
THE WILD CASCADES

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

SUMMER 2004



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The Wild Cascades

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The Wild Cascades Editor

North Cascades Conservation Council

University Station, Seattle, WA 98145-2980

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.



The North Cascades Foundation supports the NCCC's nonpolitical efforts. Donations are tax-deductible as a 501(c)3 organization. Please make your check(s) out to the organization of your choice. The Foundation can be reached through NCCC mailing address:

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Founded in 1957
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The President's Report

Summer 2004

Unfortunately, I have to use a tragedy as a lead-in to this article. A man was killed recently in an "Adventure Race" on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. According to media reports, he was hit by a boulder kicked loose by a fellow contestant on a little known mountain in an unprotected part of the Forest. I have climbed the mountain myself and can see how it could happen. We all know that people who continually challenge nature in this way are going to come out second-best from time to time. That seems acceptable to me.

The point is not whether this was an unsafe situation that should have been banned, but rather, was this activity an appropriate venue for conducting a clearly commercial venture? It should be pointed out that while much of the race occurred on logging roads, some roadless areas and Mount Baker itself were also part of the course. I contend that our public lands are being used more and more by corporations and promoters for private gain. While this media-heavy adventure-racing or whatever it is called doesn't do much actual damage to the environment in itself, the precedent is very disturbing. It doesn't take much imagination to expect the next round of television content to be filmed from helicopters hovering over our wilderness areas.

The USFS and the environmental community need to be vigilant. We must discourage use of public lands as free real estate to conduct ever more outrageous stunts. Call me Chicken Little but I see this type of media-spawned exhibitionism as one more component of the insidious privatization of our public lands.

Marc Bardsley

Calling Database Geeks

NCCC needs a donation of database software and database expertise to help us manage our membership list. If you can help, please contact

Marc Bardsley at 206-689-4999
or email bardsleym@soundtransit.org

*CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED
FOR PUBLICATION
OF NORTH CASCADES HISTORY*

NCCC Book Nears Completion

We still need donations, so we can claim a \$5,000 matching grant from the North Cascades Foundation to publish this wonderful book on the North Cascades by Harvey Manning.

Fully edited, updated, and richly illustrated with historic maps and photos, this new book tells the epic story of wilderness preservation in one of the largest wildland areas of the Lower Forty-Eight.

To those who have already contributed, thank you! The book should be heading for the printer soon—watch for ordering details in the next *Wild Cascades*.

Donations may be made to either the Foundation (tax-deductible) or the NCCC (not tax-deductible), and in either case should be clearly marked, 'FOR PUBLICATION OF NORTH CASCADES BOOK' and sent to either

North Cascades Conservation Council
c/o Thomas H.S. Brucker, Treasurer
9111 SE 44th Street
Mercer Island, WA 98040
or

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

North Cascades History: STAKING CLAIMS TO NOT-MINES

Tom Pelly dropped our bill for a North Cascades National Park in the hopper. We knew it had no chance against the bill drawn up by Dick Buscher of the Forest Service and introduced in Congress by Senator Jackson — a bill we reluctantly accepted as better than nothing. The Pelly-NCCC bill omitted the Pickets because this most alpinely dramatic sector of the North Cascades was certain of getting its due from the Wilderness Act, better wilderness protection than the National Park Act. The Jackson-USFS bill threw in the non-controversial Pickets to “make weight,” a public relations gesture to theoretically compensate for the omission of Glacier Peak.

The Jackson-USFS park was a sure thing, backed by both houses of Congress. Except for Wayne Aspinall, Congressman from the 19th century, whose motto on new national parks was “NEVER.” As chair of the House committee with jurisdiction over the flow of legislation on such matters, he had the muscle to go mano-a-mano with Jackson, chair of the corresponding Senate committee. Their wrestling match the summer of 1968 was nerve-wracking. Prior to that, though, Aspinall pulled an around-the-end stunt that won him a year’s breathing-blustering space. He forced the U.S. Geological Survey team then mapping geologic structures of the North Cascades to defer scientific research and spend a year on a survey of mineral resources in the proposed park — “prospecting.”

We weren’t worried. The 19th century “dirty miners in search of shining gold” had staked out and privatized every showing of rust-colored rock in the range. Uniform gray was the Pickets color, as interesting as the Moon to the privateers operating under their 1872 letters of marque.

Then, in the summer of 1967, I was jolted by a postcard saying simply and solely: “It’s not such a bad idea to have the Pickets in the park.” No signature. Some person with access to USGS results. Alarming results. Not a person in the USGS. I had friends there, but they were too honorable to leak information not yet released to public consideration.

