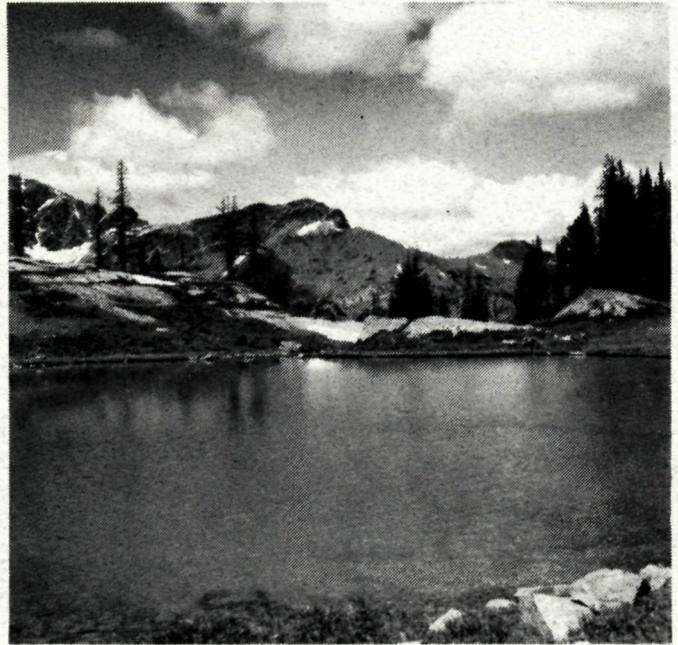

The Wild Cascades

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

JUNE, 1993



Pasayten scenes — Harvey Manning

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The Wild Cascades

Editor: Betty Manning

The Wild Cascades is published three times a year (February, June, and October). NCCC members receive this journal.

The North Cascades Conservation Council was formed in 1957 "To protect and preserve the North Cascades' scenic, scientific, recreational, educational, and wilderness values." Continuing this mission, NCCC keeps government officials, environmental organizations, and the general public informed about issues affecting the Greater North Cascades Ecosystem. Action is pursued through legislative, legal, and public participation channels to protect the lands, waters, plants and wildlife.

Over the past third of a century the NCCC has led or participated in campaigns to create the North Cascades National Park Complex, Glacier Peak Wilderness, and other units of the National Wilderness System from the W. O. Douglas Wilderness north to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness, the Chelan-Sawtooth Wilderness and others. Among its most dramatic victories has been working with British Columbia allies to block the raising of Ross Dam, which would have drowned Big Beaver Valley.

The NCCC is supported by member dues and private donations. These support publication of *The Wild Cascades* and lobbying activities. (NCCC is a non-tax-deductible 501(c)4 organization.) **Membership dues** for one year are: \$10 - low income/student; \$20 - regular; \$25 - family; \$30 - contributing; \$50 - patron; \$1000 - sustaining. A one-time life membership dues payment is \$500.

...

The North Cascades Foundation supports the NCCC's non-political efforts. Donations are tax-deductible as a 501(c)3 organization.

Please make your check(s) out to the organization of your choice. The **Foundation** can be reached through the NCCC mailing address:

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Founded in 1957
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

President's Message

Spring 1993 has been the busiest for NCCC since the campaign for North Cascades National Park. We have more people involved in more issues throughout the Cascades than at any other time. The impetus to action of having Kevin Herick as Special Projects Coordinator is making a big difference in what we as an organization of volunteers can do. Beyond the volunteer action on grazing, mining, and forest issues, NCCC is being supported by legal professionals in six legal battles to protect rivers, wildlife, trails, and even the Stehekin Road. Please read all about our thriving little group's activities brought to you courtesy of our dedicated and delightful *Wild Cascades* editor, Betty Manning!

This summer there are many things that we need *your* help to accomplish. First, visit North Cascades National Park Complex — it is 25 years old this year. Second, the planning process for Lake Chelan National Recreation Area is moving to develop alternatives for management. If you haven't been to Lake Chelan NRA recently, perhaps this is a good year to make the trip. Not only can you enjoy one of the premier freshwater fjords and mountain valleys in the world, *you can help NCCC develop its ideas for managing the area.* Third, the Forest Service is starting to evaluate ways to close off major portions of its road network. As you travel and recreate please look for roads that you think should be left open and for roads you think should be closed. *Send us your ideas.* Fourth, NCCC is working with Canadian counterparts to exchange information on how to link protected areas into a Cascades International Park. Please make a special effort to visit (see article in this issue) the Canadian Cascades. *Tell us what you think.*

GOOD NEWS! As *The Wild Cascades* goes to press, we have just learned that Judge McDonald has granted the NCCC and NPS motion for Summary Judgment in *NPS versus Chelan County*. This means that the continual "gamesmanship" over management of the road has finally been resolved. This, of course, does not mean that there are no issues of road management to be worked out. However, now that the ownership of the road is clear, the possibilities for a sensible approach to commercial access and maintenance can prevail. Furthermore, the NPS is now in a better position to deal with encroachment on road rights-of-way and other matters that have made relationships with private property owners uncertain. Judge McDonald's decision is a valuable cornerstone in the construction of a stable resource management environment in Lake Chelan NRA.

David Thuhart

NCCC Board Members Meet with Stehekin Residents

This May five NCCC Board members and Special Projects coordinator Kevin Herrick responded to the invitation in Stehekin Choice to visit Stehekin to hear the views of residents on how our organization affects their lives and livelihoods. Approximately 30 people from Stehekin participated and we had a chance to talk with a number of others informally. It is hard to measure the effect but it is a positive step toward gaining a better perspective on management issues and concerns, and a positive way to provide information about our organization and its concerns.

Probably the most important thing NCCC learned is how many people know so little about our organization and our concerns. Lots of Stehekin folks consider us to be misguided and obstructionist in our approach to community concerns and land protection in Stehekin. Many people feel like NCCC is uncaring, double-dealing and untrustworthy. These views and the intensity with which they are held is quite a shock for those of us who view our efforts as well-motivated, respectful and positive.

With such a difference of opinions, the possibility of meaningful exchange seemed slight. However, with the steady, and calm leadership of Lil Byerly as moderator, and the sharp wit of Cliff Courtney, we were able to make our way through a variety of issues in our 3-1/2 hour meeting.

NCCC heard a lot of viewpoints expressed by people attending the meeting. This is a synthesis of the main concerns as NCCC heard them and our responses either at the time or in retrospect. The Stehekin responses do not represent a consensus. Many voices were not present so there is more to know.

1. Stehekin: Don't belittle or parody Stehekin residents in *The Wild Cascades*. What NCCC may think is humorous, isn't., If it comes at the expense of other people.
— NCCC response: We really do not intend for these remarks to be hurtful and will try to avoid being disrespectful. Still humor has its place in an all-too-serious-about-itself-world.
2. Stehekin: Think of the human side of Stehekin, not just the environment.
— NCCC response: We do not say as much about people and community in Stehekin as we do about protection of the environment because we have little to say in people's lives but a lot to say about how resources are managed. We do understand that some of our protection arguments affect people and we want to know more about those effects.
3. Stehekin: Don't close the upper Stehekin road.
— NCCC response: We want these road options to be considered as part of planning for future management. The costs, hazards, and opportunities with and without the road must be fully considered. We would like to discuss these issues in more detail.
4. Stehekin: Don't close the airstrip. We may not all like it but it is something we can tolerate and we like it for winter sports and open space.
— NCCC response. We want the airstrip closure to be considered As part of planning for future management. The original reasons for the airstrip are largely obsolete. Further, it appears to be a dangerous area for landings and a magnet for non-native species. Keeping the strip open serves relatively few people in its present configuration. NCCC would like to consider ways to better utilize this space for more people.
5. Stehekin: We don't like the woodlot scheme.
— NCCC response: Neither does NCCC. We are willing to look comprehensively at this issue in the context of fire management plans. Any long-term firewood plan should be based on minimizing environmental impacts, administrative costs, and extractive use of firewood.

6. Stehekin: We're tired of being involved in planning processes.

— NCCC response: So are we. However, NCCC asked for this one by filing suit because the last processes lacked needed information and came up with inadequate plans. Let's really buckle down on the current process, get informed, develop our best alternatives, and discuss ideas. Let's try to establish a dialogue with the NPS and its Denver Service staff as well as among ourselves.

7. Stehekin: We would like to see stability in management of the area.

— NCCC response: We agree, but what are the key aspects of stability? It seems to us that a big component is the question of development of private lands in the area and numbers of people — whether visitors, residents or resident NPS employees and their families. How can this be done?

8. Stehekin: We want better access to the Stehekin Road for commercial purposes.

— NCCC response: There should be reasonable access for commercial activity subject to all relevant state and federal licensing and health and safety regulations.

9. Stehekin: We think what you (NCCC) do affects us but we really do not know what you are doing or why, e.g., Consent Decree, present litigation.

— NCCC response: How can we get information to you about what we are doing and why we are doing it? We encourage you to write or contact us for clarifications of our perspectives. We may not always agree but it is important that we know the real basis for disagreeing. We need some mechanism to provide (and receive) information to (from) Stehekin residents. Suggestions?

10. Stehekin: The NPS presence here is becoming overwhelming.

— NCCC response: This should be addressed as part of the planning process. There are probably more NPS people here because of the studies for the plan and EIS than usual. What is a long-term level that would be appropriate?

11. Stehekin: No more land should be purchased by NPS.

— NCCC response: We think a judicious land acquisition program is needed, especially for undeveloped lands that have ecological significance or are important for visitor use. A number of purchases have been made for hardship reasons and the NPS being able to provide fair-market value is a benefit to such property owners.

