

# THE WILD CASCADES

October - November 1968



# HOW HORSESHOE BASIN WAS SAVED

by

Brock Evans

Northwest Conservation Representative

To me, the North Cascades have always meant great dark rain forests drenched with ferns and moss, deep-rushing creeks and rivers, and always far above, the great jagged peaks gleaming under blankets of ice. This is the kind of land I have loved and wandered in these past years; and it was for this that I was fighting at all of the hearings and in all the rest of the effort for a North Cascades National Park, just recently so successful.

However, there is another kind of North Cascades, so I have discovered: a place of sheep and lodgepole pine forests, a rolling green meadow land with rounded mountain tops 7000-8000-feet high, a place utterly out of time and far removed from the pressures of the great urban population centers of Puget Sound. This place is Horseshoe Basin on the far northeast corner of the recently-created Pasayten Wilderness, which was a part of the North Cascades legislation.

We almost did not save it however; and the story of how it was saved may serve to remind us that other places perhaps exist which can be rescued in the same way.

It was two Fourth of Julys ago that I first found Horseshoe Basin . . . a long, long drive, 8 hours from Seattle, over the mountains and into the hot plains, far north up toward Canada to Oroville, than back into the mountains again on a long hot dusty road switchbacking up and up through ponderosa and lodgepole forests to the high country. The road ends at Iron Gate Camp, which is merely a clearing in the lodgepole forest, but the view is already magnificent. The elevation at Iron Gate is around 6500 feet, already higher than many of the most scenic places in the North Cascades.

The trail (actually the remnant of an ancient mining road) leads 4 miles through lodgepole forest towards Sunny Pass, breaking out into the open occasionally for long views down the green-forested valleys and toward the jagged peaks of the Methow Valley country far to the south.

Cover photo: Tom Nicolino

The elevation of Sunny Pass is 7200 feet. Just below it is Sunny Camp, set in a grove of trees next to the meadows that rise up to the pass. A little stream sings and dances through the camp, and everywhere is the fragrance that only the pine forests of the east side can have. Everywhere too, is the delicious feeling and sense of isolation, the sense of immense vast places, and the feeling that not only is nobody else there, but nobody else will be there. Sunny Camp, a place utterly remote and out of time and place, was for us those days the nearest thing to paradise we had known.

We spent the next full 2 days using Sunny Camp as a base, crossing over the pass each day to wander through the meadows and the rolling mountains of the Horseshoe Basin country itself. It was a unique experience. The views on all sides are astounding, not as vividly dramatic or awesome as those of the Pickets or the Eldorado-Dome Peak country farther to the west perhaps, but remarkable in a totally different sense, for the sense of vastness and endless space, the total absence of human habitation or marks in an immense plan.

The space and vastness is heightened by the geographical structure of the Horseshoe Basin itself. Its gentle grassy mountains are formed in such a manner that they constitute a series of giant stadia, or amphitheaters, from which to view the stunning procession of immense glacier-hung giants far to the west. As you wander through the basin country, you can see them all, from Glacier Peak in the south all the way north to Mount Baker and all the peaks in between. They are seen there, so far off, over another immense wilderness itself, the whole of the Pasayten country, another procession of rolling mountains, rising sharper and sharper as they roll off to the west, to finally break and crest in the chain of giants that is the new park and the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

There is an utter, total sense of silence, as if no one else had ever been in this land

before. Standing on top of Windy Peak, or Horseshoe Mountain, one can sweep his eyes from the mountains far to the west, far north into British Columbia, look out far over the hot valleys of the Okanogan to the east, then south toward Wenatchee and Lake Chelan, and see not a single sign of human habitation.

For 3 days there were only the four of us, the sun and the meadows, only the four of us in this stupendous silence, the sound of no other voices but our own. It was one of those rare wilderness experiences out of all eternity; for not only was there no one else there, but we knew that no one else would be there. It was an experience which would stay forever in our memory, one which we would not hope to recapture again. It was one of those times which was almost too perfect.

There was for me, however, that weekend also a feeling of some sadness, for at that time the Horseshoe Basin country was proposed for exclusion from the wilderness status which it had enjoyed for some 30 years as a part of the North Cascades Primitive Area. The main efforts for protection of the North Cascades, emanating from the population centers of Puget Sound, had been primarily directed to the Lake Chelan region and the rain forest valleys on the west side of the mountains; little attention had been given to this part of the mountains. Indeed, it appeared that not very much was actually known about it; and that was one of the purposes of this trip.

The primary reason given for omitting the area from wilderness consideration, according to the North Cascades Study Team Report, was that it contained some 96 million board feet of timber. After viewing the area firsthand, this statement of volume seemed incomprehensible. Almost the entire excluded region was above 6000 feet in elevation. The Basin itself is a tree-dotted parkland surrounded by high, grassy peaks. To the south is a long stretch of forest-covered valley, which also climb up the lower sides of the mountains, but this is all outside the existing Primitive Area. Even these forests belie their actual apparently highly-commercial appearance; they are almost entirely lodgepole, often stunted of growth, and barely marketable.

Thus, I returned to my office after the weekend, much puzzled, and directed to the Supervisor of the Okanogan National Forest a

detailed interrogatory-type letter, requesting more information about this area. The letter was very specific, and asked for precise acreages and volumes of commercial timber, by drainage area, both for the excluded area within the existing Primitive Area and also for the roadless country to the south. It was felt that this method of precise questioning would gain the most precise kind of information which was available to the Forest Service. The letter also asked detailed questions about grazing and mining potential and rights inside the area.

Mr. Don Campbell, the present supervisor of the Okanogan National Forest, is a square shooter. He represents a new breed of forester now coming up on the scene: he does not think conservationists are crazy for proposing that some trees not be cut, and he fairly and open-mindedly listens to what we have to say. Mr. Campbell responded to the request of this office for exact timber information with a 2-month detailed and intensive "reconnaissance" of the timber within the Horseshoe Basin part of the North Cascades Primitive Area. New methods were used, different from those employed some years back when the original estimates were made. The results, released by a letter of September 1967 were startling: instead of having 96 million board feet of timber, the area actually only contained 18 million board feet. This much timber, if cut all at once, is approximately enough to keep a medium-sized mill going for about 3 months.

It was very shortly after this new information was made available by the Forest Service that we learned that the Senate Interior Committee was "marking up" the North Cascades legislation in Washington, D. C. A telephone call from this office to the Interior Committee on a Friday afternoon informed me that the actual Bill would be marked up on the following Monday. When we enquired whether Horseshoe Basin was to be put back into the wilderness, the answer was No, because it had too much timber. I immediately advised the Senate staff of the information that had just been released, and they urged me to place it before the Committee as quickly as possible. The result was packaging all the information and the exchanges of correspondence, racing down to the airport late Friday night and rushing an airmail-special delivery package to the Senate in hopes it would get there before the legislation was considered. The effort paid off; for on that Monday, the Bill was marked

up and reported out of committee with 20,000 more acres added to include the Horseshoe Basin country.

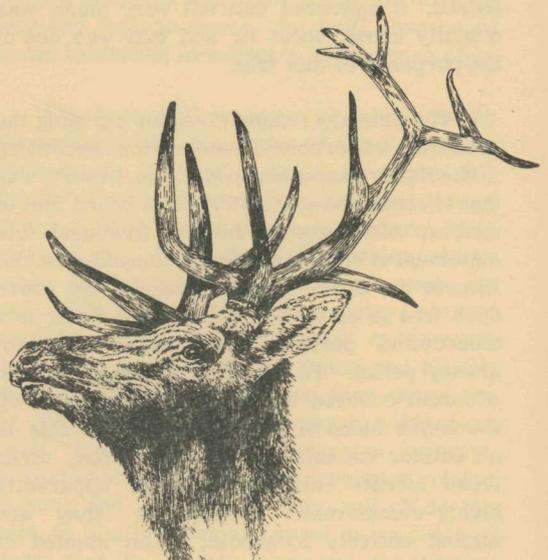
Now the splendid meadows and the great silences are protected, thanks to a chance and very beautiful trip over the 4th of July a year and a half ago, and to the honest and forthright assistance of the Forest Service. But the job is not yet finished; there is still much country surrounding Horseshoe Basin which is still wilderness and of very high quality. These are the forests and valleys and ridges to the south, and also to the east around Chopaka Mountain. The country to the south, a block of about 13,800 acres, contains about 7000 acres of commercial timber with a total volume of 22 million board feet. This would amount to an annual cut of approximately 147,000 board feet per year. The roadless country around Chopaka Mountain, also valuable as a magnificent, forested-scenic setting for the high country, contains about 9 million board feet of timber in about an area of roughly 16,000 acres.

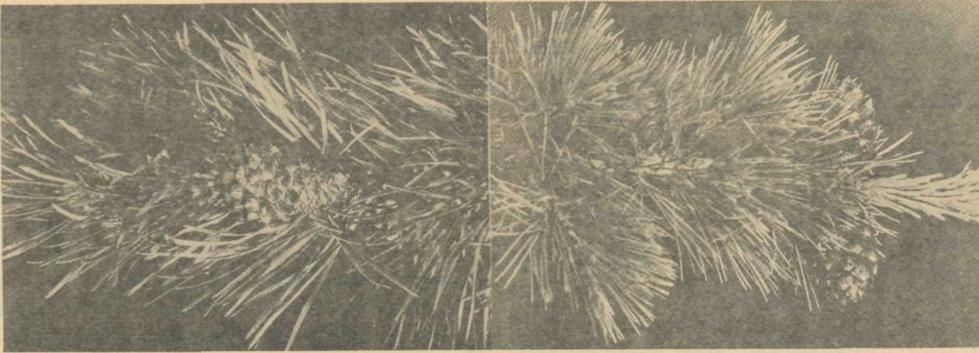
The country to the south is part of the Okanogan National Forest, and the country to the east is state-owned land. Because the volumes of timber are so low in those areas, it may be possible to sit down in an attempt to work out a management plan for both these areas with the appropriate administrators. Conservationists in the state of Washington are pushing for the establishment of a natural preserve system on state-owned lands, and Chopaka Mountain country would be an ideal addition to it. The Forest Service itself may be willing to consider a back-country type of management plan for the southern area which would preserve the natural values and avoid any scarring of the forest scenery.

Strong local support will be necessary to work out both these necessary additions to wilderness protection in the Horseshoe Basin region. Fortunately, it already exists. Contrary to most assumptions, not everybody in eastern Washington nor in the Okanogan Valley is opposed to wilderness -- or National Park protection for that matter. The town of Oroville in particular consists of a large number of strongly individualistic people who greatly love their wilderness and their back country.

