
THE WILD CASCADES

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

SUMMER/FALL 2002



*Sitka valerian in Eldorado Basin, Cascade Pass and Johannesburg Mountain in background
— Photo by KEVIN GERAGHTY*

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The Wild Cascades

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council

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

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

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.



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Founded in 1957
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The President's Report

Summer/Fall 2002

Years ago, the suppression of every wildfire bigger than a flame-up in your skillet was considered a holy act. When certain communist-inspired conservationists pointed out that, perhaps, fires in the Wilderness might be allowed to burn — the Forest Service was aghast. Subsequently, many of the federal forest-fighting agencies got religion and began touting how clever they were to let some wildland fires burn. This lasted of course until the allegedly catastrophic fire in Yellowstone National Park in 1988. Since then, there has been a confusing or at least inconsistent number of policies about when and where to suppress wildfires. And since being proactive is a virtue, many prescribed burns have been performed around the country. There are many good and bad reasons for these but they are now considered by many experts to be the best way to restore more natural conditions in our forests. There are more than a few opinions on whether this is correct. Even more to the point, what is “natural”?

In any event, it has now been proposed that prescribed burns in both true and in candidate Wilderness areas might be a way of outdoing Mother Nature. Someone tell me, am I being paranoid again or is this yet one more fundamental misunderstanding of the Wilderness Act? I see two situations which need to be debated: Wilderness fires that are fairly close to “civilization” and Wilderness fires that are truly out in the middle of nowhere. While I tend to be less than sympathetic with those who have built their summer cabins and homes in the forest adjacent to our Wilderness areas, I understand that there is not a lot of support to let them suffer the consequences of living in a wildfire zone. On the other hand, perhaps a huge fire in the true wilderness from time to time is a more natural act than a number of scientifically designed burns with an unclear goal.

Let those of us who, from time to time, review the Fire Management plans of public agencies keep in mind what Wilderness is about.

STEHEKIN

Park Plans Manipulation of Stehekin River

Carolyn McConnell

The Stehekin Valley is deep and narrow, sheer cliff walls descending to a bending strip of river plain barely a mile wide. That tiny bit of flat land is, of course, the river's course. It's also the Stehekin Road's course, and since the road stays put and the river doesn't, inevitably the two run into each other every few years in one place or another. Short of channelizing and destroying this wild river—the valley's life force—anyone maintaining the road has got to accept that fact.

The Park Service does not. While the NPS likes to trumpet its new, scientific methods of manipulating river flow—no more rip rap, it's "barbs" now—it still comes down to pushing the river around. In the eleven miles of lower river, there are now ten Park-placed barbs to protect the road, plus five permitted private barbs (that's not counting the many private, illegal logs, rip-rap and so on). This fall, the Park plans another river manipulation.

The river is threatening a stretch of road about six miles upvalley from the Lake Chelan. It is also threatening private homes in an area called McGregor Meadows (anyone who pays attention knows that river-front meadow is once-and-future river bottom), although the Park denies that it has any motive other than protecting the road.

The Stehekin River is a candidate for Wild and Scenic status and lies entirely within the North Cascades National Park Complex, all but about nine of it within official wilderness. The Park therefore has no business degrading this spectacular river at large taxpayer cost to allow a tiny number of vehicles to travel closer to the road's dead-end. The river is bound to threaten the road again, and unless the Park changes course, the number of intrusions into the river will only grow. It is time that the Park, in keeping with its mandate, adopted the principle that it will not manipulate the river.

Nor is the only solution abandoning the road although that is an option the Park should consider in the long term. The road could be shifted away from the river.

Indeed, there is an historic roadbed on bluffs just above the current road. Given the logic of federal road funds, getting approval and funding for this project would require leadership and ingenuity. Elsewhere in the National Parks system, Park administrators have shown such leadership. It is time those in Stehekin did too.

Please write Superintendent Paleck urging him to reconsider his plans. Ask to be placed on the mailing list for the

Environmental Assessment, due to begin late this summer.

In other Stehekin news, the eagerness of WeavTech to install private phone service in the valley seems to have waned. At a meeting in February, many residents expressed distaste for the project and the transformation it would bring to this isolated community. So it must have been galling to the company when WeavTech was presented with a bill for the meeting costs and told by the Park Service that it would have to foot the bill for the cost of an Environmental Assessment—about \$15,000-20,000—or, worse, an Environmental Impact Statement. This may be why the Park Service has heard nothing more from the company on the project. Facing a steepening price tag and opposition from the very customers it hopes to attract, Weavtech may be reconsidering. Too, word in Stehekin is that the bank WeavTech was seeking financing from may have soured on the project as well — perhaps in response to the community resistance.

Kudos to the community and to the Park Service for appropriately requiring WeavTech to pay its share of the public

FEE DEMO

CHARTER FORESTS

The passage of permanent Fee-Demo authorization, coupled with authorization of a "Charter Forest Pilot Demonstration Program" have been recently listed by Undersecretary of Natural Resources and Environment Mark Rey, former vice president of the National Forest Products Association, as among President Bush's highest priorities for the Forest Service.

Terry Anderson, Bush's public lands policy advisor, frankly admits that private

charter forests can only work when coupled with Fee-Demo.

Not to go into lurid details of the scheme, the public, insofar as it has heard a word on the subject, has a right to be confused, since an advocate for charters is Randal O'Toole, an economist who made something of a reputation as an environmentalist by his critique of the Forest Service, but has since signed on with the Thoreau Institute in Oregon — which is

why Henry is spinning in his grave, since this is a regional think tank of the (national) Cato species.

To simplify, Michael Anderson of the Wilderness Society in Seattle has asked,

"Are you comfortable having the local Boise Cascade sawmill manager make decisions on whether to log your favorite national forest?"

Cut away the brush and that's what a charter forest does.

It Can Happen Here!

PRIVATIZATION OF PARKS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver Sun

Yvonne Zacharias,
Wednesday, July 31, 2002

A leaked government document obtained by the Valhalla Wilderness Society indicates the province is planning a major withdrawal from the parks system by the year 2004 while paving the way for more involvement by the private sector.

While the details are sketchy, park rangers and supervision in campsites will be a thing of the past if the government carries through on the plan. With the removal of subsidies, campsite fees are sure to rise by April of next year. Facility maintenance by the government would cease by April of 2004. Private business would be invited in to parks and other protected areas.

Dated Feb. 19 of this year, the brief document entitled "stop doing protected areas" is described as section work plans oemetable:

— By April 1, 2003, there would be no park rangers in front-country areas like campsites and picnic areas. Subsidies for recreation use would cease.

Private businesses would be allowed to carry out "low-risk" commercial activities without a park permit.

— By April 1, 2004, government-funded facility maintenance or capital improvements and direct "regular" supervision would cease in front-country parks.

A second section in the planning document, entitled "priorities for protected areas," calls for a "new governance model," a transfer of protected areas like parks to Parks Canada and local administration, increased commercial recreation opportunities and a volunteer-stewardship strategy.

"This is basically a total pull-out of the government involvement in parks," Sarah Pugh, director of the environmental group, said in an interview. "Wilderness preservation is out of the question with a model like this."

The document lists the first round of cuts, which were to be implemented by April of this year. Most of those cuts, including free firewood, school programs, govern-

ment-funded interpretive programs and park brochures, were carried out.

In a news release, the Valhalla Wilderness Society decried the plan. It says much of the province's backwoods beauty will be inaccessible or accessible only to those who can pay a fee. It predicts users of trails will either have to maintain them themselves or pay to use them, and people will now have to pay to use picnic sites.

It is particularly concerned with the government's plan to discontinue the requirement of permits for low-risk commercial activities. "We are wondering what low-risk means," said Pugh. With no requirement for permits, she expressed concern over degradation of the environment.

As for the over-all government plan, "we've been watching this and expecting some move in this direction, but this is more than we had ever imagined," Pugh said.

Liz Bicknell, director of communications at the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, confirmed the existence of the document, but she said it is only a plan and no final decisions will be made until a government-appointed recreation stewardship panel reports sometime toward the end of this year.

She said, however, that the document reflects a government plan to make recreation pay for itself and to come up with a new way of doing things.

The past NDP administration doubled the size of the park system but did not put the money in place to maintain it, she said. "The status quo is no longer possible."

But "the government recognizes we have a jewel here and it has no intention of jeopardizing that."

The leaked document comes at a time when the government is already besieged with complaints that it is no longer maintaining recreation areas on Crown forestry lands.

Golden Mayor Walter (Red) Scott said, "It is a huge concern for us. In the rural area, we have a lot of people who

come here to live for the quality of life. As for the tourists, we are advertising ourselves as supernatural B.C., yet we don't have a good recreational site for them to go to."

A document prepared by the Golden economic development office provides details of the deterioration.

"Sites and trails are being destroyed through decay, over-use or blatant vandalism, while unmanaged [or unpoliced] activity has created situations of lawlessness in the backcountry," the document says. "Awareness is already spreading amongst travelers and tourists that British Columbia's famous wilderness is no longer a safe clean destination but is now to be avoided."

Tourists visiting travel information centres are being told that "the backcountry they came to visit is either inaccessible, repugnant or unsafe."

In a document sent to [The Vancouver Sun](#), a group calling itself the Coalition to Save Forest Recreation in British Columbia which was started in Cranbrook in June, outlined its concerns over government cuts to forest recreation services in B.C.

"Asking volunteers to manage the entire resource of Crown land used for recreation is unrealistic," it said. "Most non-profit organizations in rural communities cannot carry the burden of insurance and management of sites and community groups cannot handle the enforcement issues that are already becoming a big problem."

Pugh said that turning the maintenance and operation of parks and wilderness areas over to community groups is the wrong way to go.

These groups, however well-intentioned, often don't have the skills or ecological knowledge to do the job, she said. "Government parks are public property. This is a government mandate. You can't just cast it off like that."

British Columbia Provincial Government Trying to Privatize Parks — Wilderness Organizations Fight Back

A Declaration on the Principles of Parks Valhalla Wilderness Society Parks Campaign

At the turn of the previous century, as a result of massive environmental destruction, there emerged a common vision that spread across North America. People envisioned areas where nature would be preserved intact. They recognized that the future of life on the planet depended upon maintaining the healthy functioning of ecosystems.

