

---

# THE WILD CASCADES

---

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

SPRING 2005



*Lewisia tweedyi* on lower Mad River Trail

KARL FORSGAARD

***Coming soon***

**The NCCC's book,**

***The Wilderness Alps:***

***Crisis and Conflict in the North Cascades***

**(see page 4)**

## In This Issue

- 3 The President's report — MARC BARDSLEY
- 4 *The Wilderness Alps: Crisis and Conflict* close to publication
- 5 NCCC and the North Cascades Institute's Environmental Learning Center — A History — DAVID FLUHARTY
- 6 NCCC responds to Joel Connelly's editorial opinion in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 25, 2005 — DAVID FLUHARTY
- 8 Upper Stehekin Valley Road NPS Management Options — DAVID FLUHARTY for NCCC  
Coon Run Stehekin Road Reroute — DAVID FLUHARTY for NCCC
- 10 NCCC Assessments of Forest Service EAs — MARC BARDSLEY  
Helicopter use in rebuilding Milk Creek Bridge and Suiattle River Road — MARC BARDSLEY
- 11 Information Superhighway threatens Stehekin — CAROLYN MCCONNELL
- 12 DUSEL: Deep Underground Science and the Icicle Valley — WICK HAXTON
- 14 NCCC Position on DUSEL — RICK MCGUIRE  
Tunnel affects water tables in Italy  
Not Man Apart — HARVEY MANNING
- 15 Falling for the Cascade Agenda — DAVID S. BRODER
- 16 Crown Lakes to be added to Mount Si NRCA
- 17 The Retreat from Fee Demo Begins  
Fight RAT with Survey to Wild Wilderness
- 18 Threat looming for the Boulder-White Cloud Mountains in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area — MARC BARDSLEY
- 19 Happenings in Our National Forests — RICK MCGUIRE  
Middle Fork Snoqualmie ATM Plan released  
Pratt connector trail still looming  
Middle Fork "Trust Land Transfer" proposed  
Snoqualmie Tree Farm development rights purchased  
Lowe Creek Road EA released  
Wild Sky Wilderness Bill awaiting action
- 20 Venting more fumes and steam than Mount St. Helens  
Commercializing Mount Rainier's High Camp
- 21 Of Roads, Access and "Elitists" — TOM HAMMOND  
Endangered Wildlife Threatened by Draft Legislation  
Nationwide Alliance Kicks Off Campaign to Save Arctic Refuge
- 22 Book Review: *Geology of the North Cascades; A Mountain Mosaic* — POLLY DYER and HARVEY MANNING
- 23 Major Geological Events in the North Cascades — USGS Maps — H.M.
- 24 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Photo Exhibit at Burke Museum through December 2005.

---

## The Wild Cascades

---

*Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council*

EDITOR: Betty Manning  
Printing by EcoGraphics

*The Wild Cascades* is published three times a year (Spring, Summer, Winter).  
NCCC members receive this journal. Address letters, comments, send articles to:

*The Wild Cascades* Editor  
North Cascades Conservation Council  
University Station, Seattle, WA 98145-2980

*The Wild Cascades* is printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink.

**T**he 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.

## MEMBERSHIP

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; \$50.00 - Contributing; \$100 - patron; \$1000 - Sustaining. A one-time life membership dues payment is \$500.

■

The North Cascades Foundation supports the NCCC's nonpolitical 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 NCCC mailing address:

North Cascades Conservation Council  
P.O. Box 95980  
University Station  
Seattle, WA 98145-2980  
NCCC Website  
[www.northcascades.org](http://www.northcascades.org)

## NCCC Board

### *President*

Marc Bardsley

### *Board Chairman*

Patrick Goldsworthy

### *Vice President*

Charles Ehlert

### *Treasurer*

Tom Brucker

### *Secretary*

Phil Zalesky

Bruce Barnbaum

Polly Dyer

John Edwards

Dave Fluharty

Karl Forsgaard

Kevin Geraghty

Tom Hammond

Kevin Herrick

Conway Leovy

Harvey Manning

Betty Manning

Carolyn McConnell

Rick McGuire

Thom Peters

Ken Wilcox

Laura Zalesky



Founded in 1957  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

## *The President's Report*

*Spring 2005*

One subject that always gets my goat is how to manage all the roads that crisscross our favorite mountainous areas. The majority of these roads were built many years ago to facilitate logging or, in some cases, mining. Their primary purpose today, it seems, is to provide access for recreationists. Everybody from hikers to ORV enthusiasts uses these roads to get close to the places they feel like going. Having stated the obvious, I would also suggest that some of these folks feel that it is their God-given right to go wherever a road has ever gone before. Any time there is a change to a road such as a washout, the agencies insist that the public demands it be repaired immediately. There is a lot of truth to that. Fortunately there seems to be little enthusiasm anymore for extending the roads. Just fix them, and quickly. The list of roads that have recently washed out is endless: Mountain Loop Scenic Byway, Stehekin, Dosewallips, Whitechuck and Suiattle roads, and many others. Unfortunately, in many cases the repairs require unacceptable damage to the surrounding area.

The NCCC has often taken the position that if repairing or rebuilding a particular road is not environmentally sound the road might be a candidate for conversion to a trail. In my experience, this usually becomes a lightning rod for emotional argument and conflict. Many times, the hiker types are as vocal as the Sunday drivers when it comes to driving in closer. They can't accept the idea of walking further or taking an extra day out of their busy schedule to "do" a particular trip.

The environmental community needs to develop a consistent approach to road repairs. At the same time, an educational program for the public needs to be developed. Environmental groups need to convince the hiking/recreational groups that it is in their best interest to expand hiking areas for the long term by converting roads to trails. At the same time, the Greens need to support efforts to expand trails into less sensitive areas, close to population centers. All these groups in turn, need to acknowledge that some change to their lifestyle is inevitable. The expanding population cannot be forever squeezed into the same inventory of wild lands. A debate is needed to determine which roads are truly necessary to provide reasonable access to our natural environment and which ones should be allowed to go back to nature. This debate will need to include enviros, short-range hikers, agencies, and, I suppose, the wheeled users. The goal must be to protect the natural resource and provide additional unroaded areas for recreation and other values. Enough access must be retained to maintain a base of concerned user groups and also introduce others to natural areas for the "green bonding" experience. Environmentalists and the narrowly focused hiking and recreation groups need to work together on this issue; they can't afford to argue amongst themselves.

*Marc Bardsley*

# NCCC Conservation History Book Nears Completion

*From the trenches of grassroots advocacy,  
the story of wilderness preservation and national park  
politics in Washington's North Cascades*

We are pleased to say that we have nearly reached our fundraising goal for *The Wilderness Alps: Crisis and Conflict in the North Cascades*, NCCC's new book on the conservation history of the North Cascades.

**We are hoping to raise the final \$3,000 by  
the end of July, shortly before we go to  
press. A big thank you to all who have  
contributed so far.**

Originally written by Harvey Manning, the manuscript has been fully updated to 2005. So that the book might inform and enlighten a wider audience, we have added a little more background on some of the people, places, and events that were crucial to achieving park and wilderness protection.

The 448-page book includes dozens of historic black and white photos and maps, as well as two full-color sections highlighting the beauty of the region.

As we move very close to going to press, you can help once more by sending your tax-deductible contribution to:

North Cascades Foundation  
c/o T. William Booth, Treasurer  
5521 - 17th Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA 98105

Please indicate that your donation is for the "NCCC book." To those who have already contributed, again, thank you!

Watch for ordering information and a look at the cover in the next issue of *The Wild Cascades*.

# NCCC and the North Cascades Institute's Environmental Learning Center — A History

DAVID FLUHARTY

*The North Cascades Conservation Council is delighted to welcome the emergence from its chrysalis of the new North Cascades Environmental Learning Center at Diablo Lake. It has been a long time in coming.*

The North Cascades Conservation Council is delighted to welcome the emergence from its chrysalis of the new North Cascades Environmental Learning Center at Diablo Lake. It has been a long time in coming.

This blessed event started with NCCC challenging Seattle City Light's request to raise the level of High Ross Dam in the 1970s. NCCC convinced parties that there was a better (cheaper) way to supply energy wants in Seattle by making a long-term contract with Canada and avoiding the environmental impacts of raising the High Ross Dam.

When belated negotiations with Seattle City Light over the relicensing of the Skagit River Project were revived by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in the early 1990s, NCCC's role as a dogged intervenor was recognized. The question on the table was, what were the continuing environmental impacts of the Skagit River Project and how should they be mitigated?

NCCC was quite aware that the environmental impacts of the Skagit Project should be mitigated but what should that mitigation do? We were only too aware of mitigation in the form of picnic tables, children's play areas, river walks, etc. What we wanted was meaningful ecosystem restoration.

How could we turn the opportunity to obtain significant environmental benefits from mitigation of the Skagit Project Dams?

Here is what happened. NCCC had questioned the National Park Service granting of a concession rights to a new company to operate the Diablo Resort. We had also challenged the National Park Service in its preparation of its General Management Plan (GMP) that called for co-locating the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center with the proposed Newhalem Visitor Center (our concern was

that the area proposed for these two activities was undisturbed and that other sites were preferable). NCCC rationales were rejected in the GMP and other processes. (Hold that thought).

North Cascades Institute asked to become an intervenor in the FERC process to relicense the Skagit Project but it was denied that opportunity on technical grounds. I well remember how Saul Weisberg and I met one day and Saul complaining that North Cascades Institute could not be an intervenor. Instead, he proposed to me that one of the mitigations for the impacts of the Skagit River Project might be in developing support for environmental learning.

The Environmental Learning Center is the wonderful progeny of that discussion. NCCC was able to convince Seattle City Light to take over the failed NPS concessionaire option at Diablo Lake and to design a world-class ELC.

Thus, the ELC is a fusion of NCCC's interests to have meaningful mitigation and NCI's inspiring idea.

Of course, we must recognize that tremendous support given to this concept by the Skagit River tribes, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service. NCCC used its intervenor status to promote the ELC idea. SCL accepted the concept and, despite many ups and downs, has done more than required in the FERC settlement agreement to make the ELC a reality.

NCCC is proud to have used its intervenor status to support the North Cascades Institute in pursuit of the goal of a real Environmental Learning Center in the center of the Cascades. We look forward to generations of students, graduates, and seniors engaged in learning about the North Cascades.

## North Cascades Institute

Venture up the Skagit River deep into the mountains. Hike beneath towering cedars and fern-draped maples. Paddle a canoe on glacier-fed Diablo Lake. Learn with scientists studying salmon and songbirds, or paint Pyramid Peak bathed in evening light. Welcome to North Cascades Environmental Learning Center – our new field campus in North Cascades National Park.

The Learning Center is a hub of discovery for all ages in one of the wildest, most biologically diverse landscapes in North America. Here you can explore cascading streams and pristine peaks, wildflower meadows and old-growth forests, and a rich Northwest history that includes more than 8,000 years of Native American culture. Better still, you can join a community – expert teachers, intriguing new friends – dedicated to the idea that learning together inspires stewardship.

North Cascades Institute operates North Cascades Environmental Learning Center in partnership with the City of Seattle and the National Park Service. Modeling earth-friendly design and operations, the tree-sheltered campus features 16 buildings clustered on the north shore of Diablo Lake in North Cascades National Park. Facilities include:

- Multimedia classrooms, a research library and aquatic and terrestrial labs



NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE

- Overnight lodging for 46 participants and 12 graduate students and staff
- A lakeside dining hall with recycling/composting center
- An amphitheater, outdoor learning shelters and trails leading into the surrounding wildlands
- A dock on Diablo Lake for paddling adventures
- ADA-accessible facilities and paths along the lakeshore and nearby Deer Creek

Located along State Route 20 less than three hours northeast of Seattle, the Learning Center provides access to destinations east and west of the Cascade Crest, from the pine-studded sagelands of the Columbia Plateau to Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands. Yet, right out the front door, students need only grab a paddle or lace up their boot strings to head into the backcountry.