They understand natural values and are as dedicated conservationists as anybody in Puget Sound. Several of them appeared at the recent round of North Cascades hearings, held both in Seattle and in Wenatchee, and strongly supported not only the maximum wilderness protection for the Horseshoe Basin country, but also the North Cascades National Park. One of the Oroville witnesses produced a series of ballots where local persons at one of the annual crab-feed events voted on the Park and wilderness legislation. Almost 100 percent of these votes were in favor of more wilderness; and over 90 percent were for the North Cascades National Park. This belies the common assumption that only people far away from an area really appreciate its scenic and wilderness values. Support for wilderness and parks is everywhere, and needs only to be motivated to be articulate.

We owe the people of Oroville and the Okanogan Valley much for working so hard to protect Horseshoe Basin. More of us should go over there to see the country and see why it is so precious and valuable. We all need to work together in years to come to make sure that everything that deserves protection in this area finally gets it.





Lodgepole Pine    Whitebark Pine

## 36 YEARS

by  
Willis J. Erwin

The author, a resident of Oroville, here describes a memorable trip of long ago through what is about to become the Pasayten Wilderness Area. He is living proof that not everyone who lives and works near wilderness sees it only as land to be torn up for the sake of a dollar. More than anyone else, he is responsible for alerting the N3C and others to the scenic and wildland values of the Horseshoe Basin, a part of the North Cascades Primitive Area which the Forest Service originally proposed to omit from the new Pasayten Wilderness Area. He has been threatened with economic reprisal by local interests; it takes a lot more guts to be an outspoken preservationist in the Okanogan than, say, in Seattle.

Thirty-six cents will buy a short length of nylon rope to tie your tent to a tree. Thirty-six dollars will buy a pretty pack frame and multi-pocket sack. Now convert the 36 to measurements of distance and it represents how far a tall man might go with each step, or the width of a mountain river, or maybe a good, long 2-day hike. Now let's make the 36 into time. Thirty-six seconds is about long enough to swing a 40-pound pack on your shoulders and get it settled in place. No doubt most hikers will cover a mile in 36 minutes and in 36 hours cover many up-and-down miles. Now we come to the reason for the "36" stuff. It was that long ago in years that I and another young fellow took a 2-week hike and horse trip into what is now the North Cascades Primitive Area.

To pin the time down exactly I climbed into my little four-wheel air-pollution machine

and drove to the office of Conconully District Ranger Bob Snoich in Okanogan, where I was met by Office Manager Helen Bramhall. I stated why I was there and she went to her files to see what year the lookout was built on Windy Peak, that being the same year we made the hike. She didn't have any record, so kindly called the Supervisor's office several blocks down the street. After a lapse of 10 minutes we had the answer -- 1932. 36 years ago. I knew it had been a long time but didn't realize it was that long. No wonder the hills have got so much steeper the last few years.

Now, as to how I got to make the trip. A young fellow by the name of Dallas Winsor and I used to cross trails in the hills, he usually on a horse and me hiking. We got to know each other real well.

One day he showed up at my house with the

idea of a 2-week trip into the back country. This was to be a saddle horse and packhorse trip. Me and horses just don't seem to understand each other so I wasn't too interested.

So Dallas talked another local boy into going but the first night out the coyotes howled and he thought it was a band of wolves and refused to go any farther. So in August Dallas cached his pack and grub in Duncan James' cabin and returned to Oroville.

Here comes Dallas the second time asking me to think it over. He said that he had everything to go, and all I needed to take was a bed roll and a change of socks. After a night of thinking about it I decided to go with him.

We left Oroville and drove to Loomis, 25 miles away, our jumping-off place for the wilds. In those days it was only 3 or 4 miles to the wilds from Loomis. We had to go south of town several miles to get the horses, two saddle horses and a packer. It's somewhere around 15 miles to Duncan James' cabin, located along the Middle Fork of Toats Coulee Creek, and we arrived late that afternoon. In those days the old rawhide latch string hung outside the door and anyone was welcome to use the cabin. Clean up and leave wood for the next man was all that was asked.

Then came the awakening. Most of the grub Dallas had brought consisted of 75 pounds of potatoes, plus some lard, flour, bacon, and salt and not very much of anything else. No jam or canned fruit. I had offered to buy some grub but Dallas said he had plenty. He did -- spuds.

Well, we packed up the horses and it turned out the packer had a big scab on her back. When Dallas and the other young fellow were on the first trip the horse jumped or something when they put on the packs and the packs gouged her back. Dallas said, "You go to the other side of the horse and pass the rope back to me." Which I did and in less time than it takes to tell Dallas had a perfect diamond hitch holding the packs on. It stayed tight all day and all his diamond hitches the rest of the trip never needed retying.

After going up the Middle Fork of Toats Coulee and then out into Long Swamp we ran into flies -- big flies, small flies, and middle-

sized flies. The large ones went for the horses and drew blood if we didn't get them first. The middle-sized and small flies concentrated on Dallas and me. I never have forgotten that area.

Late in the day we decided to go on to the Thirtymile Ranger Station on the Chewack River. The trail we took down out of Long Swamp to Thirtymile is long gone. At least it's not on any maps nowadays. What a trail it was! When we hit the steep part where it dove over the brink of the hill into the river area we were one big mess of gravel, rocks, horses, and boys. To this day I maintain the only reason the packs and saddles didn't get to the bottom first was the horses' ears held them on their necks. Needless to say, not being a horse man I slid down mostly on the seat of my pants.

The trail came out just below the Thirtymile Ranger Station house. There was a corral with hay and we were invited to turn the horses in and give them feed. We started a fire and cooked a pan of spuds for supper, the first of many pans of spuds, and rolled into our bed rolls. No boughs -- too tired to cut any.

Next morning we got a fire permit from the ranger for the Ashnola-Pasayten area. That was the reason we had come to Thirtymile. They wouldn't issue a permit at Loomis since it was another district.

We had breakfast, coffee and spuds, and chatted with a man who was packing the new lookout house, in pieces of course, up Windy Peak. There were piles of boards and windows everywhere and I sure would have liked to stay and watch that man put that stuff on the horses.

Our destination that day was Tungsten Mine and the ranger instructed us to be sure to leave the Chewack trail and go in via Bauerman Ridge because of bog and down timber in the Tungsten Creek trail. Well, we got to admiring the scenery and peaks and the roaring Chewack River and rode right by our supposed turn-off point. We finally hit the bog area but since it was August it was no problem, being only little pools of water now and then. We soon hit the old burn, but no down trees. But before long we did come to a lodgepole pine about a foot in diameter across the trail. On the other side sat three boys with saddle and

pack horses. They had heard us coming and as they had their ax tied inside their packs decided to wait and see where ours was tied. Well, it was on the outside so they offered to cut the log out if we would furnish the ax, which we gladly did. Was a big mistake, though, because with the last swing of the ax they broke the handle.

After a little chat and feeling bad about the broken handle we continued up the creek to the mine, arriving in the middle of the afternoon.

At that time Frank Arnold lived there and he had another man, Clyde Andrews, with him. They were going to open up the old mine and make a million.

I had met Frank Arnold a few years before when my Dad and I roughed it a few miles out of Loomis at a cabin up Toats Coulee. I could see old Frank eyeing me but couldn't quite place where he had seen me. I just mentioned a certain winter in Toats Coulee and he remembered.

Poor old Frank and Clyde were just about out of grub so Frank spent some time apologizing for not being able to invite us up to his cabin to eat. We informed him we had plenty of grub -- spuds -- and cooked up a pan-full on a big Lang range that had a top at least an inch thick and two ovens on it. People tell me the range is still there today.

While we waited for that inch of iron to heat up I looked around for a suitable piece of wood to whittle out an ax handle and, finding one, spent most of that evening fitting the new handle and carving to shape. It lasted the rest of the trip.

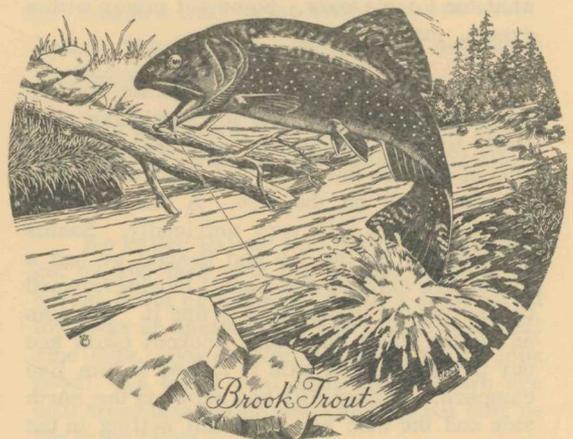
We spent the next day looking over the old mine and I climbed up back of the mine to look over the country. Could see Tungsten Lake across the canyon and many miles in about every direction. What wild, beautiful country it was. I remember the Lake looked like some giant had pushed a depression into the side of a mountain and filled it with the bluest water he could find.

From about now I was hiking mostly. The old scab cover on the horse had rubbed off and we switched packs to my saddle horse. Said "scabby" horse objected to being rode so we agreed I would rather walk than ride anyway.

The sore only seemed to bother the horse when I approached to get in the saddle. So that horse went along for the trip free from here on.

The trip continued next morning to Cathedral Lakes. The trail was mostly through a burned-out area and when we started to climb from the creek up to the pass under Cathedral Peak we entered a high mountain meadow, a mass of color. I've never since seen so many wild flowers. I suppose I could write several pages about them, the way Zane Grey used to describe a sunset in his early Western stories. (The only other person I've ever talked to who seemed to enjoy those stories enough to remember is Roger Benson, a retired border patrol man. He rode the border area every summer for several years.)

Cathedral Peak is well-named. The trail under it was easy traveling, but straight up to the peak top was nothing but sheer rock. The first of the two Cathedral Lakes is just over the pass. There was a snowbank lying in the edge of the water. The water was very clear. Grass and flowers around. No sign that anyone ever stopped there. We could see fish swimming along the shores. We wanted to camp at the lower and larger lake so continued down the trail.



We hadn't more than got camp set up when we had the darndest snow storm I've ever seen. Began to look like we'd need snowshoes instead of horses. But like all summer snowstorms in high mountains, it soon disappeared and Dallas broke out his old telescope fish pole and

caught us a nice mess of meat to go along with our pan of spuds and bannock. The fish were small but sure lots of them in those days. For a long time all we ever heard was the fine fishing at Cathedral Lakes. Everyone was heading for those lakes. Now it's Tungsten Lake. Wonder how long it will stand the pressure of the multitude.

