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Shriley Weston
Western Washington University

Huxley College of the Environment, Western Washington University

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the HUXLEY HUMUS

Vol. 2 Issue 1

POOR PLANNING → MUD

A major fault of local planning was very evident at the last meeting of the Whatcom County Planning Commission.

A home owner near Sudden Valley had a complaint that his land was suffering mud and water damage due to a Sudden Valley Subdivision, which was upslope from him. The ground cover had been removed from the "underdevelopment". This had caused erosion, changed the drainage patterns, and caused siltation of a creek.

There have been numerous examples of developers removing the ground cover with resultant mud slides and water run-off problems. Several weeks ago a mud slide occurred above the Samish Way Free-Way Exit, from land being prepared for development.

The point is this: These events are predictable. The Planning Commission could identify areas that have a potential for causing mud slides or water run-off problems and regulate the maximum stress to which these areas are subject.

(continued at top)

QUESTION OF THE DAY

Which would be better:
to have a wind up clock to cut down on energy usage or to have an electric clock to cut down on noise pollution?

At the present, most planning is to solve problems after they occur, but the objective should be to "plan" to avoid particular problems before they actually happen. Land-use planning can be based on the ecological principles, rather than economic or real estate principles. It seems many times the Planning Commission members are much more sympathetic to developers, speculators, and realtors than they are to environmentalist concerns. Maybe with increasing public interest in environmental quality, decision-making will be put in an ecological framework.

BOOK...

How to Live on Nothing by
Joan Ranson Shortney

...a must for those of you who really don't have a dime to your name, or a smile for a friend.

FISHKILL BOOKLET AVAILABLE

The booklet "Guidelines for evaluating Fishkill Damages and Computing Fishkill Damage Claims in Washington State" is NOW available from the Washington State Department of Ecology.

This technical guide is meant for use mainly by people in the field of fishery biology or related technical fields.

WAR—A DEAD ISSUE

BY DICK SMITH

Perhaps, but with the cease fire and peace talks and a winding down of hostilities there appears ahead a period of relief and a lessening of tensions. But, war does not completely end with agreement or signed documents. "Peace with honor" to paraphrase our political officials and military advisors, is no longer at hand but here, too late of course for many. The number escapes me. Those maimed, orphaned and left homeless are uncountable, and future generations not yet born, who know not of this war, may face other horrors of genetic nature associated with the systematic destruction of Southeast Asia.

This war may be over but lest we forget that reconstruction, the aftermath of war, can take longer and cost as much, as did the war itself. This has yet to be seriously advertised. A lasting peace, one with honor, one that heals, is indeed a long range undertaking. (1st col. p.3)

The Huxley HUMUS is a student publication of Huxley College of Environmental Studies a division of WWSU. Traditionally: "the Voice of Huxley", The HUMUS reports the action and reactions of environmental issues in and around the Western Community.

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Of course, our military justification is that this means of coverage and application is only aimed at food denial of enemy personnel and the resultant loss of trail and base camp perimeters.

Very Effective—with millions of acres sprayed, defoliation was a conceivable contributing factor to bringing the war to a close, but what of the land, and those who remain as our veterans return.

With 15% or more of the air-able land of South Vietnam removed from production, a large portion of the ecology of this country is virtually nonrenewable. Over $\frac{1}{2}$ of the hardwood, mangrove, and rubber forests are either destroyed or reduced to such an extent that regeneration will take a long time. With the forests, rice, vegetables, and fruit crops affected by a 20-50% reduction in productivity, and dislocation of the people tending their crops, in bombed or sprayed regions there awaits more than a temporary crop crisis. Soil is showing severe deterioration due to the characteristics of a fragil and humid tropical rain forest. Re-accumulation of leaf litter but also on the rapid capture and transfer of calcium phosphate, nitrates, potash, magnesium and sulfur tied up in the surface vegetation. Pollination depends on bats, birds, insects and ground-dwelling mammals who also help cast and disperse seeds. These natural balances are grossly upset by indiscriminate defoliation.