12. Stehekin: Changes in the course of the Stehekin River are threatening our property.

— NCCC response: We understand this as a concern. However, the bed of a major mountain river like the Stehekin is going to shift and little can be done to control it, given high snowmelt and steep river gradients. Individual actions to control erosion are generally doomed to failure. Some things can be done to minimize the effects: avoid building in affected areas and leave vegetation on the streambanks. NCCC would support study of comprehensive river management to see if there are environmentally acceptable ways to reduce risk of flooding and erosion to private property. Public lands should be managed to respect the natural hydrological processes..

NCCC was asked for its view of the Stehekin Community and its role in management of LCNRA and serving visitors to the area. NCCC does not have a policy statement on this question. However, the synthesis of NCCC views seems to be along these lines, leaving aside the difficulty of defining what constitutes the Stehekin community.

NCCC recognizes the existence of a small community in the Stehekin valley existing within a nationally significant protected area. Its remoteness makes it unique. The composition of the Stehekin population will change through time in ways that are not controlled by anyone. It is the hope of NCCC that the community will remain small, vibrant and willing to share its home and experiences with visitors. Similarly, there should be respect for the peace and privacy of residents by those who come to visit.

NEWS UPDATE

WCRM flexes its muscle

If the mining industry hoped that the Washington Coalition for Responsible Mining (WCRM) would stomp its feet and fade away, the events of the spring must have given them a rude shock.

In February WCRM surprised itself and the mining industry by succeeding in getting a state mining reform bill introduced in Olympia. While industry executives fumed in the hallways, concerned citizens and representatives of environmental groups explained to House and Senate Committees why present regulations fail to adequately protect Washington's lands from new mining technology that uses chemicals such as cyanide to extract gold from mountains turned to dust. Kevin Herrick testified on behalf of NCCC.

The bill, which was an environmentalist's dream come true, did not make its way out of committee. However, the effort did get the legislative gears started. The legislature passed a bill authorizing a committee to study the need for mining reform. The committee will consider input from a Task Force Advisory Committee which will include industry and environmental representatives. This study is expected to lead to adoption of a comprehensive mining bill.

In the interim, WCRM is pursuing a moratorium on permitting new mines. Governor Mike Lowry has agreed to impose such a moratorium if he is shown he has the power to do so.

The action in Olympia has heartened folks living down slope from the proposed open pit Buckhorn Mine in Okanogan National Forest. Up until this spring, Battle Mountain Gold (BMG) was on a roll. During the fall and winter BMG snapped up the support of local county councils as well as the support of Regional Forest Service Supervisor Sam Gher, who, one would think, ought to be an impartial participant until the EIS for the mine is complete.

Soon after WCRM's show of force in Olympia, Karl Ellers, CEO of Battle Mountain Gold flew up from his Houston office to sell WCRM on the "state of the art" mining technology to be used on the Buckhorn Mine. Mr. Ellers confidently explained how the mine would be reclaimed and the 400-foot-deep pit would fill with water. Needless to say, WCRM members were impressed, but probably not in the way Mr. Ellers had hoped.

NCCC is keeping a close eye on the Buckhorn Mine as well as state and federal mining reform legislation. Mining exploration in Washington has dramatically increased in the last 12 months and large parts of the Cascades are still open to claims. Without a little vigilance, the robbers may be back, hacking up the hills and fouling the water.

Planning for Lake Chelan N.R.A.

The NPS is moving into the decision-making stage of the General Management Plan (GMP) for the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. **This may be the most important plan the NPS will ever write for the Stehekin valley. The decisions the NPS makes will set the long-term course for management of this beautiful valley.**

In March, 1993 the NPS issued a booklet that summarized the results of the research completed for the EIS on the GMP. To help the public understand the information, the NPS held public meetings in Seattle, Chelan, and Stehekin.

The National Park Service's studies show that Stehekin Valley is a rich but fragile place. One of the studies concluded that, "Because of its small size and increasing tourism rate, which is now approximately 50,000 visitors per year, the Stehekin Valley has the potential to be proportionally more heavily-impacted than many larger parks. Most of the human activity is directly reflected by growing numbers of cleared and developed land parcels, by roads, trails, campgrounds, and businesses, and by less obvious effects such as structural alterations to the valley's old growth forests."

The National Park Service is now moving into a position to make ecologically sound decisions in the Stehekin Valley. **However, the planning process does not guarantee that research-based decision-making will prevail.** In addition to the problems of a bureaucratic culture that is just beginning to learn to use research in its management, other interests are pressuring the National Park Service **to make decisions that will not lead to preservation of the Stehekin Valley.** In June, the public will get its first of two important opportunities to participate in the GMP process. The NPS will send out an "interactive

newsletter" asking people to comment on different management options. The NPS will then consider these public comments in writing the Draft General Management Plan and accompanying EIS for Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.

The NPS did not send the *Data Summary Booklet* to you if you did not send them a response card from the Second Newsletter. Please contact Kevin Herrick for a copy. 206-789-4538.

Outdoor recreation information center now open in Seattle

The Outdoor Recreation Information Center, operated jointly by the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service, is staffed weekdays to provide walk-in visitors and telephone callers with current information about recreation opportunities and trail and road conditions in Pacific Northwest National Forests and National Parks.

The center, at 915 Second Avenue, Suite 442, offers maps, books and brochures about camping, trails and natural history. Walk-in visitors also may use the Trails Information System (TRIS), a computerized program providing information about recreation trails in Washington and Oregon. Open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; new telephone number is 206/220-7450.

Stehekin Valley travel alert

Changes in the shuttle bus transportation system have been made. Stehekin Adventures, Inc. will run a school bus from the landing to High Bridge four times a day. (\$4.00 one way; no reservation required.) The National Park Service will run 14-passenger shuttle vans from the landing to Cottonwood Camp twice a day (\$10.00 one way). Reservations are required for the NPS shuttle. They can be made at any North Cascades Visitor Center or back country office. The word is that the NPS will make an effort (nothing guaranteed) to accommodate day hikers arriving via Cascade Pass or Bridge Creek who show up at trailhead without a reservation. Contact the NPS at 206-856-5700 for details.

Conservation biology handbook available

In an effort to better inform grassroots activists about the importance of conservation biology and its application to public land management, the Greater Ecosystem Alliance has published *Conservation Biology and National Forest Management in the Inland Northwest: A handbook for Activists*.

The purpose of the handbook is to bring together a wealth of scientific information on biodiversity in a digested form that is accessible to non-scientists. . . with geographic emphasis on the forests of the Cascades and Northern Rocky Mountains. 250 pages. \$17.00 plus \$3.00 for shipping and handling. Greater Ecosystem Alliance, P.O. Box 2813, Bellingham, WA. 98277. (206) 671-9550.

Suiattle Road #25 decision

A decision has been made to adopt Alternative 2 (EA), Short Term Repair. . . for the National Forest Lands described in the EA. This alternative would repair the road at milepost 6.3; culverts would be installed in Circle Creek every spring and removed every fall. It would also include repair of the road at milepost 7.7; the road prism adjacent to the Suiattle River would be rebuilt, the lost riprap would be replaced . . . and revegetated. The damage sites would be repaired to provide vehicle access for three to four years. This would allow completion of scheduled watershed and fisheries rehabilitation projects. . . . This alternative also includes closure of Road 25 at about milepost 5.4 after completion of the projects. A turnaround would be constructed and the closed road would be available for use by hikers, mountain bikers, horse riders and other recreation users.

USFS road access planning process begins

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is initiating a Road Access Management Planning process. Its scope will make past struggles over individual roads look like thumb-wrestling matches. Almost all roads in the Forest will be considered for closure, trail conversion, improvement, or 4-wheel drive access. It has been proposed that the public be involved in the initial planning process. Such an approach would indicate the Forest Service is abdicating its authority. By turning the process over to public participation at the outset, the Forest Service risks losing the opportunity to collect and interpret field data needed for informed decisions on Forest roads.

At minimum, a roads inventory needs to be completed, bringing together information on recreation, wildlife, watershed protection (recovery), fisheries and ecosystem protection. Only then will the Forest Service and public be able to

complete a planning process leading to a balanced and effective management plan. NCCC and other groups are working to convince the Forest Service to lead in the planning process rather than follow the vagaries of an uninformed public. Contact NCCC if you would like to become involved in studying the issues.

Cascade international park

On May 11, 1993, in Bellingham, the Bellingham Mountaineers and NCCC sponsored an evening forum on prospects for the international park. Superintendent of North Cascades National Park Complex Bill Paleck, Mt. Baker National Forest Ranger Jon Vanderhey, Deputy Minister of B.C. Parks Jake Masselink, Western Canada Wilderness Committee Director Joe Foy, Greater Ecosystem Alliance Director Mitch Friedman, and NCCC President Dave Fluharty participated in the discussion which covered a wide range of topics related to trans-boundary Cascade ecosystem protection. Mountaineer activist and NCCC board member Ken Wilcox played a major role in organizing the event.

Park rally

The Cascade International Alliance (of which NCCC is a founding member) hosted a camp-out on June 5 and 6. Folks from Canada and the U.S. came to the southern end of Chilliwack Lake, just north of the U.S.-Canada border to learn about trans-boundary protection for the North Cascades.

Biologists and nature photographers led small groups on hikes through the Chilliwack drainage which is designated national park land on the U.S. side and unprotected crown land on the B.C. side. This is only a small section of the area under examination for international protection.

Budget cuts harm national parks

... The bad news: The closures of three entry stations at Olympic National Park are symptomatic of National Park Service budget troubles that will reduce the level of service visitors can expect at Washington's three big national parks this season. Some trails at Olympic, North Cascades and Mount Rainier parks won't be maintained. Some ranger-led nature-walks and campfire programs won't happen. Some restrooms won't be cleaned as often ... Congress appropri-

ated almost \$1 billion for the National Park Service for this year, but the agency said that was \$34 million less than it needed to maintain service at last year's level.