The next day was clear and sunny and our trail was mostly in high country so we could see the view in all directions. The day was really beautiful only a little while, though. We arrived at the east side of the Ashnola River Canyon. What a sad sight! A fire several years before had cleaned it out. Not a thing was green. Just charred trees and ashes and the trail would zig one way and about the time you got adjusted would zag the other. It was dusty also, and being in the rear I got the full benefit of said dust. Lots of flies again, so along with the dust and the heat due to trees being gone, it was a miserable couple hours in the river bottom. But we soon climbed out and reached green country again. Even to this day I can't help think of the terrible destruction that fire caused in the Ashnola country. Must have been pure hell on the wildlife. They tell me it is green again now, but lots of downfall in the new growth and about impossible to get through off the trail even on foot.

We were on Sheep Mountain now and stopped to look at the old cabin. At that time the walls were still up but by now it must be just a pile of decayed logs. Who built it and what for I don't know. Some old miner with a dream, maybe.

We spent that night on a ridge top and had an unfriendly shepherd for a neighbor. We found out next day he was from Spain. It was kind of cool on the ridge that night so we kept heaving wood on the fire. A bad mistake. The man there was very unfriendly. Seems he was new at the job and thought he had a forest fire starting and wasn't looking forward to starting out in the night to find it. The man on Dollar Watch Mountain Lookout could see our fire better and said it looked to him like campers. Bunker Hill had snow on the north side and the man had a tub-full setting in the sun to melt. Maybe for his summer bath?

We went on down-trail, arriving at the Pasayten River in afternoon and crossing on a bridge with a gate on one end. Dallas says, "We won't have to stake out the horses tonight.

We'll close the gate and they won't ford this river." Famous last words!

Across the river was a double-ended cabin, one end being finished and again the latch string hung outside so anyone was welcome. We hadn't more than got things laid out for evening when in rode a man leading at least 10 packhorses loaded to the limit. Seems he was a packer headed for a band of sheep up the east slopes of the Cascades and had 2 more days to travel.

He suggested we all eat together and we had a real feed. Fruit, cheese, bread, and spuds. We furnished the spuds. After several hours of seeing who could tell the biggest story we turned in for the night.

Next morning the sheep packer left before we got up. While I boiled coffee and fried spuds, Dallas went to check the horses. So they wouldn't ford the river? Two of them had. Dallas being a horse man slept with one ear tuned in for the horse sounds and he thought he'd heard them go by the cabin during the night. His saddle horse had stayed, though, so Dallas took off up the back-trail to overtake them.

I took a hike down the trail along the river to the international boundary. Wish I'd known then what I know now. Seems there is quite a famous tree known as the Parson Smith Tree. Wayback he cut a poem into the tree and it has been protected with a cover by the Forest Service. I just can't come up with the poem itself, but it was about how he had roamed all over and this was his home.

Dallas caught up with the horses about noon and returned to the cabin. They sure were headed for Loomis. Right near this spot there was a sign that said "80 miles to Loomis." Wonder if it still is there?

Dallas went fishing in the Pasayten River and we had fish and spuds that night. I kind of loafed around. I found an old magazine and layed out on the sunny side of the cabin. Started a good-looking story and it was continued in back pages. Damn if it wasn't a continued story and to this day I don't know how it ended.

Both of us had heard a lot about the Hidden Lakes so that was the way we went. They were clear and beautiful bodies of water but I liked Cougar Lake the best. Someone else

must have thought it was nice because there was an old cabin there. It appeared very old at that time and no doubt is gone now. Guess the Forest Service has some kind of a ranger headquarters in the area now.

We continued on up the valley and came to a fork in the well-used trail. One went toward the Methow country and the other up the mountain to Dollar Watch Pass. Up the switchbacks we went to the pass. We could see the lookout to our left so decided to pay a visit. We tied the horses in the shade of some trees and up we went. I was surprised to see Dallas walk.

Arriving at the Dollar Watch Lookout, first thing the man asked was were we the ones camped over near Bunker Hill several days before. When we said yes he had a big laugh, telling us how we'd given the Bunker Hill man fits that night.

The view from Dollar Watch Mountain was wonderful. Could see for miles and the air was clear. Seems I remember we stayed there feasting our eyes on the scenery for quite a while.

We returned to the horses and headed for Cathedral Lakes again. For some darn reason there is a blank in my old head just where we went from this pass but I know we didn't recross Ashnola Canyon. We ended up that night in the Spanish Camp area and stayed in the lean-to shelter. That was high open country and the horses were in heaven. We had an open fire in front of the shelter to reflect heat in on our bed rolls and we enjoyed our spuds that night.

Again I'm a little put out because I just don't remember our route, but we arrived at Cathedral Lakes and spent the night in our old camp.

We went on to Tungsten Mine, where there was great excitement. Seems Frank and Clyde had dug out the face of the old mine. Frank happened to be digging when the water backed up in the tunnel took a notion to wash out and nearly took Frank down the canyon with it. They were sure having a big laugh over it, but if Frank hadn't been pretty spry in those days and jumped out of the way he could have been hurt.

Clyde had been out to Loomis and back during our absence but we still weren't invited to eat, so we fried a big pan of spuds on the old Lang range.

That was the last time I ever saw good old Frank. Quite a few years later he didn't show up in Loomis as he usually did. So sometime later they started looking for him. If my memory is working right they found his body at one of his cabins, where Horseshoe Creek empties into the Chewack River, and he is buried there. Boyd Hilderbrand, who was sheriff at that time and was the one who went in to check, died just several days ago. I planned on going down to see him and get the true facts, but now he's gone too. Hilderbrand was a famous cougar hunter in his early days.

Well, on with our trip. We left Frank Arnold and Clyde Andrews dreaming of the millions they were going to dig out of the old mine. If they'd only known it, they were already millionaires, with their nice warm cabin, the scenery, and the wildlife.

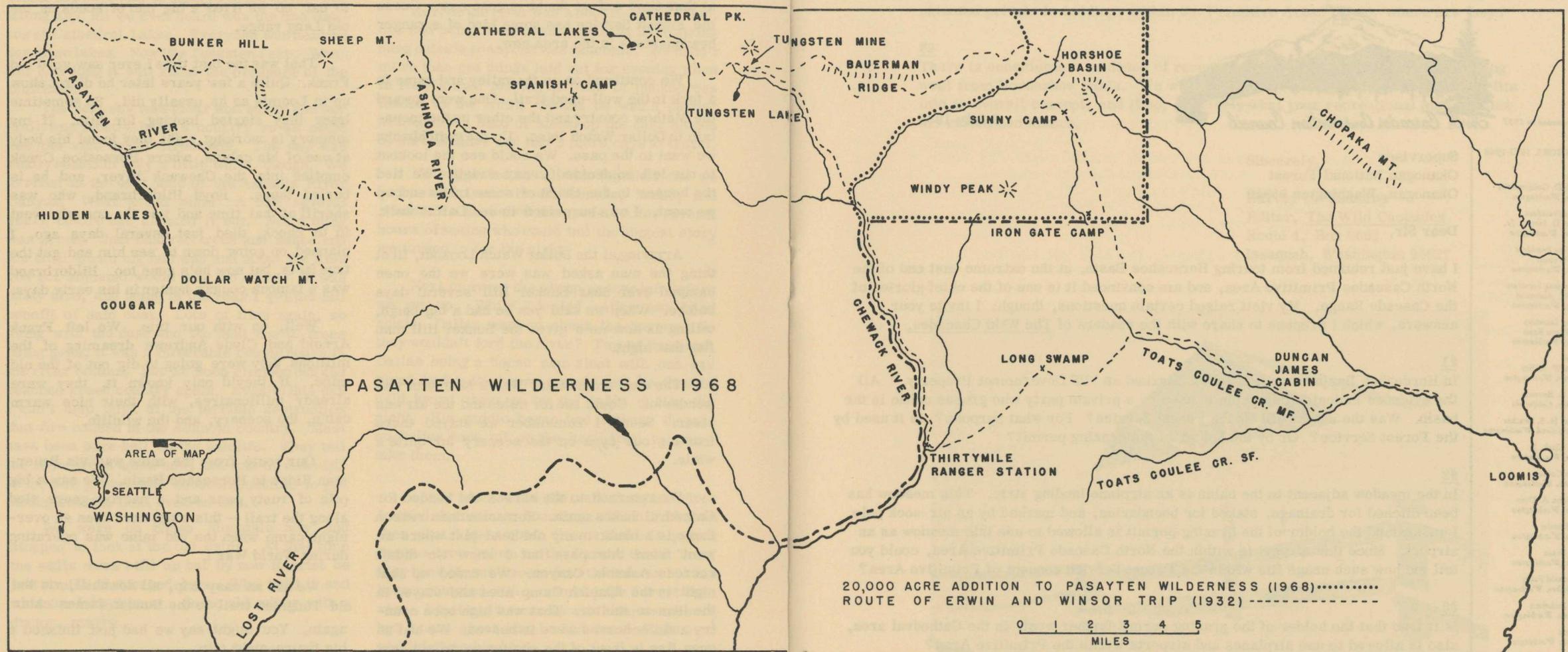
Our route from the mine was via Bauerman Ridge to Horseshoe Basin. We saw a big pile of rusty cans and a narrow-gauge sled along the trail -- this must have been an overnight camp when the old mine was operating during World War I.

We had an easy trip, all downhill, via the old Tungsten trail to the Duncan James cabin again. You might say we had just finished a big figure-eight trip.

The latchstring was still out so we stayed overnight and went on into Loomis next afternoon.

We called Dallas' Dad in Oroville to come get us and then took the horses to the home corral south of Loomis. About 1 mile out of town was an apricot tree just loaded with real ripe cots. Boy oh boy, did those things look good! We had a real fruit feed. There are still trees in the same place and I'll bet they're the same trees.

We went back to Loomis and laid in the shade. Mr. Winsor came and got us late in the day and we returned to our homes in Oroville.



I might add a few notes to the story.

You can now drive to within 4 miles of Horseshoe Basin. A good road runs through Long Swamp and if you look real careful you can still see the old trail. Where our horses and me slid into Thirtymile Ranger Station, a road is being built. Newspaper articles say it is to be a blacktop road. I also hear thousands of people are using the Spanish Camp area for recreation.

The old horses are long gone and a few years ago Dallas joined them. When I drive my air-pollution machine out onto some ridge for a look at the distant mountains, I like to think I can see Dallas riding along on the sky-

line where the sun shines bright and warm, the sky is the deepest blue, and the wildflowers bloom in great fields. There will be grass up to the horses' bellies. And there should be a squirrel in every tree to warn all the animals that man is near. I want Dallas to have plenty of dry wood for his fires and campobbers to come down out of the trees and beg something to eat, and yes, dammit, I want him to have plenty of potatoes.

