practical learning experiences to our young citizens about the value of the natural world. Preserving this area will extend the educational usefulness of the Environmental Learning Center as well as preserving the vitality and ecological diversity in this area. This action will allow creation of joint student – community member educational learning opportunities in the expanded natural park.

From the practical standpoint, preserving this space is crucial. Citizens can't appreciate what they don't understand and if our citizens don't understand the role intact ecosystems play in the health of our environment, the entire area and the Puget Sound ecosystem will continue to be degraded through neglect and ignorance.... Essentially dying the death of a thousand small cuts.

That's why the Friends of the Hidden River enthusiastically endorses, and will continue to support this proposal throughout the approval process.

Sincerely,

John Schmied