They also saw that parks would fill a critical need for sanctuaries where the human spirit could renew itself. There, uninjured by industrial inroads, or the intrusions of entrepreneurial- or entertainment-based uses, people could experience the wholeness of nature. Maintaining this opportunity is critical for the future sanity of our civilization. To a society increasingly riddled with fragmenting alienation and cynical exploitation of one another, nature left undivided teaches harmony and unity by the experience, itself.

Realizing this vision required every park creation to be tediously weighed against the interests of private exploitation. The people of BC repeatedly chose to set parks aside, to be held in trust for present and future generations. In order for this to be so, it is necessary for parks to be supported by our tax dollars, since private investment in our parks would necessarily bring private influence and control.

To ensure that parks could be maintained in perpetuity, the BC government legislated the Park Act. It was written to withstand the pressures of private exploitation under whatever forms it might take. The Park Act created the parks ministry as a central agency that would remain stable in spite of the whims of the ever-changing political administrations of government. This institutional stability made BC Parks, itself, a part of our heritage as a society.

Since then, polls, planning processes and even blockades have continuously

confirmed the profound determination of British Columbians to hold sacred the areas protected under the Park Act.

Now we are told that parks are no longer a proper use of tax dollars. We are told that parks are a drain on the public purse and must be made to “pay for themselves” by selling nature to “clients.”

And the winds of change bring rumours that the BC Park Act is being rewritten to conform to these mercenary goals. Already, the ministry responsible for parks has had drastic cuts to funding and the dismissal of hundreds of experienced staff representing the capability of our society to protect the environment.

In answer to this crisis we, the undersigned, wish all to know that these changes would, if implemented, represent the deepest betrayal of the public trust. We insist that the BC government immediately undertake to reverse these trends and commit itself to uphold the spirit and intent of our park system, which is defined in the following principles.

1. Parks are an inalienable public good to be protected under the Park Act in perpetuity.

These areas must not be sold, commercialized or privatized. (Final Report of the Park Legacy Project, 1999)

2. The BC Park Act must remain inviolate.

If parks are to be preserved in perpetuity, the protective legislation must remain stable as governments change. It is clearly the strengths of the Park Act, not its weaknesses, that are targeted for change. It is time for all friends of parks to stand behind those strengths and let them protect our interest, rather than subject them to the risk of being gutted.

3. The Park Act directs the government alone to manage and maintain parks.

There is no excuse for private interest control, long-term legal rights or self-monitoring of private operations.

The Park Act specifies that the minister responsible for parks shall “manage and administer all matters concerning

parks, including the preservation, development, use and maintenance of parks, as well as the regulation and control of public and private individuals in the use or exploitation of parks, and of human activities, behaviour and conduct in or on parks and recreation areas.”

4. The government has a duty to maintain a civil service with sufficient staff and funding to manage every aspect of the park system. This requires adequate tax dollars.

5. The Park Act gives BC Parks a dual mandate to manage for preservation and recreation. Both these mandates must be maintained. The protection of ecosystems, landscapes and wildlife must take priority over recreation. (A guiding principle recommended by the Park Legacy Project.) Recreation can degrade natural values. The dual mandates are compatible only when recreation does not significantly harm natural features. The recreation that is appropriate in parks is low-impact activities based upon preserving a natural environment and a natural visitor experience for everyone.

6. The economic values of parks are those which flow naturally from supporting parks with tax dollars and making the preservation and enjoyment of nature the top priority. These benefits are large.

The Park Act does not and should not give the government a mandate to manage parks to benefit commercial enterprise or the economy of the province. The economic return on parks should not be measured by what is taken in inside the boundaries, but by the revenues and other benefits generated outside the boundaries. Campgrounds are high-impact facilities and fees are necessary. But our park system must not be in the business of selling the experience of nature. Parks embody the essential benefits of survival, health and quality of life that flow from nature and should be free to all people.

7. There must be no industrial use in parks. Commercial recreational development should be located outside park boundaries.

8. Long-term contracts for private enterprise, based upon park land, services, or

infrastructure, must not be allowed.

9. Wilderness is an essential value of parks. There should be legislated Wilderness Areas in all BC parks that contain wilderness. The Panel on Ecological Integrity has recommended the same for Canada's national parks. Wilderness is rapidly diminishing in BC and should be a top priority of park management.

Wilderness combines the ecological, recreational and spiritual values of parks. It epitomizes the wholeness in nature that people are seeking. The Parks Branch should manage wilderness to preserve the intangible values that have great importance to many people. Such values include remoteness, absolute naturalness, natural quiet, natural means of access, and opportunities for solitude. Wilderness is not valued just by the millions of people who travel in it. It is also enjoyed and appreciated by people who view its scenery and who treasure the wildlife whose homes are in the wilderness.

10. Park management must be kept free of conflict of interest.

Protecting parks requires independent decision-makers who are not under the influence of the need or the opportunity to exploit parks for economic return. Corporate sponsorship will bring just such conflicts into our park system, and must be avoided. The concept of "making parks pay for themselves," that is, using park facilities and natural assets to recover the costs of management, would permeate our park system with conflict of interest. Those in the position to make decisions between money-making and protecting ecological integrity would be dependent upon money-making for their jobs and salaries. This is totally unacceptable.

11. Our parks fill a universal need for physical and spiritual health which is shared by all cultures. We must find ways of working with First Nations to ensure these needs can be met.

For more information contact:

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(NCCC supports the Declaration.)

COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE WILDERNESS DEEPS

HARVEY MANNING

An afternoon the middle of the last century, while in the closet (the Co-op retail store in Adam Mayer's office) picking up Sailor Boy and Wylers and MPF for a semi-expedition, my eye was caught by a card tacked to the wall, offering to guide parties up peaks of the Cascades and Olympics. Fred Beckey (that's who it was) had been hired by "Harvards" the previous summer to show them around Mt. Waddington and evidently was thus encouraged to take a stab at being a fulltime mountain bum. It was not to be. Easterners who came West headed straight for The Mountain (as the English of a past era had for Blanc), and were hauled up by the likes of Jim and Lou Whittaker, larking lads who partied away the summer on glaciers by day, the Paradise Guide Hut by night, and in September returned dutifully to school or honest toil. We "Khaki Gang" locals in war-surplus parkas and boots and goggles, feather bags and liferaft sails, were too poor to hire peasants, being peasants ourselves.

A day nearing the three-quarter mark of the last century, driving home from Lake Chelan, I stopped for a hitchhiker. To my amazement he was a summer bum, guiding for Outward Bound. By century's end I never went on semi-expedition to (formerly) lonesome backcountry without encountering a lockstep line of "twelve heartbeats" in scarlet gaiters and yellow helmets, on the march through the North Cascades, "Hi ho, hi ho, it's Outward Bound we go."

Recently I was stimulated to a bit of supplementary investigation by letter. Several Forest Service offices supplied masses of official papers. What lies ahead in our Wilderness is clearly foreshadowed.

Commercial use-days (customer days) in the report area of the Okanogan office — alone — rose from 760 in 1976, the period when I picked up the hitchhiker, to 12,732 in 1999.

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Wenatchee-Okanogan National Forests currently issue some 100 commercial permits for outfitters-guides in the Glacier Peak, Henry M. Jackson, Boulder River, Mt. Baker, Sawtooth and Pasayten Wildernesses and vicinities. Hiking, climbing, skiing,

Snowboarding, dogsledding, wagon and sleigh riding, bicycling, snowmobiling, hunting, helicoptering. Horses, mules, donkeys, llamas, goats, and dogs. "Drop camps," packtrain-supplied summer-long supermarkets that allow hikers lengthy stays on the trail carrying little more than rucksack loads.

Rock climbing is offered (in summer!) by so many entrepreneurs in Tumwater Canyon, Icicle River, and Fun Rocks that a lottery is held to allocate space fairly.

Volcanoes are the bread and butter. Glacier and Baker (and with it, Shuksan) are on most menus. (Base Camp is the bargain, \$75 a volcano.)

For purposes of analysis I have separated into three categories the permits for foot travel on and off trails.

Edge Wilderness

A third or so of the permits are for foot travel, with or without animal support in packtrains or drop camps. Most of these are for day-hiking and short backpacks near highways. Snoqualmie Pass, Washington Pass, Monte Cristo, Icicle Creek.

This edge use gives short legs and gimps, young and old, the well-off visitor from afar and the poor local from the neighborhood a wilderness opportunity, albeit next to no solitude. The very young can on these walks be green-bonded, perhaps made life-long defenders and advocates. The concentrated impact close to highways spares the pristinity of the deeps. All to the good.

Not in every case. Some wilderness edges and bordering lands in multiple-use have begun to stink like barns. Packtrains and day-riders from permanent camps-corrals. (For decades horses have been banned from one super-popular edge, the Enchantments.)

Arterial Wilderness

Major arterials extend from edges into deeps. Examples are the Boundary Trail across the Pasayten Wilderness, the Summit Trail above Lake Chelan, and the Holden-Agnes Creek-Stehekin "loop." It is a very fine thing that people who cannot carry a pack for a week at a go are enabled to

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COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE WILDERNESS DEEPS

Continued from page 7

experience the deeps. Unfortunately, the animal support is becoming so heavy that the experience for backpacker pedestrians is seriously degraded. That might be justified. But not the economic restriction of the opportunity to the well-to-do. Animal-supported arterial wilderness is not possible for the poor. I hate that. "Money money money makes the world go round."

When the tourist industry and horsepacking industry and chambers of commerce and fanatic Forest Service multiple-users conned Congress (during the "guns and butter" period) into blasting (mucho, mucho dynamite, ruthless trashing of ecosystems and geography) the Pacific Crest National Scenic Freeway through wilderness cores of the Cascade Crest, I was irate. But Nature squelched the engineers' hubris and showed up the Forest Service as ninies. Snowmelt torrents that would sweep away horses and riders. Cliffs for them to fall off. Summer-long snowfields, steep. The pedestrian experience from Snoqualmie Pass to Stevens Pass therefore can be very good. Because — here is the irony — the Forest Service ran out of money. Poverty, where is thy sting? (In the 1930s the head of the National Park Service, accused of abusing the natural scene, told Congress, "I can do no harm. I have no money.")

Hordes do throng from across America to this arterial. Well, why not? It's their Alpine Lakes Wilderness too, not ours alone. Few stray from the freeway. Solitude camps are readily found up obscure alleys. I'm as much solitude hog as any of my ancient generation. But the humanist in me rejoices when a Kansan accosts me on the trail, burbling "I saw a marmot! It whistled at me!" A woman from my home town (one year only) in Massachusetts virtually burst into song in telling that she had for the first time in her life seen John Muir's favorite bird, the dipper. Folks like this deserve a few arterials. As for pack animals, I hold my tongue.

