

WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY AREA 9 (WRIA 9) WATERSHED ECOSYSTEM FORUM

GREEN/DUWAMISH

AND



Algona
Auburn
Black Diamond
Burien
Covington
Des Moines
Enumclaw
Federal Way
Kent
King County
Maple Valley
Normandy Park
Renton
SeaTac
Seattle
Tacoma
Tukwila

King Conservation District
Vashon/Maury Island
Community Council
Covington Water District
Port of Seattle
Washington Department
of Ecology
Washington Department
of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department
of Natural Resources
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Washington
Environmental Council
Green/Duamish
Watershed Alliance
Trout Unlimited/Mid-Sound
Fisheries Enhancement Group
Save Habitat and Diversity of
Wetlands (SHADOW)

The Boeing Company
Master Builders Association
King County Agricultural
Commission

October 13, 2016

The Honorable Reagan Dunn
King County Courthouse
516 Third Ave, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Dunn:

I am writing to you in support for naming a feature of the Green River in honor of Doreen Johnson.

Doreen passed away in 2014, which was a big loss to all those who knew her and benefited from her many actions to protect and restore the natural resources of King County. Over decades, Doreen was a defender of and advocate for farmland, habitat, rural living, open space, and sound growth management.

I had the pleasure of meeting Doreen 25 years ago when I was the manager of the King County Comprehensive Plan and the effort to update the Plan under the provisions of the new State Growth Management Act (GMA). Doreen participated in many public meetings for updating the Plan, always providing thoughtful, thorough, and credible information in which to base policy and plan decisions. She served on the Rural Area Task Force which helped identify and designate the Rural Area of King County and the establishment of its first Growth Management Urban Growth line, two of the most important outcomes of the Comprehensive Plan update under GMA. Doreen also was instrumental in providing information that significantly influenced the designations of Agricultural Production Districts and Mineral Resource Lands. Perhaps most importantly, Doreen literally and figuratively "saw the forest through the trees" and supported meeting multiple objectives, seeking integration and balance of multiple growth management planning objectives. This positive, pro-active leadership of Doreen's, in my mind, is the cornerstone of effective growth management under the auspices of the 1994 King County Comprehensive Plan over the past 22 years in King County.

I later had the privilege of working with Doreen as the Green-Duamish/WRIA 9 Watershed Coordinator, beginning in 1998. Doreen served on the Steering Committee to develop the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan for recovering the threatened Chinook salmon population of the Green/Duamish River. Doreen's



Financial support provided by signers of Watershed Planning Interlocal Agreement for WRIA 9 including:
Algona, Auburn, Black Diamond, Burien, Covington, Des Moines, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Kent, King County, Maple Valley, Normandy Park, Renton, SeaTac, Seattle, Tacoma, Tukwila

understanding of the land and water of the watershed and its ecosystem coupled with her knowledge of growth management and ability to work positively with land owners, were instrumental in collaborating with the cities, County, and the many other stakeholders that worked over six years to create the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan of 2005, "Making Our Watershed Fit for a King".

Doreen's passion for the Green River was infectious, and I believe the foundation for the current coalition of supporters of the Green River that followed her lead. Indeed, Doreen and her husband Howard advocated for the Green River when few others were. It seemed she knew every square inch of the watershed, possessing together with Howard a vast storehouse of knowledge of the Green River and its Chinook salmon population. Doreen was the strongest advocate on the Steering Committee for taking an "ecosystem approach" to plan development. Doreen just didn't tell you about the special places in the Green River Watershed, she showed you—always willing to head up field trips and make connections with land owners. Icy Creek in particular was special to her, and I hold the trip she led for me to see Icy Creek for the first time as a turning point in my career in understanding the connection between people and place. She was a doer.

The big picture perspective that Doreen brought to the table has been instrumental in the leveraging of \$137 million in funding to implementing the Plan since 2005. Indeed, Doreen's knowledge of the watershed led to the identification of key acquisition sites and funding to implement the Salmon Habitat Plan, namely the acquisition of the habitat-rich Kanaskat, O'Grady, and Metzler reaches of the Middle Green River, and staving off development of the Icy Creek headwaters.

I never had the chance to say good bye to Doreen. Commemorating Doreen is just a small token of my deep appreciation for all she did for the County's natural environment, its livability and sustainability, and the inspiration, mentoring, and teaching she bestowed upon me personally and professionally. In January 2004, as she stepped down from the Steering Committee, Doreen wrote the following personal note to me and the WRIA 9 team:

"What a beautiful surprise Sat. morning to answer the doorbell & be presented with a gorgeous vase of flowers from all of you and a kind & thoughtful message. Many of the blooms were in bud and are still opening, so will be lovely for another week or more. It's hard for me to quit, but I know it's the right time. You are a great professional staff. I have every confidence that WRIA 9's Plan will be the best & in the forefront setting standards for others to follow."

Well, Doreen, those buds are still opening and blossoming lovely because of you. Your legacy lives on. Thank you for being in the forefront and setting the standard for others to follow.

The Honorable Reagan

October 13, 2016

Page 3

I am pleased and proud to have the opportunity to honor and commemorate Doreen by naming a special place in the Green River for her. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doug Osterman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and "O".