Journey into wild America. Discover the North Cascades.

FROM THE NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE  
WEBSITE:  
[www.ncascades.org/learning\\_center](http://www.ncascades.org/learning_center)

JOEL CONNELLY



In The Northwest: Rating the region's environmental activist groups

Joel Connelly

*Seattle Post-Intelligencer* columnist

Monday, April 25, 2005

[This article is excerpted.]

... Here, then, is one longtime observer's evaluation of the effectiveness on a range of the region's enviro activist groups. Ratings range from five tall cedars down to a stump.

**Save Our Wild Salmon:** Five trees . . .

**People for Puget Sound:** Four trees, or maybe a pod of orcas. . .

**Washington Conservation Voters:** Three trees, one of them wind-sculpted in the form of a question mark. . .

**Sierra Club — Northwest Office:** Three trees, down from four a few years ago. . .

**Western Canada Wilderness Committee:** Two trees . . .

**North Cascades Conservation Council:** One tree, and a dire need for seedlings. "N3C" was instrumental in getting a national park created in the "American Alps" back in 1968.

In years since, however, its leadership has aged and the group has failed to renew itself. Hence, its newsletter, *The Wild Cascades*, tends to be dominated by the old feuds of guidebook author Harvey Manning and bluster against recreation user-fees by a grim Oregonian named Scott Silver.

Disturbing and inexcusably, Manning used a recent issue to question the writing and picture-taking abilities of his longtime, recently deceased "101 Hikes" series co-author, Ira Spring.

**Green Party of British Columbia:** A Bowron River-sized clearcut . . .

**Parting kudos:** Were they closer to home, the Montana Wilderness Association and Southeast Alaska Conservation Council would both merit five-cedar ratings.

## *North Cascades Conservation Council responds to Joel Connelly's editorial opinion in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, April 25, 2005*

DAVID FLUHARTY

First, Joel Connelly is out of touch with what NCCC has done SINCE the establishment of the park. He apparently has not checked in since that time unless you allow that he reads *The Wild Cascades*, and focuses on only one of the issues we report. And anyone who believes him is also out of touch. Yes, the NCCC Board is older — and wiser. We also have some of the best young advocates joining us, e.g., Rick McGuire, Karl Forsgaard, Carolyn McConnell, Kevin Geraghty, Ken Wilcox and Tom Hammond. According to Polly Dyer's records, only three of the original Board remain, Polly, Patrick Goldsworthy and Phil Zalesky. The folks now taking leadership roles in defending the Cascades are a blend of the old, with their knowledge of history, and the new, with their expertise, competence and energy.

I want to make it perfectly clear that I can recognize we have our faults as an organization in some ideal sense. However, down on the ground we are doing a lot more than is being credited. What we can and do accomplish rests on volunteers taking the lead and following up on issues. I think it a great compliment that Connelly includes us in the mainstream powerful organizations like the Sierra Club and others in terms of our impact, yet tells us that we don't rate because we are old (he, too, is achieving this status as rapidly as all of us). We cannot do everything, but we are doing the things we do quite well working toward preservation of the Cascade Range.

Just review some of the things NCCC has accomplished SINCE the establishment of North Cascades National Park Complex. While NCCC cannot claim entire credit for any of these, I list the things that would not have happened if it had not been for NCCC involvement.

1. We would have cable cars all up and down Ross Lake had NCCC not intervened in the first General Management Plan (GMP) process after the Park and National Recreation Areas were designated. NCCC, especially Patrick Goldsworthy, fought them back.

2. We would have had a lot of development in the Stehekin Valley if NCCC members had not fronted funds to purchase properties that the NPS did not have funds to purchase. We have kept the pressure on the Congressional delegation for Land and Water Conservation Fund allocations to NOCA to allow purchases from Willing Sellers whenever possible.

3. We have challenged Seattle City Light on raising High Ross Dam and this led to the Skagit Environmental Endowment Fund which funds research on the North Cascades — give Tom Brucker, Charlie Ehlert and our departed Dick Brooks credit for this, and of course Margaret and Joe Miller for their study documenting the unique values of Big Beaver Creek.

4. NCCC stuck with the FERC relicensing of the Skagit River Project all the way to the Supreme Court, lost that fight, and then joined in developing a different approach that has led to a 10.7 million dollar Environmental Learning Center operated by North Cascades Institute starting programs in July 2005.

5. As part of the same FERC settlement we obtained 17 million dollars for purchase of key parcels of wildlife lands in the Skagit and South Fork of the Nooksack rivers.

6. The NCCC challenge to High Ross and the subsequent negotiated settlement formed the basis for the new FERC Alternative Procedure, which has transformed the adversarial nature of most FERC relicensing nationwide. You would not know about this unless you studied the arcane FERC processes. It has been used in the Lake Chelan and the Baker Lake Project relicensing.

7. NCCC challenged the very cursory General Management Plan for the North Cascades National Park Service Complex and forced a Settlement that has reverberated in the National Park Service. According to John Reynolds (the NPS Superintendent we sued), Charles Odegard, (the Regional Director we sued) and Bill Paleck (the new super on the block) NCCC changed the way the NPS did business on GMPs, i.e., they now realize that NPS planning requires preparation of Environmental Impact Statements. In other words, the NPS must be transparent in its decision-making processes and must protect the resources while it plans for human "enjoyment". A key element of this Settlement is the High Lakes Management Plan, finally coming out this summer. Many of us have grown grey hair as we track these processes.

8. NCCC was a leader in getting Wilderness designations in three national parks and numerous recreation areas in Washington 1988.

9. In the mid-1990s NCCC came close to achieving a goal of a transboundary National Park between Canada and the US and we have

*Continued on page 7*

not given up on expansions of national park and wilderness for unprotected areas.

10. I could go on with a myriad of smaller issues, but I think that I have made my point. NCCC is not moribund. Maybe we are not the organization that Joel thinks we should be. Maybe we do not live up to our own members' expectations. But, by golly, we are doing our darndest on the things we care about.

Right now let's look at what is on the NCCC action agenda. There is the invaluable leadership Karl Forsgaard is giving to Dark Divide, ORV, and outfitter issues. Look at the leadership Rick McGuire and Kevin Geraghty are giv-

ing to Mid-Fork Snoqualmie and Wild Sky Wilderness (plus the Sauk, Suiattle, White Chuck areas). Look at the expertise and vigor that Caroline McConnell brings to Stehekin issues. Ken Wilcox is getting the NCCC book *The Wilderness Alps: Conservation and Conflict in the North Cascades* into publication and NCCC and NCF funds are putting our pocketbooks to our belief system. We are challenging the National Park Service on incredible land exchanges at significant expense. We are pushing to close the Stehekin Road and other washed-out mountain roads where Mother Nature has indicated we should. Just this week a two-volume

North Cascades National Park Service Complex Mountain Lakes Fishery Management EIS with 826 total pages has just landed on my threshold. NCCC has 90 days to respond. We'd better stop looking back and get cracking!

Keep on reading *The Wild Cascades* and keep on thinking about what we are doing, who is doing it and what more we could do if we had additional resources and volunteers to carry the balls that need to be carried.

Forgive me if I have overstated anything except my confidence in NCCC, its Board and its members and their commitment to preserving the Cascades.

## Recent Awards given to NCCC Board Members



# Upper Stehekin Valley Road Management Options

DAVID FLUHARTY

On February 8, 2005 the National Park Service (NPS) asked for comment on potential management options for the Stehekin Road between High Bridge and Cottonwood Camp. Floods in 1995 and 2003 severely damaged sections of the road. The first flood forced road closure just north of Flat Creek since 1995 and the second wiped out the roadbed at Car Wash Falls [mile 12.9] and damaged the road in many places up to Bridge Creek [mile 15.6]. Long-term Stehekin goers have watched bridges and road beds get washed out by the Cascade and Stehekin rivers for many years. We have often wondered how much it is worth to continue to maintain the Stehekin Road and what alternatives are there to continual road repair. Now the magnitude of the damage has given the National Park Service and the public an opportunity to reflect on what we would like the future of the upper Stehekin valley to be.

The National Park Service has proposed four alternatives and requested that the public supply information on its concerns about the options and to suggest additional options for consideration:

1. Reopen the road to Flat Creek along its previous configuration – It is estimated that this would cost about \$6.6 million and require 70,000 cubic yards of large rock.

2. Reroute the road to access Cottonwood [e.g., below Car Wash Falls place the road on the Pacific Crest Trail which follows the Old Wagon Road.]. This would require that the Washington Parks Wilderness Act be amended because designated Wilderness starts 50 feet on either side of the Stehekin Road.

3. Permanently close the road just below Car Wash Falls. [A parking lot, turnaround, etc., would be developed].

4. Close the road above Car Wash Falls as in Alternate 3 but seek to develop bicycle access along the non-wilderness road corridor.

North Cascades Conservation Council responded to the request for assistance in further defining alternatives for management options for the upper Stehekin Valley Road in the following way.

At this time, NCCC understands that you [the NPS] are seeking to scope out the alternatives and that we are not expected to support or otherwise argue in favor of a preferred alternative. The key is to properly frame the action and the analysis of alternatives. We would be pleased to expand on any of these points or make clarifications as needed.

1. *Broaden the Scope of Action.* The stated scope of action is too narrowly defined. This is not just about replacing or not replacing the upper Stehekin Valley Road. It is about planning alternative futures for the upper Stehekin valley and the types of access for recreation, wildlife protection, Wilderness management, etc., that is presented by this turn of natural events. NCCC has long urged the NPS to consider alternative management approaches to the upper valley because of the significant opportunities that it offers for low-elevation, flat walk-in camping, etc. Regardless of the road alternative that is ultimately selected through the Environmental Impact Assessment process, the NPS should be considering these in light of a vision for how the upper valley would be managed. In this regard, it is clear that the 1995 GMP and EIS statement for management of the Stehekin Road must also be revised.

2. *Consider an Additional Road Terminus Option.* The NPS is currently considering a major revamping of the area around the High Bridge Historic Ranger District. One additional option for consideration should be closing the road at that point. There are a number of excellent reasons for combining the planning for a road terminus at a point where the NPS has traditionally had a management presence. High Bridge seems a logical terminus of the road for administrative and interpretive purposes. It mini-

mizes the need to develop further visitor services, e.g., parking and turn-around facilities, toilets, etc., at points farther up the road.

3. *Consider Deleting NPS Proposed Alternatives 1 and 2.* The environmental impact analysis required for major federal projects under the National Environmental Policy Act seeks that the agency analyze a wide suite of alternatives but allows for the agency to determine practicability as one criterion in putting bookends on the breadth of alternatives considered. It is wasteful to use tax dollars to analyze alternatives that are not practical. According to cost estimates displayed in the request for comments, the \$6.6 million-dollar price tag for rebuilding the road [Alternative 1] and the unstated but likely high cost of rebuilding the road as seen in Alternative 2 are not in the practical range. Further, the environmental impacts and costs of mitigating these alternatives are enormous [that is 14,000 one-way trips on the Stehekin Road by dump trucks capable of carrying 10 cubic yards of large rock per trip plus more trips for finer material]. Thus, it does not seem that the NPS is required to consider these further. Finally, NEPA requires that Alternatives under consideration are legal. Alternative 2 is illegal under the 1988 Washington Parks Wilderness Act as pointed out in the document requesting comment. In justifying why an alternative is included or excluded the NPS must only explain the basis for the exclusion and why that is reasonable.