Deep Wilderness

The population of America, and thus the trails, has risen beyond sanity. If there is to be in future a true wilderness experience of the olden kind, the laissez faire of the frontier must be curtailed. Here as in the stock market, Adam Smith's Invisible Hand is all thumbs. Steps must be taken to preserve whatever degree of pristinity remains in the spiritual center of wilderness, the deeps.

When the phrase, "aristocracy of the physically fit" is yapped, inform the yapper that our greatest wilderness-minded president, FDR, was his whole adult life in a wheelchair. Looking into wilderness from the edge is a wilderness experience. So is knowing it is there.

Green-bonding on the edges serves as a kindergarten. The student-hiker may progress through elementary school to secondary, ultimately by years of apprenticeship to earn the "freedom of the hills." As more and more beginners advance to the deeps, restrictions there are inevitable. The very first of these is the absolute exclusion of commercial exploitation from the deeps. Freedom cannot be — must not be — put up for sale. "If this be treason, make the most of it."

See the sidebar. Steam leaks from my ears when the jet from New Jersey lands in Seattle, juvenile delinquents march away on the tarmac in scarlet gaiters and yellow helmets, "Hi ho, hi ho" to the Ptarmigan Traverse.

The national forests are preparing to do an Environmental Assessment before granting 5-year renewals of outfitter-guide permits.

Will an EA do the job? Ought it not better be an EIS?

PRINCIPAL COMMERCIALIZERS OF WILDERNESS DEEPS IN NATIONAL FORESTS OF THE NORTH CASCADES

Mountain Madness keeps mainly to volcanoes and edges. It is mentioned here because of the Everest notoriety. In 1997 the owner, Scott Fischer, and eight others perished spectacularly in one of the bestselling bloodlettings of mountain history. His successor was preparing for K-2 in 2002 as others in her firm guided a foursome up Everest, among the 54 who "summitted" in the largest single-day mob to date.

Alpine Ascents International, founded in Nevada in 1986, incorporated in Washington in 1990, also had an Everest publicity heyday when its 2002 American South Col Expedition put 24 heartbeats on top. Its North Cascades Mountaineering School is said by them to be "the most comprehensive in the industry." (I was struck by their use of the term "industry".) The firm advertises 30 expeditions and 50 training courses ("annually") in 14 nations. That is industrious.

Most of its North Cascades industry is volcanoes and edges and highway-side rock climbing. It does offer Torment, Forbidden, and Eldorado and boasts that it features "pristine, less populated environments," obliquely pointing a finger at some of those others.

Operations are continuous through the summer, a 6-day trip for \$970, a 13-day for \$2,100. They'll take you up Shuksan for \$528.

American Alpine Institute is vague about where it came from and when (the 1980s?) The brochure is mainly about Glacier-Baker-Shuksan and such edges as Monte Cristo, Whitehorse, Sloan, Stuart. Tenpeak and Maude are samples of their deeps. My interest

was piqued by noting the Ptarmigan Traverse on their list. However, a recent annual report shows just one trip, with one customer. How many guides did he (she?) have? Porters? What fee? Was he (she?) given the whole (the Real) Traverse? More likely the usual quickie (the Fake).

National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) was founded in Lander, Wyoming in 1965 by (or at least under the name of) the colorful "Cowboy Climber," Paul Petzoldt, who used to wear his cowboy boots while hauling Eastern dudes up the Grand Teton and in the 1930s was hired by them for a fiasco on K-2. This is very big business. They have avalanched my desk with expensive magazines and catalogs and brochures describing the business done from operations bases in Alaska, Yukon, Pacific Northwest, Rockies, Tetons, Southwest, Mexico, Patagonia, India, East Africa.

In the North Cascades, volcanoes of course. Rock-climbing in Tumwater Canyon and on Fun Rock. Comprehensive all-everywhere "classes" on Snowking, Eldorado, Buckindy, Cathedral, Daniel, Bonanza, Devils Dome, Three Fools, Ice Lakes, Egg Lake, Napeequa, you have it, they got it. Yes! The Ptarmigan Traverse!

"Courses" consist of seven overlapping 4-weekers from June 7 to September 1. "Tuition" for each is \$3,000, not counting equipment rentals and jet fare from New Jersey. The North Cascades "school" prepares you for Denali (\$4,500) and Waddington (\$3,500). These prices include ski plane or helicopter to the roping-up places.

Outward Bound (OB) was founded in emulation of Lord Baden Powell's Boy Scouts, whose planned fate was to serve on the veldt in the next Boer War. A World War II commando officer called upon the ruling class of the former British empire to shape up their soft young toffs in the tradition of Kipling's Kim, that they might be ready to storm ashore in Normandy. Hardships and dangers of oceans and cliffs were the ticket. Stiffen spines, mold souls, "make a man of yez." Translated overseas

to the United States, OB took on the role once played by military school, the uniforms replaced by scarlet gaiters and yellow helmets. Wealthy parents of rock-and-roll children, child psychiatrists who tried to straighten them out, and juvenile court judges who didn't like to send rich white kids to jail welcomed OB. Children felt that being a commando was a lot more cool than rubbing sticks together and geeking toward West Point, and much less cruel than a sentence to "boot camp."*

Outward Bound set up shop in the North Cascades by committing a criminal act. In 1964 we had published *Routes and Rocks* to publicize the then little-known heart of our proposed North Cascades National Park. Once the book had done its job of putting boots into the backcountry and we had the park, it was deemed that too many boots would not be good for the pristinity we had set out to preserve. The book therefore was sentenced to death.

But OB wouldn't let the book die. It was their blueprint for commercialization of the pristine. The very names given routes by Crowder and Tabor were adopted by catalogs to distinguish their various "training courses." R&R routes were so many pin peaks, collectibles. Photocopies were run off by the illegal thousands, never a by-your-leave or offer to pay royalties.

In contrast to NOLS, which has buried me in tons of costly paper, OB plays its cards close to the vest. Field offices of the Forest Service, otherwise very helpful, tell me I "Have to go to Portland." Region Six mistrusts me. At least one OB guide has joined the Okanogan rangers in covering up scandalous abuse of the Pasayten Wilderness. Come the EA (or the EIS?) we're going to have to flush the OB facts out of the bushes in Portland.

The firm operates non-stop through the summer. The "courses" are 14-21 days in length, with "expeditions" for the backbone, "solos" for the soul. Those earnest lads and lasses you see by the trail, scribbling furiously in journals, are soloists filling blue books for grading by the Grand Inquisitor, who will judge whether or not they're ready for Normandy.

The Forest Service considers information on OB rates confidential. Presumably they are competitive with NOLS. These are the two big businesses in the North Cascades deeps. A single reporting office, in Okanogan, has OB down in 2000 for 3,890 client-days. What, we wonder, is the total number of the whole range? That will take some detective work. We have heard there is a whole other operation in the North Cascades, based in British Columbia, "unknown" to the Forest Service.

**(In August of 2002, High Peaks Wilderness, based in Utah, was shut down by the Montana Department of Public Health when 11 teens enrolled in a "wilderness therapy" program for troubled youth had to be rescued, cold and dirty and hungry, from a camp near Butte.)*

WE SEE BY THE PAPERS

Pasayten Encounter Noted

In "Signpost" section, Backpacker Magazine, August 2002, the Pasayten Report researcher, Martha Hall, made the news:

"Stand by Your Land. Washington resident Martha Hall was recently ordered to stay away from horsepackers in the Pasayten Wilderness. Complaints were filed after the former schoolteacher was found photographing and documenting destruction caused by commercial horsepackers in the designated wilderness."

North Cascades Conservation Council Board Meeting, North Cascades National Park Complex, May 20, 2002

Highlights of the informational meeting with Superintendent Dalecki:

— Stehekin Land Exchange

An appraisal would be performed on the possible upcoming Stehekin land exchange prior to an Environmental Assessment. The five-acre property in question is straddling the Stehekin River. The National Park Service will require restrictions on property uses.

— Drug smuggling within park boundaries

Drug smuggling across the border is a problem at Hozomeen (a Ross Lake access), Chilliwack River and Beaver Pass. A backpack of high-in-demand B.C. marijuana bud can bring several thousand dollars in California and thus encourages the smuggling. Park Service rangers seized 44 pounds of cocaine and arrested four individuals using the East Bank trail along Ross Lake to the North Cascades Highway. Other arrests have been made.

Dam security is of concern. There may be restrictions preventing the crossing Diablo and Ross dams by car. NPS budget problems and reassignment of staff to Washington, D.C. contribute to the present shortage of personnel.

— Skagit City Light Re-licensing Agreement

Seattle City Light may not be meeting the requirements of the new FERC re-

licensing agreement, including the licensing agreement to fund the establishment and operation of the Environmental Learning Center on the shore of Diablo reservoir. The contract for the construction of the Learning Center has been issued. Board members indicated that they would investigate and hopefully secure Seattle City Lights commitment to the Learning Center.

— Pacific Northwest Trail

The Secretary of Interior has officially designated the Pacific Northwest Trail. Brian Bowden, NPS Seattle office, is coordinator. The superintendent stated that NPS has no intention of building new trails within the North Cascades Complex for the PNT and will enforce its own standards within the Complex and the Stephen Mather Wilderness. The board raised questions about the route, habitat for animal and plant species being deleteriously affected, and concern for the small number of grizzly bears possibly in the region.

— Fire Management Plan in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area

Prescribed burns will be stepped up and some burns on the order of 10,000 acres may be undertaken. If the prescribed burning management employed is differ-

ent from that described in the General Management Plan, then an Environmental Assessment will be prepared.

— McGregor Meadows

As there is a need to protect McGregor Meadows from the Stehekin River threatening the road, an Environmental Assessment will be required. (See McConnell article, page 4, this issue.)

— Stehekin Paving Project

As described in the General Management Plan, a paving project to 9 Mile on the Stehekin Road is in the works. Between Harlequin Bridge and 9 Mile, the road would be paved and reduced to a single lane (12-14 feet wide) with pullouts. The road between 9 Mile and High Bridge would be maintained as a single-lane gravel road.