— *Seattle Times*, May 31, 1993

NCCC receives Wilderness Society grant

The Wilderness Society has awarded NCCC a small grant to support NCCC's efforts to provide the public with informational materials on important land use issues in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. Part of the fund will be used to produce a slide program that will illustrate the land management issues found in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.

Thanks, NCCC members

NCCC would like to extend its appreciation to those who have given generously to our fundraising drive. While we still have a way to go until we reach our goal, the response from our members has been most heartening and supportive.

Highway 410 — D.O.T. clearcut

The Washington Department of Transportation recently issued its draft environmental Assessment for the "improvement" of 7.7 miles of Mather Memorial Parkway (Highway 410). At hearings in May, the D.O.T. heard from a public that was overwhelmingly against the proposed plans. While few people opposed repaving the road and widening it slightly to accommodate growing bicycle use, there was strenuous opposition to a 20-foot cleared "safety" area on either side of the road. This would necessitate that 20 to 40 acres of ancient forest be logged. Many people, including NCCC's board chairman, Pat Goldsworthy, pointed out that removing the canopy-forming trees would destroy the very scenery that caused Stephen Mather to suggest that the road be designated a scenic highway during his tenure as first Director of the National Park Service. The public also raised questions concerning maintenance costs, alien plant immigration and the ecologic impact of removing old growth forest from the White River drainage.

Underlying the debate over this short piece of road is the fact that one end of the project ends where Highway 410 enters Mt. Rainier National Park. The park portion of the highway to Cayuse Pass is scheduled to be paved sometime after next year. If D.O.T. succeeds in clearcutting its way

through Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie forest land, the National Park Service will be faced with the pressure to keep the road consistent in terms of the type of devastation ("standards," the D.O.T. says) found outside its borders.

NCCC has been through this type of circus with the D.O.T. before. Past exercises have shown that safe roads can be maintained without mangling the roadside. It is time to teach the lesson again.

MORE OVERFLIGHT PROBLEMS

Whidbey battles jet roar with big beams

Frustrated by an inability to silence the roar of low-level Navy jets, one central Whidbey Island neighborhood has retaliated in recent months with floodlights. By shining bright lights in the sky, opponents hoped to persuade the Navy to shift its practice carrier landings elsewhere a participant said.

... Ross Hatch of Coupeville has pleaded innocent of a charge of reckless endangerment. If convicted Hatch faces a maximum one year jail term and \$45,000 fine. . . He is accused of shining a bright light into the cockpit of a Whidbey Island-based aircraft. . . It was the most recent of a half-dozen incidents in which residents turned on the bright lights as Whidbey jets entered a steep landing pattern that crosses over their neighborhood at an altitude of about 300 feet, officials said. . . Years of complaints by residents have failed to persuade the Navy to devise a solution, Hatch said. The decision to use floodlights was "a way to get the Navy's attention," he said. . . An environmental impact statement on air operations around Oak Harbor and Coupeville is undergoing a final review by senior Pentagon officials. The much-delayed study is expected to propose several solutions to the noise problem.

— *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 19, 1993

Navy puts onus on crop-duster pilot in collision with jet

A collision between a Navy jet and a crop-dusting biplane over rural southeast Washington Wednesday has left some local pilots angry about the Navy's low-level training missions. . . Crop-duster Keith Gaham, of Homedale, Idaho, was in critical condition yesterday after a Whidbey Island-based naval plane slammed into his biplane southwest of Spokane. . . "They come through here about 200 to 300 feet and don't watch for anybody," he said. "but they will not quit. We've asked them to modify their pattern in the spring and they will not do that either." Navy spokesman Howard Thomas said aviation maps clearly show that the crash occurred in a military training route for low-level flights. "It is the responsibility of the persons entering a route when it is active to watch out for themselves." Thomas said. He acknowledged that the Navy has received complaints about the low-level flights.

— *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 16, 1993

Foley questions Navy training flights

Besieged by constituents angry over low-level Navy training flights in Eastern Washington, House Speaker Tom Foley is calling on the Navy to re-examine its training flights throughout the state, aides said yesterday. . . Whidbey Island-based A-6E Intruders have been a daily fixture over the state as they practice combat bombing operations between Oak Harbor and a target range in Boardman, Ore. . . Foley wants the Navy to review its training program to see if safety standards are effective, and is asking the Navy to consider canceling flights over farm areas of Eastern Washington during crop-dusting season, which runs from March through July, said spokesman Jeff Biggs. . . "We're trying to get the concerned parties together to discuss the . . . problem, and look for solutions outside the courts or legislative process," said State Rep. Mark Shoessler. "Our goal is to try and prevent an accident like this from happening again."

— *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, May 5, 1993

LATE NEWS UPDATE

Growth Management Appeal

On May 21, 1993, the Eastern Washington Growth Planning Hearings Board denied Chelan County's motion to dismiss our appeal of its decision to permit Mr. Sherer's Bible camp/resort development without sufficient evaluation of environmental impacts and impacts on growth. The Board upheld our standing to bring this appeal and the Board's jurisdiction to hear the appeal. The board ruled that it did not have power to review the Chelan County permit issued to Sherer or to block the project based on failure to comply with the Growth Management Act. (NCCC is pursuing these issues in Chelan County Superior Court.) In addition, on June 9, 1993, arguments were heard by the Board on NCCC's trial memorandum requesting the board find Chelan County to be in violation of the GMA. We are awaiting the outcome of that proceeding.

To paraphrase Mark Twain: *Civilization is not all that civilized. . .*



Trillium— Kristian Erickson

Update on Litigation Proceedings

Federal cases:

NPS v. Chelan Co. 1992 (in which NCCC intervened) re Stehekin Road ownership. The case has been *settled!* See the President's Message, page 3.

State cases:

NCCC v. Chelan Co. 1992 NCCC sues Chelan Co. for violating the Shoreline Management Act, State Environmental Policy Act, etc., in taking rock from one location in a county-designated protected area and depositing it in another.

NCCC v. Chelan Co. 1992 NCCC sues Chelan Co. for violating the Shoreline Management Act, SEPA, Forest Practices Act, etc., by failing to issue a Shoreline Permit for a bulkhead on the Sherer property and for improperly issuing a permit for other activities on that site. Mr. Sherer is named as an "indispensable party defendant" in this suit. This suit is pending.

County Superior Court

NCCC v. Chelan Co. 1991 NCCC sues Chelan Co. for violating its own rules and regulations with respect to permits issued on the Sherer property. This suit is pending.

Eastern Washington Growth Planning Hearings Board

NCCC v. Chelan Co. Board of Adjustment and Wesley M. Sherer 1993 in which NCCC appealed the Board of Adjustment action issuing a Conditional Use Permit for a Commercial Resort (Bible Camp) in violation of the Washington Growth Management Act. This appeal is pending.

NPS Issues Land Acquisition Report

The National Park Service (NPS) recently released its report entitled, On the Past and Proposed Land Acquisitions in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. The report was prepared pursuant to Senate Appropriation Committee Report 102-345.

The NPS report carefully considers the issues raised by Senator Gorton in April, 1992. In it the NPS clearly lays out the legislative history and intent of Congress with respect to land acquisition. The NPS shows precisely how a land acquisition program was implemented in accord with the legislation and using funds provided by Congress for this purpose. It counters with fact the biased conclusions of a previous (1980) report by the Government Accounting Office. It provides information on the status of revisions on the Land Protection Plan for LCNRA.

North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) has reviewed the report in detail and concurs with the research and findings. We sincerely hope that it puts to rest the concerns of Senator Gorton and others and that it gives confidence in the professionalism of the NPS land division staff of the Pacific Northwest region and North Cascades NPS Complex staff.

NCCC is very concerned that the NPS resume a judicious program of land acquisition in the Stehekin Valley. There are currently major undeveloped lands on the lakeshore and river banks that are for sale. Existing funding is inadequate to purchase even the smallest and most critical of these parcels. NCCC appeals to Congress for funding to allow the NPS to resume land acquisitions of vital pieces of LCNRA for public purposes.

Comments of NCCC on North Cascades National Park Service Complex Draft Environmental Assessment

General comments expressing NCCC concern and questions over the NCNPS draft environmental assessment of the Stehekin Valley Road repair were covered in a letter by David Fluharty to William Paleck, Superintendent, April 8, 1993. [The NCCC statement is excerpted due to lack of space.]

1. Timing of road repair in the context of NPS Planning for LCNRA. There are frequent comments that advise that repair and refurbishing work being done under this EA does not represent the final road or landing configuration. . .NCCC has argued strenuously that that this road repair should be delayed until completion of the planning efforts. . . it seems to make little sense to push this project ahead of planning. The same comment can be made about changes in the configuration of the landing and parking.
2. Justification for realignment of road at Boulder Creek is lacking. It is *unnecessary* to alter the alignment of the road except to satisfy some vague road standards imposed by “typical engineering standards.” Stehekin is a *unique* site and should not be degraded by conformance to arbitrary standards. This sets an awesomely bad precedent for any future repairs. Repair is a euphemism for highway building. . . it is the character of the road as well as the service it performs that is in question here.
3. Lack of attention to road use conflicts. One of the chief problems with the Stehekin road in its lower four miles is the conflict between different forms of use — truck, car, bicycle and pedestrian. There is no discussion how this mix of uses will be affected by road repair or construction activities.
4. Evaluation of environmental impact of causeway. The present causeway of the road through the wetland at the head of the lake needs to be examined from the perspective of its impacts on wetland hydrology. . . the way that the causeway interferes with wetland functions should be examined, and in the long run, if adverse impacts are shown, mitigation should be planned.
5. Role of the contractor in environmental compliance. Much of the document reads like it is derived from a statement of duties by the contractor. It is recognized that the contractor’s sensitivities to protecting the watercourses, roadside and other features in the vicinity of the repairs is perhaps the most important factor in minimizing impact. What measures are being taken to monitor compliance? What sanctions is the NPS able to impose for breach of these responsibilities? Does the NPS have sufficient interest and intent to enforce this sort of prescription?
6. Water and air quality monitoring. What measures is the NPS prepared to take to monitor water and air quality impacts of road repair and construction?
7. Accommodation of travel patterns. Given the mix of modes that use the Stehekin road, has any thought been given to how pedestrian and bicycle traffic will be treated in construction zones?
8. Removal of road base materials. There is no assurance that the estimated amount of material needed from the gravel source area is at all consistent with the estimate of 3,000 cu/yds. that is given. If you do not know how big your hole is you don’t know how much it will take to fill it back in.