4. *Consider Restating Alternative 4.* The current alternative seems to place a priority on accommodating one form of use, i.e., bicycles, over other forms of access. NCCC understands that bicycles are not permitted in Wilderness, thus, this alternative seeks to evaluate the feasibility and costs associated with providing this specific form of access. NCCC would request that the statement be broadened to include comparison of the bike route with routing suitable for other means of access.

5. *List of Issues for Analysis.* NCCC concurs with the partial list provided [Wilderness, Threatened and Endangered Plant and Animal Species, Visitor Use and Historic and Prehistoric Resources]. Others that should be considered relate to the first point made by NCCC above relative to alternate goals and policies for managing the upper Stehekin Valley area without road access. Similarly, the role of the NPS and private operators for public transportation services/shuttle services should be revisited in light of change in access. Further, the role of public transport in the interpretation of the Stehekin Valley should be evaluated. Compatibility of visitor uses and visitor safety are also important elements. Ability to administer and consistently enforce management requirements in an expanded upper valley configuration must be part of the evaluation.

In light of each of the alternatives it would be useful to evaluate the continuing erosion of the road bed with respect to contribution to downstream sedimentation and geohazard to determine if measures are necessary to reduce these hazards, i.e., putting the road no longer maintained into a long-term stable “restored” condition, removing culverts, etc.

Other issues that require analysis include social/cultural impacts to residents and visitors of changing the terminus of the upper Stehekin Road. Most importantly, the economic costs and benefits of the project should be identified – especially in light of the extremely high costs under several of the options and the yet unstated costs of annual maintenance.

Conclusion. NCCC looks forward to working with the NPS in evaluating the future for the upper Stehekin valley. The natural processes are reasserting their dominance in this area and foreclosing options. At the same time these natural processes are giving the NPS a unique opportunity to plan for a new way of protecting and enjoying the area.

# Coon Run Reroute

North Cascades Conservation Council submitted a version these comments on the Environmental Assessment to Restore Vehicle Access on the Stehekin Valley Road at Coon Run (Mile 9.1-10.2) in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.

We concurred with the National Park Service determination that Alternative D is preferred. Construct an Upper Road Reroute around the Coon Run Washout if it can be accomplished as described and with the environmental impacts assessed. We note that this is a more expensive routing than the others but we would agree that it is more consistent with the NPS goals of removing facilities from the floodplain and other natural hazard areas.

NCCC has not had an opportunity to visit the routes of the various alternatives to formulate

its own assessment of these impacts; therefore we are relying on the information from the EA in making this determination. Satellite photos of the area document the effect of fire management thinning, which obviously lessens the specific impacts on vegetation and habitats from road construction.

Lack of specificity in the EA gives some concerns about the following points that we cannot resolve relative to Alt. D:

1. Restoration of the old roadbed is mentioned but not well described. What would be done and what is a time frame provided for when this would occur?
2. Two culverts are mentioned as part of Alt. D and their placement is indicated on the site map on p. 6. These culverts are only described as "large" on the map.

3. Alt. D notes that it will traverse a "debris cone" but does not mention the source of the debris or whether it indicated exposure of the roadbed to geohazard.

4. The new Coon Run bridge is defined as a "minimum" 50 foot structure. What would be the "maximum"?

5. There is scant discussion of the effect of the "causeway" at the upper end of the project and how the road would interact with the hydrological features.

6. Is it correct to understand that the terrace cut and the causeway fill results in more or less a balance of material? Also, does the approximately 900 cu.yd. surface gravel from a non-local source mean that additional material from the existing gravel pit is not required for the project?

NCCC is concerned that this road project is segmented from an overall assessment of hydrology and transportation on a watershed-scale. This piecemeal approach may be expedient in terms of decision-making but a detailed long-term assessment is to be preferred.

*Upper Stehekin Road at Carwash Falls after a 90's flood.*

SANDY WALKER PHOTO



# NCCC assessments of Forest Service EAs

MARC BARDSLEY

## Low Creek Easement for Longview Fibre

May 2, 2005

Mr. Don Maks  
Attn: Lowe Creek Easement Snoqualmie Ranger District  
450 Roosevelt Ave. E.  
Enumclaw WA 98022

Dear Mr. Maks:

I am writing to comment on the EA for the proposed Lowe Creek easement for Longview Fibre company on road 6030. The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) strongly opposes granting Longview Fibre an easement to use this former road, most of which has long reverted to the status of trail.

We believe rebuilding this road for the use of Longview Fibre is a terrible use of taxpayer's money. There is no public need for this road. Longview Fibre can well afford to develop other means of access to its properties. Your proposed action seems to be entirely designed to cut costs and generate profits for Longview Fibre, all at public expense. The EA fails utterly to demonstrate any public benefit from this action, and fails to disclose and discuss the very considerable public costs which will result. At the very least, a full Environmental Impact Statement must be done to adequately disclose the many adverse effects of this project.

You claim that increased mileage of roads for driving will be a major benefit. This is ludicrous. There are plenty of opportunities for driving in the Skykomish district and elsewhere. What is lacking is low elevation walking opportunities. Your proposed action will eliminate one of very few low elevation walking opportunities within a riparian environment in the entire central Cascades.

There is very little discussion of the many problems which will result from rebuilding a road here. There is no adequate discussion of the likelihood of more "dispersed recreation sites" forming, and the damage these will cause. There is no discussion of the likelihood of vehicles driving through the sensitive spawning beds of lower Lowe Creek. There is no discussion of the dangers of meth labs, toxic waste dumping, and general lawlessness which will result. The Skykomish district does not have adequate personnel to police the roads currently open to vehicles, yet here you are proposing to add more mileage. Presumably, road maintenance would be paid by Longview Fi-

bre, not the USFS.

Your entire action here seems tailored for the exclusive benefit of Longview Fibre. The EA does not establish any public need for or benefits from this action. We urge you to adopt the No Action alternative, and cancel this project entirely. Marc Bardsley, President North Cascades Conservation Council

## Lake 22 Trailhead Perry Creek

May 17, 2005

Ann Risvold  
Darrington Ranger District  
1405 Emens St.  
Darrington Washington 98241

Dear Ms. Risvold:

The North Cascades Conservation Council is happy to comment on your proposed plans to modify parking areas in the Lake 22 and Perry Creek areas.

Lake 22 Trailhead Parking Area upgrades:

1. We understand that day use in this area is very high and that there is a perceived need for additional parking. Our concern is that the amount of natural vegetation to be disturbed by this project should be minimized. We commend the USFS for proposing to leave all large trees. We would also recommend that any increased parking area not be paved. The upgraded parking area at the Big Four trailhead is clearly overbuilt and should not be used as a model in this area.

2. We support the preferred plan that would make minor changes to the existing lot including removal of existing boulders and some brush to increase the number of parking spots by a modest amount. We also think the idea to construct a connector trail with Gold Basin Mill Pond is a good one. We suggest that upgrades to the GBMP parking area be deferred until evidence is collected that people will actually use it, rather than continue to park along the highway.

3. It is also suggested that additional analysis be given to the upgrade of parking and safety considerations at the Hemple Creek area. Our observations are that the area is little used and that a more efficient use of already disturbed forest area would be to channel people and their cars into this area, rather than disruption of further forest areas. A cross walk and warning signs might allow quite a bit of reasonable parking.

## Perry Creek Trailhead Modifications:

1. We support the concept of pulling back the existing Perry Creek Trailhead to the area of the Mountain Loop.

2. Has the USFS explored the possibility of developing a parking area at the start of the Perry Creek Road and then converting the entire road to a trail? Could this idea be stretched to include the Big Four Parking lot as part of the development?

3. The value we hope to promote is minimizing the conversion of lowland forests to parking areas. If it is possible to combine parking areas while at the same time efficiently providing reasonable recreational amenities, that should be the ultimate goal for both the agencies and the concerned public.

Thank you for your efforts to provide an environmentally sensitive approach to upgrading recreational facilities on the Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

## Helicopter use in rebuilding Milk Creek Bridge and Suiattle River Road

May 19, 2005

Mr. Jon Vanderheyden, District Ranger  
c/o Carol Gladsjo  
Darrington Ranger District  
Darrington, WA. 98241

Dear Ms. Gladsjo,

The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed use of helicopters to rebuild the bridge on the Milk Creek Trail over the Suiattle River, as well as the proposed trail re-route of the Suiattle River Trail. We offer the following comments:

Suiattle River Bridge  
Bridge work over the Suiattle for the Milk Creek Trail #790

While we normally oppose any use of mechanized equipment in a designated wilderness area, the NCCC is amenable to case-by-case evaluation of such use. The reasons for using helicopters to facilitate bridge reconstruction are compelling enough that in this particular case,

*Continued on page 11*

# Information Superhighway Threatens Stehekin

CAROLYN MCCONNELL

## NCCC assessments of Forest Service EAs

*Continued from page 10*

we support the plan as put forth.

We strongly encourage the Forest Service to restrict flying to mid-week (not Friday through Monday) and make every effort to reduce the number of flights if at all possible. Please note that our support of this plan is by no means an acceptance of wilderness helicopter use in general, or in any other specific proposal.

### Suiattle River Trail #784 re-route

We acknowledge the use of the rock-drill might reduce environmental impact by reducing the numbers of people, and the time spent, but we question the scope of the project in the first place.

As one of our board members pointed out, it is interesting that kilometers of tunneling for railroads was successfully completed more than a century ago without the use of modern rock-drills. The North Cascades Conservation Council questions the need to re-route the trail to a position that requires such extensive blasting, especially considering first area ("relocation A") is 2,666 feet in length. This is one-half mile. The second re-route ("relocation B") is one-half mile past relocation A. It seems that the two relocations are proximate enough to combine and perhaps alleviate the need for so much blasting.

Additionally, consideration should be given to a narrower trail prism in the re-route areas to reduce the amount of blasting.

The use of mechanized equipment in a wilderness area for the sake of expediency is not a legitimate reason to employ such equipment. We do recognize the benefits of such tools in this instance, but believe the job can be done with far less drilling and blasting than is currently proposed. As noted before, we are willing to examine exceptions (the use of mechanized equipment) on a case-by-case basis in wilderness areas; and in this case we believe a compromise can be achieved that reduces the need for rock-drilling equipment, and in doing so mitigates the impact on the wilderness resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed plans. We look forward to working with the U.S. Forest Service to preserve and protect our natural resources in the future.

It's almost enough to make a person a right-winger: a community doesn't want a service, but the government is going to pay a corporation large sums of money to bring the service to the community. Worse, the public is going to see its money spent on a project that will harm the community and the environment of a nationally protected place. Meanwhile, the project cranks forward inexorably, leaving few opportunities for the public to have any say in the matter.

Thanks to well-meaning New Deal policies and the 1996 Telecommunications Act, phone service is made available to even the most remote communities, such as Stehekin, within the North Cascades National Park Complex. That mysterious Universal Service Fee we pay on our monthly telephone bills goes toward a fund to provide service where it isn't otherwise profitable to do so—such as Stehekin. It doesn't seem to have occurred to those who drafted these policies that there might be communities that, far from being denied phone service, choose to do without it. Lack of phones, along with inaccessibility by road and spectacular wild beauty, is what makes Stehekin the magical place it is. Although a Chelan Mirror article gushed that Stehekin residents "crave communication," with few exceptions, the community doesn't want phones. A survey conducted by residents found that of 70 year-round residents queried, 42 of the 48 who responded said they did not want phone service. For the first time, the North Cascades Conservation Council and Stehekin Heritage, a group of Stehekin residents long opposed to Park Service enforcement of environmental laws in Stehekin, find themselves united on this issue.