**For current information contact
the National Park Service
website through www.nps.gov
and choose the park you wish to
view.**

WE SEE BY THE PAPERS

Go! Go! Go! Before Arabia Runs Out of Oil

Commenting on the Bushy attitude toward wreckreation, Kirsten Brengel of the Wilderness Society was quoted in the New York Times, April 16

“They’re asking for extra studies to enable the higher-ups in D.C. to reverse

course on professional Park Service decisions. We’ve seen it in Yellowstone. The snowmobile and personal-watercraft industries have unprecedented access to this administration, and the administration is willing to reverse course on environmental decisions in order to benefit these industries.”

In the May 12 Seattle Times, Ron Judd, outdoor columnist, reported “snowmobiles roaring all the way up to St. Helens’ 8300-foot crater rim, making tracks where once only hardy hikers and climbers stood and stared with reverence into the gaping abyss. It’s become far from an oddity. Blasphemy? Maybe. Felony? Not even a misdemeanor.”

SNOWMOBILES TRESPASS ALPINE LAKES WILDERNESS

Snowmobile Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit and Blackpine Basin Hut EA

Jennifer Zbyszewski
Methow Valley Ranger District
Winthrop Office
24 W. Chewuch Road
Winthrop, WA 98862

Dear Jennifer:

These comments are submitted by North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) in response to the Snowmobile Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit and Blackpine Basin Hut EA.

NCCC agrees with and joins in the comments submitted by Susan Crampton of Methow Forest Watch. NCCC is very concerned about the environmental impacts of snowmobile use. Snowmobiles pollute the air and water, harass wildlife, and threaten public health and safety. Monitoring and recreation planning needs to be completed before there are any increases in snowmobile use.

Many of the routes are located very close to Wilderness boundaries, as is the Blackpine Hut. There have been increasing violations of Wilderness boundaries by snowmobiles, such as in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness in the Cle Elum District. Any permit should be subject to area closures outside Wilderness to reduce problems of Wilderness violations, and/or to reduce any other types of resource damage and/or user conflicts that may exist.

Any permit should also be subject to area closures in the event that the area is designated Wilderness by Congress. The existence of the permit should not be an impediment (financially, politically or otherwise) to Wilderness designation.

The EA uses an inaccurate, narrow view of what area is "affected" by snowmobiles. The "affected" area is not just the snow underneath the machines, but rather the much larger area over which the noise is heard and over which the pollution is dispersed.

Sincerely,

Karl Forsgaard, Board member,
NCCC

Cle Elum Ranger District Fines Snowmobilers

Three snowmobilers recently received \$250.00 tickets each for unlawful use of motorized vehicles in the Alpine Lake Wilderness area near Ingalls Lake, according to District Ranger Catherine Stephenson of the Cle Elum Ranger District. The Wilderness Act of 1964 prohibits the use of all motorized vehicles within the boundary of an area that has been designated wilderness.

"For the past several years the Cle Elum Ranger District, together with responsible volunteers, have been conducting educational and enforcement programs to prevent unlawful use of snowmobiles within the Alpine Lakes Wilderness boundaries" said Stephenson. She added that these efforts have included signing the wilderness boundary, providing information at sno-parks and trailheads, and making personal contacts with snowmobilers.

"Progress has been made, but there is evidence some snowmobilers are still riding in Wilderness" said Wilderness Ranger John Morrow. The Cle Elum Ranger District continues to enforce a zero tolerance policy for motorized wilderness incursions, according to Morrow. Riders in wilderness risk fines and snowmobile impoundment for all in the snowmobile party, Morrow concluded.

From the E-mail Chatroom: Snowmobile Trespass

News Item: Three snowmobilers recently received \$250 tickets each for unlawful use of motorized vehicles in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness near Ingalls Lake.

E-mail Chat:

— This is a "slap on the wrist" and not likely to deter future snowmobile trespass. In similar cases in Montana and Wyoming the fines have been more in the \$1,000 to \$2,500 range. Given the small chance of getting caught, the "thrill" of riding in wilderness and the amount of disposable income most of the snowmobile crowd seems to have, \$250 doesn't seem to cut it.

— In many states, wildlife poachers run the risk of having their vehicles,

rifles and other equipment confiscated if they're caught. These large fines are necessary because, like with snowmobile trespass, the chances of getting caught are very small. Severe penalties are the only deterrent in many cases. I think similar penalties are warranted for those who willfully ride their snowmachines in Wilderness.

— The issue of wilderness trespass does mirror the progression of educating the judicial system that had to take place regarding poaching. It took "direct" pressure toward in many cases) specific district attorneys from hunters and anglers to make the judicial system recognize that the public took wildlife offenses seriously. TIP (Turn in Poachers) programs and rewards offered by hunting groups, etc., are now widespread among states. In addition to property confiscation, loss of hunting privileges and fines, most poachers, especially habitual offenders, face jail time.

WE SEE BY THE PAPERS

That Noise You Hear Is the "Locals" in D.C.

Reacting to the Bushism that the locals in Montana want to run the national forests and parks, so they can snowmobile in Yellowstone and mudrun in the wilderness, the president of the Montana Wilderness Association, Ross Rodgers, made no bones about it in the April 11 New York Times: "Every public survey done here has shown that a strong majority of 'the locals' prefer quiet trails and natural landscape protected from motorized off-road vehicles. The administration claims to have a penchant for local control but really gives the motor vehicle industry the final say."

Wild Sky Wilderness:

United States Senate Bill S.2565

SKYKOMISH WILDERNESS UPDATE

RICK MCGUIRE

After much work, identical bills have been introduced in the House and Senate by Congressman Rick Larsen and Senator Patty Murray to designate 106,000 acres in the Skykomish Ranger District of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest as the "Wild Sky Wilderness." Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn has co-sponsored the legislation. A Senate hearing was held at the end of July, where even Senator Larry Craig of Idaho, not normally a Wilderness fan, expressed guarded support for the bill.

As finally introduced, the bill represents a number of compromises made by Murray and Larsen to address the concerns of various user groups and to broaden support for the bill. Conservationists initially proposed about 121,000 acres for protection. Lost in the 15,000 acres whittled away were Windy Ridge, near Stevens Pass, due to objections from snowmobilers, as well as some areas in the western Johnson Ridge area. A large acreage in the lower Salmon Creek area north of Index was excluded to accommodate the destructive "Sky Forks" timber sale. Another disappointment was the failure of the legislation to end float plane usage at Lake Isabel.

Continued on page 16

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2565

To enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River Valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2002

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River Valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Wild Sky Wilderness
5 Act of 2002".

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Americans cherish the continued existence
 2 of diverse wilderness ecosystems and wildlife found
 3 on their Federal lands and share a strong sense of
 4 moral responsibility to protect their wilderness herit-
 5 age as an enduring resource to cherish, protect, and
 6 bequeath undisturbed to future generations of Ameri-
 7 cans.

8 (2) The values an area of wilderness offer to
 9 this and future generations of Americans are greatly
 10 enhanced to the degree that the area is diverse in to-
 11 pography, elevation, life zones and ecosystems, and
 12 to the extent that it offers a wide range of outdoor
 13 recreational and educational opportunities accessible
 14 in all seasons of the year.

15 (3) Large blocks of wildlands embracing a wide
 16 range of ecosystems and topography, including low-
 17 elevation forests, have seldom remained undisturbed
 18 due to many decades of development.

19 (4) Certain wildlands on the western slope of
 20 the Cascade Range in the Skykomish River valley of
 21 the State of Washington offer an outstanding rep-
 22 resentation of the original character of the forested
 23 landscape, ranging from high alpine meadows and
 24 extremely rugged peaks to low-elevation mature and
 25 old-growth forests, including groves with some of the

1 largest and most spectacular trees in Washington,
 2 with diameters of eight feet and larger.

3 (5) These diverse, thickly forested mountain
 4 slopes and valleys of mature and old-growth trees in
 5 the Skykomish River valley harbor nearly the full
 6 complement of the original wildlife and fish species
 7 found by settlers of the 19th century, including
 8 mountain goats, bald eagles, black bear, pine
 9 marten, black-tailed deer, as well as rare and endan-
 10 gered wildlife such as northern spotted owls and gos-
 11 hawks, Chinook and Coho salmon, and steelhead and
 12 bull trout.

13 (6) An ecologically and topographically diverse
 14 wilderness area in the Skykomish River valley acces-
 15 sible in all seasons of the year will be enjoyable to
 16 users of various kinds, such as hikers, horse riders,
 17 hunters, anglers, and educational groups, but also to
 18 the many who cherish clean water and clean air, fish
 19 and wildlife (including endangered species such as
 20 wild salmon), and pristine mountain and riverside
 21 scenery.

22 (b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress hereby de-
 23 clares that it is the policy of the United States—

24 (1) to better serve the diverse wilderness and
 25 environmental education needs of the people of the

1 State of Washington and its burgeoning metropoli-
 2 tan regions by granting wilderness protection to cer-
 3 tain lower elevation wildlands in the Skykomish
 4 River valley of the State of Washington, and
 5 (2) to protect additional lands adjacent to the
 6 Henry M. Jackson Wilderness designated by the
 7 Washington Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law
 8 98-339), in further tribute to the ecologically en-
 9 lightened vision of the distinguished Senator from
 10 the State of Washington and former Chairman of
 11 the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Re-
 12 sources (formerly the Senate Interior and Insular
 13 Affairs Committee).

14 **SEC. 3. ADDITIONS TO THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRES-**
 15 **ERVATION SYSTEM.**

16 (a) **ADDITONS.**—The following Federal lands in the
 17 State of Washington are hereby designated as wilderness
 18 and, therefore, as components of the National Wilderness
 19 Preservation System: (certain lands which compromise ap-
 20 proximately 106,000 acres, as generally depicted on a map
 21 entitled “Wild Sky Wilderness Proposal”, dated May
 22 2002, which shall be known as the Wild Sky Wilderness.
 23 (b) **MAPS AND LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.**— As soon as
 24 practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the
 25 Secretary of Agriculture shall file a map and a legal de-

1 scription for the wilderness area designated under this Act
 2 with the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of
 3 the United States Senate and the Committee on Resources
 4 of the United States House of Representatives. The map
 5 and description shall have the same force and effect as
 6 if included in this Act, except that the Secretary of Agri-
 7 culture may correct clerical and typographical errors in
 8 the legal description and map. The map and legal descrip-
 9 tion shall be on file and available for public inspection in
 10 the office of the Chief of the Forest Service, Department
 11 of Agriculture.