Telling the tale at this late date can do nobody harm. The USGS contracted with a helicopterer to taxi them around the wilderness. He also served the swarms of 1872 privateers then a-swarming over the public lands.



Unloading pack Sun Bell 63 on border slash, Chilliwuck River.

One of these was my climbing buddy, “Lardy,” who had become the most notable minerals geologist in the region. He was a defender of the 1872 policy, though recognizing it needed major amendment. He once visited, by chopper, a pair of us at White Rock Lakes, and as he lay at ease in the heather, gazing over the West Fork Agnes to Dome Peak, he jerked a thumb in the direction of Miners Ridge, headquarters of Bear Creek Mining, his employer at the moment, then engaged in plotting an “open

proved up by on-the-ground labor before Labor Day of 1968. There weren’t all that many climbers around in those days who would (or could) climb to the ridge-top location of the monument. Watch was kept with baited breath on the Bellingham courthouse all summer. The deadline passed, the Lardy claims lapsed, no for-real claims were filed, and the White House ceremony went off without a hitch.

— HARVEY MANNING

GOERING’S LAW

People don’t want to go to war. . . But after all, it’s the leaders who determine the policy and it’s always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it’s a democracy or a fascist dictatorship or a parliament or a communist dictatorship. The people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to greater danger. It works the same in any country.

— HERMANN GOERING, WHILE BEING TRIED AT NUREMBERG: “GOERING’S LAW”

STEHEKIN LANDING STUDY

July 21, 2004

Dan Moses
National Park Service
428 West Woodin Avenue
Chelan, WA 98816

RE: Stehekin Transportation Study and Conceptual Landing and Design Options

Dear Mr. Moses:

When the Park Service arrived in Stehekin, they did a service to visitors by buying out the competing and scruffy businesses at the landing (one of which was pink), ending the absurd dueling loudspeakers, and eventually putting in a deck and painting it all an unobtrusive gray-green. The arrangements were good and, except for maintaining them, the Park Service's job here was basically done. There are sufficient bathrooms (I have never seen a lineup) and while there is occasionally a bit of crowding and confusion on days when a full boat of tourists coincides with a large amount of freight, there is no serious problem

here in need of expensive fixing.

The Transportation Study and Landing and Design Options therefore seems an odd document. What problems does it address? A prior question is what brings people to Stehekin; that is, what needs was the Park created to serve? The NRA was created to protect the scenic and wilderness qualities of Stehekin and provide for the public's enjoyment of them. So the landing in Stehekin should be designed to allow people to enjoy the wildness around them. The primary problem I see is lack of easy, immediate access to the wild scenery of the valley and the wilderness around it. Every time I travel the Stehekin road in summer I encounter strollers and hikers forced, by lack of alternative, to walk along the road. To walk a road, passed by cars, is not what these people came to Stehekin for. Rather than spending money for the expensive building projects outlined in your study, funds for building such a trail should be sought. The route for such a trail has already been surveyed.

Sure, a covered area out of the rain would be nice. It would be nice to get the tour buses out of the way. But none of these is an egregious problem that requires a major investment (it hardly rains in the summer months in

Stehekin and people have raincoats — or they can go inside the Lodge, which I'll admit could be more inviting, but that is another matter altogether). Since people need vehicles for carrying freight and themselves up the road, it seems necessary that vehicles be at the landing. It makes far more sense to let those who are looking for a non-motorized experience to get away from the road.

I also believe the Park interpreters who meet and greet the boat are doing their jobs just fine. Those who need more service can make the short walk to the visitor center.

Also sort of nice in an optional way would be these luggage carts, but please, no motorized ones. This would add to the chaos and motorization, not reduce it.

I do not see that this study has addressed the real problems faced by visitors on arrival in Stehekin.

