



Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society

P.O. Box 1092, Sandpoint, ID 83864 www.nativeplantsociety.org

Officers

October 16, 2010

President

Don Childress
(208) 255-7928

Superintendent Dick Cvitanich, LPOSD 84
901 Triangle Drive
Ponderay, ID 83852

Vice-President

Bob Wilson
(208) 683-2387

Dear Supt. Cvitanich,

Secretary

Dennis Rieger
(208) 263-5947

The Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society is an active and large group (150+ members) based in Bonner County, where it educates about the benefits of native plants and their habitats, works to identify and protect sensitive plant populations and engages the public and institutions in the support of native flora, from small plots to forests.

Treasurer

Ken Haag
(208) 255-4413

Several of our members walked around the designated wetland behind the Sandpoint Middle and Senior High Schools. It defines the east edge of middle school property at the north playfields and the west border of the high school. The Idaho Department of Transportation tells us that this area was established as an offset for the new Highway 95 bypass. Signs on the property indicate the National Wildlife Federation was also involved in sponsoring its development. The Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society appreciates your commitment to maintaining this functioning, vestige wetlands and encourages continuing efforts towards fostering a return to a native ecosystem within this small area.

Arboretum Manager

Sylvia M. Chatburn
(208) 263-2175

Board Members

Joanna Fuchs
(208) 265-4839

We did note encroachment by a small fill and by several tires and rusted equipment next to the maintenance area near the new restrooms and a slow widening of access roads across the wetland. We would encourage restoring and maintaining a clear boundary to this area due to its small size and relative fragility. Also, invasive plant species including grasses, tansy, Eurasian hawkweed and others were evident. It appears that some weed control would be in order.

Carol Jenkins
(208) 265-9204

Marilyn McIntyre
(208) 290-7176

Though it is our understanding that the original wetland, as developed by ITD and the National Wildlife Federation, might have included some non-native plant species the intent was to maintain a native and natural environment. Thus we would encourage that new plantings be only species native to our region, and that non-native species be discouraged or removed over time. We might suggest this as an excellent on-going project for the middle and senior school environmental and biology classes. Expert consultation is available in Sandpoint for the various aspects of wetland restoration, through both the Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society and some agencies. A joint venture might also be possible.

Jim Stern
(208) 265-6733

Founder

Lois Wythe
(208) 263-8038

Maintaining and restoring this native wetland ecosystem could provide an educational asset for our schools and an increasingly enjoyable area for our students. We appreciate that the school system signed on to this responsibility and would enjoy any opportunity to work with you towards improving this element of our town's future.

We would appreciate a briefing on your management plans for the wetland, and look forward to helping with implementation.

Sincerely,

Don Childress, president