12 **SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.**

13 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to valid existing rights,
 14 lands designated as wilderness by this Act shall be man-
 15 aged by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with
 16 the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this Act,
 17 except that, with respect to any wilderness areas des-
 18 ignated by this Act, any reference in the Wilderness Act
 19 to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed
 20 to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act.
 21 (b) **NEW TRAILS.**—
 22 (1) The Secretary of Agriculture shall consult
 23 with interested parties and shall establish a hiking
 24 trail plan designed to develop a system of hiking
 25 trails within or adjacent to or to provide access to

1 the wilderness designated by this Act in a manner
2 consistent with the Wilderness Act, Public Law 88-
3 577 (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

4 (2) Within two years after the date of enact-
5 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall
6 complete a report on the implementation of the hik-
7 ing trail plan required under this Act. This report
8 shall include the identification of priority hiking
9 trails for development.

10 (c) REPEATER SITE.—Within the Wild Sky Wilder-
11 ness, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to use heli-
12 copter access to construct and maintain, in a manner com-
13 patible with the preservation of the wilderness environ-
14 ment, a Forest Service communication repeater site to
15 provide improved communication for safety and health
16 purposes.

17 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION FOR LAND ACQUISITION.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture is
19 authorized to acquire lands and interests therein, by pur-
20 chase, donation, or exchange, identified as “Priority Ac-
21 quisition Lands” on the map entitled “Wild Sky Wilder-
22 ness Proposal”, dated May 2002. The boundaries of the
23 Snoqualmie National Forest and the Wild Sky Wilderness
24 shall be adjusted to encompass any land acquired pursu-
25 ant to this section.

1 (b) ACCESS.—Consistent with section 5(a) of the Wil-
2 derness Act (Public Law 88-577; 16 U.S.C. 1134(a)), the
3 Secretary of Agriculture shall assure adequate access to
4 private inholdings within the Wild Sky Wilderness.

5 (c) APPRAISAL.—Valuation of private lands shall be
6 determined without reference to any restrictions on access
7 or use which arise out of designation as a wilderness area
8 as a result of this Act.

9 **SEC. 6. LAND EXCHANGES.**

10 The Secretary of Agriculture shall exchange lands
11 and interests in lands, as generally depicted on a map enti-
12 tled Chelan County Public Utility District Exchange and
13 dated May 22, 2002, with the Chelan County Public Util-
14 ity District in accordance with the following provisions:

15 (1) If the Chelan County Public Utility District,
16 within ninety days after the date of enactment of
17 this Act, offers to the Secretary of Agriculture ap-
18 proximately 371.8 acres within the Snoqualmie Na-
19 tional Forest in the State of Washington, the Sec-
20 retary shall accept such lands.

21 (2) Upon acceptance of title by the Secretary of
22 Agriculture to such lands and interests therein, the
23 Secretary of Agriculture shall convey to the Chelan
24 County Public Utility District a permanent ease-
25 ment, including helicopter access, consistent with

1 such levels as used as of date of enactment, to main-
 2 tain an existing snowtel site on 1.82 acres on the
 3 Wenatchee National Forest in the State of Wash-
 4 ington.

5 (3) The exchange directed by this Act shall be
 6 consummated if Chelan County Public Utility Dis-
 7 trict conveys title acceptable to the Secretary and
 8 provided there is no hazardous material on the site,
 9 which is objectionable to the Secretary.

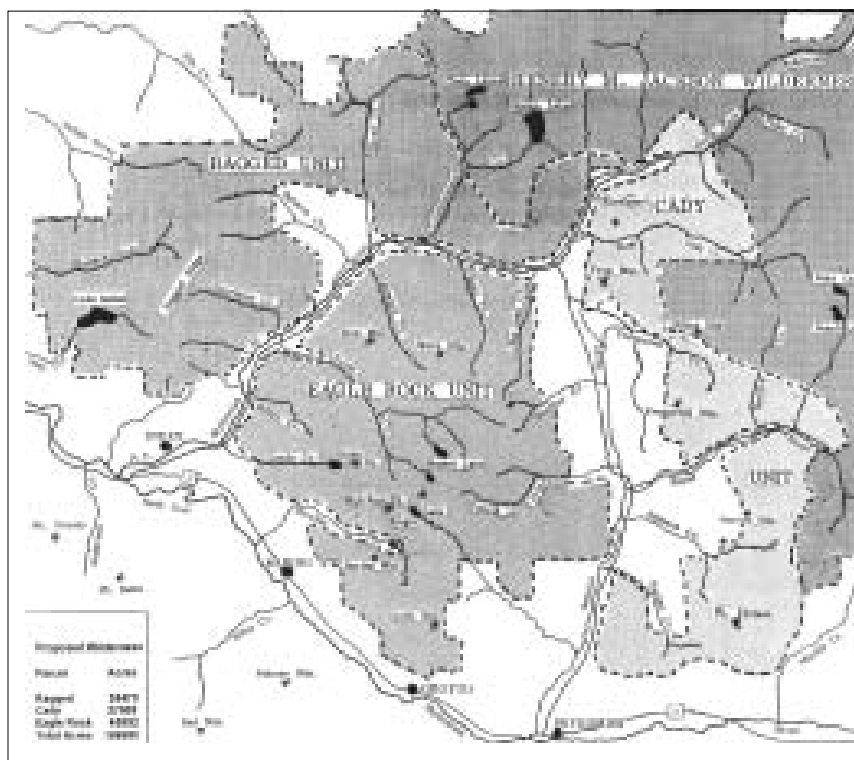
10 (4) In the event Chelan County Public Utility
 11 District determines there is no longer a need to
 12 maintain a snowtel site to monitor the snow pack for
 13 calculating expected runoff into the Lake Chelan hy-
 14 droelectric project and the hydroelectric projects in
 15 the Columbia River Basin, the secretary shall be no-
 16 tified in writing and the easement shall be extin-
 17 guished and all rights conveyed by this exchange
 18 shall revert to the United States.

SKYKOMISH WILDERNESS UPDATE

Continued from page 12

Nevertheless, despite these losses, the Wild Sky bill represents a major departure from almost all previous Wilderness bills in that it would protect a large percentage of low-elevation forest, and areas critical to sustaining salmon runs. Particularly in the North Fork Skykomish Valley above Index, the bill would protect extensive areas of low-elevation forests, some of it old growth and some of it mature, naturally regenerated second growth in areas railroad logged in the 1920's. These low elevation forests grow on some of the most productive sites in the entire National Forest system.

Although time is running short, supporters are hoping the bill might still pass this Congress. Action in the House is hoped for soon. If passage isn't possible this year, supporters are prepared to try again next year.



***Proposed Wild
Sky Wilderness
— Map by
PATRICK D.
GOLDSWORTHY***

PRESERVING OUR WALKING TRAILS

HARVEY MANNING

August 23, 2002

This piece was written early in 2002 to serve as frontmatter in a revised edition of a 100 Hikes volume. As of this date I do not know if it will be published or not because Mountaineers Books has taken to suppressing those of my writings that they and my co-author dislike, and not informing me when this is done. Check your local bookseller — you will find out the same time I do. H.M.

Were “civilization” to be subjected to a cost-benefit analysis, it could claim innumerable goods, such as Mozart and ice cream. Some goods, though, would have to be listed as endangered. For example, an early triumph, not of civilization itself but of an essential preliminary, was walking on our hind legs, an option that now is at risk. Wheels. Another would be the recent recognition of the need for legal protection of the church where John the Baptist went to be with God. Wilderness.

When we began publishing guide-books in the 1960s it was not from any delusion that penetrations by civilization — trails, that is — enhance wilderness. The good thing they do is teach us the importance. Our books are driven by the iron law, “use it or lose it.”

Books aim the feet. Feet are the artillery. Feet have fired off the broadsides that have got the attention of land managers and elected officials.

The turning point in the state of Washington was 1960, when we crammed down the throat of the U.S. Forest Service a Glacier Peak Wilderness that was much smaller than we sought, but far larger than the “wilderness on the rocks” that the timber industry tried to cram down our throat.

The year 1964 brought a triumph on the national scene when Congress passed the Wilderness Act.

Then 1968, the North Cascades National Park and Pasayten Wilderness.

Then 1976, the Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

Then 1984, the Washington Wilderness Act, Boulder River and Henry M. Jackson Wildernesses and additions to the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

Then — what happened? The metropolitan eight-year gestation of new births stopped dead. Had the spiritual womb gone barren?

If so, it was not in one fell swoop. In chilling contrast to the grand operas staged in the Oval Office by Presidents Johnson and Ford for their bill-signings in 1968 and 1976, President Reagan signed in 1984 only under the pressure of bipartisan unanimity in our state’s Congressional delegation. No convocation of smiling faces. No Marines in dress uniforms. No resounding proclamation. It is said that he retreated to a private room, sat himself on a convenience, affixed his signature, and slid the paper under the door while finishing other business.

The 1984 Act omitted twice as much requested wilderness as it included. An Act II was confidently expected. But 1992 passed, and 2000. Nothing. Reagan had set Washington City on a course of contumely. But he was not a captain without a crew. Go door to door in the nation’s capital. Round up the usual suspects.

Frustrated preservationists, their numbers and fervor ever mounting, pursued administrative recourses, went to the courts, undertook guerrilla actions.

Yet in 2000 a president elected by a minority vote behaved as if he had won by a landslide, hunkered down in the White House with his Praetorian Guard of Reagan retreats and “think tank” brains and declared war on the American earth. In 2002, therefore, our main forces are mustering to renew the offensive on the Wilderness Act front.

Boundaries are being studied and debated, bills drafted. Limber up your letter-writing arms. Listen to your feet.

The Foe, Too, Is Mustering

The revival of the preservation movement after World War II was energized by the hubris of the U.S. Forest Service, striving to chisel in granite the airy mantras of Gifford Pinchot. An attempt was made to glorify “multiple use” as the quintessence of the American Way; in 1964 and 1968 the American people didn’t buy it. “Sustained yield” was touted as self-evidently wise, and it was, and it is; under a program of sustained over-cutting, however, the Forest Service began running out of trees.

And thus, out of money. Preservationists joined the endangered rangers in demanding that Congress make up the difference required to fund its entire spectrum of management responsibilities — wildlife habitat, species diversity, recreation. Congress wouldn’t do it. Tank-thinkers who were swarming in Washington City like mosquitoes in a hot swamp had a better idea. The Plan.

