



# Meadows-Ferndale Homeowners' Association Quarterly Newsletter 2021-Q2 (Spring)



## LIFE IN OUR WETLANDS

This section features photographs and descriptions of critters in our wetlands -- recently submitted by our residents and neighbors. If you have a photo for a future edition of our newsletter, please submit it to <mailto:meadowsferndalehoa@gmail.com>.

### Ring-Necked Duck

The ring-necked duck (*Aythya collaris*) is a medium-sized North American diving duck most commonly found in freshwater ponds and lakes. The male has a wingspan of about 24 inches and is slightly larger than the female.

Ring-necked ducks start pairing during spring migration. The pairs stay together only for reproduction, then they separate. Their nest is bowl-shaped, built on water in dense emergent vegetation with sedges and woody plants. The female lays one egg per day until 8 to 10 eggs are laid. They are incubated 25–29 days and the female may remain with the young until they are able to fly.



Photo courtesy of C. Millard

These birds are omnivores and feed mainly by diving or dabbling at the surface. Ducklings are dependent on animal matter such as insects, worms, midges, and snails. As the ducklings mature, they tend to change their diet to submerged plants such as pondweed and coontail (aka hornwort), and emergents such as annual wild rice.

### Muskrat

The Meadows community is lucky to have several muskrats (*Ondatra zibethicus*) living in our ponds. Muskrats are medium-sized (1-4 pound) semiaquatic rodents native to North America and are found in wetlands over a wide range of climates and habitats. They play an important role in the ecology of wetlands. Muskrats feed on aquatic plants and may chew their food underwater after bringing their haul back to their feeding platform.

Muskrats have many predators including mink, otters, coyotes, foxes, eagles and large hawks, owls, and domestic cats and dogs (more reason to keep them leashed or indoors).

Muskrats are crepuscular, meaning they are most active during twilight hours. They build lodges made from mud and vegetation and may even build separate lodges for feeding and nesting. They can stay underwater for up to 15 minutes and can also swim forward AND backward! Their average lifespan in the wild is 3-4 years, so let's be sure we keep our distance, protect our wetlands and let these cute neighbors live their best life ever in The Meadows wetlands.



Photo courtesy of A. Nokes

## PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

### Nubgaard Development

The approval of this project by the City Council is essentially a "done deal". The permits have been submitted and are in review by the City. A public hearing will take place in mid-April and then the project will likely receive approval near the end of April, after which construction drawings will be submitted. Review and approval of the drawings will take 2-3 months, making it unlikely that any construction will occur until late summer at the soonest, probably August. The Board will continue to monitor the project and will do as much as we can to identify and mitigate any adverse effects to our community.

### Native Growth Area Cleanup

Our wetlands (technically Native Growth Protection Areas) are special places. They are special for our neighbors and for the critters who visit or inhabit. It is important to keep these areas clean, which can prove to be a challenge with the winds that blow home and construction debris into those areas. The HOA is developing a plan for trained neighborhood volunteers to accompany Board members or workers from Squalicum Mountain Ecological Restoration (SMER)

into those areas for cleanup. If you want to volunteer, contact Kathy Young at (541) 517-0943.

## Speed Monitors

We are currently assessing the impact on our speed and traffic monitoring needs posed by the Nubgaard construction project (see articles in this and the previous newsletter). We expect to proceed with purchase and installation in late spring or early summer.

## Mailbox Project Completed!

The reorganization of our mailboxes to make the mail delivery and pickup process more efficient was completed over the weekend of 26-28 March. As Robert Browning once said about "the best laid plans of mice and men", it didn't happen without some hiccups, but it got done – thanks to the USPS and Meadows volunteers who worked on the project. The community has the following folks to thank for this splendid event: Kathy Young, Jim and Jenna Gizzi, Dan Lesan, and especially to Rick Horsman who planned and managed this very substantial effort.



## OTHER TOPICS

### Street Parking

Effective March 22<sup>nd</sup> the entire state of Washington moved to COVID Phase 3. This means that addressing our on-street parking problem cannot be far off. The Board will want to take a well-informed and equitable look at the situation before taking any action. But remember, on-street parking for more than 24 hours is a violation of Ferndale Municipal Code and vehicles parked on curves create a safety hazard. Please plan ahead for the change.

## Public Use of Trail System

Our trail system is open to the public, according to the chart on page 35 of the Ferndale Parks & Recreation Master Plan and Section 3.3 of our CC&Rs. Those living outside The Meadows are, however, subject to all rules that apply to our own residents and owners. The Board is pursuing methods for informing visitors of the rules and for explaining our enforcement procedures. The City's plan also mandates the submission of a biennial Trail Report. We have just recently submitted that report for 2021 and have recommended, *inter alia*, that the use of the trail system be restricted to those who pay for its stewardship. That would be us.