Doug Osterman

WRIA 9 Watershed Coordinator

December 3, 2016

The Honorable Reagan Dunn
King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Dunn:

Our family is very pleased that you are sponsoring the naming of an important habitat area along the Green River for my mother, Doreen Johnson. Her legacy in King County can be experienced in the Green River Natural Area, our county's rich rural and forest resource lands, and at Green River Community College. She contributed her passion and knowledge to county planning processes and mentored others in how to constructively advocate at the local, regional and state levels. She led by example, advocating for sound planning followed by *action*, using her knowledge and perseverance to catalyze plan implementation.

My mother was very modest and would not have expected any recognition. However, the colleagues who worked with her to preserve Green River salmon habitat felt that her impact was so significant that it warranted memorializing. And after documenting her contributions over the years and hearing from those she collaborated with, I have to agree!

When community members wanted to know how to approach an issue they faced, my mother was one of their first phone calls. She would share who to talk to and what plans and policies to review, then she would help them figure out where to start. I respected and appreciated her approach of working within government processes and collaborating with stakeholders to get things done.

Doreen was known for her open space and water quality contributions, notably in her own community — the Green River Basin. She was on subcommittees for both Water Resource Inventory Areas 9 and 10. Mom went looking for critical habitat to be preserved in the middle and upper Green River. Her efforts were supported and informed by my father, Howard, who had fished the Green River since boyhood and represented the Federation of Fly Fishermen in some of the planning work. She identified and talked with property owners who eventually sold their riverside properties for protecting habitat and opening up the ability to restore key locations, such as Brunner Slough. She told the WRIA 9 committee about Icy Creek and its importance as a groundwater source of cold, clean water to the river. And she was instrumental in calling attention to the potential sale of O'Grady farm, leading to its subsequent acquisition as a park that provided the foundation of the Green River Natural Area. We celebrated my parents' 50th wedding anniversary with a picnic at the newly purchased park.

My mother's environmental legacy can be experienced throughout the region, beyond the Green River Basin. For 15 years she reviewed all forest practice applications in King County for the Washington

1802-7102

Environmental Council, working side-by-side with timber and tribal interests on interdisciplinary teams to ensure that stream and wildlife habitat was protected. She was an early reviewer of Tacoma Public Utilities' proposed Pipeline 5 project. She also participated in several other King County planning efforts including: Enumclaw Community Plan Advisory Committee, King County/Metro Consolidation Advisory Committee, Livestock Management Panel, and the Citizens' Committee for Draft Farm & Forest Report. And in Pierce County, the eight acres my mother inherited from her parents (Mother Earth Farm) are organically farmed by the Emergency Food Network who produces almost 100,000 pounds of fresh fruit, vegetables and honey annually for their food banks and meal sites.

My earliest memory of Mom working on a major community project was helping to create Green River Community College. I recently found a history of GRCC that said she was appointed co-chair of the Auburn Junior College Advisory Committee in 1959. She was described as "a tireless worker" who was instrumental in getting approval for the college in 1964.

My mother cared deeply about preserving our environment and supporting her community. And she put her passion into actions that benefit current and future generations. Her legacy is seen in plans with specific implementation strategies, habitat areas that are now preserved, a college that provides local affordable education opportunities, and those she mentored who will carry on her work.

On behalf of my family, thank you for supporting the proposal for the Doreen Johnson Conservation Area.

Sincerely,



Nora Johnson Hightower

Doreen Johnson Ordinance

The Story of Doreen Johnson added to the Green River Gorge Greenway website in honor of her contributions to conservation of the Green River Gorge Greenway. I'm here to advocate for approval of the proposed ordinance going today to rename an area within the Green River Natural Area in honor of Doreen Johnson in recognition of her service, dedication and profound influence in southeast King County.

Doreen was a long time resident and activist on the Enumclaw Plateau. She started the Enumclaw Plateau Preservation Society and had been an advocate for many important environmental issues on the Enumclaw Plateau and the entire Green-Duwamish watershed.

Doreen had watched the plateau change over the years. She talked about what the walk to Icy Creek used to look like. She remembered trees towering over head in the upland forest of towering Cedars, Douglas Fir, and Western Hemlock. The sounds of birds filled the cool forest air as she and her husband walked down to the Green River Gorge from the Enumclaw Franklin Rd.

When I started working on conservation of the headwaters of icy creek the towering forests were gone and in their place a 10 year old tree farm. I worked with Doreen to found the Middle Green River Coalition with the first effort being to preserve the uplands so that, one day, it could return to being an old growth forest and protect the headwaters of Icy Creek.

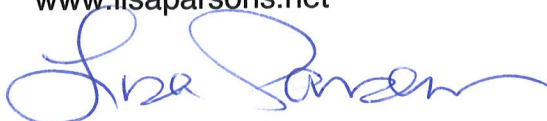
Doreen's historical reference for what the area used to be like and what it was like now was a harbinger of things to come unless people like Doreen, myself, and others continued to advocate for the environment. I was a newcomer to the plateau but realized, like Doreen, that there were important resources that needed to be managed responsibly and areas that needed to be conserved.

Doreen's contributions were invaluable, as was her knowledge of the area. As with Wolf Bauer, their contributions can not be understated and it is important to understand the efforts of those who came before us so we can chart an effective path forward building on their legacies.

This renaming will honor her and can be part of an ongoing story that inspires people in our community to continue her important work.

She will be greatly missed but not forgotten!

Lisa Parsons
Lisa Parsons
www.lisaparsons.net



www.greenrivergorgegreenway.org
206-902-8305
backyardadventuregirl@comcast.net