... AND ANSWERS

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter has been excerpted because of lack of space.]

Mr. David Fluharty, President

North Cascades Conservation Council

April 14, 1993

Dear Mr. Fluharty:

This is in reponse to your comments of April 8, 1993, concerning the draft Environmental assessment of the Stehekin Valley Road repair in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. Following is our response to each issue raised in your letter.

1. You are correct when you state that the road repair does not include the potential landing reconfiguration. That issue will be addressed in the Development Concept Plan (DCP) portion of the Environmental Impact Statement process. However, the repair is minimal in that only existing road surface will be replaced. The present road surface is in need of immediate attention. Deferral until 1995 will result in failure of more of the road surface.
2. Boulder Creek has the ready potential to create serious problems in severe storm events. The present bridge configuration becomes a dam in debris flow situations. The newly configured bridge will decrease this possibility and enhance fish migration up-stream by allowing the creek to be "free flowing."
3. Road use conflicts regarding competitive uses of the lower Stehekin Valley Road have been discussed. Presently the uses are compatible. . . .
4. We will consider the mitigation of the causeway at the head of Lake Chelan through the EIS process.
5. Sensitive resource mitigation is being written into the contract. Sensitive species such as goshawk, spotted owl, and the harlequin duck will be monitored throughout the contract period. Areas within a mile-wide corridor along the road will be surveyed to identify nesting sites. Road construction activity will be limited to insure that sensitive species are not affected. The construction schedule was delayed one month to avoid interference with nesting activity. . . Identified nesting sites will be monitored.
6. The turbidity of Boulder Creek will be monitored by the project supervisor and the NPS Resource Management Specialist.

The Park is concerned about hazard spills of road material. Our Hazard Material Spill Plan is currently being revised. . . . The contractor will be required to provide a detailed erosion control plan prior to construction and all resource concerns will be . . . closely monitored by the project supervisor.

7. In an attempt to minimize all potential impacts, there will be one detour for construction activity and that will be at Boulder Creek. Temporary delays up to fifteen minutes may occur. . . . As is always the case, private property rights will be respected.
8. Initial dig-out estimates were not available from Federal Highways when the EA was completed. Federal Highways has provided the NPS with quantity estimates which are below the estimate of 3,000 cubic yards of crushed gravel needed to refill the excavation areas. . . . a log system for the borrow pit . . . will track both materials taken from and deposited in the pit.



A Reexamination of Stehekin Myths

Chapter Three

[This edition of Stehekin Myths is dedicated to myths created in Stehekin about NCCC's policies and goals.]

Myth: NCCC's diabolic plot and overall goal in Stehekin is to drive the community from the valley.

Verifiable Fact: NCCC recognizes the community isn't going anywhere — even Nebraska. NCCC's goal is to ensure that the valley's scenic, scientific, recreational and educational values are preserved. Congress allowed this to occur in conjunction with the presence of private inholders.

Myth: NCCC wants to cut the Stehekin Valley Road off at Eight Mile (below the Courtney Ranch).

Verifiable Fact: It would be kind of tough to get to the ranch if the road ended at Eight Mile. NCCC does not disagree with basic rights of access to private property. If the road needs repairing, as it will at Eight Mile, fix it. But first, do the required environmental assessments and pick up the best option. NCCC has asked for proper assessments, not that the road be closed. The NPS is completing the assessments.

Myth: NCCC's desire to see Wild and Scenic designation of the Stehekin River is just another plot to force property owners to sell land to the NPS.

Verifiable Fact: Wild and Scenic designation would not change at all the willing seller-willing buyer rules set up in the enabling legislation of 1968. Wild and Scenic designation would add emphasis to the laws already protecting this fantastically dynamic and beautiful river.



The Firewood Issue Smoulders

NCCC has worked hard and willingly with the NPS on the issue of firewood in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. We are extremely disappointed in the lack of timely planning for the 1993 season. We do not know exactly where the fault lies. Fixing blame is not so important to us as fixing the process in order to effect environmentally sensitive decisions with full input from all parties. This is the intent of the litigation leading to the Consent Decree for LCNRA. It is this intent that should guide interim management of resources and preparation of the new management plans and EIS. Somehow the message is still not getting through.

Current Situation

According to the present Firewood Management Plan (FMP), a Technical Committee is to meet annually to discuss the previous season and to plan for the next. . . In 1992, by mutual agreement, there was no meeting. In February, 1993, the NPS proposed a meeting, which did not happen.

On April 30 the NPS requested NCCC approval under the Consent Decree to allow an access route for firewood cutting in the woodlot between the airstrip and the gravel pit. Opening this access will allow dispersal of harvest and avoid more impacts at the previously harvested woodlot. . .

There was little administrative wood available for firewood in the Stehekin Valley, (resulting) in more reliance on the woodlot. Furthermore, the NPS noted formal dates of cutting under the FMP are April 15 - June 1. . . We are now into the month of May without issuance of permits.

NCCC Perspective

From NCCC's perspective this request from the NPS does not give adequate time for analysis and discussion of alternatives among all interested parties. . . .It does not take advantage of the Firewood Technical Committee that was set up to deal with precisely this type of circumstance. . . . NCCC does not appreciate being placed in this awkward position of being asked for a yea or nay under the Consent Decree when ample opportunities existed to plan for and resolve this kind of issue. This sort of bureaucratic brinkmanship should be avoided at all costs as it engenders distrust.

NCCC considers the idea of blading an access route into the woodlot as a technical violation of the Consent Decree. . . . (and) the NPS action prejudices the development and evaluation of alternatives for the FMP in an EIS. The proposed action indicates a preference for vehicular access to cutting areas in a woodlot as opposed to other potentially less ground-disturbing forms of wood transport. . . .It does not use the interim period to seek alternative ways to reduce demand. or examine new ideas (e.g., barging firewood from outside the NRA). Apparently, the Stehekin community has not had the opportunity to suggest its ideas.

NCCC Position on Consent Decree and Interim Firewood Planning

Notwithstanding these objections to the NPS proposal, NCCC chooses not to challenge NPS action for provision of firewood under the Consent Decree due to what we consider the emergency nature of the situation for wood users for the 1993 woodcutting season. NCCC asks that, at the end of this season, the access route (be restored) to its previous condition unless the planning process for the 1994 season contradicts this requirement. . . . NCCC expects that the NPS will initiate a planning process for dealing with the 1994 season involving all interested parties under the Firewood Technical Advisory Committee as provided in the FMP. After 1995, NCCC assumes that a new plan covered by an EIS would guide NPS action.

. . . the NPS should actively supervise any access route work (including) care . . . taken to control erosion and active measures . . . taken to control spread of non-native plants from the airstrip.

In preparation for the Firewood Technical Advisory Committee discussions, the NPS should prepare a review of the results of the 1992 (and) 1993 seasons, along with projections for the 1994 season. . . ideas developed in the interim planning forum should be informed by and should inform the longer term planning process.

NPS Firewood Plan Update

The National Park Service has agreed to reinstitute the Firewood Plan Technical Committee for the coming years. A review of the implementation of the 1993 season and plans for 1994 will be made in fall of 1993.

Normally, firewood cutting halts by June 1 to avoid exposing visitors and wildlife to chainsaw noise. As a result of the late start of permitting for the 1993 season, the NPS asked that NCCC agree to a short extension of the cutting period into the first ten days of June. NCCC agreed to this request with the understanding that this was a "one-time" emergency extension to assist wood users in Stehekin acquire their winter supplies.

Ancient Forests — An Essay on Solving the Present Impasse

David Fluharty

North Cascades Conservation Council offers these insights and directions for crafting a solution to the present impasse on the management of Ancient Forests. We consider the solution to the problems to lie in a comprehensive approach to design of sustainable forest harvests in the context of protection of riparian and other sensitive habitats on a landscape level. This means that public and private forests must be managed in an integrated manner. New institutions and management approaches must be developed. This essay only sketches the approach.

How did we get into this mess? The answer is simple.

We “cut it all”. Well, most of it. First we cut the trees along Puget Sound and along rivers. Then, we harvested the lowlands. Next, we cut the foothills. Now, we’re logging the mountain tops. First we cut the private lands, then we cut the public lands. Now almost no lowland forest meets the Ancient Forest or Old Growth forest definition.

Yes, it is true much of this land is growing trees — Some by natural succession and some in planted and managed stands but, we’re cutting it all again. The evidence is everywhere in the lowlands — cities and suburbs occupy much former forested land and high stumpage values are encouraging rapid liquidation of the trees.

Already in the late 1960s and early 1970s forest economists and planners were predicting a production drop in the forests of the Pacific Northwest in the late 1980s. They calculated that the reserve of large old trees would be cut by that time and the “missing generation” of forest (i.e., that cut in the late 1880s through 1930 but not replanted) would not be there to kick in.

This is a story of the failure to achieve forest conservation. In Washington, sustainable forestry was not practiced on large areas of private and public land. It is not necessary to talk about all the other values of the forest besides its value for timber to get at the fundamental issue. The forest issue is conservation.

Was it wise to accelerate the cutting of forests in the late 1970s and 1980s when faced with predicted declines in forest production? Of course not, but that was done.