(cont'. column 2 p. 3.)

(from column 1 p.2) WAR...

Considering the nature of war and the sophistication of this one must include not only the destructive effects on the environment of Southeast Asia, (more than five million bomb craters) but the devastating effects on the entire ecosystems disrupted by chemical applications of herbicides and defoliating agents. Vietnam has benefited from our scientific elitism and has enjoyed as clean a war as the American conscience could provide. Unlike nuclear holocaust, the effects are not entirely irreversible. But let's take a closer examination.

Herbicides, commonly called defoliating or anti-ag-agents of crop production are used on U.S. farms and gardens to increase productivity and eliminate undesirable vegetation. In Southeast Asia this use was an entirely different story. Higher concentrations and increased applications constituted use of these chemicals as indiscriminate and devastating warfare.

The Joint Chief of Staff, definition of Herbicide, "a chemical which causes trees, shrubs, and plants to shed their leaves prematurely." This is an ambiguous statement. This is without regard to the effects on food and water supply or the health of animals, people, or lower organisms, or the long-term effects of herbicides.

(con't. column 2 p. 2)

Spraying of defoliants, due to effects on deciduous plants retards photosynthesis, encourages succession of increaser vegetation, changes soil consistencies and characteristics of fertile tropical forests to brick-like laterized clay pans which support little organic coverings. Erosion factors increase and make future land reclamation difficult due to long term ecological balances which are disrupted.

War has brought to Vietnam, a poor country with peasant people on a subsistence economy, drastic cultural changes. The fragility has been weakened by ten years of bombing, burning, bulldozing, defoliation and dislocation of a people. These are factors which have increased immigration, rapid urbanization, increased population pressures, health problems, economic activities of large cities and the problems of cultural disassociation of a people with their land.

War affects change: land--in design and use; and people--in culture, attitudes, values, dispositions, and health. The teratogenic (birth defects) and carcinogenic (cancer) effects of the

(con't. column 2 p. 6)

HUMUS DEADLINE: This quarter's deadline for contributions is 2pm on Wednesday. Send through campus mail or drop in the HUMUS box, Zimmerman House.

SEE THE LIGHT?

On any given night, Seattle is aglow with the lights of the Sea-First Building, I.B.M. Building and numerous other buildings. One immediately thinks there must be a lot of people working overtime but further investigation reveals nobody at home. According to Puget Sound Power and Light, if no one is home you turn the lights off to conserve electricity. Excuse me, I forgot. This is the territory of Seattle City Light where buildings are designed (yes, designed) to be heated by the electric lighting. The lights heat the building making air conditioners mandatory during the warm months. Electric air conditioners are used to cool the air heated by the electric lighting system. Poor economics? No, not when the costs are calculated on an annual basis utilizing the cheap all-electric rates of Seattle City Light.

The cheap electricity sold by Seattle City Light is the primary factor in this unfortunate situation while the building owners compound the problem. If one has spent a large sum of money building a building, why not advertise the fact by keeping it lit during the hours of darkness.

With the current concern over wasted energy, it seems only logical that the above situations be eliminated.

Louie Reed

ECOLOGY DEPT. RAISES OBJECTION, NOT DAM

The State Department of Ecology has taken a firm stand against the raising of the height of High Ross Dam.

"The Department has continually monitored the situation for several months and has concluded that any benefits derived from the High Ross Dam would be so short-lived that the environmental damage...would materially outweigh any advantage," according to Director, John Biggs.

Biggs said that the Department of Ecology feels the Ross Dam situation points out the urgent need for a total state energy policy. The department is seeking such a program, to be carried out by citizen leaders from government, environmentalists, and industry.

In our world which is overpopulated there is a cry for more room. We really shouldn't complain. We have been the cause.

FUMES !!

A group of researchers has found a direct correlation between the frequency of motor vehicle accidents and the levels of air pollution. Oxidants can dull the senses, impair vision, and affect performance and judgment, and cause people to become irritable. Carbon Monoxide (CO) has a time lag in its correlation with accidents. Nov. 1972, Archives of Environmental Health.