Sincerely,

Carolyn McConnell

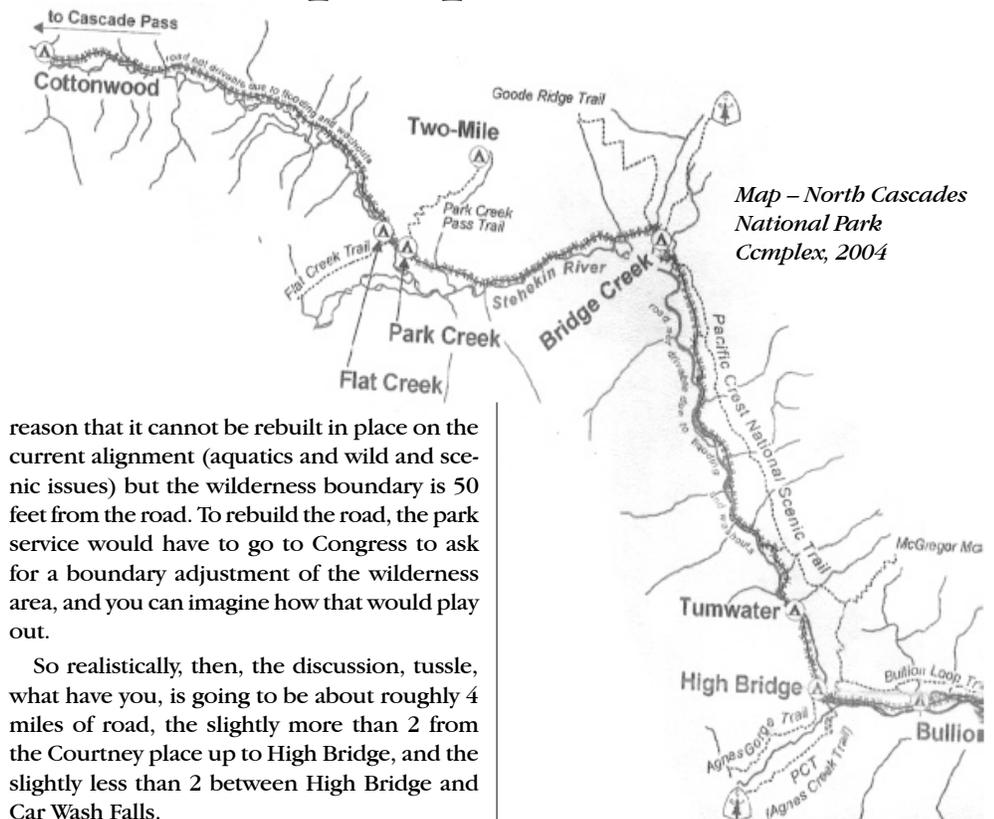
Stehekin road repair process

(KEVIN GERAGHTY CONVERSATION WITH DAN ALLEN)

The National Park Service plan three separate Environmental Assessments (EAs), sequentially. First, up to the Courtney place, second, Courtney to High Bridge, third, above High Bridge. Dan Allen argued for two, one for the park segment above High Bridge, where there are wilderness issues, one below. The further segmenting is, according to Dan, not a nefarious scheme to disguise things, but due to a desire to get things actually moving (i.e., move some dirt) on the least controversial part.

The first EA, the one dealing with the lower 8 miles up to the Courtney place, is coming out in a month or two. In this stretch, the road has already received "emergency" repairs on account of the Courtney ranch (arguably illegal), and I assume we are not going to oppose reopening, although we should certainly scrutinize the EA when it is issued.

It is pretty much a foregone conclusion at this point that the road will not be reopened above Car Wash Falls (M 12.2), for the simple



reason that it cannot be rebuilt in place on the current alignment (aquatics and wild and scenic issues) but the wilderness boundary is 50 feet from the road. To rebuild the road, the park service would have to go to Congress to ask for a boundary adjustment of the wilderness area, and you can imagine how that would play out.

So realistically, then, the discussion, tussle, what have you, is going to be about roughly 4 miles of road, the slightly more than 2 from the Courtney place up to High Bridge, and the slightly less than 2 between High Bridge and Car Wash Falls.

Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow

(1872 and 1872 and 1872)

Excerpt from a piece by Robert McClure in the May 11, 2004 *Seattle Post Intelligencer*:

“Under a 132-year-old federal law, foreign companies . . . together with U.S. citizens and companies . . . have been able to convert 9,200,000 acres of public land to private use, according to a report released yesterday by the non-profit Environmental Working Group. . .”

The globalized mining industry always has been fond of the Third World, which includes 1872 America. One is reminded of Mae West, reclining at voluptuous ease in her boudoir, requesting of her lady’s maid, “Peel me another grape, Beulah.”

Mount Rainier National Park: **LONG JOURNEYS MAY WITH TINY STEPS BEGIN**

Achievement of the Mount Rainier National Park-that-should-be might require a major volcanic eruption. At present most environmental energies are too busy elsewhere to pray up another St. Helens stunt. All hail, therefore, to the citizens of Fairfax. Thanks to them, and their arousing of (1) Pierce County and then (2) Washington, D.C., and (3) the willingness of a timber company to sell back stolen goods for a quick profit, the Carbon River corridor to the park will gain 800 acres. In company of Pierce County’s creation of a Fairfax Forest as a historical monument, this may be the start of something big. The 800 acres is the largest expansion of Mount Rainier Park in 70 years.