NCCC and other organizations tried to reduce the amount of timber cut on federal lands by lobbying Congress and the Forest Service. Our main motivation was to protect areas from logging for outdoor recreation, scenic, wildlife habitat and other values. We didn’t see our efforts as attempting to slow the rate of cut to ensure timber jobs would last longer. However, slowing the rate of cut would have had this effect. There were some, albeit feeble efforts in the early 1970s, to get forest workers to join in protecting areas — but NCCC was seeking Wilderness and loggers were enjoying high-paying jobs. Today it is ironic that high timber prices make forest corporations extremely profitable at the same time the number of employees in the harvest and processing sector is falling.

Where should we go? The answer is complex.

In 1993, NCCC argues that many of the important recreational, scenic and scientific areas of the remaining old growth forests still merit protection. There are very important opportunities in front of us — for example, linking North Cascades National Park and Wilderness lands with Canadian Parks and wild lands. However, we are also aware that the mid- to high-level elevation wilderness areas and parks cannot exist as islands — especially with respect to wildlife. We need to find ways to connect the core protected areas to allow movement of wildlife and to ensure diversity of habitat types. We need to restore the biological integrity of rivers and wetlands, too.

Does this mean that NCCC wants it all? No, but we want to work with others at restoring the lowland forests through developing long-term management of public and private forest lands.

How? Here are some suggestions.

Let's start with the shortrun problem of transition to a sustainable timber economy. Long-term industry trends coupled with a recognition of environmental needs dictate a permanent decline in forest sector employment in the Pacific Northwest. We cannot avoid either hit — but we can soften the blows.

Short run

• **Let's start by prioritizing the harvest of those forest lands where harvest would do the least ecological damage** and where they would have minimum impacts on recreation and scenery. Many timber sales now on the block seem intended to achieve precisely the opposite effect. National Forest plans and documents on protecting endangered species offer considerable guidance if we are willing to let ecosystem criteria guide the selection of sale areas. Similar work needs to be done on state and private lands. Unpopular as they may seem to some, all forest land ownership must contribute a share and some shares may not seem fair.

Long run

• Let's use the time we gain (3-5 years) with short run measures to look at opportunities for protection of forest lands and for long-term sustainable harvests. We should look comprehensively at forests in Washington State and ask how to restore and maintain ecosystem health and at the same time sustain a forest economy. We could start by designing restoration and habitat management measures for the whole landscape on a watershed basis. Restoration measures would be designed to prevent further resource loss but otherwise allow natural processes to work. Management measures would protect riparian zones and other sensitive habitat or physical features (i.e., unstable slopes, etc.).

We should look comprehensively at forests in Washington State and ask how to restore and maintain ecosystem health and at the same time sustain a forest economy. We could start by designing restoration and habitat management measures for the whole landscape on a watershed basis.

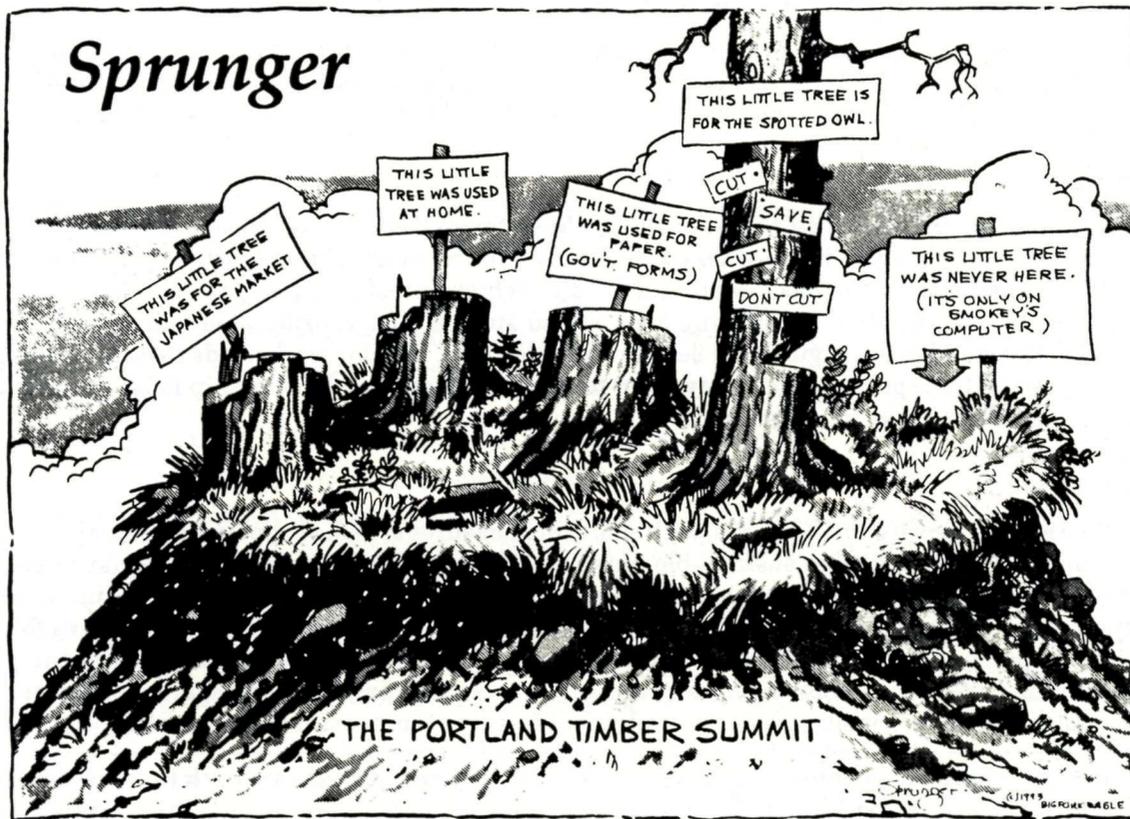
* Owners of lands in restoration zones or sensitive habitats might find limitations on harvests. One approach would be to allow reductions in property taxes for these areas in exchange for concessions not to harvest. Where this creates a "taking" of private property, a mechanism for compensation should be developed pro-rated over the normal rotation time and yield for the site adjusted for cost of harvest and environmental damages avoided. (For example, a site with high erosion potential on a salmon stream could cause serious environmental harm if logged. Estimated resource damages to wildlife habitat would be deducted, like logging costs, from compensation so that the net loss to the property owner is paid.) Costs for the compensation program would be generated from tax revenue in part and in part from taxes on timber production.

* Concomitantly, protection of the forest land base would become part of growth management. Rapid urbanization and suburbanization results in substantial loss of high quality forest land each year. This expansion requires significant investment in infrastructure and is a major generator of ecological impacts. Thus, the logic of growth management works in favor of protecting the forest landbase and must be an integral part of the solution to problems of sustainable forestry and environmental protection.

Creating the problem was easy. Devising the solution is difficult. Let's get started.

• • •

"It may be the love of wilderness that finally teaches us civilized responsibility." – Wallace Stegner



Bigfork Eagle (Bigfork, MT) April 7, 1993



PHOTO: Stehekin firewood — Dave Fluharty



PHOTO: Joe and Margaret Miller and the new NPS greenhouse in Marblemount, WA. Left, Bill Lester, the Millers, and Superintendent Bill Paleck, NCNPC — Dave Fluharty

Joe and Margaret Miller Honored for Pioneering Work in North Cascades

On Saturday, May 29, 1993, Joe and Margaret Miller were honored by the North Cascades National Park when the Miller Greenhouse at the Native Plant Nursery in Marblemount, Washington, was dedicated to their pioneering work in revegetation in the North Cascades for 22 years. Joe and Margaret were made Honorary Employees of the National Park Service and were each given a plaque with an embossed NPS badge and a classic straight-brimmed felt ranger hat.

Their work in plant propagation and site repair has influenced the rehabilitation of thousands of acres in parks and forests throughout the Northwest. Their work began under Roger Contor, first superintendent of North Cascades, who had the foresight to initiate and strongly support a revegetation program. Bill Lester, former Wilderness District Ranger, and his wife Kathy also played a crucial role. They worked tirelessly and creatively at growing plants and keeping the program alive and expanding over 12 years.

The revegetation program at North Cascades National Park began over twenty years ago. Its purpose is to restore areas damaged by human impact, especially subalpine meadows. (For an historical overview of this project see Joe Miller's article in *The Wild Cascades*, October 1991.)

An Exchange of Letters:

ARE WE CHICKEN ABOUT GRIZZLIES?

3 February 1993

Harvey,

Three years ago, I was standing in front of a room full of people in the Golden West Visitor Center giving an evening slide program on bear in the North Cascades — black bear and grizzly bear. The program aimed at replacing people's irrational fear of bear with a respectful, healthy fear of bear.

My colleagues and supervisors were supportive of the program. A number of headquarters types even encouraged me to be more direct in making the point that there *are* grizzly in the North Cascades. They pointed out that we should be pleased and proud that grizzly are naturally returning to the North Cascades after a half-century hiatus. Their return confirms that our efforts over the last 50 years to preserve wilderness are in fact having an ecologic impact.

One evening I had done my part and had opened the floor to questions. A visitor asked what I thought of the Seattle environmental community's non-support of grizzly returning to the North Cascades. Interpreters are rarely at a loss for words, but this question floored me. Was it possible that the National Park Service was out in front of the environmental community — more visionary — more understanding of and truer to wilderness?

Now that I'm here in Seattle, I've been testing the waters. At the end of meetings when everyone is putting on their coats and walking out, I often casually bring up the grizzly issue and people go, "OOOOOOOH, that's a touchy subject."

Is there something I'm not getting here? Is there something about the wilderness of Glacier and Yellowstone that we don't have out here? Is ours "different" wilderness? Are we afraid of sharing the lands we have designated wilderness with an animal that naturally calls that land home and happens to have the power to harm us? If that is the case we are guilty of the accusation often levied against wilderness advocates — that we are just people who want to protect our favorite type of recreation — hiking through natural-looking areas without many people around to bother us. Wilderness deprived of its natural inhabitants is tamed, making the whole discussion of wilderness a farce.