NOTHING FISHY HERE

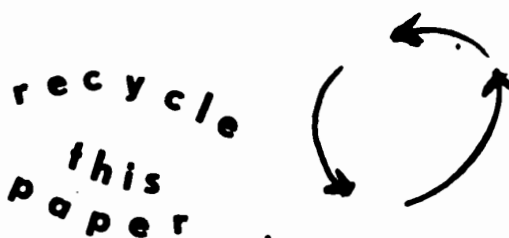
For those people who have wondered as to the source of the smell emitted from the basement of Zimmerman house, wonder no more. The alcoholic and previously formalitic odor is the responsibility of the Bellingham Bay Study, a problem series group working with Bert Webber and Bob Anderson, working in conjunction with the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The project is an inventory and study of Bellingham Bay from the Nooksack Delta to the Larrabee region. Two crews handle the work. While one group is on the beach setting a two hundred foot beach seine, the other is out in a boat setting gill nets and crab pots, taking water samples and conducting otter trawls. The latter work is handled by Ron Starkey of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife with equipment furnished by the Bureau.

All this takes place Wednesday night between the hours of 4 o'clock and 12 o'clock. Thursday is the day of compilation as the previous nights work is sized, dissected, and on occasion preserved.

HUMUS Staff

Shirley Weston-Editor
 Terry Greer
 Kathy Kudrna
 Louie Read
 Bob Speed
 Arne Vicklund

Seniors interested in working for the Federal Government should be thinking about taking the Federal Service Entrance Examination. This is necessary for most federal career positions. The FSSE is given on the third Saturday of each month and the Western Placement Office (in Old Edens) has more information.



INTERIM RIVER BASINS REPORT OUT

The Department of Ecology has completed the Interim Report; Southwest Washington River Basins, in a joint project with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The entire report will be completed in 1974.

The interim report is accompanied by a booklet: Water Resources of Southwest Washington. This booklet contains the technical background for the Interim Report.

Copies are being mailed to planning agencies, public libraries, and the Cooperative Extension Service.

Comments or requests should be sent to: Study Coordinator, Southwest Washington River Basin Study, Washington State Dept. of Ecology, Lacey WA, 98504.

1-WAY Dead
 B.L.U.C. :> End ...

At the January meeting of the Bellingham Land Use Commission a dilemma presented itself.

BACKGROUND

When the downtown one-way grid system was first operated, many merchants suffered a loss of business. The Shangra-La Motel on East Holly had a severe decline of customers due to the change. The operators of the motel were in the progress of buying it from a couple who had made that motel their life's work. After four months of losing money the buyers quit the business and it returned to the old couple. They had to come out of retirement and operate it themselves. They had planned to retire on the payments from the motel. The present income from the motel is estimated to be one-fourth the operating expenses.

THE PROBLEM

The owners requested that they be permitted to put signs in strategic positions around the city in order to draw customers. At present that is against city policy.

The dilemma becomes apparent: If the city allows people to advertise, environmental degradation will follow; if they do not allow this, many will suffer economic losses. If the one-way streets are changed, the traffic

flow will have decreased efficiency.

This is a sticky problem for which there is no easy solution. It seems that we at Huxley should be developing an ethic that can alleviate problems of this kind.

WAR...

from p. 3

Vietnam people due to defoliation of their country by toxic chemicals may persist long after the land renews itself.

This war has opened many doors revealing rich minerals and fossil fuels. Our country is the first in line for handouts.

The changes that have occurred in Vietnam exist to such an extent that decades will pass before their full effects will be known. No trace of Waterloo or Gettysburg remain, scars of Verdun or Guadacanal are hard to find, and even Hiroshima has been reconstructed to be unrecognizable as ground zero. But the landscape of Vietnam may be a more permanent memorial in the minds of future environmentalists.

A good reference to "what our herbicided are doing to us" can be found in "Defoliation" by Thomas Whiteside, Ballantine F.O.E. 1970.