North Cascades Institute: *Environmental Learning Center* **UPDATE**

or Seattle City Light Redons Its Black Hat

THOMAS BRUCKER

POOR SEATTLE CITY LIGHT; it just is not comfortable wearing the white hat. The winter 2003-4 issue of *The Wild Cascades* reported on a pleasant — and unexpected — benefit of the High Ross Dam struggle: a 3-way agreement between Seattle City Light (SCL), the North Cascades Institute and the National Park Service providing for the construction of an Environmental Learning Center on the shores of Diablo Lake. Under the 1991 basic contract between the parties, the Memorandum of Agreement, City Light was responsible for construction of the buildings. Work was proceeding; all looked good.

From 1997, when the architects were selected, to 2001 when construction began, to 2004, SCL had never expressed any reservations about the cost of the ELC during the numerous reviews of costs, bid reviews, contractors’ estimates, contractual awards, environmental reviews, contractual oversight, or at meetings with NCI and the Park Service,

Alas, on April 16th of this year, without notice to any party, SCL reverted to its old self and instructed the contractor to stop work on two of the key buildings — the main service building and the terrestrial lab/classroom and informed the other parties that these buildings would not be completed because they were

“too expensive.” This decision by SCL was made unilaterally and in violation of the Memorandum of Understanding. Without these two buildings and the essential services they were to provide, the ELC would not be economically or programmatically viable. The dream of an ELC appeared dead.

What to do? The building of the ELC was already 6 years behind schedule; litigation would result in further delay and add additional cost. The decision was to try to negotiate and see if anything could be salvaged. These discussions were painful and lasted over a month. NPS Superintendent Bill Paleck was a strong supporter of NCI and was instrumental in insuring a positive outcome.

In the end agreement was reached. The two buildings will be completed essentially as designed, but NCI has agreed to pay SCL \$870,000 in order to get the project completed and the Park Service will contribute \$400,000. The North Cascades Institute is currently engaged in a monumental effort to raise these funds.

Had Seattle City Light been able to meet any of their previous schedules for completing the Center on time, the Institute would have been teaching children for years, a tremendous amount of money would have been saved, and this controversy would not have arisen.

PAY to PLAY WITH AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Funding agencies, 50 in number, nominally philanthropic but zealous in their common hatred of the “liberal enemy” have disbursed roughly \$3,000,000,000 over the past 30 years for what has been described as the fabrication of “irritable mental gestures which seek to resemble ideas.” These “think tanks” of the Republican Party seek such objectives as “shrinking the federal government to a size small enough to drown.” The four largest of the “national tanks” based in Washington, D.C. had a total budget in 2001 of \$100,000,000. Of these,

the American Enterprise Institute deployed \$25,000,000. It uses clever screens to hide its central goal of privatizing the commons — the broadcast spectrum as well as the timber, the water, the air, the mineral deposits — and the law. The AEI battle strategy features “PAY to PLAY.” Aside from the poor starvelings of the U.S. Forest Service, who see their once potent agency as sharing the danger of the National Park Service, who among us is a docile dupe?

Only Weirdos Look Out the Window

RICK MCGUIRE

The U.S.-Canada boundary cutting across the Cascades along the 49th parallel has long been a dividing line in more ways than one, with preserved landscapes to the south, and to the north, moonscapes with appeal only to dedicated connoisseurs of ugliness. In recent years the contrast has become, and continues to grow greater. One can't help but wonder where it will all lead if, as seems likely, present trends continue.

Recently I had a chance to see it first hand from the window of an airliner. Flying back to the Northwest from the European continent in daylight, one sees, weather permitting, a series of interesting landscapes. First Scotland, brown and bleak, then, a few hours later, the white immensity of Greenland and its fast-melting glaciers, followed by the Pangnirtung fiords of Baffin Island, one of the least known and most spectacular wonders of North America. Then, more water and ice, and the endless "Barrens," the tundra lands of northern Canada. They seem to stretch to infinity, and even a dedicated landscape junkie such as myself has trouble taking it all in. Boldly defying the orders of the steward to pull the shade all the way down so that the fuzzy B movie on the screen can be better viewed (what can they do, throw me overboard? Banish me to first class?) I look and look at the blazing whiteness, my attention drifting till I suddenly see . . .