I understand that grizzlies are frightening animals. I'm sure as their numbers increase that I'll change some of my hiking habits. But the fact is that the chances are still greater that you will be killed by a rock (falling on you or you falling on one) in any grizzly country than by a grizzly. It's like learning to watch for avalanche chutes when skiing down the road from Paradise at Rainier — know what to do and you will stay out of trouble; in very unlikely circumstances you might end up in a frightening situation.

Admittedly, it is a big issue. Are we unable to deal with such things? I'd like to hear your comments.

Sincerely,

Kevin Herrick
NCCC Special Projects Coordinator



February 10, 1993

Dear Kevin,

The grizzlyphobia among us cannot be dismissed; there are too many documented instances of folks getting clawed and chewed, and the fact that the unlucky humans were stupid, or careless — or simply unlucky — does not convince people they should learn to live with the possibility of danger. As we can see from the high-tech tents, parkas, mittens, and thermal underwear, if the modern breed of wilderness travelers could eliminate bad weather, they would. Surely they would also get a law banning lightning, falling rocks, toppling trees.

One definition of the wilderness experience is the presence of danger. Just as is said of climbing, "If there isn't a chance of getting killed, it's not a climb, it's a hike," so too if there is no danger from close encounter to Nature, it's not wilderness, it's an amusement park.

We must for many years keep up educational campaigning, teaching the meaning of wilderness and what things one gives up in leaving civilization; and the statistical facts about human-grizzly encounters, including the rarity of damage to humans.

Still, the growing number of humans in the backcountry certainly requires careful study of what grizzlies are all about, and what concessions must be made by humans (and perhaps by grizzlies?) in order for the two to share wilderness — and to keep it as wilderness by retaining the grizzly as an "indicator species."

At the root of this problem is anthropocentrism. This attitude pervades almost everything that is written by the recreation industry, including the backpacker subgroup! Thus, so far as our public work goes, attack-attack-attack anthropomorphism. Scorn it. Ridicule it. Defame it. But recognize that we are not going to get Gortex yuppies who are afraid of the night and of getting rain on their skin to give up their garb and gear and hyper-kineticism to share space with critters. Though generally not religious people, still they would fall back on the argument of the Old Testament, in which Jehovah turned the whole planet over to the supermonkeys.

Them is mine preliminary thoughts.

Sincerely,

Harvey Manning



Courtesy, GEA.

Peggy and Erwin Bauer Photo

"North America's second most dangerous mammal."

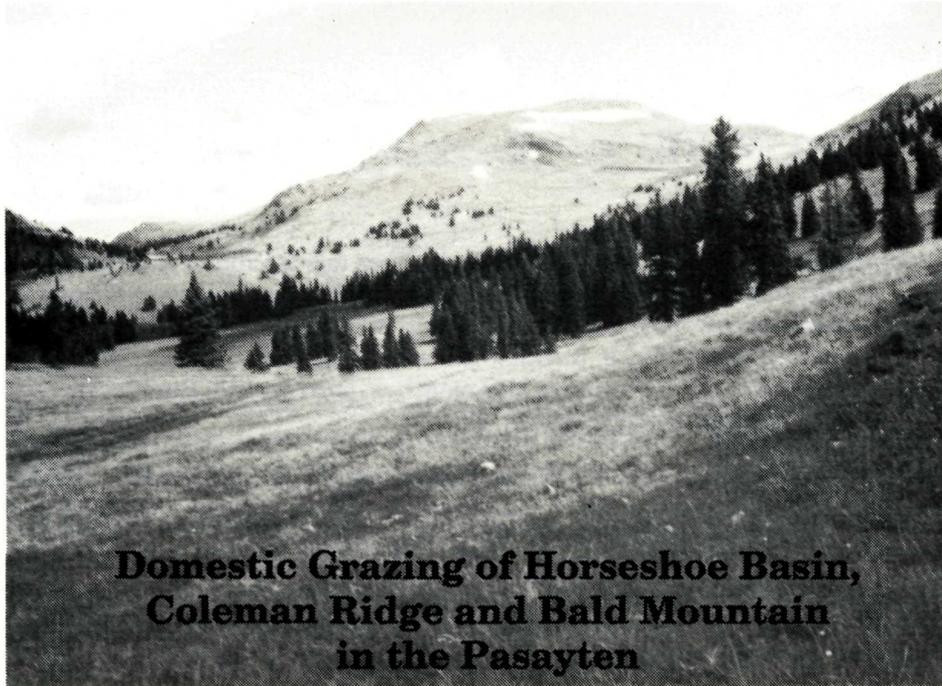


PHOTO: Horseshoe Basin country — Harvey Manning

Domestic Grazing of Horseshoe Basin, Coleman Ridge and Bald Mountain in the Pasayten

A.B. ADAMS

Hundreds of thousands of domestic animals have grazed in the Pasayten high country since the late 1800s, much to the detriment of meadow vegetation, recreational use and erosion. The 1964 Wilderness Act, a compromise between public land preservation and utilization, did not resolve the problem. While prohibiting mechanized vehicles, it allows domestic grazing and permits liberal utilization by horses. This article discusses major issues involved in the debate over grazing in the eastern Pasayten Wilderness Area. Horseshoe Basin is grazed annually by sheep. Cows graze on Coleman Ridge one year and are rotated to Bald Mountain the next. Both sides of the debate are discussed and new issues are introduced— high country wetland and water-resource preservation.

During the advance of continental glaciation into central Washington more than 10,000 years ago, most peaks of the western North Cascades remained above the glacier. The eastern North Cascades of the Pasayten Wilderness had a different history. Here, all but a few of the mountain summits were inundated by the ice sheet. With glacial recession, most peaks had been ridden over and rounded to broad mountain summits with meadows that seem to stretch forever in tundra-like hummocky meadows and vast alpine meadows. This is why ranchers consider the Pasayten prime grazing land. Below the summits plant communities grade from alpine to subalpine parkland to spruce to lodgepole pine. Habitats unique for the lower 48 states include *Larix lyallii* forests (tamarack) with *Luzula hitchcockii* (woodrush).

Major issues are involved in ecosystem protection and long-term sustainability of the natural resources of the Pasayten. In order to prioritize these issues, the impact of domestic grazing must be evaluated objectively. A critical point in this evaluation is determining what maintains the subalpine and alpine equilibrium of the Pasayten. Is it the harsh climate, short growing season, natural disturbance, grazing, unstable soil, water saturation of the soil, etc.?

Proponents of grazing offer their theories. One theory is that cow and sheep grazing are responsible for maintaining the meadows, because tree invasion is apparent in the subalpine areas, and with cessation of grazing, the trees invade meadows more rapidly. Mechanisms proposed to explain how grazing limits tree invasion include direct consumption of seedlings and saplings, seedling trampling and soil compaction. A second theory is that domestic ungulates secrete enzymes in their saliva which stimulate herbaceous plant growth. A third theory is that nitrogen is imported into the system resulting in an increase in grasses. A thick growth of grass in turn inhibits conifer invasion. A fourth theory holds that when grazing ceases, shrubs become more dominant resulting in rare plants being overtopped and ultimately eliminated.

These arguments in favor of grazing have elements of truth to them, but are also misleading. Tree invasion may be more rapid when grazing ceases, but this doesn't mean herbivores are the major factor

in forest stand dynamics. A more reasonable theory is that a combination of fire, climate and wetlands interact to maintain the meadows. Evidence for periodic and massive fire in the Pasayten is abundant. Massive burn sites are everywhere. In the last three years, two lightning strikes started fires in Horseshoe Basin alone. In both cases, the resultant fires were extinguished by the Forest Service. The increase in conifer forests is more a reflection of fire control policy rather than the removal of ungulates.

At the highest altitudes of the Pasayten evidence indicates that extreme weather conditions limit tree growth (e.g., dead seedlings and saplings, krumholtz growth forms and evidence of soil movement from freezing and thawing cycles). Short growing season is one reason why trees don't survive. Also, the upper slopes melt-off earlier than some lower areas. Winds reach maximum velocities on ridge tops. The long periods of dry soil coupled with the devastating effects of windburn make survival difficult for trees in their conventional growth forms. A third factor controlling tree line is soil water saturation. There are many wetlands in the Pasayten highlands. Often, the wetlands are slow to clear of snow. Because of the short growing season and saturated conditions of the soil, trees do not grow in the wetland. Wetlands have other functions important to ecosystem quality These are discussed later.

The belief that grazing stimulates herbaceous plant growth comes from work with wildebeest in its native habitat — the Serengeti. It deals with a native herbivore eating coevolved native plants (not ungulate imports); also, the work is questioned in follow-up studies. Grazing causes increases in graminoid species [e.g., *Danthonia X intermedia* (oatgrass) in the Pasayten], but this does not mean overall productivity increases. Herbivores may redistribute nitrogen, but there is no known mechanism



PHOTO: Smith Lake, Long Draw, Horseshoe Basin area — Harvey Manning

for them to increase nitrogen content. To do so is in violation of the second law of thermodynamics. In fact, places where nitrogen is stockpiled (e.g., sheep bedding sites) are also where trampling and erosion are greatest. Any local benefits accrued are quickly discounted.

Can biodiversity be maintained by using ungulates to control shrub growth? Probably not. Indeed, the reverse may be true. Community physical structure is increased by a shrub layer, and this results in higher faunal diversity (especially birds). Any improvement in rare plant habitat (and I doubt if there would be any) by overgrazing to keep shrub growth “under control” would be offset by a loss in faunal diversity. In addition, some small trees and shrubs affected by such a policy are not common outside of the Pasayten [e.g., *Salix tweedyii*] (willow).