A lot has happened in 36 years, so now you see the reason for my title of this story.

Say, Sonny, will you please hand me my cane and help me up out of this rocker?

## THE IRATE BIRDWATCHER RETORTS

Mr. Smith obviously owns Horseshoe Basin. With FS approval, he picks up a lookout cabin (government property, and so labeled) and moves it to a knoll beside his airport, a lovely meadow only 4 1/2 miles from the road-end at Iron Gate Camp. (So why is air travel essential to supervision of his 241-305 lousy cows? The cows walk. Can't Smith?) After 50 years of chewing up the flowers with sheep, now cattle, Smith and family doubtless feel they have squatter's rights. But please remember the National Forests were established specifically to prevent the public lands from being appropriated by private interests.

For rendering Horseshoe Basin virtually off-limits to people from July 1 to October 15, for converting a gloryland into a reeking pasture, Mr. Smith pays an average of \$670 a year. The Forest Service could get more revenue simply by asking each hiker to pay a small fee to be free of cows and cow pies.

The frontier is dead and gone. Wilderness is too rare, too much in demand, to be wantonly abused by cowboys. The time has come for Mr. Smith and his animals to get out of our flowers.



Founded in 1957

8 July 1968

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Spokane, WashingtonMrs. John A. Dyer  
Seattle, WashingtonJesse Epstein  
Seattle, WashingtonBrock Evans  
Seattle, WashingtonDr. Donald Fager  
Wenatchee, WashingtonFrank Fickeisen  
Bellevue, WashingtonHal Foss  
Yakima, WashingtonMrs. Neil Haig  
Seattle, WashingtonDr. William R. Halliday  
Seattle, WashingtonJohn Hodge  
Bellingham, WashingtonLouis R. Huber  
Seattle, WashingtonHarvey H. Manning  
Issaquah, WashingtonJ. Michael McCloskey  
San Francisco, CaliforniaGrant McConnell  
Chicago, IllinoisVern Morgus  
Shelton, WashingtonRodger W. Pegues  
Edmonds, WashingtonFrank Richardson  
Seattle, WashingtonJohn F. Warth  
Seattle, WashingtonPhilip H. Zalesky  
Everett, Washington

Supervisor

Okanogan National Forest  
Okanogan, Washington 98840

Dear Sir,

I have just returned from touring Horseshoe Basin, at the extreme east end of the North Cascades Primitive Area, and am convinced it is one of the chief glories of the Cascade Range. My visit raised certain questions, though; I invite your answers, which I propose to share with the readers of The Wild Cascades.

## #1

In Horseshoe Basin there is a cabin, marked as "US Government Property." All the evidence indicates this cabin is used by a private party who grazes cattle in the basin. Was the cabin built by the Forest Service? For what purpose? Is it used by the Forest Service? Or by the holder of the grazing permit?

## #2

In the meadow adjacent to the cabin is an airplane landing strip. This meadow has been ditched for drainage, staked for boundaries, and marked by an air-sock pole. I understand the holder of the grazing permit is allowed to use this meadow as an airport. Since this airport is within the North Cascade Primitive Area, could you tell me how such usage fits within the Forest Service concept of Primitive Area?

## #3

Is it true that the holder of the grazing permit farther west, in the Cathedral area, also is allowed to use airplanes and airports within the Primitive Area?

## #4

What is the exact Forest Service justification for the Pasayten Airport, also within the Primitive Area?

## #5

How long has Mr. Emmett Smith (and his family) held the grazing permit in Horseshoe Basin? How many animals are grazed there each year? Is it true that sheep were grazed there mainly until 2 years ago, and that now cattle are entirely grazed? How many animals are allowed annually? During what period?

## #6

What fee does the permit holder pay for use of the Horseshoe Basin area?

## #7

Could you tell me how many other grazing permits are extant in the North Cascade Primitive Area, and for how many animals, and where, and for what fee?

#8

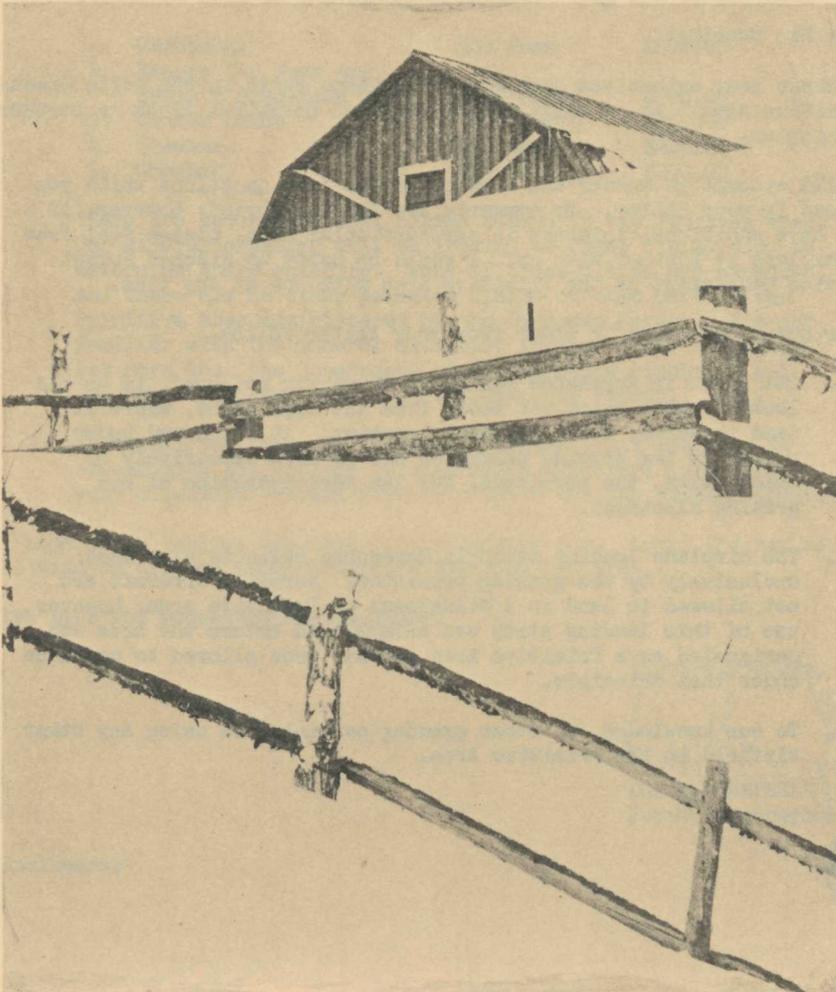
What is the current status of the mineral claims at Tungsten? Are there any other patented private in-holdings within the Primitive Area? If so, where are they?

#9

There is considerable evidence of recent major work on the "high trail" leading west from Horseshoe Basin. We would be interested in knowing whether this fits into an overall concept, and if so, precisely what your recreational plan implies for riders and hikers.

Sincerely,

Harvey H. Manning  
Editor, The Wild Cascades  
Route 4, Box 6652  
Issaquah, Washington 98027



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE  
OKANOGAN NATIONAL FOREST  
POST OFFICE BOX 980  
OKANOGAN, WASHINGTON 98840

IN REPLY REFER TO  
2150

July 25, 1968

Mr. Harvey H. Manning  
Editor, The Wild Cascades  
Route 4, Box 6652  
Issaquah, Washington 98027

Dear Mr. Manning:

We share your enthusiasm concerning Horseshoe Basin in the North Cascade Primitive Area. It is truly one of the most beautiful spots in northern Washington.

I will attempt to answer and comment on the nine questions which you raised in your letter. My comments are somewhat brief; however, if you have additional interest in any particular area, please feel free to explore it further with us. I would be happy to discuss Forest Service management of the Primitive Area with you at any time.

Your questions taken in order from your letter follow.

1. The cabin in Horseshoe Basin, to which you referred, is an old lookout house which was moved from the high point, where it used to serve, to its present location. It was moved under permit by the grazing permittee and is used exclusively by Emmet Smith, the permittee, for the administration of his grazing allotment.
2. The airplane landing strip in Horseshoe Basin is also used exclusively by the grazing permittee. Normally aircraft are not allowed to land in a Wilderness or Primitive area; however, use of this landing strip was established before the area was designated as a Primitive Area and has been allowed to continue under that principle.
3. To our knowledge, no other grazing permittee is using any other airfield in the Primitive Area.



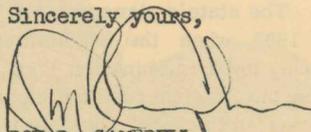
- 4. The Pasayten Airport was constructed in the late 1930's or early 1940's for fire control purposes during a period of recurring, large, uncontrolled fire situations. The only justification for using it now would be an actual going-fire situation or a life or death rescue mission.
- 5. Mr. Emmet Smith's father was issued a sheep permit which included Horseshoe Basin in 1917. The permit went to his sons in 1938. The permit was recently converted from sheep to cattle with 305 animals allowed annually between 7/1 and 10/15. Last year Mr. Smith grazed 241 head of cattle.
- 6. The fee for that area averages \$670.00.
- 7. There are five other grazing permits in the North Cascade Primitive Area on the Okanogan Forest. They are as follows:
 

1. Cathedral	300 cows	\$600.00
2. Frosty Big Face and Devil's Dome-Rock Cr.	2400 sheep	\$700.00
3. Hidden Lakes	1200 sheep	\$350.00
4. Chewack	75 cows	\$200.00
5. Chewack	100 cows	\$250.00
- 8. There are several mineral claims staked in the Tungsten area. Our mineral examiner will be looking at these claims soon to determine their validity. None of these claims are patented, and there are no other patented claims on that part of the Primitive Area administered by the Okanogan Forest. I'm not familiar with the mineral situation further west. I might say here that the Government has the surface rights on all unpatented mineral claims on the Okanogan Forest.
- 9. The trail you refer to is an all-purpose trail designed to accommodate all classes of wilderness travelers in an east-west direction between Horseshoe Basin and the Cascade Crest.

I hope these replies are what you're looking for. Again I'd say we will be glad to discuss these points in depth at any time.

The maps you requested are enclosed.

Sincerely yours,



DON R. CAMPBELL  
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures

# ACROSS THE NORTH CASCADES BY BULLDOZER AND HAY WAGON

by  
Alice Thorn

The North Cross-State Highway will probably be a completed, paved reality in 1973.