Trees! Hard to tell just what kind, though obviously part of the great boreal forest spanning northern Canada and Eurasia. Forests, and



lakes everywhere, so many that it looks as though one could paddle anywhere with only minor portages. It's a delight to see a forest that stretches off in all directions without a scratch in it. But all too soon, it's over. Northwestern Saskatchewan looks beautiful, but once we're above Alberta the inevitable roads and clearcuts begin, along with perfectly straight oil and gas seismic exploration lines. They crisscross the

landscape, and each other, at every kind of angle, jumping across rivers, seeming to extend to infinity, as if they were drawn by some demented, ruler-wielding giant. Is it really necessary to survey so destructively, or just more convenient? Mercifully, the clouds close in and draw a veil over it all.

The Canadian Rockies and the Interior Ranges of British Columbia still have substantial wild areas, though outside of the limited protected areas roads have been pushed up most valleys. The clouds part as we emerge over a complex, fiord-like lake. For a minute I try to puzzle out where we are, then realize it's Shuswap Lake, where the cedars of the Selkirks meet the pines and grasslands of the Okanagan, as they spell it in Canada.

Shuswap Lake is where western redcedar usually thought of as a giant rainforest tree, reaches the dry end of its range, with some individuals even growing alongside ponderosa pines where they meet the grasslands. Cedar forests stand out from the air, their foliage a lighter shade of green than other evergreens. But it's not the green that's striking here, it's the brown of recent clearcuts, and the network of roads snaking everywhere. They reach even be-

yond the recent clearcuts into the still-standing cedar forest, signifying that this is an ongoing destruction, growing worse by the day.

British Columbia is bigger than Washington, Oregon and California combined, with fewer people than Washington state. It still has lots of places where you can get so far from crowds and civilization that you're glad to see someone when you do. But the timber industry is

devouring its forests, a subsidized frenzy that is intensifying every year. The scars are really starting to show, especially from the air. From Shuswap Lake we continue south and west, and the clearcuts just get bigger. Places that recently seemed quiet and forgotten, Pennask Lake, Douglas Lake, the Nicola and Tulameen valleys, the Similkameen country, are having roads being punched all through them. And it's not just the southern part of the province that's getting the treatment. Logging is pushing everywhere, even the far north. Every day, long trains of lumber cars can be seen moving south through Everett and Seattle, laden with load after endless load of wood, in plastic wrappers bearing names that not long ago evoked images of wild remoteness, names like Omineca, Skeena, Cassiar, Peace River. . . .

One could say that British Columbia, indeed most of Canada, is, in comparison to the United States, a mix of the good old days and the bad old days. The good old days, because life is sometimes a bit slower, the social safety nets haven't been so thoroughly shredded, and people seem relaxed and friendly in a way that's getting rare here. The absence of gun culture and militarism helps, too. But the bad old days are here too, and one can only cringe at the ongoing destruction so apparent from above, and its blythe acceptance by most of the natives. There seems to be little prospect of slowing it down anytime soon.

But it's left behind at the 49th parallel, at least in the North Cascades. The faint trace of the cleared boundary swath is visible, south of which are wonderfully natural landscapes. On this particular trip I was treated to the sight of pristine valleys on both sides of Ross reservoir, with Lightning Creek and Devils Creek to the east, Little Beaver and Big Beaver valleys to the west, Big Beaver showing the light green of low meadows and giant cedars. Apart from the reservoir itself there is little to suggest the hand of man, and looking at the Big Beaver valley is a particular pleasure for an NCCC'er, those meadows and cedars still there because of the efforts of NCCC and Canadian allies (notably the unforgettably named R.O.S.S., for "Run Out Skagit Spoilers,") which prevented the raising of Ross Dam.

The spiraling destruction north of the border multiplies the appeal of all the preserved country in the North Cascades. Even more pleasing than the pristine country in the North Cascades National Park and Wilderness areas is the sight of low valleys in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, recovering now for a number of years from the earlier logging they suffered. Fortunately, trees grow quickly on the west side of the Cascades, and places like the Illabot Creek and Cascade River valleys, and many others, horribly pockmarked in decades past, are starting to look nice again. South of Darrington, the Sauk valley is a mostly continuous carpet of green, and the North Fork Skykomish valley presents a vista of un-

broken forests blanketing the slopes from the river to the mountaintops.

The Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is looking a lot better than it did 20 years ago. Most of the rest of the world, British Columbia especially, may be in decline, but nature is reasserting herself here. The North Cascades are on the comeback. Whether this can be sustained, or falls victim to ill-conceived "forest restoration" logging, will be up to NCCC and other groups.