The heart of it is: “Anything government can do, free enterprise can do better.” The necessity of earning a profit, the “thrive or die” learned in the jungle, gives the businessman his hard head, his “know how.” The “Invisible Hand” identified by Adam Smith as the superego for the marketplace wisely steers his course. These are what have made America great.

Revitalization, there’s the key. Politicians live for votes, bureaucrats for pensions. Together they have brought our social infrastructure to wrack and ruin. The public schools are a disgrace. The socialization of medicine a failure. An exhaustive study by civil engineers has found that most of the nation’s bridges are in danger of collapsing — or, in the state of Washington, of sinking or blowing down.

As for the public lands, we waste precious tax money in tending them while MBA entrepreneurs stand ready to do the job at no cost to us. The national parks, getting the message in the era of the stagecoach, are in the jet age cloning Disneyland and Six Flags Over Texas. Taking pages from Yosemite and Grand

Continued on page 18

Preserving our walking trails

Continued from page 17

Canyon, Mount Rainier is considering ways and means to compete with resorts on its border, to “enlarge its service area”; one suggestion is to build a paved skateboard trail from Tacoma to Paradise. Real estate in the Stehekin Valley of the North Cascades National Park Complex, dirt cheap in 1968, has become so pricey that luxury condos are being schemed — and what is that looming on the horizon — a casino?

Then, the national forests. . . Check by jowl with loot of the Northern Pacific Land Grab where stumps of trees gone to market are being replaced by golf course-swimming pool-cocktail lounge Gomorrah, the future hangs heavy heavy over their head. Scenic climaxes cry out to be freed up so the Invisible Hand can build vacation cities. Areas lacking geographical pizzaz could be converted from tax sinkholes to cash cows, “charter forests” could be managed by businessmen for maximum sustained yield of revenues by the industry that lies crouched and panting — “wreckreation.”

The Plan had its inception in the think tanks about the same time that President Reagan appointed James Watt Secretary of the Interior, a position that is held in 2002 by his star pupil. A flurry of white papers from the tanks candidly detailed the exact route toward final privatization of public lands. Watt was so enthusiastic that preservationist Republicans apologized to Democratic friends, assured them that Ronnie had been misled, soon would come to his senses. He never did, not even when the largest mass rally of preservationists in Northwest history gathered at Seattle’s Gasworks Park to protest the Watt intention to issue leases for geothermal power in the Glacier Peak Wilderness. When Watt was (belatedly) fired, it was not over policy but for publicly laughing at disadvantaged citizens. In 2002, Wattism waxes in the White House.

The initial step in the Plan was slyly taken by a rider to a completely irrelevant bill; few members of Congress so much as noticed. On the surface it seemed innocent, a temporary experiment to test the willingness of Americans to pay fees

to use trails that had been freely walked ever since the pioneers crossed the land bridge from Asia. The Fee Demonstration Program.

Bad idea. Yet with Congress so niggardly, rangers in such danger, preservationists could not but yield to the plea, an echo of the 1933 song, “Brother, can you spare a dime?” They went along with the temporary Plan, unaware that it was a plan, and that the refusal of funds by Congress was fundamental to the Plan. Stupid birdwatchers? No, merely trusting. They read only the first page in the white paper, the one with the violins.

In 2002 they read the second page, where “temporary” is scratched out, replaced by “permanent”. Eyes were dried, heads scratched. Some of the rangers began to look suspiciously like cops. Hikers who refused to buy the required Northwest Forest Pass were threatened with fines and/or imprisonment. What to do? Stand up for principle and at the least lose a pleasant day in the woods? Or grumble and pay? Maybe accept the rangers’ offers of free passes for serving as volunteer members of the posse?

The wilderness rangers on the trails were and are the best and the brightest, our very good friends. Many were obviously unhappy and told us why. They had read Chapter Two of the Plan, and Chapter Three, and this wasn’t their Forest Service. Between the wilderness trails and Washington City the quality of spirit, of soul, diminished geometrically. In the vicinity of the Oval Office, the top guns of the Forest Service held secret meetings with the tank-thinkers and the wreckreationist industry. The folks in the field were being sold down the river by their bosses in the offices.

And how about this? The Northwest Forest Pass was gleefully endorsed by the snowmobilers who compel rangers to wear gas masks, by the four-wheel mudrunners of marshes and meadows and steppe, by the “vroom vroom” of motorcycles, by the log-hopping bombers of the “single-track.” Paying a fee would give them a contractual guarantee, legitimize their illegitimate abuse. “We pay to play.

The ones who walk on their hind legs and whine, they’re the scowflaws.”

The Militia Comes Marching In

For 10,000 years or so the only trails in the North Cascades were those beaten out by the feet of deer, elk, bear, coyotes, marmots, and the folks who had trekked on over from Asia. For some half a century the “dirty miners in search of shining gold” built and maintained hundreds of miles of trails, often wide and solid enough for packtrains. During the same period many a valley had a trapline and trapper’s trail and many a ridge had a sheepherders’ driveway. For 30-odd years, roughly from World War I to World War II, Forest Service rangers built trails to fire lookouts atop peaks and to give fire crews quick walking to blazes.

The rangers then began taking to airplanes and parachutes and the wannabe miners to helicopters and the trails deteriorated. However, as recreation enlarged from a subsidiary to a central use, the management concept embraced walking

Walking, plus whatever. . . . In the nigh-onto-half-a-century that preservationists have been saving Washington trails by creating a national park and a bouquet of wildernesses, the Forest Service has been converting true trails (paths for speeds up to 5 miles or so an hour) to motorcycle roads (trails rebuilt for machine travel) that let the off-road vehicle, the “ORV,” do 10-30 miles per hour.

Walking is the overwhelmingly dominant travel mode in wildlands, by orders of magnitude. Yet a handful of ORVers, very loud, highly visible, reeking of hydrocarbons, heavily financed by industry and assiduously fronted by lobbyists adroit in cloakrooms and bars, have converted more miles to motorcycle roads than walkers have saved for trails. On federal lands of Washington state, only 45 percent of trails are machine-free by virtue of being in national parks and wildernesses; of the other 55 percent, half are wide open to motorcycles.

The dirt bike, the “revenge for Hiroshima,” was welcomed on trails as a rightful and respectable multiple-abuse. Then came the “mountain” bike, exploiting the

WE SEE BY THE PAPERS

meretricious appellation to cash in on the TV fad for the “extreme” and employing Orwellian “newspeak” to transform trails to “single-track.”

The walker, though, if quieter and slower, is smarter. The volunteer trail crews that in the past decade have become as busy as deer flies on an August afternoon do noble work, keeping the slide alder from whipping our cheeks and the devils club from slashing our throats. They are also ingeniously political. A picture is worth a thousand words. Photos in the papers and on television of tiny children and gimpy elders whacking the weeds reach out to the hearts of the public and the campaigns of elected officials.

A person able to walk the wildlands more than a little bit ought to do some of that walking with lopper or shovel or pulaski in hand. Virtually all preservation groups sponsor volunteer trail crews. The nagging of Congress is and must be continued; the equipment and skills of the rangers are indispensable for heavy work at a distance from trailheads. The militias, though, can serve excellently well in the several miles from the road. This “edge” wilderness is precisely the best for “green-bonding” the newcomers we must recruit as wilderness defenders.

A caveat. We revere the trail for what it does, not for what it is. We honor the volunteer weed-whackers, but not to the point of wishing to “promote” them to professionals; trail work can be a form of privatization, as it most surely is when undertaken by those who do it to facilitate their wreckreation.

No new trail should be built, for any purpose, anywhere, or any deteriorating trail be rehabilitated, without a prior assessment of the impact on life systems. Elements of the pedestrian militia now are deconstructing, “putting to bed,” trails that are judged to do more ecological harm than re-creational good.

The wild things need their space. So does John the Baptist when he says hang the slide alder and devils club and strides into the brush to be alone with God.

State’s Gravel Miners

In the February 25, 2002, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Gordy Holt wrote a comprehensive piece under the subhead, “Residents are digging in, resisting attempts by state’s gravel miners to increase output as population rises.”

The Wild Cascades has reported NCCC efforts, led by our director, Bruce Barnbaum, in the Granite Falls affair, where Rinker Materials of Florida “survived an 8-year permit battle to open a 400-acre site.” The city council of Granite Falls (in company of Sultan and Index councils) has publicly raised the question whether any towns stay alive with gravel trucks rumbling through the business districts, by the schools, the homes. The Snohomish County Council seems to be more responsive to Rinker of Florida and the Japanese mining companies than to county residents.

Holt tells how the town of Sultan faces the prospect of 800 trucks a day going through town on Highway 2, already bumper-to-bumper with traffic to and from Stevens Pass. The state Department of Natural Resources didn’t have the courtesy of informing the town about the mine proposed just north of town; only an email from the Tulalip Tribes brought attention to the planned leasing of the property.

Glacier Northwest (Japanese) plans to increase its Mauzy Island output from 10,000 tons a year to more than 7,500,000.

The image of the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Foundation was tarnished when Weyerhaeuser leased the terminal moraine on the eastern outskirts of North Bend to Cadman (German), involving 900 trucks a day, and the only comment by the Foundation was, “Well, it’s private property.”

On the Olympic Peninsula, at Mats Mats Bay, Glacier Northwest is seeking to deepen its quarry to a point 60 feet below sealevel and to work around the clock.

Adverse Possession?

A property owner in Kittitas Country has blocked off public access to the Big Creek Trail, on the Top Ten Threatened Trails List of the Washington Trails Association. A Cle Elum hiker who has proof

that he personally has used that trail for more than 20 consecutive years has filed an adverse possession claim, clouding the property title. His logical next step could be to attempt to use the trail. Were the landowner to force him to leave, a civil action based on adverse possession could be filed.

Other long-established access points to public lands in Kittitas County might be blocked due to the sale of 10,000 acres of Plum Creek land (from that Northern Pacific Land Grab, of course) to Sapphire Skies for carving into private homesites.

Has such an action ever been filed hereabouts? Not to our knowledge. However, the Northern Pacific Land Grant and other “privatized” theft booty has had hundreds (or thousands?) of miles of trails blocked off — trails that date from prospector or other public use in the 19th century and continuously used to the present — or until they were clearcut. This case will be watched. Another good day for the lawyers.