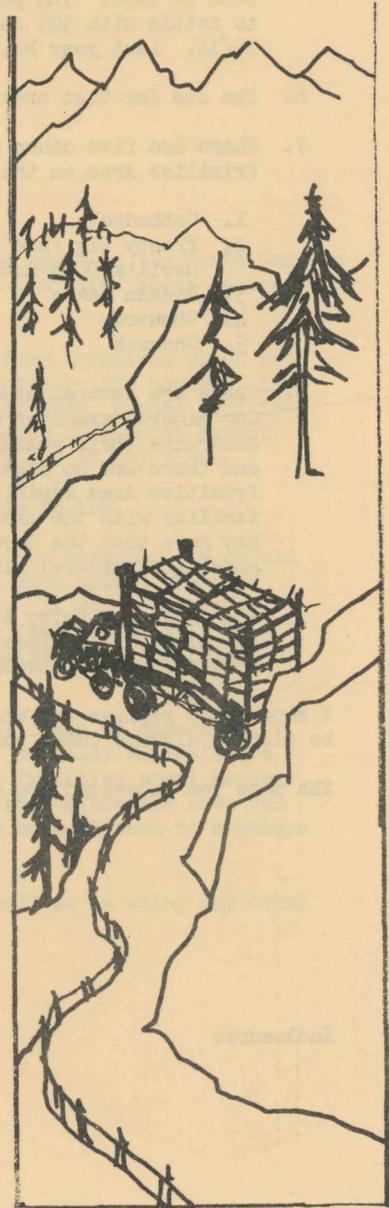
The fact will cause rejoicing (justified or not) among members of the North Cross-State Highway Association, Chambers of Commerce, fruit and wheat growers, loggers, hotel, motel, and restaurant operators, hunters, skiers, and automobilers.

It will be greeted with considerably-tempered enthusiasm by conservationists, many of whom had hoped the road would never be built.

The reality of the highway's existence is underscored by the present status. Work has been done or contracts let for all but a stretch of 5 1/2 miles. (See map.) On the east side, construction is in progress on the 9.6 miles from Rainy Pass down to Granite Creek to the Granite Creek Crossing. On the west, approximately 5 miles from Lillian Creek to the confluence of Canyon and Granite Creeks is being graded. The highway from Rainy Pass to Ruby Creek is more like a trail at the moment, though the North Cross-State Highway Association (NCSHA) conducted a victory drive of the entire route on September 29th. Their tour was carefully guided, over a route barely passable in places to four wheel drive vehicles only. (The road will not be open to the public in any sense until late 1969.)

The state's plans to build this road began in 1893 when the legislature appropriated money for a combination trail and wagon road from the Skagitacross the mountains. Several names and several possible routes have been chosen over the years, and money appropriated for various projects. (See the *Wild Cascades*, December 1962 and January 1963.) But it was not until the late 1950s that appropriations and plans gave serious impetus for completion of the highway.

At that time conservationists increased their efforts to modify as much as possible the



highway's impact upon the wilderness Cascades. A major effort involved route choice.

In 1961 the legislature designated the highway as State Highway No. 16, considering several possible routes across the mountains, among them Cascade Pass, Harts Pass, and the Rainy Pass-Washington Pass route. If the highway had to be built, conservationists felt the Harts Pass route should be chosen, particularly since there was already a road partly into the area. They also asked that Cooper and Twisp Passes be considered, and particularly objected to the Rainy Washington Pass route, since it would destroy the secluded beauty of 5,577-foot Washington Pass, and send a major road through wilderness. To avoid public pressures for further roads, conservationists had hoped to include the Granite Creek drainage in the Glacier Peak Wilderness area.

But in December of 1962 conservationist hopes were dashed and the Rainy Pass route selected. The choice was made by the Washington State Highway Department in cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service. Expenditures for all but 41 miles of construction were provided at that time.

The motive for building this highway seems to have been purely economic. Highway Commissioner George Zahn wrote in 1961 of the dreams of wealth -- minerals, timber, and transportation of cattle and produce -- which have led men to work for the highway down through the years. The prospect of a booming tourist business now spurs the building, he said. More recently, an editorial in the Wenatchee Daily World stated the case: "The original impetus for this road was access so a great timber resource could be harvested."

The rejoicings of NCSHA members at the road's progress read like a litany in praise of money: "This will be the best thing that can happen to the economy here ... a boon to the Skagit-region dairymen ... "Dairymen will save \$5 a ton on hay"... "For more than a century lack of a short route to the coast has had a strangling effect on the economies of the areas."

"From Mt. Vernon on the Skagit to Pateros on the Columbia will be 100 miles shorter than over Stevens or Snoqualmie."

Highway proponents usually list three main reasons for the highway: for the harvesting of natural resources such as timber and minerals; as a shipping route between the northeast and northwest state; and for opening up a scenic area to tourism and recreational development. All three give conservationists reason to fear future developments. For example, with the Granite Creek drainage excluded from park or wilderness protection, and with a highway down its heart, how long will its timber remain standing?

With construction inexorably underway, a real crisis was and is control of the highway. The NCSHA has been working assiduously to guard its economic interests; the possibility that the highway might go through a park was a specter to exorcize. Members asked Senator Jackson to introduce an amendment to the park bill, the original language of which was explicit: "No restriction shall be imposed on use of the road by commercial traffic and no fee charged for the use of the road." Governor Evans, testifying at Park hearings, expressed doubt



about having the highway controlled by a National Park: "We have found in some other instances that if we are talking about a national park as such, that there are some restrictions on highway use that have been somewhat troublesome."

The Senate bill gave the state of Washington control over the highway, though the proposed NCSHA language is not used. The bill reads:

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect adversely or to authorize any Federal agency to take any action that would affect adversely any rights or privileges of the State of Washington in property within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area which is being utilized for the North Cross State Highway.

There may be some comfort in knowing that the highway falls under the Scenic Highways bill, passed by the Washington State Legislature in 1967 and signed into law by Evans. The purpose of this bill is to establish "a scenic and recreational highway system, "with provisions for establishing such things as hiking, bicycle, and bridle trails; campsites and shelters; boat-launching sites; access trails to lakes, rivers, and streams; safety rest areas; historic and geologic interpretive facilities; observation facilities; roadside landscaping; and uniform signs and markers. It provides that planning and design standards are to be co-ordinated by the State Office of Community Affairs, and that the Highway Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission be responsible for developing the system.

Evans' testimony indicated the state would work closely with federal agencies in development for the scenic recreation highway. Just how much effect this state bill will have remains to be seen.

There remains an age-old dilemma. Advocates of the highway said it would "open up" an area of scenic beauty to the public. An argument which is all too familiar to conservationists is given by the highway booster: "Not everyone wants to shoulder a pack for days to view the mountainous splendor." But in the process of opening up, just how can the beauty be preserved against the encroachment of blacktop, cars, people, and buildings which the highway will bring? The private ski developments along Snoqualmie Pass are a haunting

example. George Selke's remarks, in the Study Team Report, state the problem of management in the North Cascades:

The emphasis should be upon the kind of management that makes best use of the renewable resources, protects those which must never be lost, and appropriately controls and directs the people who use them. It has taken a long time to sense that the greatest danger to our natural resources are the people who use them . . .

Just what are the appropriate controls?

This question must surely be answered in the decisions on additional roads. For with the North Cross-State Highway in, pressures for more roads increase. The Study Report stated:

Because of the relative inaccessibility of the Study Area, the great popularity of driving for pleasure as a recreation pursuit, and the importance of making much more of the North Cascades available to large numbers of people, high priority should be given to the construction of scenic roads.

At the time of the report, there were an estimated 5,500 miles of forest highways and forest development roads in the study area. "There appear to be reasonable possibilities of a scenic road network of about 920 miles in the Study Area of which over two-thirds are existing roads and the remainder need either improvement or construction."

Forest Service Management plans in the report gave highest priority to routes through Curry Gap, Cady Pass, Harts Pass, and Austin Pass. Ironically, the Harts Pass route is one earlier rejected for the North Cross-State Highway "by reason of the difficult terrain between Granite Creek and Robinson Creek on the east, the long distance of sustained maximum grade, the heavy curvature, and this being the highest pass on any of the routes." Evidently these problems are no longer insurmountable.

Two roads in particular have raised opposition. One would have been a road access from Canada down the east side of Ross Lake, connecting the North Cross-State Highway to



Highway No. 3 in British Columbia. This was to provide "east access to the North Cascades National Park from Vancouver and also from Banff and Jasper National Parks in British Columbia." Not all study team members agreed that this road should be built, several arguing that travel should be by ferry on Ross Lake.

Another recommended road would be from the highway to Bridge Creek. In this case it would be altogether too easy to continue an extension to the Stehekin road.

The Senate Bill thus contains prohibitions against two specific roads:

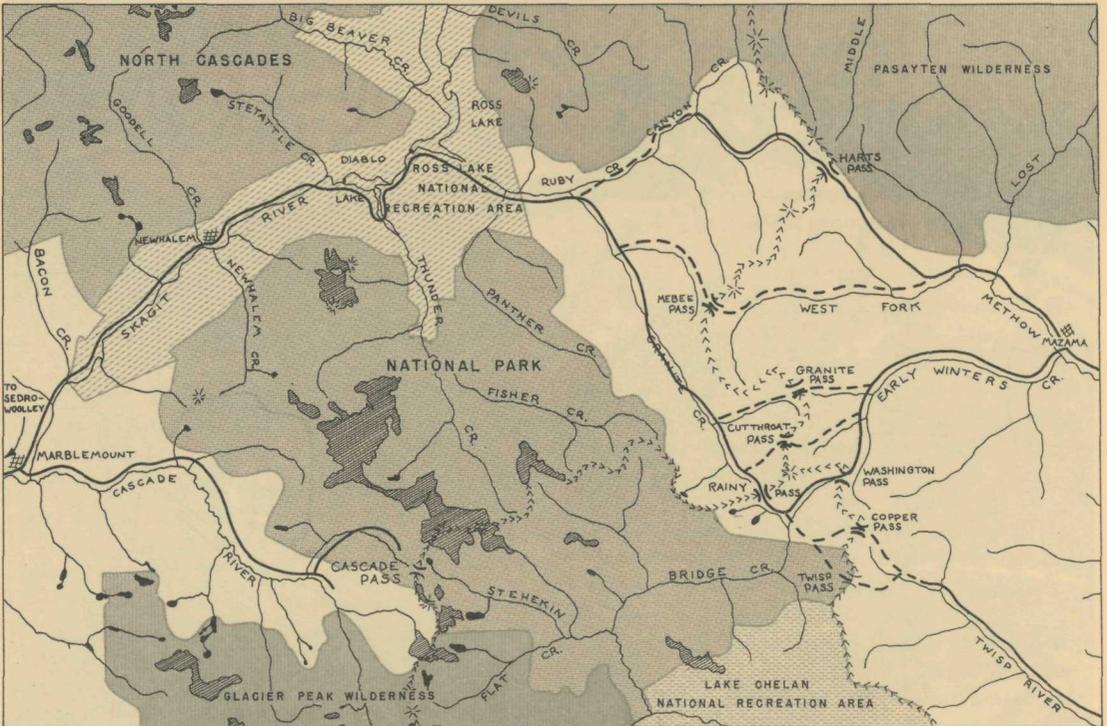
The Secretary shall not permit the construction or use of any road within the park which would provide vehicular access from the North Cross State Highway to the Stehekin Road. Neither shall he permit

the construction or use of any permanent road which would provide vehicular access between May Creek and Hozomeen along the east side of Ross Lake.