Not much truly pristine country remains to be protected in the Cascades. The challenge is to "take back" places, and expand the definition of wild country to include re-wilding places. Just about all of the rest of the world has made this transition. Wild places in Europe always have traces of past human activities, as do places in eastern North America. There's not much untouched country left anywhere. The drive to re-wild places around here began with Harvey Manning and the campaign to protect what he dubbed the "Issaquah Alps." When thus named, these were little more than typical Cascade foothills, roaded, logged, distinguished only by their proximity to Seattle. The name seemed more than a little over the top - "alps," for these rounded hills? And why would anyone want to protect a bunch of second growth? Tiger Mountain was a place for high school kids to drive up on Friday nights to drink, hang out, and look at the view. But no one laughed for long. Harvey's idea of "Wilderness on the Metro" took off, perhaps even more than he thought it would, and the rest is

history. The Issaquah Alps were largely taken back, and today Tiger Mountain presents a pleasing vista of continuous forest, all of it re-wilding second growth, perhaps the most popular hiking destination in the state.

While the Issaquah Alps model may not fit all other parts of the Cascades, certainly parts of it can be exported, and modified as needed for local conditions. The Middle Fork Snoqualmie valley near North Bend, formerly much abused, is now the object of a long standing drive to "take it back." Large parts of the North Fork Skykomish valley, railroad logged 80 years ago, are proposed for inclusion in the Wild Sky Wilderness. There are numerous other places in the process of re-wilding in the Sauk, Suitttle, Skagit and Nooksack areas, places where future protected areas, whether Wilderness or some other designation, could and should take in productive low valleys which once saw some logging.

Plenty of scenic high country has been protected in the Cascades. Everyone loves old-growth forests, but just about all of them around here which haven't been protected are on poor sites, or at high elevations, places the timber industry didn't want. What is largely missing from our Wilderness and park areas are the biologically richer lower elevations, where salmon can spawn and big trees can grow. Nature is already doing her part. It will take time - these things always do - but it's time to start thinking about how to protect those low valleys which are starting to once again look so delightful from above.

YO YO MOUNT ADAMS?

In the September 13, 2004 *Yakima Herald-Republic*, Philip Ferolito wrote an article entitled "Destination or Desecration?" Following are (condensed) excerpts:

"Mount Hood Meadows Development Corporation has proposed a four-season 'eco-resort' on Mount Adams: 11 ski lifts reaching the 11,100-foot level on the south side, three 18-hole golf courses, a mid-slope restaurant, casino, night club, and 2500 lodging units. Also a summer camp for tribal youth with year-round education courses on Yakama culture.

"Said Yakama Nation tribal secretary Davis Washines (traditional name, Yallowash), 'Developers pitch such projects to the Nation every few years.' The full tribal council has yet to hear the proposal, and it would have to be approved at General Council, where voting tribal members decide on major decisions and elect the 14-member tribal council.

"Said Regina Jerry of the White Swan Shaker church, 'The idea of putting any kind of development on the mountain in the closed sec-

tion of the Yakama Reservation would be a terrible violation. Tribal leaders were sworn to an oath to protect the things that re sacred to our people.'

"The closed area consists of more than 600,000 acres from Ahtanum Ridge to below Satus Pass. Only enrolled Yakama tribal members are allowed to practice sacred food gatherings, such as berry picking, root digging, and hunting and fishing. Outsiders need tribal permission to enter and must be accompanied by a tribal member.

"The tribe closed this portion of the reservation to protect wildlife and the natural habitat. A 49-year boundary dispute with the federal government ended in 1972 in return of the eastern half of Mount Adams to the Yakama Nation."

(Until then, this part of the Mount Adams Wilderness and adjoining National Forest lands were protected by the Wilderness Act.)

Ridding the Recreation Access Tax (The RAT)

In the 10 days since Representative Regula's Recreation Access Tax was sneaked onto the Omnibus Appropriations bill, dozens of articles and editorials have been published. All but one have been critical of the new tax and the underhanded way in which such unpopular legislation was rammed through. Links to these articles are provided at www.wildwilderness.org/docs/feedemo.htm

Even more interesting is what elected officials are saying. Senators and House members are livid at the arrogance of Mr. Regula. Many are speaking of revising the RAT when Congress reconvenes.

The RAT was slipped onto the Omnibus bill by people who knew that the program lacked adequate support to be passed into law by normal legislative procedures. — Scott Silver, <wildwilderness.org>

Rider on House bill could make recreation fees permanent

New 10-year public lands access fee program includes high fines and possible jail time for violators

Metbow Valley News
Patrick Hannigran
December 2, 2004

Feel like taking the kids out for a hike? Starting in 2005, you'd better have your new

WHAT EVERYBODY'S GETTING FOR XMAS...

"America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass," or a day strolling the public lands surrounding the Methow Valley could cost you \$5,000 and six months in jail.