Fascists in Montana

Montana, the home of the Unabomber and the Freeman and Project 7 (the latest militia group to have an armed stand-off with the police) has “declared war on ‘green fascists!’” A radio talker in Kalispell named John Stokes goes on about it for 3 hours each morning — the most popular radio program in the county. He wants environmentalists to be “rounded up and put in an internment camp.” One of his avid listeners was arrested in April with two trailers packed with guns, 30,000 rounds of ammunition, and a target list of public officials who have spoken in support of environmentalist causes.

“Say it Ain’t So, Joe!”

On May 13 a member of Recreational Equipment Inc. wrote the firm expressing amazement and disgust that his beloved ol’ co-op was running radio ads about “flying down a hill” on mountain bikes. Mike Vandeman, a leader in the California opposition to heels on wheels, sent out an email on “REI Enriching Itself at the Expense of Wildlife — the Mountain Bike.” Member No. 1102 wrote the boss to say, “I am shocked. Simply shocked.”

WEST SIDE FIRE

RICK MCGUIRE

Every year brings more attention to fire in the forests of the western United States. As everyone now knows, many decades of fire suppression have led to unnaturally heavy fuel loads, since the low intensity fires which once cleaned up the brush no longer burn. When fires do start, they tend to be much more destructive than was the case before the fuel buildup. It's a big problem, about which very little is likely to be done. Logging the smaller "problem trees" which have grown up thickly will never pay, and most Forest Service timber sales, even ones which purport to reduce fire danger, end up taking out the big, merchantable trees and leaving the smaller ones, worsening the problem.

With the exception of the coastal Northwest, this fuel buildup affects just about every forest of the western United States. About the only place one can now see natural looking pine forests is the San Pedro Martir mountains of northern Baja California, Mexico. There, ground fires have been allowed to burn and the open, parklike forests stand in sharp contrast to those in the western United States. Here in the coastal Northwest, fires have also been extinguished with the same diligence which has led to this tinderbox situation in most other areas. Have we escaped the unnaturally flammable state which imperils most of the West?

Probably yes, at least for the time being. Every kind of forest has its own fire

regime to which it has adapted over the millennia. Some forests, notably those of ponderosa pine, are designed to burn frequently, and some forests, like ours on the west side, burn infrequently. In the very wettest areas such as coastal Alaska, forests virtually never burn. Most of our "west side" Cascade forests saw fire only every few hundred years — infrequent, but often very large fires.

Americans of European descent have long romanticized about the "virgin" state of nature which supposedly characterized North America when white people first arrived. The reality was often far different. Indians used fire extensively, and a good argument can be made that the North America which whites first found was in fact, east and west, the result of their burning practices over many centuries. The Willamette Valley was largely grassland and reverted to forest only after the Indians stopped burning. Many areas in the Puget Sound lowlands were likely kept open by natives, such as the Tacoma prairies and various other places which had few trees until the whites put an end to the Indians' fires.

There is little evidence, though, that Indians set many fires in the wetter forests which characterize the west side of the central and northern Washington Cascades. Annual rainfall amounts ranging from 50 to over 150 inches per year make these west-side forests fairly fireproof. Even during dry summers, the rising of warm air frequently draws in "marine layer" clouds from the ocean during periods of high-pressure weather. Although seldom producing much rainfall, this cools and humidifies. These "good weather" clouds sometimes reach inland only as far as the Cascade foothills, but often go as far east as the Cascade crest or beyond. Generally, anywhere mountain or western hemlock grows is an area which sees marine cloudiness. The fog drip resulting from these clouds encountering billions of tree needles contributes significant



Evergreen Mountain fire, caused by logging, 1967, Skykomish Ranger District — Photo by HARRY ROMBERG

moisture, and greatly lessens the chances of fire.

In addition, thunderstorms are infrequent west of the Cascade crest. Those which do occur are usually accompanied by copious rainfall. Dry lightning is almost unknown here. Although it is possible for a forest fire to start from the lensing of sunlight through a dewdrop, such events are extremely rare. Without lightning, there isn't much way (other than humans,) for fires to start on the west side.

Nevertheless, the forests of the west Cascades aren't as wet as those in south-east Alaska, and the presence of Douglas fir says that fires do burn here, though some areas may go many centuries without it. When fires do come, though, they can burn very large areas. Jan Henderson, ecologist with the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, has done pioneering work in researching the fire history of the west-side forests. Since trees can live many centuries here, it is possible to partially reconstruct fire history going very far back, and to also look at the role of natural climate change in shaping these forests.

Only 10,000 or so years have elapsed since the ice left the Puget Sound region, but that's been long enough for numerous climate fluctuations and long enough for the Cascade forests to have changed their appearance many times. It's believed that during a warm period called the "hypsihermal" about 5000 years ago there were few or no glaciers in the Cascades, and the Puget Sound lowlands were a savannah-like mix of grassland and Douglas fir, perhaps like that found in the drier parts of the San Juan Islands today. Henderson's studies have looked back as far as the "medieval optimum," the period before about 1300 a.d. when the climate was warmer and drier than today. He believes that fires were then more frequent on the westside than today. There is evidence for this in the existence of some very old Douglas fir trees growing at high elevations where they cannot now reproduce. This period was followed by the "little ice age" until about 1700 a.d. which saw much cooler conditions. Since then the climate has been gradually warming again, now hastened by human-produced greenhouse gases.

Henderson's research has documented three great fire episodes which burned extensively across much of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie. These have been dated to 1308, 1508 and 1701. Each of these fires burned large acreages; however, many areas within the limits of these fires, such as rocky slopes, stream bottoms and wet north slopes, did not burn. Only a few, limited areas appear to have escaped all of these conflagrations. Often it's possible to surmise which of these burns gave rise to a particular forest. For instance, the Boulder River Valley forest is almost exclusively hemlock, cedar and silver fir — it hasn't seen a fire since the 1308 burn. Much of the Skykomish Ranger District burned in 1701, and Douglas fir is much more prevalent there.

There have been no great fires on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie since 1701. Most of the fires which have happened since then have been relatively small, and human-caused. So, are we likely to ever again see the kind of large, stand replacing fires which burned in centuries past? No one can know, but it's certainly still possible. Although generally not long lasting, hot, dry east winds can send humidity and moisture levels plummeting. These occur when high pressure east of the Cascades causes "outflow" or "squamish" winds, which blow on the west side of mountain passes in places such as Enumclaw, North Bend and Gold Bar. It is thought that the 1701 burning episode was driven largely by these dry east winds. If a sustained period of east winds followed an extended period of unusually low rainfall, we could see again the same kind of conditions which led to the 1701 fires. What the west side does not have, though, is an unnatural fuel buildup like the east side. Down wood rots quickly on the west side, and there has never been the cycle of (now-absent) frequent ground fires of the east side, where down wood rots slowly. So the likelihood of extreme fires has not increased on the west side as it has on the east side. But anything's possible, and we now have the new wild card of human-caused climate change in the equation. It could be decades or centuries away, but someday the conditions which led to the 1701 fires will occur again.

WE SEE BY THE PAPERS

ALICE'S RESTAURANT

A popular ballad of a recent decade had the refrain, "You can get anything you want at Alice's restaurant." Mountaineers Books is enlarging its menu in emulation. A new offering is 50 TRAIL RUNS IN WASHINGTON, by Cheri Pompeo Gillis. Of the "runs," 7 are in the Issaquah Alps. Examples are No. 44, "Cougar Mountain — 14 miles (3.75 hours), and No. 46, "Tradition Lake Plateau — 6 miles," and No. 47, "Twelve Summits (Tiger Mountain) — 34 miles, 10,000 feet gain, 11 hours."

When the fate of Tiger Mountain State Forest was being planned by the state Department of Natural Resources, a presentation was made by Harvey Manning on behalf of the Pacific Northwest Elephant Stampede Association. A manuscript surely should now be considered by Mountaineers Books, extolling Bush-style family togetherness in the howdahs.

Other suggested books are "Favorite Mud Runs," featuring such classics as the ridge route from Wilkeson past Fairfax up Gleason Ridge, Reiter Razerland on Highway 2. As "extreme" sports proliferate, the market will grow for the off-trail skateboard, the jet-powered pogo stick, and "Good Places to Jump Off From with Wings Attached."

Give America Back to: (1) The Indians, (2) The Pilgrims, (3) Texas — (Choose one)

Among the implements for proposed privatizing of government functions is the "charter forest." The free-market community is drawing up the legislation for President Bush.

A notion of the direction this idea could take is the Valles Caldera (Baca Ranch) in New Mexico, acquired from private owners in order to test new ideas for public lands management. A number of environmental organizations embraced the idea.

In April the executive director of the preserve, Gary Ziehe, announced plans to begin public hiking tours on the preserve, led by private operators (for a fee). He added that the preserve intends to solicit business proposals from tour companies.

In our Cascades, the portion of the Northern Pacific Land Grant that was bought back from Weyerhaeuser (at a bit more than the \$6 an acre paid by Weyco in 1900) and christened the Evergreen Forest, is a new idea worth watching.

MODERN TIMES

(Apologies to Charlie Chaplin and his movie of that title)

H.M.

My typewriter of course cannot address the matter of guidebooks without, first off, a *mea culpa*. — Or better, Tom Miller's *culpa*. He was the one who imported from Germany, via England, the concept of 100 Hikes, subsequently enlarged to gigantic dimensions by the industrious Ira Spring. I have served in that enterprise as a very junior partner. Tom also is responsible for the series that has been judged by an international panel of experts to be the most magnificent climbing guide in the history of the world, Fred Beckey's *Cascade Alpine Guide*. When Tom and I and our Literary Fund Committee were, as founding unpaid amateurs, running Mountaineers Books, he was the one who instigated and designed Fred's masterwork. Not that Fred took a lot of instigating. In 1949 the American Alpine Club (not the Mountaineers) published the first edition ("the little green book") of "Beckey's Bible," as we soon were calling his guide to the Cascades and Olympics. To ambitious, ignorant novices the book was a comet flashing across the sky, illuminating a world of wonders unknown to the likes of us. The next year I was assigned by the Climbing Committee to draft a schedule of Experience Climbs for the Climbing Course. Among them was what proved to be the third ascent of Snowfield (the first two had been in the early 1930s). We also doubled the number of climbers ever to set boot in Luna Cirque (our party numbered nine members; all our predecessors were either Ptarmigans or Beckey Brothers). That's the sort of thing that guidebooks do in the hands of the ignorant.

