Intro Paragraph with photo of Geoduck Gallop:

Greetings from Olympia! After slogging through one of the wettest months in recorded history, we started the new month at a gallop. In what is becoming an annual tradition MES students, faculty, and staff enjoyed (mostly) dry conditions while completing the 10K or half marathon at the Geoduck Gallop. We posed with Evergreen’s mascot, Speedy, before intimidating other runners with our tight racing formation and coordinated uniforms.

Photo of Environmental Lobby Day:

As I write, our first-year students are working hard on their candidacy papers in [Ecological and Social Sustainability](https://www.evergreen.edu/catalog/offering/ecological-and-social-sustainability-23527). One highlight of this class (besides the beloved candidacy paper) was participating in Environmental Lobby Day at the Washington legislature. After studying environmental policy in fall quarter, we got a close-up view of the policymaking process. Many students had a chance to meet with their state representatives and senators to share their perspectives and expertise on environmental issues. The legislature is considering many bills focused on climate mitigation and adaptation, so our focus on climate science and policy fit well with this event.

Photo of Thesis Presentation:

Our second-year students are fully immersed in their thesis research. At the end of fall quarter, they shared their works-in-progress with the Evergreen community at a poster session in the library lobby. Spring thesis presentations will take place on May 19, 21, 26, and 28 (3-6 pm)—mark your calendars and look for an announcement in early May.

Photo of GIS presentations

This quarter many second-year students are also completing ambitious projects as part of [Special Topics in GIS](https://www.evergreen.edu/catalog/offering/special-topics-gis-23532). I’ve been really impressed by their sophisticated analysis and engaging presentations over the past few years. Consider attending their public presentations session to learn about cutting edge work in spatial analysis on March 11, 6-10 pm in Seminar 2 A1105. The presentation schedule will be available soon at the [MES Blog](https://www.evergreen.edu/mes/blog). With this presentation, students will have completed a three-quarter sequence and earned a Certificate in GIS.

We continue a long-standing tradition with the 31st annual [Rachel Carson Forum](https://www.evergreen.edu/mes/rachel-carson-forum) on April 30. Our student organizers, Sarah Croston and Kevin Lester, have chosen the theme “Environmental Heritage of Washington State.” The keynote speaker is [Dr. Antonelis-Lapp](https://jeffantonelis-lapp.com/), Evergreen faculty (emeritus), who just published “Tahoma and its People: A Natural History of Mount Rainier.” I hiked the Wonderland Trail with him during the earliest stages of this book. Based on our conversations—the miles sped by!—I anticipate an enriching and fun talk.

We also have scholarship by MES faculty to celebrate. Since our last newsletter, Shawn Hazboun published the results of survey research on public responses to oil, natural gas, and coal exports among Washington State residents. [“A left coast ‘thin green line’? Determinants of public attitudes toward fossil fuel export in the Northwestern United States”](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214790X19302242) appeared in *The Extractive Industries and Society*. Her research identifies key demographic, geographical, and political variables that influence individuals’ perceptions and which underscores the possibilities and challenges of the “thin green line” as a climate mitigation strategy.

John Withey and collaborators at the University of Washington published a study on land conservation strategies to protect biodiversity conservation in the face of climate change. [“Planning for climate change through additions to a national protected area network: implications for cost and configuration”](https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rstb.2019.0117) appeared in the high-profile *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B.* As climate change transforms the habitat of precarious species, this work provides a broad vision for identifying future climate refugia and preserving corridors that allow these species to migrate to new homes.

Check out recent publications by MES faculty [here](https://www.evergreen.edu/mes/faculty-research-and-publications).

Last, in bittersweet news, MES alumna and Assistant Director for the past three years, Andrea Martin, has accepted a new opportunity as Recreation Policy Manager for the Washington Department of Natural Resources. She’ll be combining her experience in outdoor recreation, program management and partnership engagement to collaboratively develop recreation policy state-wide, provide guidance on volunteer programs, and support regional staff in policy implementation. We’re of course sad to see her go, but excited to have another alum contact to provide connections and opportunities to MES students. Andrea’s last day at Evergreen will be Friday, March 13. More information about staffing for this role will be shared as soon as possible.