The issue is pin-pointed by George Selke: "Roads are anathema to wilderness." And the dilemma of mass access is stated by George Hartzog: "I concur that National Parks should be available for reasonable public access. I do not believe, however, that they should be so thoroughly emasculated with roads and trails that their basic values are impaired."

Once such roads were built, there is no guarantee they will be simply scenic parkways. In fact, the Study Team Report suggests otherwise:

It should be mentioned also that the roads in the proposed scenic road system would serve multiple purposes, not just



recreation use alone. They would be valuable for timber hauling, for some interstate use, and for normal commercial and trade use.

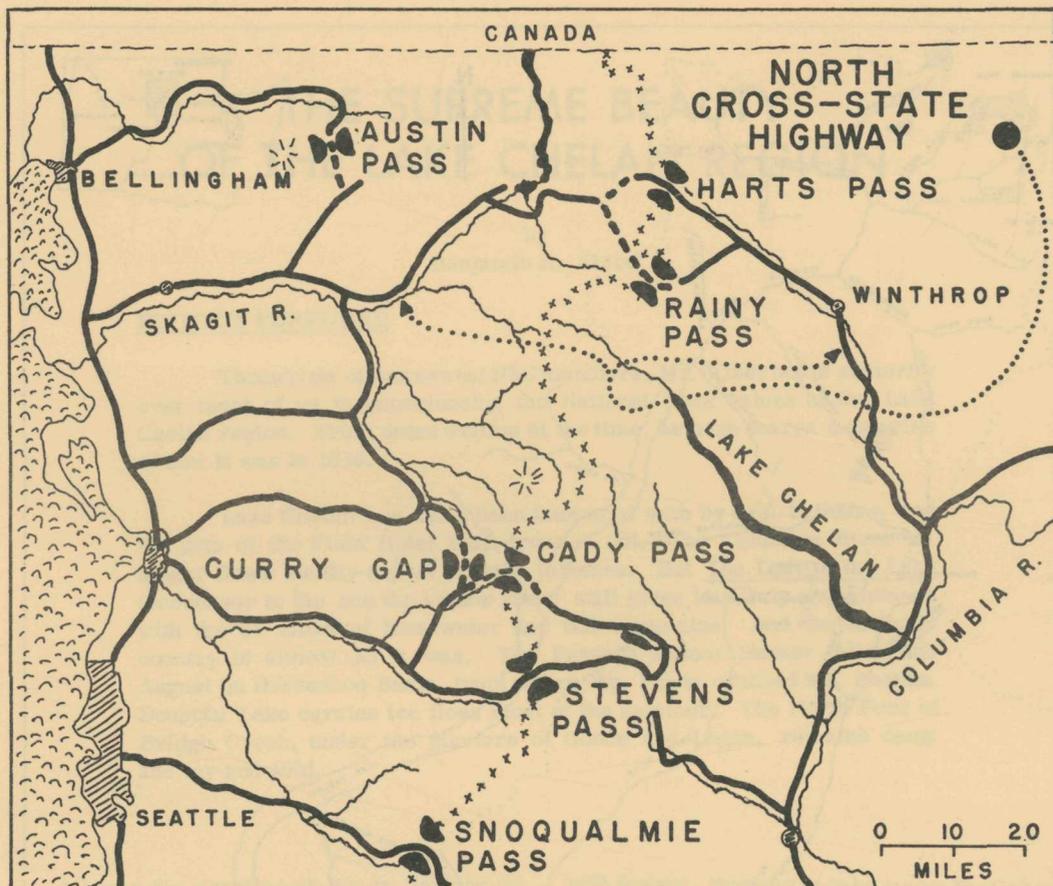
The problem of "reasonable public access" does not end with subsidiary roads, for the North Cross-State Highway makes all things possible, including mechanical access to the high country. Owen Stratton writes his personal view:

I have seen trams and funiculars in Europe, and I am impressed with the skill and ingenuity that Europeans have shown in transporting large numbers of people to spectacular vantage points where they can be controlled and where none but a few mountaineers do anything as far as the mountains go but look at them. These devices are a way of making it possible for large numbers of people to see the

wilderness without destroying it, and although I would agree that the trams will not add to the beauty of the mountains, they will be relatively inconspicuous, as will the facilities at the overlooks at the ends of the trams and helicopter routes. The importance of providing a sort of vicarious wilderness experience for large numbers of people out-weighs the disadvantages that are involved.

However, George Selke disagrees:

I object most vigorously to the recommendation that the Picket Range be made available for easy access to the multitudes by trams or other mechanical means.



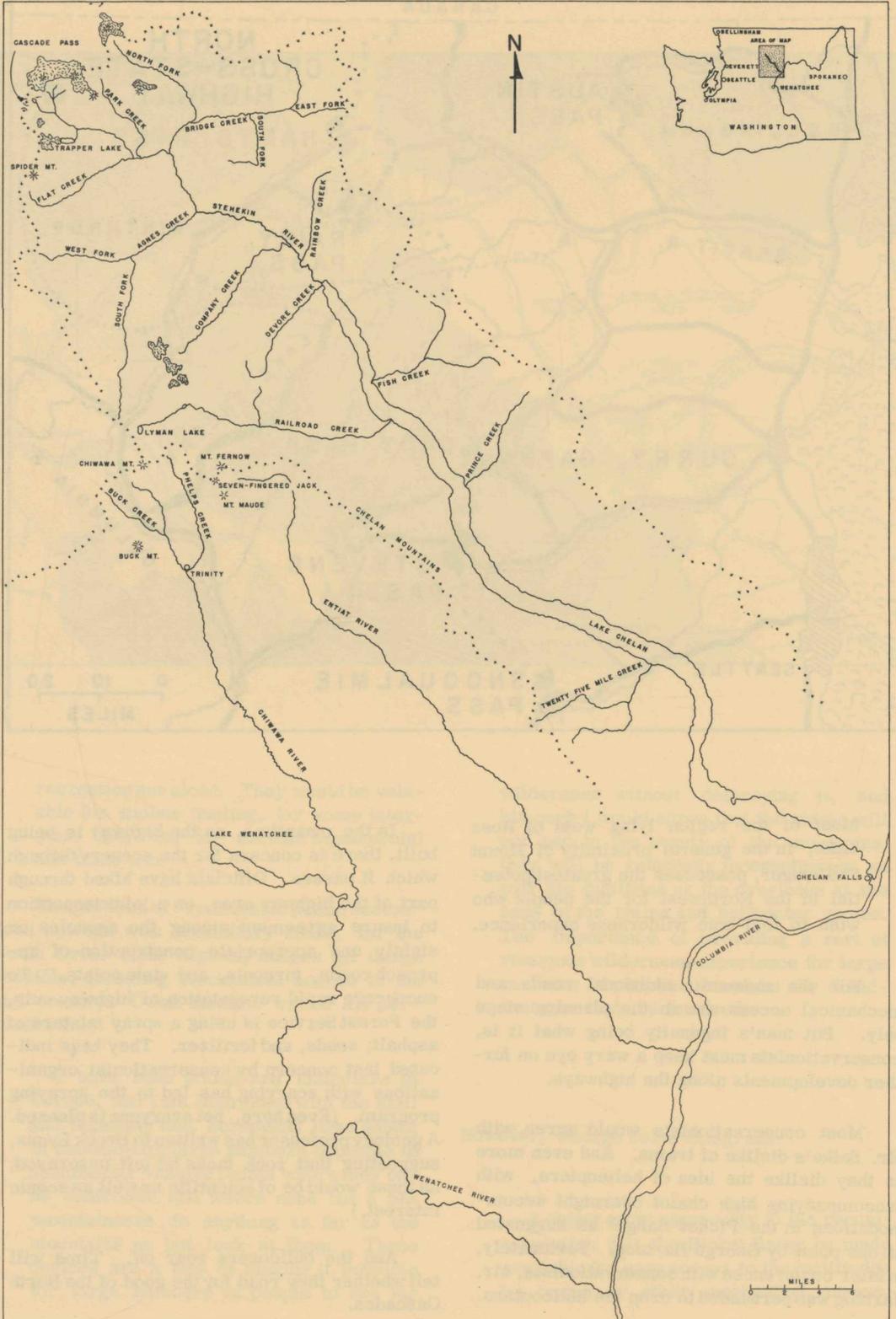
Most of the region lying west of Ross Lake, in the general proximity of Mount Challenger, possesses the greatest potential in the Northwest for the people who wish to find true wilderness experience.

For the moment, additional roads and mechanical access are in the planning stage only. But man's ingenuity being what it is, conservationists must keep a wary eye on further developments along the highways.

Most conservationists would agree with Mr. Selke's dislike of trams. And even more do they dislike the idea of helicopters, with "accompanying high chalet overnight accommodations in the Picket Range" as suggested at one point by George Hartzog. Fortunately, in later conferences with conservationists, Mr. Hartzog was persuaded to drop the helicopters.

In the meantime, as the highway is being built, there is concern for the scenery through which it passes. Officials have hiked through part of the highway area, on a joint inspection to insure agreement among the agencies on sightly and appropriate construction of approach roads, turnouts, and vista points." To encourage rapid revegetation of highway cuts, the Forest Service is using a spray mixture of asphalt, seeds, and fertilizer. They have indicated that concern by conservationist organizations with scarring has led to the spraying program. (Even here, not everyone is pleased. A geology professor has written to Brock Evans, suggesting that rock faces be left unsprayed, as these would be of scientific as well as scenic interest.)

And the bulldozers roar on. Time will tell whether they road for the good of the North Cascades.