So far that is being treated as irrelevant, because there is a great deal of money to be made. An entity called Weavtel has proposed to install phone service in Stehekin, using the Universal Service moneys. The company has been pre-approved for loans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service and applied for grants from the FCC's Universal Service Administration Corporation. Thanks to these promises of money, any bank will lend Weavtel virtually unlimited amounts of money. Rumor in Stehekin has it that the Weavtel contracts with these federal agencies are on a

Halliburton-style "cost-plus" basis. I have not yet gotten confirmation of this from the bureaucrats in D.C., but it would explain some of Weavtel's practices in Stehekin. The company has already acquired property to build a call center. In clearing the property, it has been accused of illegally cutting trees from both surrounding private land and public land. It may well have to pay fines to the Park Service and restitution to the private owners, but if its contracts are cost-plus, such fines perversely will add to, rather than subtract from, its profits. This bodes ill of its future behavior, if the company digs lines throughout the valley and constructs several large towers, as proposed.

The best hope of forestalling this unwanted project is thanks to the National Environmental Policy Act's requirement for public input. The Park Service recently issued an environmental assessment of the project. Because the phone project would involve laying lines through Park Service property, the Park could stop the project by denying permission to do so. Although as we go to press, the deadline for comments was June 30, the NCCC and others are requesting extensions, to allow for all to weigh in on this important matter. Read the assessment online at the Park Service's planning and public comment website,

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectId=12528>.

Request that the Park Service deny Weavtel permits to build this project.

Unfortunately, as written, the assessment ignores the real issues. This project would forever alter the environment of the valley, changing the character of a place set aside by Congress as a place apart. A major reason the Park was created was to prevent plans to put a road into Stehekin; installation of a branch of the information superhighway would be just as much of a threat to the valley. Park Service has the authority to grant rights-of-way for utilities, but it has a responsibility first to protect the land under its jurisdiction as Congress mandated. This project would threaten the valley's wildness and the community's character, there is no need for it and no demand for it. The Park Service has no reason to grant the permits and every reason to deny them. Help convince them of this.

# Deep Underground Science and the Icicle Valley

## — DUSEL —

WICK HAXTON

We are grateful to the North Cascades Conservation Council for the opportunity to provide another perspective on the Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory. DUSEL-Cascades is a proposal by the University of Washington, on behalf of 39 educational institutions, to create a new laboratory to advance our understanding of basic physics and astrophysics, to inventory the microbial life that thrives in the deep subsurface, to study the subsurface processes that influence surface hydrology, biology, and geochemistry, and to design ultrapure materials important to future microelectronics.

Some of the research is driven by intellectual curiosity. We have discovered, over the past several years, that all of the matter familiar to us — the earth, our sun, and distant galaxies — accounts for only 4% of the total mass and energy of our universe. The remaining 96% is “dark,” unknown and invisible, but coexisting with us. We know of its presence through its gravity — an invisible hand that has shaped the form of everything we see in the night sky. We believe it will be possible to identify this matter by building a new kind of observatory deep underground, away from the effects of cosmic rays that interfere with observations on the surface of the earth.

Other research is immediately relevant to the stewardship of our world. DUSEL will allow earth scientists to conduct long-term studies of the changes occurring in subsurface water and in the cycling and transport of carbon and nitrogen. The Cascades site will provide the first opportunity to monitor the hydrology of an entire mountain ecosystem over a multi-decade period. Such information is crucial in helping policy-makers understand and respond responsibly to the changes mankind is inducing in the environment.

Mount Cashmere in the Mount Stuart batholith is one of six proposed DUSEL sites now under consideration by the National Science Foundation, the federal agency that would sponsor the laboratory. The site’s remarkable topography resulted from ice-age glaciers sawing into the heart of this granite mass, creating the Icicle Valley. The batholith is also home to seven tunnels, including the 8-mile Great Cascade Tunnel, the nation’s longest; the 5.3-mile unlined Pioneer Tunnel, a remarkable geological laboratory for assessing properties of the deep rock; and the Snow Lakes water tunnel, an excavation on the ridge that includes Mount Cashmere. The competence of the granite, the unusually favorable access, and the exceptional engineering and geologic databases were the reasons the Cascades site was identified in a national search.

When the site was identified, the UW began a program of outreach to the public. Our discussions included local and state-wide environmental and recreation groups, local communities, residents living along Icicle Creek Road, groups concerned with watershed stewardship, and local educators and their students. Meetings occurred as town forums, in the homes of residents, and with public agencies. UW graduate students visited local schools to discuss science, and school groups toured our facilities at the UW. Over 80 public meetings were held in the past 1.5 years. A comprehensive “pre-proposal” — a 300-page document describing the project’s scientific and educational motivation, construction plan, timeline, permitting process, and mitigation plan — was prepared for and released to the public in May 2004. Our group incorporated into the pre-proposal many community suggestions for avoiding and mitigating laboratory impacts and for inte-

grating DUSEL into the community. Examples of the latter include improved public transportation, public-private partnerships for creating affordable housing, and programs to address specific educational needs in Chelan County. The pre-proposal became the basis for a Citizens Advisory Committee study of DUSEL-Cascades, which in turn led to a recommendation by the Port of Chelan, the County’s economic development agency, to encourage proponents to submit a proposal to the NSF.

The UW’s public outreach is perhaps unique among large development projects in that the UW sought public input at the earliest possible stage, at the time basic project concepts were in development. Our intent was to invite public participation in the conceptual design of the project, so that the project could reflect a larger vision of Chelan County’s future. We continue to hope that these steps have laid the foundation for welcoming scientists and students to the County as new neighbors and friends.

The DUSEL-Cascades proposal, submitted to the NSF on 28 February 2005, describes three components:

- A very deep, ultraclean underground laboratory would be built under Forest Service land by tunneling three miles from Icicle Creek Road to Mount Cashmere. The laboratory at the tunnel ends would house several observatories that pipe data to the surface by fiber. In response to community requests to minimize impact, all utilities and parking would be underground, and dark skies would be maintained. The most visible surface feature of the laboratory would be the 20-foot tunnel opening in a rock face. Scientists and students would be transported from the science campus to the laboratory by electric shuttle, as

internal combustion engines are not compatible with the laboratory’s cleanliness standards.

- A science campus, to be built on a commercial site in the county, between the towns of Peshastin and Leavenworth. This is the main center of activity. The campus would be a regional model for (LEED certifiable) sustainability. The conceptual design, by the architectural firm Mithun Partners, is modeled after IslandWood, the environmental learning center on Bainbridge Island. The science campus would provide office, research, and administrative facilities for about 35 permanent and 100 visiting scientists (faculty, post-doctoral researchers, and graduate and undergraduate students) and about 65 support staff (computer staff, technicians, machinists, draftsman, secretarial support). Typically two-thirds of the support staff for such a facility are hired from the local community. Many of the students would be Washington residents.

- A visitor center, to be sited either near Leavenworth or elsewhere in the county, to focus on K-12 teacher enhancement, K-12 and public outreach, distance education, and university/local college partnerships to increase access to higher education in an underserved region of our state. The proposed facility is modeled after Berkeley’s Lawrence Hall of Science. We estimate that the center would draw approximately 250,000 visitors per year. Current tourism in Leavenworth accounts for about 1.1 million annual visitors. There are opportunities for coordinating visitor center activities with those of two other area science-oriented facilities, the new Audubon Center and the National Fish Hatchery.

The institutions responsible for DUSEL — the National Science

*Continued on page 13*

Foundation and the University of Washington — have exemplary records of working for the public good. The National Science Foundation, the proposed DUSEL sponsor, has supported basic research and education within America's colleges and universities for the past 55 years. It is deeply involved with the training of undergraduate and graduate students as scientists, and with public education programs to help equip citizens to make informed decisions in an increasingly technical world. The UW will hold the US Forest Service use permit for the underground laboratory, build and maintain the science campus and visitor center, and be responsible for health, safety, and the environment. Its oversight committees will be public and include citizen representation. The UW has an established record for responsible oversight: of the university's 27 off-campus research facilities, approximately one-third are operated on USFS, National Park, or other public/tribal lands under similar use permits.

The UW recognizes that 2.6 years of DUSEL construction will have temporary negative impacts on the Icicle Valley. The rock haulage will increase traffic on the County and USFS portions of Icicle Creek Road by 4% and 16%, respectively. Five miles of USFS roadway must be strengthened in conjunction with the burying of a power transmission line and fiber communications. During construction a staging area will be needed near the portal, located outside a nearby riparian area by a creek that has been proposed for recreational designation.

We have approached these problems on several levels. Direct mitigation includes all feasible engineering steps to reduce impacts. In the case of the trucking, this includes modern trucks using low-sulfur fuels, careful scheduling and caravanning of trucks, preservation of quiet hours, covered loads, and wheel washes. While roadbed improvements are necessary, the

USFS believes the project requires no widening or straightening of the roadway. Representatives of the Access Fund, a climbing advocacy group, have agreed to help the UW inventory roadside climbing rocks, to help guard against any construction-associated damage. We will encourage Icicle residents to take advantage of our buried power line to remove existing overhead power lines that detract from recreational areas like the Snow Lakes trailhead. The portal area, until recently in private hands, was clearcut before it was transferred to the USFS. We have proposed extraordinary steps, described in the pre-proposal, to minimize the size of the staging area and the visibility of the construction, so that our work does not exacerbate past damage. The portal is on an existing USFS road: no new road construction is required.

In addition, the UW has been working with major environmental groups to formulate a broader plan for mitigation to compensate for our use of the national forest. We are advocating the expansion of the DUSEL electric shuttle system to include recreational users of the valley. The goals are to reduce traffic and parking while improving air quality, which is important to DUSEL. We are also working to forge a partnership with existing lands programs to reduce future development on private holdings within the national forest.

We believe the proposal to site DUSEL on national forest land is fully consistent with the intended purposes of these public lands. Public science and education, along with scenic, recreational, historic, and wilderness values, are cited as justifications for preserving and protecting public lands, in the major founding statutes. The North Cascades Conservation Council's mission "*To protect and preserve the North Cascades' scenic, scientific, recreational, educational, and wilderness values*" also acknowledges these pur-

poses. During its expected 40-year operational lifetime, DUSEL will have little impact on other users of the national forest. Laboratory activities will be undetectable from the surface, apart from the immediate vicinity of the portal. Even there, DUSEL will not significantly restrict any other public uses. When DUSEL is finished, the use permit will require us to remove all evidence of our use. Finally, a significant portion of DUSEL research — its hydrology and associated environmental science, its inventory of subsurface microbial life — will provide new knowledge important to the stewardship of public lands. It is likely that some of this research will strengthen arguments for such preservation.

There have been claims of hazards associated with DUSEL that have, in our view, misled and frightened members of the public. We have not yet applied for permits or entered into the public review phase of the project. When the review phase begins, the agencies charged with protecting public lands and public welfare will rationally evaluate all such claims. We emphasize that the purpose of DUSEL is to create an environment completely devoid of the trace radioactivities and other contaminants found everywhere on the earth's surface. Furthermore, safety and environmental standards for university research are far more stringent than those of the commercial world. Double containment of all fluids has been a US scientific standard for two decades: this is the reason we have been able to work for the past fifty years in a variety of US underground sites without any environmental incidents. Finally, we stress that the materials used underground are generally benign and can be found in virtually every urban physics department and in many hospitals. The noble gasses we use are minor components of air and do not react. The most hazardous material is scintillator fluid, a hydrocarbon similar to gasoline. Far more hazardous

materials, in far larger volumes, with far less monitoring are transported by truck and rail through virtually every community every day. This includes the 50 tons of gasoline carried in the tanks of the 1100 cars that travel along the Icicle daily.