Buried in the 3,000-page appropriations bill currently being considered by Congress is a new version of the National Recreation Fee Demonstration Program, which established the fee commonly called "the Forest Pass" in 1996. While the new fee program has not yet become law, passage of the measure appears likely. The bill is attached to the \$388 billion appropriations measure that provides funding for much of the U.S. government.

The new bill, which would replace Fee Demonstration Program, is called the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. It would dramatically increase the penalties for non-compliance, extend the fee program for 10 years, and expand the program to include federal lands managed by the Bureau of Reclamation as well as the Forest Service, National Park Service, Bu-



Cartoon – Gavel McNeil, *Idaho Mountain Express*, December 1, 2004

reau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Passage of the appropriations bill—which includes the new fee program—was delayed after the discovery of a controversial clause that would have allowed members of Congress to peruse individual tax returns. The Senate has already approved a new version of the spending bill, which drops the unpopular tax clause, but retains the language establishing the new federal lands fee program.

From *The Hightower Lowdown*, July 2004

... The Bushites are laissez-faire purists striving for their ideal of a corporate-run state. Not only does this mean removing public restrictions on corporate power, but also removing anything and everything that has the word "public" attached to it — from education to Social Security, housing to health care, national forests to our local water supplies. Their extremist anti-government agenda, culled from a sprawling clutter of right-wing corporate-funded think tanks, is so sweeping and is being pursued so energetically that one can imagine them holding pre-dawn pep rallies each day in the White House . . .

It's our "commons" that they're out to eliminate. The commons are both the common wealth that all of us own together, and the public institutions that we've established for our common good. The commonwealth includes such physical assets as our air, airwaves, pure water, the ozone layer, and all of nature, as well as such intangible assets as human rights and liberties. The public institutions of the com-

mons runs the gamut from our national treasury to schools, water systems, wildlife preserves, elections, postal service and parks.

TAKING THE COMMONS, AGAIN

Bush and company are not merely trying to take us back to the Gilded Age of pre-New Deal, robber baron corporatism, but also all the way back to the "enclosure movement" of 18th-century England. Back then, with the blessing of parliament, the dukes and barons of the aristocracy suddenly laid claim to the forests, meadows, wild game, and other resources that, up to then, all had shared (and the peasantry had literally relied on for sustenance), enclosing these commons as the private property of the elite.

Three centuries later, here we go again, for Bush has blessed a gold rush by today's corporate elites to privatize our commons. . . .

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WILD SKY BILL LIKELY DEAD THIS CONGRESS

RICK MCGUIRE

Supporters of the Wild Sky Wilderness have resigned themselves to the likely failure of Congress to pass the bill this session. As this issue of TWC goes to press, the House Resources Committee, chaired by Richard Pombo, R-Calif, failed to consider the bill, which means the full House is unlikely to take it up. The bill has twice passed the Senate.

Pombo has made it clear that he is no fan of Wilderness or even of public lands. He made a great show earlier this year of declaring that the wishes of members in whose districts proposed Wilderness areas were located would be given great weight, as well as that of the delegations of affected states. The proposed Wild Sky Wilderness lies entirely within the 2nd Congressional district of Washington, represented by Rick Larsen, a sponsor and strong proponent of the bill. Apparently, Pombo's deference to local Members extends only to opponents of Wilderness. The Wild Sky bill contains some areas which were previously logged, most of

which now support mature 70 to 80 year old, naturally regenerated second growth forest. Pombo seized upon this to stop the bill, claiming that only totally pristine places could be designated under the "letter" of the Wilderness Act. This is patently absurd - Congress has designated many places as Wilderness which have contained old roads or mines, or previously logged areas, including a number of examples in Washington state within the Pasayten, Glacier Peak, The Brothers, Goat Rocks, and other areas. Some Wilderness areas in eastern states were 100% logged in the past.

Murray and Larsen have indicated their intentions to re-introduce the bills next year. Both won high praise from Wilderness supporters and editorial boards for sticking to their original proposal and not accepting Nethercutt's version with the "good stuff" removed. Good things take time, and it looks like the Wild Sky will take some time.

Gold in Them Thar Hills

The October 9, 2004 *Post-Intelligencer* reports that members of The Lands Council, part of Westerners for Responsible Mining, went out October 7 to 20 acres of public land next to the "posh subdivision" of Canfield Mountain, near Hayden Lake, Idaho, drove a stake in the ground, and thereby, under the Mining Law of 1872, privatized all the gold, copper, and precious jewels.

A spokesperson for the Bureau of Land Management comments that staking such claims is perfectly legal. There is no major effort in Congress to amend the ancient law, which the National Mining Association insists is essential to the nation's economic health.