# THE SUPREME BEAUTY OF THE LAKE CHELAN REGION

by  
Benjamin H. Kizer

## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Though one of our newest N3C members, Mr. Kizer holds seniority over most of us in experiencing the National Park values of the Lake Chelan region. From notes written at the time, he here shares memories of how it was in 1910.

Lake Chelan has since been tampered with by dam-builders, and the site of the Field Hotel thus drowned out. The Columbia River no longer flows swiftly except through turbines. But The Lady of the Lake (successor to the one the author knew) still gives leisurely acquaintance with the 50 miles of blue water and tall mountains. And the Stehekin country is almost as it was. The Perseid Meteor Shower falls each August on Horseshoe Basin, from where Mr. Kizer climbed Mt. Booker. Doubtful Lake carries ice floes most of the summer. The North Fork of Bridge Creek, under the glaciers of Goode and Logan, remains damp and icy and wild.

I began the practice of law in Spokane in 1902. I was impressed by Spokane's position between the Rockies on the east and the Cascades on the west of the city, and early determined to explore these great ranges. The Rockies were closer, and my earliest explorations were made on their westering slopes.

By spring of 1910, I heard of Field, a prominent member of our State Legislature, who maintained a hotel at the head of Lake Chelan, where he also had guides who during the summer season could escort small parties from Lake Chelan up into the heart of the Cascades. The way in which Lake Chelan cut deep into the eastern slopes of the Cascades appealed to my imagination, and I determined to devote the first 2 weeks of August to an exploratory expedition up the lake and thence on up to the summit of the Cascades.

Accordingly, on the evening of Tuesday, August 2nd, 1910, I took the Great Northern train to Wenatchee, arriving at 1:00 a. m. At once I went on board the steamer being loaded

with freight, that was to take me up the Columbia. The berths on the steamer were all taken, so I napped on a convenient bench. At 5:00 a. m. the steamer started up the river. The swiftly flowing Columbia, with its occasional rapids, caused our steamer to make slow progress so that it took us 8 hours to travel the short distance up to Chelan Falls where the Chelan River, the outlet for Chelan Lake, flows into the Columbia.

From here I took a stage-coach a distance of 5 miles, up to Lakeside, at the foot of Lake Chelan, spending the late afternoon and night at the Tourist Hotel.

The following morning I embarked on the veteran steamer, The Lady of the Lake, which took us for a 6 hour trip up Lake Chelan to its head, 50 miles away. I had great pleasure in making this leisurely acquaintance with this unique and beautiful lake, so long and yet not more than a mile wide, cutting so deeply into the ridges of the Cascades. The lake was of great depth, and its lovely waves, sparkling

in this August sun, thrilled me every mile of the way.

We left the steamer near the head of the lake, at Stehekin, where the Stehekin River flows into the lake and where the Hotel Field was located. I was soon able to make arrangements with Mr. Field to be one of a small party to leave the following Tuesday, the 9th, for a trip by horseback up the trail in the valley of the Stehekin, and thence on by trail to the summit of the Cascades. Two of Field's "boys" would pack us in, and would act as guides, cooks, etc. for the party.

I spent Friday through Monday exploring the general area around the head of the lake, on one day climbing up to a height of 5000 feet, 4000 feet above the lake, and another day walking up to Rainbow Falls on the Stehekin. The main fall is a clean 325 feet, and then a second fall of 25 feet more. Above the first fall is a long, deep gorge with a succession of beautiful cascades and deep pools. No one visiting Stehekin should overlook the opportunity of hiking up the 2 miles or so to view these magnificent falls and the cascades. On the third day I took a horseback ride with a party for a distance of 16 miles up a mountain trail of the region. This gave us scenic views of great beauty, though they were to be outdistanced by the longer exploration ahead of us.

On Tuesday morning we started out on horseback, a party of nine (of whom only four went the whole of the way) with two guides and five pack horses loaded with bedding, baggage, and grub. We took a trail in the valley of the River for a first distance of 10 miles up to Bullion, a camping station, thence on up. After lunch we packed up a steep mountain trail, quite slow going, until we reached Bridge Creek, where we had dinner and spent the night. On a dare I took a good bath in the mountain stream whose waters, drained from nearby glaciers, were quite as cold as I had expected them to be.

The next day we journeyed a further distance up the mountain trail for 13 miles to reach the Upper Horseshoe Basin. The last 5 miles were so steep that we had to dismount and take it on foot, some of the party holding on to the horses' tails for help. We then walked for another mile over a field of ice to the "Davenport" mine, and found a camping place on the rim of the basin.

The scenery here was most beautiful. We were at an elevation of 6800 feet. The flowers were especially remarkable. There were streams from the snowbanks and glaciers every few yards, for the most part just a succession of waterfalls and cascades. The abounding moss and luxuriant vegetation were more beautiful than the choicest triumphs of the park gardener's art. It was a beautiful sunset, and a clear, starry night. I counted over 20 meteors as I looked upwards from my bed. We slept in blankets extended along the trail, as the steep hillside afforded no other place for them. The basin abounded with ptarmigan and whistling marmots, and the clear whistle of the latter was heard every few minutes. The striking red of Indian paint brush was conspicuous among the flowers, but all colors were represented. Our camp was close to the timberline.

The next day I arose at 6 a. m. As I ate no breakfast this gave me time, without delaying the party, to climb up to the summit, giving me an elevation of close to 8500 feet. I never saw a grander sight in my life. Just to the west I could look down into the beautiful Park Creek Basin. The summit was so narrow that I straddled it with ease, a foot hanging over in the direction of either basin. In the distance, as far as the eye could see, in every direction was disclosed an apparently unending succession of snow-clad peaks. It was quite a steep climb over the snow and ice fields and the rocky slopes.

Rejoining our party, we traveled back down from the Upper Horseshoe Basin to the junction of the trail leading to Doubtful Lake, where we took that trail to the lake. We found a giant ice floe which covered perhaps half the lake on which the snow was banked up to a considerable height, and numerous fragments of snow and ice floated on the water. Doubtful Lake Basin is not unlike Upper Horseshoe Basin in shape, with numerous waterfalls, but without its luxuriant vegetation, and with an elevation of about 5000 feet. Two of us then climbed up to the summit, and from there struck a trail that led us into the Cascade Pass, which we followed for some distance to gain a good view of the western slope of the Cascades. We then returned to our Doubtful Lake trail. Doubtful Lake is the source of another branch to the west, tumbling down the steep mountain side, out from under the snow.

The following day, Friday, the 12th, I started afoot and walked the 9 miles to Bridge Creek. From here we traveled to the North Fork of Bridge Creek, where we spent the night.

The next day, Saturday, I arose at 6 a. m. and walked up the North Fork to its beginnings, tracing out its source among the snowbanks of the basin. This is an exceptionally damp basin, with a great deal of snow on the ground, and adders' tongues, a great yellow flower, grow-

ing up through the snow in great profusion. The glaciers here are more numerous than at any other point on our trip. From here I journeyed back to Stehekin.

The following day I returned down Lake Chelan and to Spokane by the same route I had used at the beginning of this vacation. It seemed to me at the time that it gave me a series of scenes and experiences I could never forget, and now, 58 years later, I am still of that opinion.



The history-making "meeting of the jeeps" atop 4860-foot high Rainy Pass, celebrating the first official vehicular crossing of the North Cross State Highway, brought smiles to some familiar faces (left to right): U. S. Representative Thomas S. Foley, U. S. Senator Warren G. Magnuson, congratulating "Miss Washington Highways" Jeannine Gill, Governor Daniel J. Evans, and U.S. Representative Lloyd Meeds (seated on jeep, next to the Governor).



Caravans or jeeps converging upon the roughly graded pioneer road from both east and west ends of State Highway 20 in the North Cascades brought a crowd of 3000 enthusiastic spectators to witness the 75th Anniversary celebration. Construction of a highway through the rugged "American Alps" was first authorized by the State Legislature in 1893.



## FOOTNOTES

by  
I. B.

One of the most remarkable and splendid characteristics of the Cascades used to be the absence of any highway crossing of the range in the 90-odd miles northward from Stevens Pass to Allison Pass. Had this characteristic somehow been preserved, in another few years the whole nation would have bragged it up. (Look here! No roads! Aren't we smart?) But the 1893 mentality of the frontier-busters, plus America's 1920-era love affair with the automobile, plus the ant-hill industry of mindless highway engineers, plus the blatherings of idiots and the machinations of scoundrels won the race against good sense.

A friend of mine, who proposes to eliminate urban sprawl by making dealing in real estate a capital offense, would preserve roadless areas by establishing a "season" on the highway engineers, trusting Mr. Biggs of the Washington State Game Department to so regulate the annual harvest as to keep the population in balance with nature.

I wonder how many of these loud-mouth Skagit cow-milkers and Methow hay-ranchers ever saw the North Cascades except on maps? I wonder how much hay is ever going to be trucked to those cows over the new highway? Right from the beginning most of us birdwatchers said the farmers (who probably total, with dependents, about 700 people, contributing altogether maybe \$500 a year to the GNP, after deductions for highways) were dreaming, that economically the project would turn out to be a fiasco, that any trucker looking for the cheapest, fastest way from the East Side to the West Side would still drive Stevens Pass or Snoqualmie Pass to Washington Pass-Rainy Pass and the long, long mountain valleys.

Amid all the whoop-te-doo, did anybody hear the State Highway Department say it had no plans to keep the road open in winter? Which means from October to June -- that's how long the North Cascades winter lasts.

Did anybody hear Governor Evans say, after hiking the route, that so far as he could see the highway was virtually useless except for recreation?

It wouldn't matter. Highways are not planned and built by reason, but by reflex. That 90-mile stretch of highway-less Cascades was an itch that had to be scratched. The frontier died in 1890, but the frontiersman continues to leap and flap and scratch.

The highway is not being built with any consideration whatsoever of scenic values. The robot engineers are blasting and hacking according to the Book -- the one they lip-read and rote-memorized in college back in 1936. They are building a monument to their ape-crude egos, slashing a wound that lichens, mosses, grasses, and shrubs will not heal over with scar tissue for generations. Had the engineers not been a power unto themselves, once unleashed, had Someone in government informed their ignorance and arrogance, the highway could have been built with much less damage and still served its purposes.

Okay, let's talk about "purposes." Since the highway is a reality, and since it can't (no how, no way) do what its original promoters hoped, but since we're going to have to live with it, then I once more propose and demand that it become the Cascades Parkway, in name and in fact.