The problem with Fred's three-volume work of 1963-1981 is, simply, it is too much. He offers more riches than any but a Beckey-scale peakbagger can manage in a number of lifetimes. Inevitably, therefore, came the cream-skimmers, the Readers-Digest-like excerpts. Teck/Roper ran the entirety of North America through their sifter for their book about North America "classics" and came up with two in the North Cascades. These and the rest of the fifty they chose became an international honeypot drawing the bees and flies as the Mountaineers Six Peaks Pin long has done locally. Nelson/Potterfield then did a single-volume abridgement of Beckey, a "selection" that provides the novice and/or

foreigner a manageable agenda.

The North Cascades National Park has a marvelous thing going on the Internet. For a sample covering the "2000 Season" check out "Climbing Notes," <http://www.nps.gov/noca/climbing-2000.htm> (Then go to all the other years, starting in 1995).

"There were 22 incidents that generated response from search and rescue teams in 1999." Five of the incidents are summarized. . . . Following are thumbnails of the NPS summaries:

June 19, Sahale. A climber pulled off a loose rock that hit him in the head. He fell 25 feet, dislocated a shoulder, fractured an orbit, knocked out some teeth, and contused his body. Bivouac. Signal flares. Another party reported to rangers by cell phone. Helicopter evacuation.

July 19, Shuksan, Shannon Ridge. Two climbers descending from Sulphide Glacier got lost. Exhausted. Built a signal fire. Searchers led them out, uninjured.

July 29, Blum. Two climbers on a 4-day trip reported overdue by family. Search began on Day 6, aerial and ground. Found in a gully at 2300 feet, disoriented, dehydrated, unable to travel. Fluids and food lowered. Ground crew guided/carried them out on Day 7.

August 3, Nooksack Tower. Climber twisted knee at base of tower in rough but non-technical terrain (brush). Cell phone. Helicopter.

September 19, Shuksan. Climber slid down Winnie's Slide and broke ankle. Helicopter. (When Winnie slid she had to walk out; "The past is a foreign country. They do things differently there.")

Johannesburg. "The summer of 1999 saw an unusually high number of climbs and searches on J-burg. Of those who signed the trailhead register before starting out, indicating an expected return time, a full 50% were overdue by a day or more, triggering a search. In each case, climbing parties were neither lost nor injured — they were just late".

National Park Service Editorial Comments and "No Trace" Information

So what makes a "classic" or "select" climb, anyway? Elements such as technical enjoyment, scenery, exposure, rock quality, geographical significance, and level of commitment all contribute to a climb's overall aesthetic feeling — regardless of actual difficulty or grade.

Guidebooks and magazines usually provide excellent route descriptions and overviews. Novice climbers and those new to the area are especially covetous of this information. It is unfortunately inevitable, however, that these "classic" climbs are usually the most popular routes in the Park. Backcountry camping permits are in high demand for these areas, and the routes and bivy sites are often heavily impacted by years of high use that notoriety brings. Some climbers complain that when a route attains "classic" status, its wilderness quality is inevitably compromised.

The North Cascades are home to a seemingly endless number of spectacular climbs and high alpine traverses. As more people visit this area in search of a classic climbing experience, it is critical that climbers exemplify and practice *Leave No Trace* backcountry ethics in order to preserve a classic *wilderness experience* for all.

Blue Bag Info

In addition to an increasing number of backcountry composting toilets, the blue bag program is expanding. Blue bags for packing out waste are available where permits are obtained. Beginning in 2000, deposit barrels will be available for collecting the used bags, with the waste transported for incineration in Oregon. Check for deposit barrel locations upon obtaining a camping permit.

Sulphide Glacier Camps

There is increasing concern about pollution from human waste at climbing camps that are primarily snow camping the entire season. In response to this, a second composting toilet was added at the common area for camping on the lower Sulphide Glacier. It is recommended that climbers ask the location of one of the toilets upon obtaining a camping permit, and make an effort to camp nearby.

DESPATCHES FROM THE PRIVATIZING FRONT . . .

■ We cannot forget that the national parks, forests, grasslands, seashores are not “federal land.” They are our land, your and mine. If we lose them, we will never get them back. We must also remember that government is not bureaucrats. Government is us, and that simple notion is the foundation of democracy. Let’s refuse to base our policy decisions on economics alone. Fifty years ago, Aldo Leopold gave us a better standard: “Quit thinking about decent land use as solely an economic problem. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends to do otherwise.”

— Carol Estes, freelance writer in Minnesota

■ The Political Economy Research Center (PERC), a conservative think tank devoted to property rights, has held more than 100 conferences in the past 5 years. Airfare, food, and lodging have been paid for journalists, academics, and congressional staffers.

Carol Estes attended one in 1996 and reported: “It is an October morning at the Mountain Sky Guest Ranch near Bozeman, Montana. The cold air smells of pine, and steam rises from a hot tub with a view of snow-covered peaks across the valley. This is an exclusive place, \$2,000 a week per person, where I cannot afford to vacation. I am not paying for this trip. This one is on PERC.”

■ From Alaska Department of Natural Resources:

“Chena Recreation Site, of all the parks were forced to close, is the one that best lends itself to private operation because it generates enough user fees to make it a profitable business.” (If there is money to be made from a park in Alaska, management is being transferred to the private sector. Parks considered “marginal” are currently maintained by volunteers — a twilight zone from which they may ultimately be rescued by entrepreneurs.)

■ From Valhalla Wilderness Society

Parks Campaign, British Columbia:

“Our new provincial government is moving full-steam ahead to allow privatization and commercialism in our park system, which we re fighting tooth and nail. Unfortunately, this government has something like 97 percent of the seats in our legislature!”

(A “Declaration on the Principles of Parks” has been signed by half a hundred organizations in British Columbia and supporters in the United States, including the North Cascades Conservation Council. See page 6 for the full text of the Declaration.)

■ From the *Christian Science Monitor*, June 26, 2002:

PUBLIC-PRIVATE TOURISM FAILS

“On Midway Atoll a public-private co-tourism venture failed due to a clash of values. Strapped for cash, the US Fish

and Wildlife Service struck a deal with a private contractor. But the company and the agency found themselves in a pitched battle. The Service found itself unable to have both a resort and a refuge. The contractor, who had sunk \$1,000,000 in a French restaurant overlooking the beaches, wanted to reopen beaches that had been closed to protect seal-pupping, to allow activities that ranged from kayaking to shark-feeding, and to cut down trees that blocked views from the restaurant.”

■ The Department of the Interior, whose Bush-appointed head is a spiritual clone of James Watt, has commenced a “Recreation Onestop” program to facilitate “creative partnerships.” A law passed by Congress and signed by the President, titled “Take Pride in America,” would be a means to commodify, commercialize, and privatize public lands, just as has been aggressively proposed since the Dawn of Wattism under President Reagan.

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 wish membership in 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.

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DESPATCHES FROM THE FEE-DEMO FRONT

■ Rep. Jim Hansen, architect of the nation's 5-year experiment with the "pay-to-play" idea, has backed off on plans to make the program permanent, and to expand it to all public lands before he leaves office at the end of the year.

This is wonderful news. Clearly, the growing opposition to fee-demo has pushed permanent fee-demo authorization off its fast track. This news means that the fee-demo is hurting and that ARC is losing its sway over Congress. It means that ARC and the other proponents of recreation user fees have been forced back to the drawing board where they are no doubt, developing new strategies for advancing their agenda. We must expect many more battles to be fought before this program is permanently put to bed!

■ On June 2, 2002 *The Oregonian*, the giant-type headline atop page 1 of the "commentary" section is "PAYING TO PLAY". A "YES" says \$30 is a small price to pay. A "NO NO NO" cries out "The woods and mountains are a public heritage, not to buy and sell."

John Balzar, in a column reprinted from the *Los Angeles Times*, says: "Fee boxes are going in. Rangers and their side-kicks, those once-kindly volunteer campsite hosts, have been given a new missions. Make way for the bulldozers and cement

mixers and construction workers." Balzar, unlike the trusting dupes among our sheep friends, plainly sees the camel's nose. He foretells ". . . Mercury vapor lights leading to a hot-water shower and a laundromat and strip-mall. Sign in and deposit money here."

■ From the *Missoula Independent*, July 12, 2002 (summarized): Fee-Demo has become a tax. Even the USFS is calling it a tax. . . . When the public rejected the user-fee concept, it quietly mutated into a tax — a tax levied by a federal agency without the legal authority to do so. Fee-Demo has become a political issue that may determine who is elected and who is defeated in 2002.

■ Senator Larry Craig (Republican, Idaho) has been a staunch supporter of Fee-Demo. In a July 12 op-ed piece in the *Twin Falls Time-News* he wrote, "The grades are in, and the recreation fee demonstration project has flunked in Idaho. . . ."

■ Terry L. Anderson, Executive Director of The Center for Free Market Environmentalism has been flying around since the Reagan crowd began buzzing out of the dung heap and now sits at the right hand (far right) of Bush II. On July 8 Anderson hosted a luncheon briefing "Fee Recreation v. Welfare Recreation." ("Welfare" is what we get, or used to, when we went hiking in a national forest. As for "Fee," that is the

camel's nose under the tent, full privatization to follow.) Among the 28 funders of the lunch, we note Gates Foundation and the Invisible Hand Foundation. Hmmm-mmm. . . . Recreation user fees are opposed by 240 organizations, none of which were invited.

■ On June 27, the USFS announced it was dipping into the Fee-Demo money pot to fight fires; last year the "borrow" was \$12,000,000. Borrow? The USFS does not always repay. The accounting firm it employs is PriceWaterhouseCooper, which just happens to be a member of the American Recreation Coalition.

■ Note that smack in the middle of the American Recreation Coalition's "Great Outdoors Week," President Bush announced his "Healthier US Initiative" and declared June 22-23 a "free weekend" to enter national parks. Whoopee! (By the way, "healthier" has been adopted by the ARC as its new theme. Coincidence? A lot of coincidences happen around the White House these days.)

■ As in Alaska and British Columbia, state parks in Washington are moving away from "welfare" recreation. The weekend after day-use fees went into effect (\$5 for parking), attendance at Washington state parks in the Columbia Gorge dropped 30-40 per cent.

THE WILD CASCADES

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