A previous NCCC newsletter (*The Wild Cascades*) included an article from the Icicle Valley Protection Alliance, a group that was formed to oppose DUSEL. We believe that article is misguided: DUSEL's educational and scientific objectives and our individual responsibilities to preserve and protect public lands are compatible goals. There is much to be gained from working together to reach these goals, as the project evolves. This evolution includes a very thoughtful process for independent review and evaluation of the project, with full public participation, as established by NEPA and SEPA. This will provide a factual, unbiased examination of all aspects of the project. The process is designed to be fair to the applicants while also safeguarding public lands for the use of current and future generations. The UW hopes NCCC members will recognize both the importance of basic research and education to society, and the extent of our efforts to work cooperatively with the environmental and recreational communities.

Our group would welcome opportunities to talk with the NCCC or with its individual members.

**The DUSEL-Cascades Office  
Box 351273**

**University of Washington  
Seattle, WA 98195-1273  
(206) 897-1755**

**[www.int.washington.edu/  
DUSEL/cascades.html](http://www.int.washington.edu/DUSEL/cascades.html)**

# Proposed NCCC Response to Dusel

RICK MCGUIRE

The North Cascades Conservation Council cannot and does not lay claim to the scientific competence to pass judgment on the University of Washington's proposed Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory on strictly technical matters. We cannot say whether the attributes of the proposed Mount Cashmere site are superior to those of competing sites as regards the scientific objectives of the laboratory. Such judgments are for Dr. Haxton's scientific peers, and the National Science Foundation, which will decide whether or not this site has more to offer than the competing proposals.

NCCC has not taken any formal position for or against the DUSEL project, but it is probably fair to say that most of the Board members object to the placement of such a facility below a federally designated Wilderness, in this case the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. A sister group, the Alpine Lakes Protection Society, has decided to formally oppose it. The backers of the Mount Cashmere proposal say that the facility will be deep underground, as its name implies, and there will be no visible evidence of it above ground in the Wilderness. Maybe so, but it will nonetheless be there, and will set a bad precedent for not only the Alpine Lakes but all other Wildernesses. DUSEL is big science, and were it proposed for somewhere else NCCC would likely wish it well. But it is proposed for below a Wilderness, which designation is supposed to be the strongest and most permanent land protection in American law. If Big Science can bend the rules to dig below a Wilderness, then why not Big Mining? Or anyone else?

We have yet to be convinced that the need for this facility, in this place, is so overwhelm-

ing as to justify bending the Wilderness Act to accommodate it. Mount Cashmere is not the only competitor as a DUSEL site. There are other places, such as existing deep mines in South Dakota and Colorado, outside of Wilderness areas, which are also contenders for hosting the facility. It stands to reason that it may be less expensive to use existing mines rather than digging a brand new tunnel, and it may be that these sites raise fewer objections from nearby residents. We can't offer any expert opinion on the suitability of the rock at the competing sites for shielding the facility. That job is for the National Science Foundation, and Congress, who will judge the competing proposals on their scientific merits, and economics.

The DUSEL proposal has generated plenty of local opposition from people who object to it not only because of the intrusion into the Wilderness, but because of the increased traffic, noise, possible pollution, and other ill effects which it may produce. There is a strong, and growing, feeling that Leavenworth and the Icicle Valley in particular is not the right place for such a large facility.

It is not necessary to repeat all the arguments against DUSEL here, but check out the excellent website of the Icicle Valley Protection Alliance, [www.iciclevalley.org](http://www.iciclevalley.org).

Dr. Haxton is an articulate proponent of DUSEL, and obviously believes that Mount Cashmere is the best place for it. We have yet to be convinced. We believe that the other proposed sites deserve full investigation. It's very unlikely that NCCC will endorse construction of such a facility beneath a federally designated Wilderness.

# NOT MAN APART

## A Grizzly Story

The *Anchorage Daily News* reported in June that Rich and Kathy Huffman, kayaking the Hulahula River, were in their tent, in their sleeping bags, when they were victims of "a rare, unprovoked attack by a predatory grizzly." Bruce Bartley of the Department of Fish and Game said, "It just hardly ever happens." North Slope Borough Search and Rescue tracked and killed the bear and took the body to Fairbanks for a necropsy to try to determine why the bear did it.

Some years ago a National Park ranger noticed an abandoned kayaker camp on the saltwater, investigated, and found nothing left of the missing kayaker but his feet — in his boots. Tracked and killed, the responsible bear was found to be very skinny, which led officials to speculate that it was hungry. The Hulahula bear was a healthy, well-fed 300 pounds and only incompletely devoured the Huffmans.

The *News* said that about six people a year are injured by bear attacks in Alaska, two-thirds of them hunters. Every other year, on average, a death results, as when a brown bear is surprised in wilderness (the reason some hikers wear "bear bells" on boots) or is protecting its young or a fresh kill.

Bartley pointed out that attacks are few, "Considering there are people all over Alaska's bear habitat, some 35,000 or so brown bears and three times as many blacks. If they wanted to eat you, they would. We'd lose an Alaskan every day of the week."

Alaska loses hundreds of bears a year, the slaughter rate always spiking after a widely publicized attack. Every killing or wounding in Alaska stirs atavistic furies in other states. The "wildlife recovery zones" proposed for the North Cascades embody a central ethic of "wilderness" as defined by mainstream environmentalism. However, in eddies and backwaters linger what might be called "Red State environmentalists" who believe wild animals should be permitted in the domain of hardhat-maintained trails only if they behave themselves.

Rebel yells are heard insisting that the National Wilderness Act of 1964 be amended to encompass Wilderness With Wheels. So too there is a cry to establish Wilderness Without Bears.

To which the proper response is: "Shame."

— H.M.

## Tunnel affects water tables in Gran Sasso region of Italy

In 1993 a highway tunnel and adjacent neutrino lab were dug through the Gran Sasso mountain range in central Italy. What was perhaps unanticipated is that the tunnel and lab act as a drain for the water table of the mountain. Ten workers were killed by the outpouring and the water table in the mountain was dramatically lowered by 800 meters, to the tunnel level. The tunnels empty 3050 liters of water per second from the mountain. Three rivers with their source on the mountain have reduced flows: the Tavo River by 70%, the Tinno River by 16% and the Enel River by 18%, as certified in March 1999 in a National Geologic Service report.

Deep lab nuclear physicists at Gran Sasso are pushing for a third tunnel to satisfy growing demand for new scientific experiments there. But the communities that have lost their water say no, joining environmental groups and agencies in the "Committee for the Protection of the Waters of Gran Sasso." On December 20, 2003, protests by 1500 people in Pescara, 700 in Teramo and 100 in L'Aquila said "No" to a third tunnel at Gran Sasso. In 2001 there were 10,000 protesters in Pescara, 7000 in Teramo and 1000 in L'Aquila. Yet, they say, the scientists continue to push for their lab expansion.

## Falling for the Cascade Agenda

DAVID S. BRODER  
Syndicated Columnist,  
*Seattle Times*

SNOQUALMIE, WASH. — When summer visitors come to the viewing platform to see Snoqualmie Falls, one of Washington's main tourist attractions, few of them realize they are also looking at an example of a unique and successful land-management and planning exercise.

The falls are backed by over 100 acres of lush and unscarred green forest, once destined for commercial and housing development by Puget Western Inc. and the city of Snoqualmie. But the Cascade Land Conservancy, a private nonprofit, stepped in and bought the property for \$13.3 million.

It was something of a gamble, said conservancy president Gene Duvernoy, because the sum was twice the net worth of his organization. "We were a little over our skis," he said. But having nursed the organization through its first four years from its start in 1989, working out of the attic of his house, the former New Yorker was accustomed to improvising.

His strategy was to "solve the problem by enlarging it." He first approached Weyerhaeuser, which had recently built 3,000 homes on a nearby tract.

Duvernoy struck a deal. The conservancy went to the city fathers and persuaded them to let Weyerhaeuser build Phase 2 now, rather than wait 20 years in return for the company financing the percent of the purchase price of the tract behind the falls. He then went to King County officials and got them to transfer development rights on 3,000 acres of land along Highway 18, that the county wanted to protect, to the Phase 2 land, allowing more density of housing. The county in turn transferred the 3,000 acres to the conservancy for safekeeping.

When Duvernoy walked me through the transaction on a recent visit to the falls, he called it a "win-win-win-win deal" for the city, the county, the company and his own agenda. It reflected "the unbridled strain of civic commitment in our region, with progressive business leaders, talented elected leadership and engaged citizens," he said.

Now, the conservancy is testing that com-

mitment with an enormously ambitious plan, made public last month, called the Cascade Agenda. The plan, looking ahead to a century of growth expected to double the population in a four-county region, aims to make almost 1.3 million acres of forests, farms and stream beds in the cascades foothills — an area 24 times the size of Seattle — permanently off-limits to developers. And it aims to foster the healthy growth of the cities and towns within the region.

The agenda, hammered out in a year-long series of community forums, relies less on regulation than on market-based tools, notably swaps of development rights of the kind exemplified by the Snoqualmie transactions.

The project is expensive — about \$7 billion in current dollars — because it requires compensating landowners who give up development rights on their property. But the creators of the blueprint say it can be financed in phases by boosting the annual local and state government expenditures for conservation, now estimated at \$50 million a year, to \$70 million.

Because the acquisition of development rights would ideally come in the early stages of

he process, the conservancy is backing legislation in Congress that would allow groups like itself to issue tax-exempt bonds. Bills for that purpose have passed both the House and Senate, but never reached the President's desk.

While the emphasis is on preserving the natural environment that accounts for the region's appeal, and the farms and orchards that were there long before such industries as Boeing and Microsoft appeared on the scene, the agenda recognizes its essential urban component.

"We can only succeed at this conservation vision if our cities and towns really become magnets for our region's future population growth," Duvernoy wrote in a recent newspaper op-ed. "If cities and towns truly become family-friendly, with good roads and schools and nearby jobs so that we want to live within them and not outside them, the pressure on our critical landscapes will be at a level our market-based strategies can manage."

The scale and ambition of this project make it nationally significant. That it has even the possibility of success speaks volumes about the character of this region and its leadership.

### The Past is Present on Si

During the Great American Burn of 1910, when it seemed all the forests of the West were in flames, and the U.S. Forest Service took on its fire-suppression mission (for which we now are paying the piper), Mount Si was burned bottom to top, except for the grove that survived at Snag Flats. The new forest we see at the parking lot could pass for 120-year-olds. Up higher, some doesn't look a day over 40. At the very high end, trees established slowly, essentially meadow colonization, as is still going on east of Teneriffe.

—KEVIN GERAGHTY

# Crown Lakes to be added to Mount Si Natural Resource Conservation Area

*Nearly 600 acres with three lakes will provide habitat and scenic views in popular recreation area*

SEATTLE – Cascade Land Conservancy (CLC) and Commissioner of Public Lands Doug Sutherland today announced the purchase of the Crown Lakes Property for inclusion in the Mt. Si Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA). The property, nearly a full section of land (597 acres), is unique in having a west-facing basin that contains three large alpine lakes, Lake Moolock, Lake Nadeau, and SMC (short for “South Meandering Corner”) Lake, immediately accessible to the Seattle metropolitan area.

“This property will be a popular addition to the Mt. Si conservation area, and will be an excellent complement to the Mountains to Sound Greenway,” said Sutherland. “I am proud of the many groups and of my staff who made it possible to add this piece to the dwindling legacy of undeveloped forestland in King County. Conservation lands and working forests help preserve the important balance between the natural landscape and developed land in areas that are rapidly growing.”