Opponents are concerned about the destruction of habitat quality as a result of grazing in the high country. The complaint voiced most often is that of water contamination. A second concern is that overgrazing creates opportunities for exotic species to invade and overwhelm the natives. This occurred in lower elevations of Washington. Third is the fear that overgrazing directly eliminates sensitive plants. Fourth, domestic ungulates compete for forage and habitat with the native fauna. In addition, herders shoot at and sometimes hit large native predators. The noise of a gun alone is enough to frighten the native fauna into Canada. Finally, the overall deterioration of the environment due to grazing causes the desertification of marginal habitats (i.e., the alpine meadows) and destruction of the water retention properties of the soil and aquifers.

The argument that has the most emotional support is that of water contamination by feces. Personally, I find the ubiquitous presence of horse, cow and sheep dung repulsive. However, the Forest Service argues (and perhaps correctly) that the greatest threat is unburied human excrement and improper treatment of drinking water. Humans are the most likely carriers of human pathogens, domestic ungulates less so. Human excrement is a common feature of the Pasayten, especially around areas from which camp water is collected. Just as a violent encounter in the Pasayten is most likely to come from another human (not a grizzly) so, too, is the likely source of water contamination to be from another human. The ungulate may be a carrier, but humans brought it in (giardia excepted).

In my opinion other issues raised by opponents are more credible. Even though I have not found massive invasions of exotic species here, I often encounter patches of introduced weeds in overgrazed areas and by trails. If grazing continues, there is a high probability that the Pasayten will be overwhelmed by weeds. Critical in this respect are plants such as the little annual, *Gentiana tenella* (white to bluish purple gentian). In the state it is found in disturbed habitats (including sheep bedding sites) only on Mt. Chopaka and in Horseshoe Basin. Although the species may receive short-term benefits from grazing, the end result will be extirpation as weedy dandelions, thistles and annuals out compete it. Trampling and habitat alteration of the hummocky meadows cause disruption of *Gentiana glauca* (bluish-green gentian) populations. Its association with hummocks appears to be virtually obligate. This



PHOTO: *Gentiana tenella*, Pasayten country — Lanette Smith



PHOTO: *Gentiana glauca*, Pasayten country — Lanette Smith

may be why its distribution in the state is restricted to the northeastern Cascades. The Department of Natural Resources lists both gentians as sensitive. Direct consumption is resulting in the decline of meadow natives. In Horseshoe Basin the scarcity of lupines is due to the fact that they are preferred forage for sheep.

Grazing impacts wetland structure and function. Wetlands are important for water purification, habitat features and water retention (retention enhances aquifer recharge and flood control). Nationwide, little attention has been directed towards preservation of the wetlands in the high country. Instead the focus is on protection of lakes and streams. This policy does not address the true complexity of the situation. For instance, in the Pasayten wetlands are often a mixture of open water, intermittent streams, sedge and willow meadows, hummocky meadows and a dry glacial esker. How do we define these areas and their buffers? Must we wait for the government to tell us what is important?

The Rare and Endangered Species Act resulted in an emphasis on documenting taxa quickly and accurately. Point locations of rare plants have short-term results for preservation, but the ultimate question defies ephemeral resolutions. It is better to document the status of plant and animal populations and their dynamics. Unfortunately, environmental research often is in response to political crises, not an attempt to understand ecosystem complexities; yet to preserve biodiversity, we must also understand the ecosystem. If a community has a role in maintaining long-term ecosystem quality, as well as sensitive plant species, then the two factors together make a site especially worthy of protection from grazing. Such is true in the Pasayten.

The greatest concerns are long-term effects on soil erosion and compaction, invasion of exotics, and ecosystem structure (biodiversity, productivity and physical features). Irreversible environmental degradation often occurs over centuries and is not detectable with a time frame of decades. Effective environmental policy in the Pasayten involves long-term strategic analyses as well as staying prepared for quick and efficient responses to crises.

Those whining Westerners are at it again

John Farmer
Newhouse News Service

It should come as no surprise that the first whimperers to win relief from President Clinton's call for national sacrifice to defeat the deficit were those mighty men of the American West.

With much weeping and gnashing of teeth, senators from Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico and the rest of the Rocky Mountain region persuaded Clinton that their states should be spared the special costs his plan would have imposed on them.

Not that Clinton was asking all that much from the West — an increase in the minimal fees ranchers pay for grazing cattle on federal lands, a 12.5 percent royalty on minerals mined on federal land, and an end to subsidized sales of federal timber.

The whole package would have raised about \$500 million over four years, by one estimate not even enough to qualify for what the late Sen. Everett Dirksen called "real money."

But to hear those strong silent Western types bellyache, one would have thought Clinton's modest proposals meant the end of civilization.

But, then, what else are we to expect? Among the hoariest of American myths is the one about the silent, self-reliance of the Westerner — the frontiersman who, with his bare hands, tamed the land and ran off the Indians — and, of course, his equally self-

sufficient modern-day offspring.

It's that kind of spirit, we're told, that has made the West the home of muscular conservatism, the kind that cherishes free enterprise and wants no truck with federal handouts. What rot!

In fact, no part of America has been so pampered and subsidized as the American West, almost from the time of the Lewis and Clark expedition, which charted the region for Thomas Jefferson at the start of the 19th century.

The great impetus for settling the West was the federal government's grant of free land under the Homestead Act in the 1860s. The railroads, which integrated the West into the rest of the country and brought its cattle to market, were built on public land given gratis to railroad magnates. The American Indians were driven off, not so much by those hardy settlers as by the U.S. Army.

But the subsidization of the West didn't end with the conquest of the frontier. If anything, there's been even more in this century.

For vast stretches, the American West is a waterless place. As Bernard De Voto, the great chronicler of the Move West has written: "The West begins where the average rainfall drops below twenty inches."

What nature has omitted, the federal taxpayer has provided, namely water. Over the decades in this century, billions of federal dollars have been poured into water power and irrigation projects that made otherwise parched portions of the West livable — and made more than a few ranch, farm and mining millionaires in the process.

Rural electrification, price supports to prop up farmers, subsidized water, cheap grazing on federal land, timber sales so subsidized they actually cost Washington money — the list of taxpayer largess for the West is a long one.

But it is not something Americans from other regions have begrudged the West, nor should they. The subsidization of the frontier and, later, the underwriting of modern development of the region has always been seen as in the larger national interest. Even the Easterner, often scorned in the West as an effete free-loader, took pride in the growth of the West; and why not, he helped pay for it.

What's less understandable is the begrudging by so many Westerners of any federal help for their less-well-off fellow citizens in the cities. It was most tellingly evident in the sneering derision Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., heaped the other night on the urban projects Clinton's economic stimulus package would finance.

Simpson's not alone; it's an attitude found among too many of the cowboy capitalists who represent the West and the livestock, farming, mining and timber millionaires who mooch off the federal government.

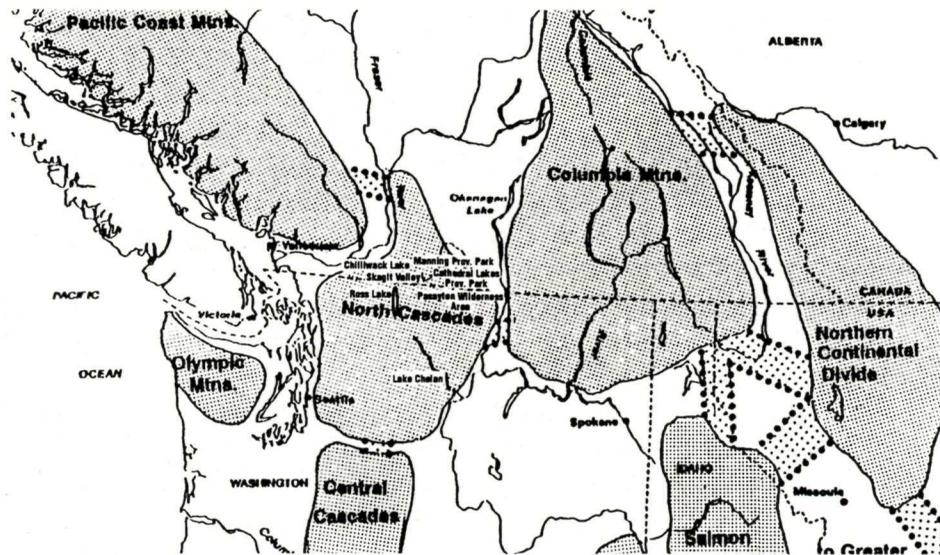
In the great game of who wins and who loses in the distribution of the federal dollar, the West has always been a big winner — and an even bigger whiner, as it proved once more in choosing selfishness over Clinton's call for some small sacrifice.

■ John Farmer is a staff writer for the Star-Ledger of Newark, N.J.

Scott Linn

April 6 1993

GREATER ECOSYSTEMS OF THE NORTHWEST



The Proposed International Park — Visit the Borderlands This Summer

Conservation groups on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border have begun a concerted campaign for an international park to encompass the Greater North Cascades Ecosystem. Political boundaries usually are irrelevant to ecosystems. As an historic example, reindeer herds and their herders continue today as for centuries to migrate across the natural ecosystem of the northern Euro-Asian tundra.

The United States and Canada have political precedents for ecosystem-embracing international wilderness parks. Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario, the adjoining Boundary Waters Canoe Area and nearby Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota are a wilderness of interconnected waterways. Waterton Lakes-Glacier International Peace Park in Montana and Alberta are integral to the Rocky Mountains. The International Peace Park at Blaine, Washington is our closest example of a non-ecological park; the park we have in mind is the opposite of the manicured landscaping there.

We propose an international park extending throughout the North Cascades of Washington and British Columbia, including the Chilliwack and Skagit River corridors, Manning and Cathedral Lakes Provincial Parks, and the high Canadian ridges north of the Pasayten Wilderness. This will not be simply a showpiece park, it will be the first international park that recognizes the power of the land itself, the interconnectedness of the life that the land sustains — *an ecological international park*.