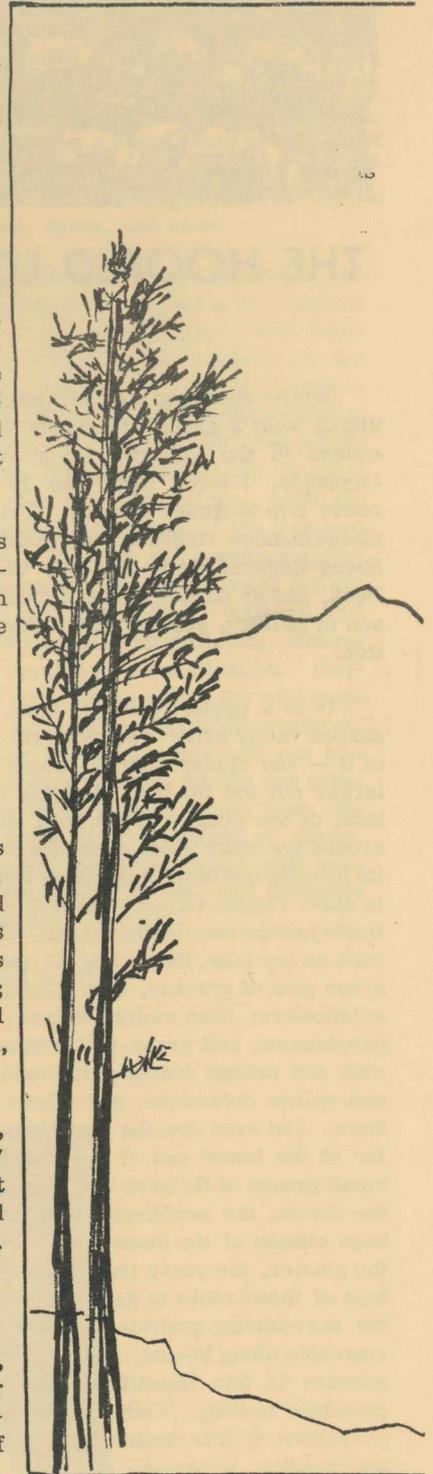
The alternative? See Snoqualmie Pass.

Which reminds me -- I haven't mentioned in these pages the 1967 Letter to the Stockholders from Snoqualmie National Forest. Faithful readers will recall that the 1966 Letter stressed the total number of annual visits by cows and sheep and loggers and gunslingers. The 1967 edition is Logger Larry Barrett's pratfall response to the Sierra Club Exhibit Format series; even the photos of sheep are pretty, not to mention the Girl Scouts; the Rangers are trustworthy, friendly, brave, clean, reverent, and etcetera.

But we're talking here about roads and road-builders, and from the 1967 Letter we learn that during Fiscal Year 1967 there were constructed on the Snoqualmie National Forest 93.6 miles of new road, with another 124.1 miles surveyed and designed, and another 109.8 miles engineered for construction.

How long, O Lord, how long?

How long must we wait, Mr. Biggs? Your vacant-eyed, drooling hungry gunners will find the average highway engineer a very sporting target compared to the summer-tamed campground deer butchered before breakfast on the opening day of each autumn's High Country "Hunt."





## THE HOOFED LOCUSTS IN SPIDER MEADOW

by  
Charlotte Corkran

While spending the last week in August hiking with a group of friends in the headwaters of the Chiwawa River in the North Cascades, I twice made the 10-mile or so round trip to Spider Meadow. This is a large alpine meadow ringed by such giants as Maude, Seven-fingered Jack, Fernow, Chiwawa, and Buck, and as such provided a challenging lesson in geology, ecology, and sadly, conservation.

It is a perfectly round bowl, with a U-shaped valley exit -- Phelps Creek running out of it -- and Spider Glacier, which when much larger cut out the bowl, hanging up behind a knob of the great curved wall of mountains around the other sides of the meadow, sending its foaming meltwater cascading down the walls to start Phelps Creek. Several small snowfields join the race farther along. The meadow, once an icy lake, then a bog, is now a brilliant green gem of grasses, sparkling all colors of wildflowers; deep violet gentians, red-purple penstemons, soft green-yellow false hellabore, pink and orange Indian paintbrush, crimson-and-yellow columbine, and others I don't yet know. And even now the next stage is coming, for at the lower end of the meadow already small groups of fir trees are stepping out from the forest, the seedlings hiking in the lee of huge chunks of the mountains pulled down by the glacier, the young trees scrambling to the tops of these rocks to gaze triumphantly over the surrounding grasses, and the older trees marching along behind, slowly taking over the meadow in this beautifully evident cycle of mountain ecology. Only one thing mars the perfection of this meadow, and that, as you can imagine, is because of man.

The communities of animals living in different parts of the area are as distinct as the physical and plant environments they inhabit. In the fir forest below, there are squirrels and snowshoe hares, bear and martens, and all the jays, nutcrackers, chickadees, and kinglets of the tall trees. In the rocks above, where grasses are partly replaced by mosses and lichens, there are marmots, pikas, and the few juncos and sparrows of the exposed heights.

There are still some mountain goats up there, but I didn't see any. And in the meadow itself, there are chipmunks in the shelter of rocks, warblers in the bushes along the creek, flycatchers and swallows grazing the air above the plant tops, and anglewing butterflies, mosquitoes and flies, beetles and loudly ticking grasshoppers in the grasses and flowers. All the niches seem to be filled, each way of life used by some wild creature. But one major absence spoils the resplendence of an otherwise completely balanced system, and that is the lack of a grazer of the meadow.

When I first walked up here, I instinctively looked for elk stepping proudly through their domain, or deer feeding cautiously by the creek. But there were none. Their place, their right to this lushness, has been usurped by sheep; short-legged, ill-adapted domestic sheep. Believe it or not, a few sheep-herders (I can't say shepherds), with as many barking, snapping dogs, have a camp up here. Their pack mules graze in a small group, one shaking flies from its ears and clanking a tinny bell which hangs from its neck, and sheep, packed tightly together as if afraid of being alone in this wilderness, make their slow way around

the hillsides, plucking tender shoots, their wool grey and tangled but growing long for shearing later down in the towns. There are places for these things, and I enjoy the sheep on a green slope, the dogs, the mules with bells, but not here, please, not here in the wilderness.

It is impossible for me to understand how the Forest Service, administering this beautiful and easily accessible place which is entirely within the boundaries of the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area, could open up this particular meadow for sheep grazing. How sadly impotent is our Wilderness Act if it allows this, and how thin is the veil of fair play, the "multiple use" the Forest Service talks about.

I looked around the meadow carefully, and in some places here as well as all along the trail leading into it, where the herds are most concentrated, there are large patches of some now unrecognizable plant totally stripped of leaves, flowers, seeds, or whatever it might naturally be carrying this time of year. Only the naked stalks with broken stem bases stand up strangely above the often close-cropped grass. These plants may not die immediately of being so stripped, but whenever they do at last brown and wither, since they are not allowed to duplicate themselves and spread, they must eventually disappear. And then perhaps some insect which used that plant for food or shelter will go, and a bird which preferred that insect. The balance may tip and not be able to regain its naturally changing form but constant equilibrium. I walked down to the creek for a drink of cold fresh meltwater, but

soon realized I was denied even that. The natural bank I walked down is cut back and the grass trampled or gone. The water's edge is a mixture of the rich black bog mud and sheep droppings, churned and chopped by thousands of cloven hoofprints. I didn't feel safe drinking the water. When I ate my lunch, I found it easier to climb to the top of a huge rock than look in the grass for a clean place to sit. And even there I smelled the presence of sheep instead of the delicate fragrances of wildflowers, rocks, earth, and snow.

The Forest Service's idea of multiple use no longer applies here, for soon the meadow will be for no one but the sheep and their tenders. It is such a pleasant hike from the roadhead above Trinity, but who will want to go there when the creek is no longer potable, when the wildflowers are trampled or no longer there, when the hillsides are eroded as some of the trails higher up already are, when the smells and sounds are those of the common farmland, not of the rare and gorgeous alpine meadow? Hikers will find other trails not cut back, washed out, and soiled. Walkers will find other, though less magnificent, natural scenery, not spoiled by domestication. Hunters will find other areas where the wild game have not been replaced by less noble creatures. Or perhaps the Forest Service will not just listen to the herders who pay for the use of the land and earn their meager profit from the shearing of these huge numbers of sheep. Perhaps for once the appreciators will have rights with the utilizers, and this exquisite place will remain.

What can I do?



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE  
WENATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST

Lake Wenatchee Ranger District  
Star Route, Box 109  
Leavenworth, Washington 98826

IN REPLY REFER TO

2350

September 19, 1968

HERE IS HOW CITIZEN-HIKERS CAN GET SHEEP  
OUT OF THE FLOWERS: BY GRIPING

Mr. David H. Corkran III  
8039 N.W. Skyline Blvd.  
Portland, Oregon 97229

Dear Mr. Corkran:

Thank you for your fine letter of 9/2/68, and I apologize for a rather tardy reply. Constructive criticism is conducive to good management.

I am familiar with the areas whereof you speak, and we do have some problems. Spider Meadow has been opened to sheep grazing the last few years, but due to the heavy increase in recreational use also during these last few years, we had already decided to again close this small grazing area to sheep grazing--not that the area has been harmed but because it is apparently incompatible with the heavy recreation use.

The Leroy Creek Trail is of course first and foremost a sheep drive-way. It was built by the sheepmen and has been kept open by them. It is steep, the soil easily subject to erosion and the location difficult to maintain. It is unfortunate that we do not have the funds to construct a standard trail into the Leroy Creek basin area.

Years of sheep use in this area would not do a fraction of the damage that was done in one cloudburst about five years ago when Leroy Creek itself sluiced out and emptied its contents into Phelps Creek. At this same time much of the good grazing area at the head of Leroy, Chipmunk, and Box was destroyed or covered by wash from the above peaks. Because of this and the conflict on the trail with some additional erosion, we are looking for a substitute area and route for the sheep. If our present plans materialize, then the sheep may have seen the last of the Leroy Creek area. However, no matter how beat down the upper meadows look, you may rest assured that they were not damaged by grazing. If you go back into that same area next year, you will find the Bluebell and Cow Parsnip again lush with few signs of the area having been used the previous year by the sheep.



-2-

This year we had three different bands on the Lake Wenatchee District although one took non-use. Some of our people spent considerable time locating new routes and working with the herders to reduce as much as possible the conflict between domestic sheep grazing and recreational use. As the recreational use continues to increase the problems of conflict will increase, and undoubtedly in the future the uses will become incompatible in some areas. Again, I thank you for your thoughts on the subject.

Sincerely yours,

RICHARD H. WOODCOCK  
District Ranger

By *John F. Moser*



Sheep grazing above White River -- Dick Brooks

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