The property is highly prized for its recreation and habitat values, scenic lakes and spectacular views that span the Snoqualmie Tree Farm, the cities of Bellevue and Seattle, all the way to the Olympic Mountains. The property offers connections to the Middle Fork Snoqualmie recreation area and the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area. This acquisition was achieved through a partnership between the Department of Natural Resources and Cascade Land Conservancy.

“The Mount Si NRCA is a regional treasure that we in King County have an opportunity to enjoy every day,” noted King County Executive Ron Sims. “Crown Lakes is an incredible addition to the system of conserved

lands in our community.”

The land was purchased from Crown Lakes, LLC, for \$4,250,000. Funds for the purchase come from Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) land acquisition grants. CLC has been negotiating the purchase of this property for several years. In August, Crown Lakes, LLC finally agreed to sell the property, with the requirement that the transaction be closed by mid-December and that the Crown Lakes LLC retain limited rights to remove talus rock from a 30-acre area isolated from the majority of the property by a prominent ridgeline.

In a step that recognizes the challenges now faced by public agencies in funding land management, CLC and State DNR have committed to a collaborative effort to steward the property and create trail linkages to publicly accessible trailheads in the area.

“Crown Lakes merits the highest level of stewardship,” said Gene Duvernoy, President of CLC. “The DNR’s Natural Areas Program staff are expert in caring for our state’s most fragile eco-

systems — we are honored to have an opportunity to collaborate with them in the care of this spectacular property.”

## Cascade Land Conservancy

Cascade Land Conservancy is a private, nonprofit land trust working in King, Snohomish and Pierce counties in Washington. It

collaborates with individual landowners, organizations, and local governments to protect and steward the Puget Sound region’s wetlands, shorelines, forests, wildlife and rare plant habitat, stream corridors, and urban open spaces. Established in 1989, it has protected thousands of acres of land, and are currently negotiating to protect many thousands more.

### *Mount Baker Wild! Summer Hikes*

The summer hiking schedule for Mount Baker Wild! and sign-up details are available at: [www.mtbakerwild.org](http://www.mtbakerwild.org). Or give Ken Wilcox a call at 360-733-7014 for more information. Hikes are free and open to the public as always.

You can also volunteer on the website to help out with a variety of tasks, such as tabling at events or easy data collection while you’re on the trail. Mount Baker Wild! is dedicated to winning park or wilderness protection for most remaining roadless areas in the region, including Sauk Mountain and the largest block of unprotected roadless area (mostly old-growth forest) remaining in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.



*View from Sauk Mountain —KEN WILCOX*

# The Retreat from Fee Demo

## Forest Service Cuts Fees at Sites

### Western Washington Trailheads, Picnic Areas Benefit

June 17, 2005

WASHINGTON — The Forest Service is eliminating \$5 and \$10 recreation fees it charges at about 5300 picnic areas and trailheads — including 69 in Washington — after outdoor enthusiasts and Western lawmakers complained.

Ken Fischman of Sandpoint, Idaho, said the government shouldn't charge fees for visiting

any national forest since people pay taxes to maintain them.

"These fees discriminate against low-income workers and families," said Fischman, who belongs to a coalition of outdoor enthusiasts, environmentalists and sportsmen circulating a petition urging Congress to repeal the fees. Legislatures in at least three states — Oregon, Montana and

Colorado — have passed similar resolutions.

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), a longtime critic of the fee program, said he was "vehemently opposed to the Forest Service charging citizens to park at undeveloped trailheads with a dirt pullout, one battered picnic table and a decrepit outhouse."

Interior and Forest Service officials acknowledged that the fees — instituted on a trial basis in 1996 and renewed every two years since — are unpopular.

A law pushed by the Bush administration and signed by the President in December granted long-term authority for the once-temporary fees at recreation sites.

## Help Fight RAT by Completing and Mailing FS Site Surveys to Scott Silver, Wild Wilderness

The FS's implementation of their new Recreation Access Tax (RAT) is not going well for them. On some National Forests, such as the Deschutes here in Oregon, as many as half of all fee sites fail to meet the requirement set forth in the law. Simply put, the FS is currently charging fees at recreation sites where it has NO authority to do so. In so doing, the FS is defying the intent of the US Congress who, many will recall, gave the recreating public its assurances that fees would only be charged Where, When and If certain specified requirements were met.

Many in Congress have an inkling that problems exist, but no one yet knows the full extent to which the FS is abusing the RAT. That's where we need your help. We'd like your assistance in groundtruthing this ever-contentious and always-unpopular program!

Appended is a easy-to-complete site survey. Every time you visit a FS fee site, please complete a fresh form. You can print and mail them to me or you can use e-mail, if you prefer. It matters not how you get me the info, but it is vital that a steady stream of completed surveys begins to flow quickly and

continues to flow throughout the summer of '05. I will make certain that this valuable information finds its way into the right hands.

Please help, please forward this message as you wish — and thanks so much!

—SCOTT  
Scott Silver  
Wild Wilderness, 248 NW  
Wilmington Ave., Bend, OR  
97701  
541-385-5261,  
ssilver@wildwilderness.org,  
www.wildwilderness.org

### Survey of U.S. Forest Service Recreation Fee Sites (Instructions: CHECK ALL APPLICABLE RESPONSES)

Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of National Forest: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Is site used for:**

- Camping    Trailhead    Picnicking    OHV/4WD Use  
 Hiking    Boating    General Access    Other

IF "Other" describe \_\_\_\_\_

Yes    No **Is this site a "destination" visitor or interpretive center?** IF YES, does it provide a "broad range" of interpretive services, programs and media?    Yes    No

**Is this site a:**

- National Conservation Area    National Volcanic Monument

**Does this site have the following?**

- Designated developed parking    Permanent toilet facility  
 Permanent trash receptacle    Interpretive sign, exhibit, or kiosk  
 Picnic tables    Security services

**Does this site encompass:**

- Multiple access points    A travel corridor    Multiple "sites"

**Does this site in effect charge a fee for:**

- General access or entrance    Dispersed or backcountry areas  
 Roads or trails    Sole access to a river, trail, lake

**Does this site in effect charge a fee for:**

- Solely driving, walking, boating, horseback riding or hiking through the area without using the facilities and services

**Does this site in effect require a fee for:**

- Parking, undesignated parking, or picnicking along roads or trailsides  
 Camping at undeveloped sites    Use of overlooks or scenic pull-outs

Yes    No **Are there non-fee access points or non-fee recreation areas within 1/4 mile?**

Date of site survey: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name and contact information: \_\_\_\_\_

# Threat Looming for the Boulder White Cloud Mountains — Sawtooth NRA

MARC BARDSLEY

**The North Cascades Conservation Council normally focuses on issues directly related to the Cascade Mountains of Washington. There are good reasons for this and we have developed a reputation for “watching the store” with our friends in other environmental groups. Occasionally an issue comes along out-of-state or out-of-our-area that will have a direct impact on our own North Cascades. Unfortunately, one of these issues has popped up.**

In the middle of Idaho is an area many of us have probably heard of or perhaps visited once or twice. It is the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. A portion of this NRA is composed of two subranges of mountains called the Boulder and White Clouds Mountains. When the NRA was created in 1972, Congress designated about half the Boulder-White Clouds as a Wilderness Study Area. In 1987 and 1989, the USFS and BLM recommended that about 250,000 acres be designated wilderness. In 1983 Idaho citizens proposed a Wilderness area of 460,000 acres, later upgraded in 1990 to about 500,000 acres. For many of the usual reasons, none of these proposals resulted in even one acre of congressionally mandated wilderness.

eral land to local governments for resale to developers. The federal land involved in the giveaway, as you might expect, just happens to be in prime wildlife habitat.

A few environmental organizations such as the Wilderness Society and the Idaho Conservation League have endorsed the bill but with qualifying statements that some of the more egregious problems remain to be worked during the legislative process. Many other local and regional organizations have come out in opposition to CIEDRA. It is understandable that groups fighting for wilderness all these years feel pushed into the position of wanting protection for at least some of the area. We here in our part of the Northwest certainly know that feeling. We can imagine the feeling of helplessness as ORVs continue to run rampant in these pristine areas of Idaho. The urge to sacrifice forever a bit of a great place in order to save the rest could be very tempting.

The precedent here must not be overlooked, however. Giving away existing federal land, some of it purchased recently for its wildlife values, in order to get something very different in return, is a dramatic change in a strategy. The strategy that has worked for the conservationist movement over the years has been to compromise with the other side by accepting less than what we want, with the right to go back later and fix the problem. Giving the land away means it is unlikely to ever be available. It takes little imagination to see this exact scenario taking place in one of our local economically challenged rural areas.



*This 8.3 acre parcel of public land in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area was purchased by U.S. taxpayers in 1989 for preservation. Under the CIEDRA, this land would be privatized as would a total of 2,000 to 3,000 acres.*

Photo – JOHN OSBORN, M.D., courtesy Western Lands Project

*For more information:*  
Western Lands Project  
PO Box 95545  
Seattle, WA 98145-2545  
Phone 206-325-3503  
Fax 206-325-3515  
[www.westernlands.org](http://www.westernlands.org)

In May of 2005, local Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson introduced HR 2514, aka Central Idaho Economic Development and Recreation Act (CIEDRA). This bill would, among other things, designate somewhat less than 300,000 acres of Wilderness, memorialize off-road vehicle use in much of the remainder, take away federal water rights and, possibly the most disturbing, give away up to 3,000 acres of fed-

The NCCC has determined that it is the best interests of our region to oppose CIEDRA and the concept of land giveaways for certain congressional promises that we have now seen can be taken back quite easily. Consequently, the NCCC has signed on to an open letter to Congress that opposes the Central Idaho Economic Development and Recreation Act (HR 2514).

If you are as upset by this precedent-setting land grab as I am, please write to your congressman and oppose HR 2514 unless major revisions are made to change ORV use, protect federal water rights, and not give away federal Land.

# Happenings in Our National Forests

RICK MCGUIRE

---

## Middle Fork Snoqualmie ATM Plan released

The Snoqualmie district of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest has released the long-awaited revised Decision Notice for the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Access and Travel Management (ATM) plan. Regular readers of *The Wild Cascades* will recall that efforts to get the ATM plan out have been ongoing for some time, and it is the product of many hours of hard work, both from stakeholders (including NCCC), and by Forest Service personnel, who deserve a big thank-you for seeing this effort through.

The ATM plan will shape the future of the transportation infrastructure in the Middle Fork valley. The centerpiece of the ATM is the conversion of the Middle Fork road above Dingford Creek into a multi-use trail. This will turn eight miles of dusty, potholed road into a new low-elevation trail, giving access to the upper Middle Fork valley. In addition, it will close off a number of spur roads leading to the river that have become squalid, muddy messes. The Middle Fork trail between Taylor River and Hardscrabble Creek will be opened to mountain bikes every other day for a three-year trial period.

NCCC and other organizations recommended that the Middle Fork road be converted to trail beyond Taylor River. Although this will not happen as part of the ATM, the plan nonetheless represents a huge step forward for the valley, which has in the past been plagued by dumping, vandalism and wild shooting.

---

## Pratt connector trail still looming

NCCC board members recently met with Forest Service personnel from the Snoqualmie Ranger District to discuss the Pratt connector trail project, which would build a new trail on the southeast side of the lower Middle Fork Snoqualmie from Taylor River down to the Pratt River valley. NCCC and other organizations, such as the Alpine Lakes Protection Society, oppose this trail project, and would like to see the Pratt remain as it now is: close by, yet remote and difficult to access, an undisturbed refuge for wildlife. The Pratt valley is a remarkably lonely place — very close to Seattle and I-90, yet hard to get to because one must ford the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River to reach the Pratt trail. The ford is difficult in spring, when the habitat value of the Pratt (only 900 feet in elevation at its mouth), is highest for species

such as bears emerging from hibernation. It is easy in the fall, when bears and other species have moved to the high country. It's a near-perfect setup for both animals and humans.