Such a park is necessary to protect the diversity of the lands before the remaining border forests have been clearcut and no longer have a wilderness potential. Wolves, grizzlies, deer, bobcat, marmots, birds can survive only within an ecosystem, not on isolated islands surrounded by clearcuts. Trudy Frisk, in a speech in December 1992 (see *Northwest Conservation* (publication of the Greater Ecosystem Alliance) Winter, 1993, page 13), stated that Canadians do not have access to legal processes available in the American system for halting poor forest management — there are no federal appeals processes, no environmental impact statements mandated by law. “A cultural boundary definitely divides the ecological integrity of the Greater North Cascades Ecosystem. Laws, land tenure, management strategies, politics, even awareness of urgency, all differ considerably on either side of the Canada/U.S. border. . . the Federal Environmental agency has only a discretionary role in protecting the environment. . . the Ministry of Parks is hampered by lack of detailed biological data base, inadequate research funding, a mandate to provide recreational opportunities and a draconian Mineral Tenure Act. . . The Skagit Valley is heavily staked, as mining has highest priority. . . It must be noted that the “Skagit” (Valley Provincial Recreation Area) “is slated for up-grading to a Class A Park. There is strong government support on both sides of the border for an international peace park . . . the heart of a truly sustainable, evolving dynamic ecosystem.”

Exploring the Canadian Side:

To truly grasp the geographical expanse of a region, one must experience it. To know the lay of the land, the people who live there, necessitates making a journey. See what the proposed international park will offer by going north of the border and visiting our borderland wilderness-park areas. You will no doubt find large expanses of logged land, as in the United States. All the more reason to protect the remaining forests. To know where they are is the first step toward protecting them.

Lucky Four Group. The Lucky Four Group, named for the Lucky Four Mine, are Foley Peak, Welch (Wahleach) Mt., Conway Peak, and Stewart Peak, all part of the Cheam Range rising from the Fraser River west of the Chilliwack River. The peaks are visible from Abbotsford, Sumas and Lynden. You may find them surrounded by logging clearcuts.

Directions: Drive Trans-Canada Highway 1 east of Vancouver to the Jones (Wahleach) Creek Road, a logging road that passes Jones Lake and terminates (as far as cars are concerned) in 8.9 miles at a parking spot. The last 1.5 miles of the road are impassable except on foot; the trail, new in 1971, zigzags uphill where the decayed road turns sharp left and swings upward.

This new trail intersects the old government pack trail which ascends to Mile High Camp on a timbered knoll near treeline.



PHOTO: Lucky Four Mountain — Harvey Manning



PHOTO: Chilliwack Lake — Harvey Manning

The Chilliwack. The upper reaches of the Chilliwack River flow north into Chilliwack Lake, fed by creeks draining the slopes of the Northern and Southern Pickets, and Whatcom and Hannegan Passes in the United States.

Directions: Drive Trans-Canada Highway 1, 80 miles from Vancouver.

Trail destination: Little Chilliwack Shelter .75 mile south of the Canadian/U.S. border. The Chilliwack River trail extends a further 9 miles upstream to Whatcom Pass trail and Hannegan Pass. From Vedder Crossing drive the 25 or so miles up the awe-inspiring Chilliwack River valley to Chilliwack Lake, a recently created provincial park reserve. From the picnic facilities a logging road runs south along the east bank of the lake toward the upper valley and U.S. border. Assuming the logging gate is open, immediately south of Paleface Creek go right; at 1.7 miles beyond the gate, near Depot Creek, go right again and continue 1.5 miles to a parking place. No camping facilities; picnic site and toilets. (Can camp on beach at head of the lake.) Find the trail about 100 yards east of the picnic site. Walk south on the east side of the river in superb ancient forest. Round trip, 4.5 miles; allow 3 hours; little elevation gain; good all year.

Skagit River Trail. (Skagit Valley Provincial Recreation Area) The upper Skagit flows south into Ross Reservoir, which was kept from flooding farther north into Canada and drowning the Big Beaver by the coordinated efforts of Americans and Canadians in blocking the High Ross Dam.

Directions: Drive Trans-Canada Highway 1 to Hope, B.C. and the Skagit Valley Provincial Recreation Area.

The Skagit River Trail, paralleling the Ross Lake Road, presently starts just upstream of the junction of the Skagit and Sumallow rivers. Turn south on a short fire-access road, leaving the highway about one kilometer south of Rhododendron Flats. Limited parking. The trail crosses the Skagit River on a bridge and continues along the valley bottom until a junction with the Ross Lake Road at 31 miles. The popular trail has been kept open by fishermen and trappers and now provides the hiker an excellent and scenic journey along the east bank of the Skagit. The Skagit River Road ends in the United States at Hozomeen Camp and the start of the East Bank Trail. To continue on into Ross Lake National Recreation Area, hike the East Bank Trail.

Manning Provincial Park. The park, 140 miles east of Vancouver, B.C., is wholly in British Columbia and borders the Pasayten Wilderness. Both the Skagit and Similkameen Rivers begin within the park.

Directions: Drive Hope-Princeton Highway 3 from Hope, B.C. across Allison Pass to park headquarters.

The trail to Monument 83 at the border is a rough trail-road, 9+ miles, ending 10 miles in a little meadow. The trail eventually connects with the Pacific Crest Trail, and also offers an excellent loop trip. About 200 campsites are provided with road access.

Cathedral Lakes Provincial Park. **Directions:** Drive Hope-Princeton-Highway 3 toward Keremeos, B.C. The park is located in British Columbia, east of Manning Provincial Park, and east of the Ashnola River.

Park trails lead to Cathedral Peak, Rimmel Mountain, Spanish Camp and points west and south in the Pasayten Wilderness. A private 9-mile jeep road leads to trailheads and a resort at Quiniscoe Lake, where trails lead to a series of subalpine lakes, meadows, and granite cliffs. Jeep service by Cathedral Lakes Resort is responsible for non-wild access to what should be purely wild.

Crossing the International Border. At present there is no legal way for a hiker to cross the Canadian-U.S. border on the Pacific Crest Trail. Hundreds of folks "allegedly" cross the border on the Monument 78 and Monument 83 trails. There is no record of hikers being arrested since Repeal.

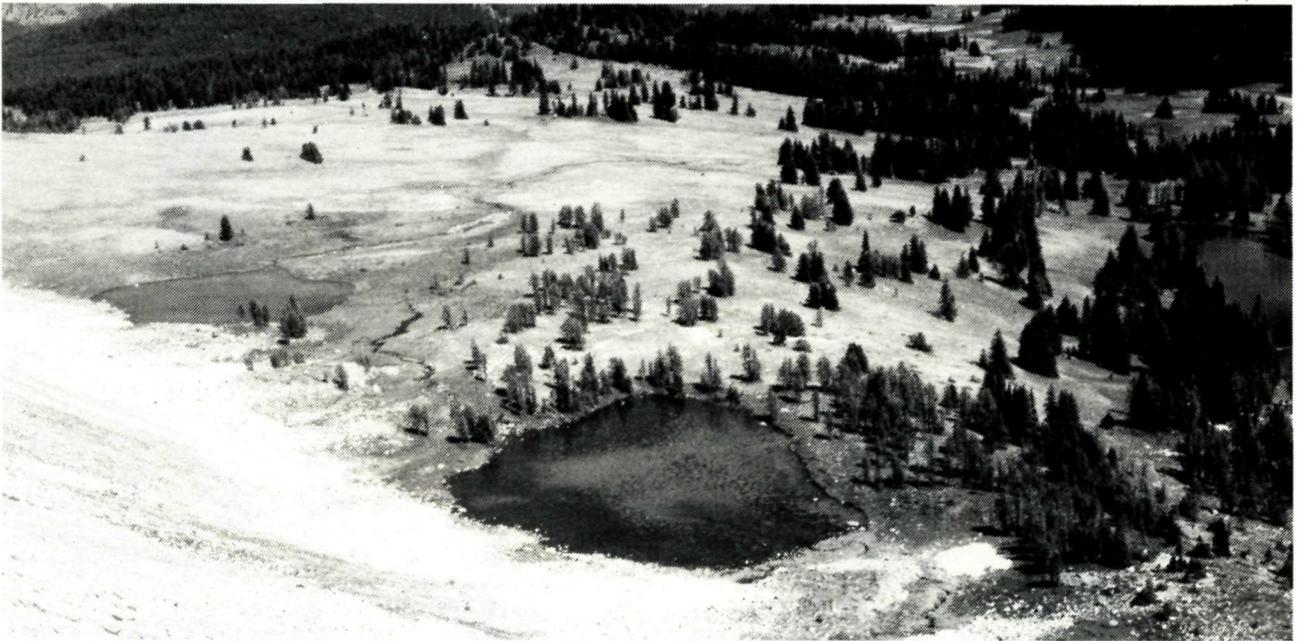


PHOTO: Lakes below Sheep Mt. in Park Pass country, eastern Pasayten — Harvey Manning

Further Reading: For more information on geology, approaches, and border hikes:

Cascade Alpine Guide, Climbing and High Routes, Rainy Pass to Fraser River, Fred Beckey, The Mountaineers, 1981.

Exploring Manning Park, Andrew Harcombe and Robert Cyca, The Mountaineers, 1979.

Hiking the Great Northwest, Harvey Manning, Ira Spring, and Vicky Spring, The Mountaineers, 1991.

100 Hikes in Washington's North Cascades National Park Region, Ira Spring and Harvey Manning, The Mountaineers, 1988.

103 Hikes in Southwestern British Columbia, David Macaree, British Columbia Mountaineering Club and The Mountaineers, 1971.



PHOTO: Monument 83 — Harvey Manning

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**More information
will follow in
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