## ARC Requirements

This is a reminder: any physical change to the exterior of your property or fences (other than minor landscaping) requires approval from the Board through the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). This is to ensure that the changes adhere to Ferndale Municipal Codes and HOA CC&Rs, and that they do not violate any health or safety issues, or trample on a neighbor's property rights. Approval of such actions cannot be given by real estate agents, building contractors, or anyone other than the ARC and the Board.

## Burning Ordinance

Ferndale Municipal Code Section 8.08.030 states: "The following are determined to be a nuisance: any open burning, including without limitation, refuse, yard, or construction waste." Further, Section 8.08.100 states: "It is unlawful and a civil infraction for any person ... to do or permit to be done ... any of the acts or things declared to be nuisances herein."

## Pet Waste

With the installation of pet waste stations along The Meadows trail system, the issue of pet waste littering along our trail system has been substantially reduced. But let's not let our guard down. Longer days and more sunshine will see an increase in the number of neighbors and their pets enjoying those trails.

Here are a few reasons why it is so important to scoop that poop. Many people think those droppings will just break down, be washed away and that it is "natural" fertilizer. Nothing could be further from the truth. It can take up to twelve months for waste to break down. During this time bacteria (salmonella, e-coli), fungi (ringworm), and worms (roundworms and tapeworms) can be carried into the water and soil

where it can thrive for years. Your dog does not have to show symptoms of being sick. Their waste can still carry diseases that are harmful to humans, other pets, and wild fauna. Studies have shown that 30% of bacteria found in watershed come from pet waste. Allowing pet waste to run off into nearby water sources can also cause an increased growth of algae and weeds.

Cleaning up after your pet is not only common courtesy, but facilitates a safer environment for you, your pet, and your neighbors. Thank you for being a responsible pet owner.

## Household Trash

A running joke among many Ferndale residents is that if the winds are blowing, it must be trash pickup day (by Sanitary Services Company or SSC). While we cannot keep those winds from blowing, there are actions we can take to reduce the amount of trash that gets blown around our neighborhood.

- Ensure your trash container will close all the way and make sure there is room around it for the pickup arm on the truck to lift it.
- Never secure the lid (e.g., with a bungee cord).
- If your bins are not full, consider waiting until the next pick-up day.
- Mark your trash container and recycle bins with your address so they may be returned should they blow away.
- Return your bins to their “home” as soon as possible.
- Paper waste and plastic seem to be what scatters most easily. Try covering them with heavier items that are less vulnerable to being scattered by wind.
- Be sure to break down cardboard by cutting tape, etc. Do not just crush to flatten. Place flattened cardboard under one of the bins.

These tips and more may be found on the Sanitary Services Company website (<http://www.ssc-inc.com/index.php>). Thank you for doing your part to keep The Meadows trash-free.

## Outdoor Trash (Spring Planting & Dumping)

With the coming of spring, we expect to see a lot of landscaping and garden work. Professional landscapers and ecological restoration specialists will take care of all areas except our privately-owned lots. The work on private lots will inevitably produce “stuff”

that needs disposal – let’s call it “yard waste”. It is essential that we dispose of this yard waste appropriately. Think about it this way: all areas off your lot are either someone else’s private property, public property owned by the City of Ferndale, or common areas collectively owned by all members of the Meadows-Ferndale HOA. What this means is that all these areas off your property are owned by someone else, so please do not dump your yard waste on someone else’s property. Not only is it rude to do so, but the HOA can incur substantial penalties for violating the rules that govern our stewardship of the non-private areas of our neighborhood. It should also be noted that such waste cannot be burned (see burning ordinance article in this newsletter) or accumulated on your property to the extent that it violates the health, safety, or aesthetic rules of our community. So, please either haul your waste to the dump operated by Recycle and Disposal Services Inc. on Labounty Drive near Slater Road (<https://www.rdsdisposal.com/>) or use the “yard waste and woody debris” service offered by the Sanitary Services Company at the following URL (<http://www.ssc-inc.com/index.php>).

## Meadows Buildout Status

House/Lot Status	Number
Occupancy permits issued*	132
Homes under construction	7
Vacant lots	18
*Includes 3 rentals	
<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>	<b>157</b>

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

HOA Website:

- ▶ <https://www.meadows-ferndale-hoa.org>

HOA Email:

- ▶ [meadowsferndalehoa@gmail.com](mailto:meadowsferndalehoa@gmail.com)

Windermere Property Management

- ▶ Phone: (360) 733-7944 ext. #1410

And finally ...

To all our owners and residents: stay healthy.