NCCC advocates putting wildlife needs ahead of human recreational desires, and is urging the Forest Service to leave the Pratt as is, and instead build new trails to middle-elevation viewpoints near Taylor River. NCCC members and others have made numerous field trips to investigate trailbuilding opportunities in the Taylor junction area of the Middle Fork valley. These trips have led to the discovery of a number of extraordinary places where new trails could be built without going in to a big “blank spots on the map,” as the Pratt connector would. A system of ledges on the lower and middle slopes of Garfield Mountain — the “Garfield Balconies” — have superlative views up and down the scenic Middle Fork valley. Other similar places are also found on lower Quartz Mountain, and on “Stegosaurus Butte,” a knoll which stands above the Middle Fork just south of where Taylor River joins it. New trails built to these places would have far fewer adverse impacts on wildlife habitat, and would likely be far more popular than a trail downvalley to the Pratt. The new Middle Fork campground is currently under construction near Taylor River, and trails to nearby viewpoints would provide splendid opportunities for campers and all other users to enjoy the “backyard wilderness” of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie.

NCCC views the Pratt connector project as a test case for the habitat protection efforts which have been put forth as part of the North Cascade Grizzly Bear Recovery Area, which encompasses all federal lands north of I-90. The Pratt valley has some characteristics which make it near-unique in the Cascades. Although there are other big, low valleys, such as Big Beaver Creek and Thunder Creek, both of those valleys are far back into the mountains and have more severe climates and much more snow cover (in “normal” years, at least,) than the Pratt. The Baker River and Boulder River valleys are perhaps climatically more similar, but both of those are steep, narrow valleys, and the Boulder has a heavily used trail. The lower Pratt is big and broad, has a true lowland climate, and together with the nearby areas on the southeast side of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie above and below it, offers unmatched “core security habitat.” NCCC hopes to keep this lonely valley as it now is, and to work with the Forest Service and other groups to develop many new trails in other nearby places.

---

## Middle Fork “Trust Land Transfer” Proposed

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources manages a number of pieces of land in the lower Middle Fork Snoqualmie valley, including some spectacular groves of old-growth spruce and cedar. This DNR land is intermingled, often confusingly so, with U.S. Forest Service lands. The King County District of DNR has proposed a “trust land transfer”, whereby these lands would transfer out of the “trusts” which are supposed to make money for the state, and become designated as Natural Resource Conservation Areas. This would mean that they would no longer be in danger of being logged, a big step toward guaranteeing that the Middle Fork remains wild. The state legislature must approve the transfer. We and other groups are working to make the transfer a reality.

---

## Snoqualmie Tree Farm Development Rights Purchased

At the western foot of the Cascades, stretching from North Bend to the Snohomish County line, the former Weyerhaeuser “Snoqualmie Tree Farm” (now owned by John Hancock Timberlands,) is the last big piece of relatively flat, undeveloped land in King County. These lands are just west of the Alpine Lakes area, and much of the areas is in the North Fork Snoqualmie watershed, a little known place considering its proximity to Seattle. Conservationists have long worried that suburban sprawl would spread east from the main Snoqualmie valley and overwhelm the place, turning King County into another Los Angeles, with development all the way from Puget Sound to the wall of the Cascades. But because of King County Executive Ron Sims, and others in the King County government, there is now no need to worry. King County recently purchased the “development rights” to 90,000 acres of these lands, insuring that they will remain as commercial forestland rather than fall victim to yet more sprawl.

The mountains of the Alpine Lakes area of the central Cascades will thus retain a green buffer to the west, thanks to the farsighted actions of Sims and his administration. An earlier effort to save the area from development, the “Evergreen Forest” initiative, failed to get a bill through Congress which would have allowed it to issue tax-exempt bonds to purchase the property outright, with the bonds paid off through receipts from low-intensity logging.

*Continued on page 20*

Most of the land in question has been logged two or even three times, and it's fair to say much of it has a rather bleak appearance after repeated, short rotation cuttings. But, as the old saying goes, "the worst clearcut is better than the best subdivision." It may be difficult to appreciate that concept as one surveys the lunar aftermath of high intensity logging in this area, but it is nonetheless true. Trees will likely grow back as long as there is some soil, but pavement is forever. Perhaps one day another effort will be successful in purchasing full "fee simple" ownership. The \$22 million dollars which King County paid for the development rights will keep King County from turning into one endless sprawl, and will keep open the option to fully preserve the place, which would be forever lost were it subdivided and sold off for residential development.

## Low Creek Road EA Released

The Forest Service has released an Environmental Assessment for the rebuilding of an old, long vanished road at Low Creek, on the south side of the South Fork Skykomish river from Money Creek downstream about four miles. The old Low Creek road washed out several decades ago, and the lands on the south side of the river where it would be rebuilt have gone back to nature, and are the only part of the otherwise heavily developed South Fork Sky valley where one can go from river to mountaintop without crossing an active road. The area was railroad logged in the early 20th century, and is now reforested with attractive, naturally regenerated 80-year-old second-growth forest. Low Creek itself has a large delta where the creek meanders, with some of the best salmon spawning reaches in the Snohomish watershed.

This beautiful place may now have a road punched through it, built largely at taxpayers' expense by the Forest Service for the exclusive benefit of the Longview Fibre company. Longview Fibre owns some lands in the Index Creek area which it wants to log. Rather than rebuild an old bridge across the South Fork Skykomish, Longview would prefer that the Forest Service build a road through the Low Creek area so that it can log its lands more cheaply. The Forest Service has put forth an astonishing proposal to build this road at public expense, claiming that the public will benefit from new opportunities to drive on dirt roads. They are proposing to spend public money to build this new road for Longview when they cannot even maintain the hundreds of miles of logging roads which already crisscross the Skykomish Ranger District.

This new road would indeed provide opportunities — for meth labs, recreational "mudding", and driving directly through the pristine spawning beds of Low Creek. Not only would

it destroy a beautiful area of re-wilding nature, it would also be one of the most appalling examples of corporate welfare ever seen in the Cascades. Longview Fibre would be able to log its lands with less expense than providing its own access. The Forest Service says that reducing costs for Longview means that they should build a road through this wild area, paid for by the public. NCCC and other groups disagree, and are preparing for a major effort to stop this giveaway of public money, and keep Low Creek wild.

## Wild Sky Wilderness Bill Awaiting Action

The Wild Sky Wilderness bill, which would permanently protect 106,000 acres of mountains and lowland forests in the Skykomish watershed north of Highway 2, has passed the Senate Natural Resources Committee, and is awaiting action in the House of Representatives. The bill has twice passed the full Senate, but has yet to get past House Resources Committee chairman Richard Pombo, who asserts that only fully pristine places can be designated Wilderness. But good things take time, and Senator Patty Murray, and Congressman Rick Larsen, the bill's chief sponsors, have vowed to keep trying, for however long it takes. Wilderness protection has never been a job for those with short attention spans, or addicted to quick results.

## Mount Rainier Park Concessions Venting more fumes and steam than Mount St. Helens

*"Parks ... have always been subject to attack by despoiling gain-seekers and mischief-makers of every degree from Satan to Senators, eagerly trying to make everything immediately and selfishly commercial." — JOHN MUIR*

Actually, it is too late for you to comment on the further commercialization of the facilities at Mount Rainier's Camp Muir. Deadline was June 15! (You likely know that the Muir high camp is the most used by climbers that ascend The Mountain.)

Too bad the questionnaire represents a foregone conclusion to the Park's Commercial Services Plan, and is another sorry example of the selling of access to our public places... pay your fee to the concessionaire and you are in. Go as an independent and there will be no room at the inn. In my opinion, the questions represent what the commercial services want. What you see in the thinly veiled questions will be the end result.

For what it will accomplish (i.e., nothing), at least have the perverse pleasure in completing and submitting the questionnaire.

— SCOTT SILVER

## Commercializing Mount Rainier's High Camp

### Camp Muir Questions *Mount Rainier now accepting comments on Camp Muir Planning Process*

Key questions the park would like public input on:

1. How should the park best modify existing uses of structures or provided new structures at Camp Muir to fulfill the intent of the Commercial Services Plan in providing a variety of guided climbing visitor experiences?
2. How should structures at Camp Muir serve day use visitors?
3. Should there be separation at Camp Muir between guided public visitors and independent public visitors?
4. Should the public, guides and clients sleep in built structures or in tents?
5. Should cooking shelters be provided at Camp Muir to reduce potential hazards associated with visitors sleeping and cooking in the same structure during inclement weather?
6. How can the park provide better information o Camp Muir visitors to ensure they are informed of potentially hazardous conditions during inclement weather?
7. Can multiple concessionaires share the same facilities or should separate facilities be provided for each concessionaire?
8. If new structures are to be built at Camp Muir should they be for the public or for concessionaires?
9. Should potable drinking water that meets WA State Public Health Department/EPA "Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule" be available to concessionaires' guides and clients?

Submit your comments in writing to:

Superintendent, Mount Rainier National Park, Tahoma Woods, Star Route, Ashford WA 98304 OR VIA EMAIL to donna\_rahier@nps.gov.

# Of Roads, Access, and “Elitists”

TOM HAMMOND

I’ve heard much use of the term “elitist” to describe proponents of wilderness, and by extension, those opposed to allowing motorized recreation on certain areas of public land. While I fully support and petition for protection, expansion, and creation of new wilderness areas, I have never considered myself an elitist, so I figured I’d better find out exactly what the word means.

According to *Webster’s Dictionary*, **elitist means: “Someone who believes in rule by an elite group.” And a follow-on: “a group of persons who by virtue of position or education exercise much power or influence <members of the ruling elite> <the intellectual elites of the country>”**

Well, this certainly does not describe me, or pretty much anyone I know in the hiking or climbing community. Nor does it describe those who share a love of the woods and an appreciation for intact ecosystems, or even simple peace and quiet. Indeed, I would contend that the opposite is true: those who wish to access every bit of public land (especially those via a machine with an internal combustion engine) fit the definition of elite, considering the influence the extractive industries (timber and oil), as well as the ORV manufacturers, exert on policy makers in our government. One need look no further than the numbers: those in power have determined over history to use over 90 percent of the land for things other than roadless/wilderness area, leaving less than 10 percent as “protected”. When I hoist a pack on my back that weighs upwards of 70 lbs for a few nights in the backcountry, I hardly consider myself elite. This is especially true when I’m working my way along a snowy road on skis, only to have a snowmobile zoom past me in a cloud of poison exhaust and deafening noise.

Who is elite? I know for sure when I work my way up a ridge, folks in the valley enjoying themselves can’t hear my gasping breaths, footfalls, and thrashing in brush. Yet even a single dirtbike or snowmobile makes their presence known for miles around. Amazing how only one or two people can affect miles of backcountry, and every person, be it a hiker, a climber, or even a family out for a picnic, with their actions. Which of us is exercising more “power or influence”? Who is elite?

One would think that in our daily lives, filled with automobiles, trucks, aircraft, and the like, a person would have their fill of vehicles and noise. Apparently not, as people demand they be allowed to access the backcountry by every motorized means possible, even at the cost of what makes the backcountry unique and desirable in the first place. I know for a fact one cannot enjoy the backcountry for what it is from a car, or a snow machine, or a dirtbike. I know because I have spent a great deal of time hiking roads that I have also driven and snowmobiled.

When I drive a machine what I hear are tires on gravel, the roar of the engine. What I feel are the focus and concentration required to keep a vehicle pointed in the right direction. There is no appreciation for the roar of waterfalls, the sound of birds, the changing views as one works up a valley. I remember once I hiked the Cascade River Road for more than 10 miles — it was closed at Hard Creek due to snow covering the road. I’d driven the road perhaps 50 times over the previous 10 years, but when I hiked it, I felt like I was in a place I’d never seen. To see Mt. Formidable rise through the trees, to encounter the N. Fork Cascade River, to see Mt. Torment rising precipitously more than a mile above the valley

at points along the road was (and is) simply spectacular. I ended up camping right on the road—it was one of the most scenic and enjoyable valley camps I’ve had the pleasure of visiting. I didn’t feel elite as I finally shed my pack after that trip, but I did feel blessed to have experienced the Cascade River in a manner not recognized by many these days. I considered the people who would be driving Winnebagos up to the road end after the snow melted to be much more elite than sweaty, sore me. Indeed, just this past weekend, I took a novice up the N. Fork Cascade River. It was a perfect introduction for a backcountry experience, as the road was gated at Milepost 21. The hike to the road end provided changing perspective and views of the finger glaciers of Johannesburg, the roar of a hundred waterfalls all around us, and a peaceful lunch below Cascade Peak. We spent sunset perched on boulders next to

Midas Creek, the sounds of water and life all around us. No hopping out of the car for a snapshot and then a hasty departure. I imagine we never would have seen the two bear cubs wrestling on an avalanche fan of Johannesburg had we been in a car that evening.

Roads have their place. And their place is not in headwaters of watersheds that so many creatures, including humans, depend on for our very lives. Roads have no place on steep ridge lines to allow cars to access the subalpine or alpine. I’m not advocating closing the Cascade River Road, at least not below the Eldorado gravel pit, but I am hopeful we can all recognize the value of land for what it really is and act to preserve what little we have left that is roadless. Imagine a place of peace. Your favorite place of peace. I have to believe there aren’t roads involved. If there is a road there, that road is gated.

---

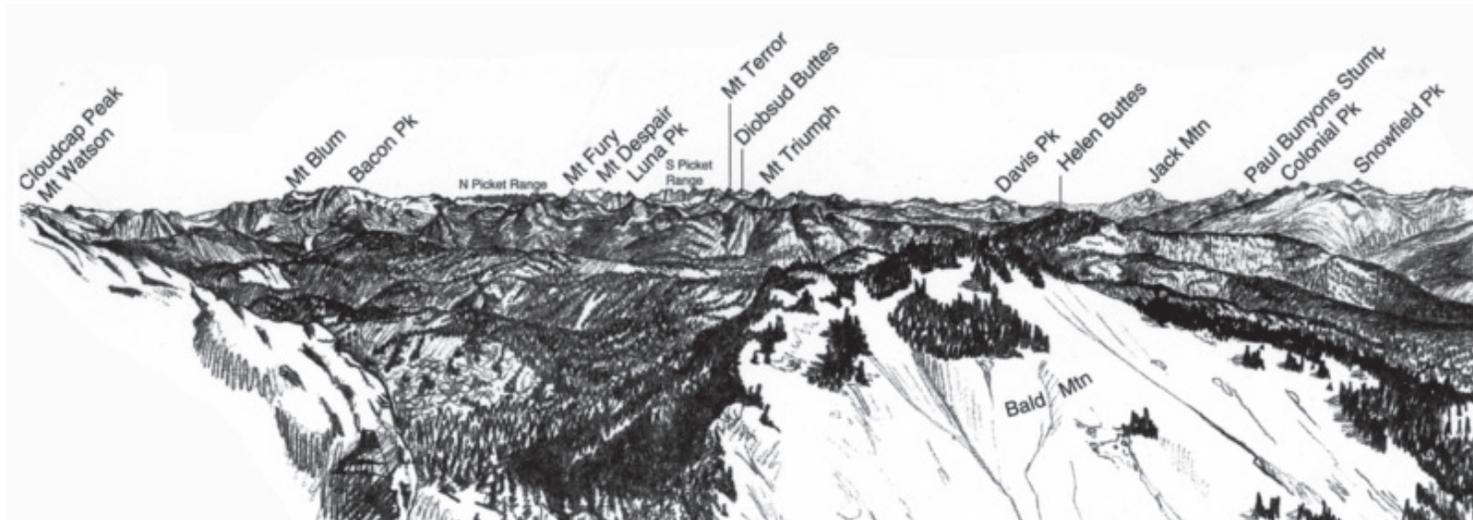
## Endangered Wildlife Threatened by Draft Legislation

— DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

Despite the overwhelming support of protections for endangered species by the majority of Americans, a powerful member of Congress has written draft legislation that would undermine the law that protects endangered animals from extinction. The proposal, penned by Rep. Richard Pombo (R-California), would undermine the Endangered Species Act and punch loopholes in the law for the benefit of oil, timber and mining companies and real estate developers. Visit [www.saveesa.org](http://www.saveesa.org) to learn more about how you can join the fight to save rare creatures from the finality of extinction.

## Nationwide Alliance Kicks Off Campaign to Save Arctic Refuge

It’s crucial that the public realize that the fight to save the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska from oil and gas drilling is not over. With that in mind, a broad coalition of religious, conservation and other organizations, including Defenders, recently launched “Arctic Refuge Action”—a summer-long national grassroots and media campaign to save the refuge. The final vote in Congress that will decide the fate of the refuge will likely be in September. Please visit [www.savearcticrefuge.org](http://www.savearcticrefuge.org) to keep updated on the events of the campaign and to take action to save one of America’s last and greatest truly wild places.



Looking northeast from Sauk Mountain at high peaks, mostly in North Cascades National Park.

*Geology of the North Cascades; A Mountain Mosaic*

Rowland Tabor and Ralph Haugerud, drawings by Anne Crowder. The Mountaineers, 1999, 2002

**J**ohn [Dyer] has been reading it and I have gone through it. This story of the geology of the North Cascades in Section I, and in Section II the “Geologic Notes for Points of Interest” describe where to see (hike to) areas for particular types of geologic sites and rocks, etc. Makes me wish I was getting out into the hills.

The section with maps and color photos, in addition to black and white drawings throughout, makes it most understandable.

— POLLY DYER

*NCCC board member and wife of John, who led some of the toughest pitches on the first ascent of Shiprock, with Dave Brower*

**R**owland and I were members of the committee of editors that produced the first edition of *Freedom of the Hills*, 1960. He was among the disciples of Peter Misch who worked under the master to puzzle out the mysteries beneath the greenery and whiteness of the North Cascades.

In 1963 the Literary Fund Committee of The Mountaineers was proud to publish by him and the late Dwight Crowder a book that in my personal judgment is the “deepest” hiking guide ever done — *Routes and Rocks: Hiker’s Guide to the North Cascades from Glacier Peak to Lake Chelan*.

I say “is.” The correct verb is “was.” Its intention was to bring public attention to the heart of the national park proposal by the North Cascades Conservation Council etc. The Forest Service, though unable to kill our park was able to get Senator Jackson & Company to help them pull the “cowbird trick,” which is to kick some other bird’s egg out of the nest and substitute its own.

This by no means dimmed the luster of *Routes and Rocks*. Yet the very qualities that made it so beloved were all too successful in attracting boots. One year I was driving home from the hills, spotted a youth hitchhiking, picked him up, learned that he was a guide for something called “Outward Bound.” This com-

mercial enterprise was in process of casting its “adventure” web over the whole financially exploitable world, including the North Cascades. The hitchhiker showed me the manual issued him by The Company. Yes, none other than *R&R*.

Alerted to what we had done, we put the beauty out of print. Too late. Outward Bound cranked up its photocopy machines and (illegally, I might add) re-published the book. Examine its current schedule. Compare to *R&R*. The language of their brochure, details of their trips. . . .

Thus the birth of our awareness of a threat to “deepness” that has emerged as comparable to the trail motorcycle.

Happily, Rowland has given us a new book that embodies much of the best in the old — we are pleased, too, that the memory of his old partner Dwight lives on in the drawings by his daughter.

— H.M.

# Major Geological Events and Maps in the North Cascades

## Geological Map of the Sauk River 30-by-60-Minute Quadrangle

by R.W. Tabor, D.B. Booth, J.A. Vance, and A.B. Ford  
U.S. Geological Survey,  
Geologic Investigations  
Series I-2592, 2002

## Geologic Map of the Mount Baker 30-by-60-Minute Quadrangle

by R. W. Tabor, R.A. Haugerud, Wes Hildreth, and E.H. Brown  
U.S. Geological Survey,  
Geologic Investigations  
Series, I-2660, 2003



View south from Spider Mountain to Le Conte Glacier spilling down off Old Guard and Sentinel Peaks.

If you've got a vacancy on your living room wall of 3-1/2 x 4 feet, you can spend many happy days studying the breathtaking many-colored map of the Sauk Quad: the mélange blocks west and east of the Straight Creek Fault, the mafic amphibolite and intrusives of the Dead Duck pluton.

If you have two such vacancies, you can further astonish and enrapture your guests with the map of the Mount Baker Quad: the Northwest Cascade System, the Easton Metamorphic Suite, the Chilliwack Group, the Oligocene tonalite of the Chilliwack batholith.

Each map has an explanatory pamphlet that could be dangled by a string for easy reference.

The Sauk Quad pamphlet has as epigraph a passage from *The Hollow Hills*, Mary Stewart, 1973:

But lower, in every dip and valley, the forest is dense, of trees crowded and hugely grown, impassable with undergrowth as tightly woven as a fisherman's net. Here and there, unnoticed until you tumble across them, are crags and bouldered screes of rock thickly clothed with thorn and creeper, invisible and deadly as a wolf trap.

## Membership Application

Be part of the North Cascades Conservation Council's Advocacy of the North Cascades. Join the NCCC. Support the North Cascades Foundation. Help us help protect North Cascades wilderness from overuse and development.

NCCC membership dues (one year): \$10 low income/student; \$20 regular; \$25 family; \$50 Contributing; \$100 patron; \$1,000 sustaining. A one-time life membership dues payment is \$500. *The Wild Cascades*, published three times a year, is included with NCCC membership.

Please check the appropriate box(es):

I want to join the NCCC

**The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC)**, formed in 1957, works through legislative, legal and public channels to protect the lands, waters, plants and wildlife of the North Cascades ecosystem. Non-tax-deductible, it is supported by dues and donations. A 501(c)4 organization.

I wish to support NCF

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

This is a  NCCC Membership  NCCC Renewal Membership  Gift NCCC \$ \_\_\_\_\_

This is a  Donation to NCF NCF \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut, enclose  
check and mail form  
and check to:

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**NORTH CASCAD** Name \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSERVATION COUNCIL** Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Chair** City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**L. Zalesky** Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**2433 Del Campo Dr.** Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
**Everett, WA 98208**

# Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Photo Exhibit

Burke Museum, Seattle — through December 2005



The Burke Museum in Seattle is presenting the photo exhibit Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: *Seasons of Life and Land*, by Subhankar Banerjee.

The exhibit, which created such a controversy at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., is presented here with the original titles restored.

The exhibit will run through December 31, 2005. There will be a series of presentations by some of the book's authors, as well as lectures on monthly themes of arctic animals, native cultures, migrations, energy and climate change.

The program schedule is available at [www.washington.edu/burkemuseum](http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum).

*Scenes from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Above: An arctic fox on the coast, right by the ocean where Bush wants to drill.*

*Right: Kongakut River.*

— JONATHAN ROSENBLUM



## THE WILD CASCADES

*Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council*

Post Office Box 95980

University Station

Seattle, Washington 98145-2980

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

SEATTLE, WA

PERMIT No. 8602