Mike Peterson of The Lands Council says other groups in "California, Montana, Seattle, Idaho, Colorado, and New Mexico . . . will be staking claims next to neighborhoods, ski areas, and hiking trails."

Let the festivities begin. Bring on the dancing girls.

NATIONAL PARKS *REALLY* IN PERIL

SCOTT SILVER, WILD WILDERNESS

Assuming the Bush administration does NOT significantly increase funding for the parks, then the only remaining solution will be to further increase the reliance upon USER-FEES. That, of course, is where the recreation user-fee issue began when in 1982 Ronald Reagan proposed CUTTING park budgets by 25 percent and replacing that money with user-fees.

The narrowly focused messaging of National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA) and other organizations who have repeatedly pointed to inadequate funding of the parks while saying nothing about the larger and directly related issues of fees, commercialization and privatization are backfiring. Those efforts are increasing support for user-fees while doing little to increase funding for the

parks. And so when user-fees prove to be an inadequate and ineffective solution, and when Congress and free-market ideologues convince editorial boards that there simply isn't any more money available to give to the parks (what with the war on terrorism, etc.), then editorial boards all across the nation will tell their readers that commercialization and privatization are the only avenues remaining with which to "Save" the parks.

When that happens the public nature of public parks will be destroyed and, to be blunt, the failure of NPCA and others to focus their message correctly will be partially to blame. The failure of conservation groups to become actively, and courageously, engaged in this issue will also de-

serve much of the blame.

Wild Wilderness does not oppose NPS entrance fees. We recently supported legislation to make them permanent, though we adamantly oppose similar fees for the USFS, BLM, FWS and other agencies. We understand that the national parks are in peril and we understand that they have been intentionally PLACED in peril. We understand that Fee-Demo was created not to save the parks, but to advance a political / ideological / commercial agenda. And unlike NPCA, we recognize, and are prepared to publicly state, that the "solution" that has long been planned for the national parks is to commercialize and privatize them. Who else will stand up and fight for the parks????

THE RECENT VERY COMMERCIAL ADVENTURE QUEST

KEVIN GERAGHTY



SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER
AUGUST 23, 2004

When I first heard that western Washington and the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie would this fall experience the “Subaru Primal Quest,” currently North America’s most publicized “adventure race,” I tried to make some sense of it.

Invented by a Frenchman who had an epiphany while viewing Patagonia from a helicopter (or perhaps while suffering boredom during a transatlantic sailing passage, accounts differ) the activity was brought to the United States in 1995 by Californian Mark Burnett who “understood that there was marketing potential in America for a race that blended extreme sports with human interest stories.”

One claim made by advocates of this activity, the “new sport for the new millennium”, as they say, is that it represents a “return to the great outdoors” by fitness enthusiasts who, weary of marathons and triathlons, “venture beyond the clubs and embrace more natural surroundings.”

Another unobvious claim is that it is, well, adventurous. The “Primal Quest” web site had this gem of lush publicist prose:

“Adventure racing traces its roots to the great maritime trade expeditions of explorers such as Columbus, Magellan and Cook...”

Starting in the 19th century, legendary explorers such as Lewis & Clark, Amundsen and Byrd mounted extremely challenging expeditions to the far reaches of the globe, searching for mythologized destinations and riches.”

“By the late 1980s, the world was picked over; the highest peaks climbed, the largest deserts crossed, the oceans sailed and the skies crisscrossed by space exploration. Into this void stepped the Raid Gauloises, a race that sought to reconnect man with nature, to reclaim the spirit of discovery and adventure...”

But what, specifically, were the latter-day Columbus, Magellans, and Cooks called upon to do? “Subaru Primal Quest 2004”, billed as “earth’s richest adventure” (a

reference perhaps to the \$250,000 purse), was to cover roughly 400 miles and last 5-10 days. It was supposed to consist of 17 separate legs involving paddling sea kayaks on Puget Sound and on the Skagit River, “trekking” (trail and cross-country travel), mountain biking, orienteering, “ropes” (jumaring up fixed lines and rappelling down), pulling the sea kayaks on wheeled dollies along an 11-mile road course, roller-blading and push-scootering on pavement, and walking about on the Easton Glacier on Mount Baker. In terms of distance, kayaking (Puget Sound and the lower Skagit) and mountain-biking segments (largely on roads) accounted for roughly three-quarters of the projected length. Everything else added together comprised the remaining quarter.

The contestants were teams of four, each composed of three men and a woman, and were required generally to stay in close contact with each other, on pain of disqualification. The course started and ended on Orcas Island. There were staffed checkpoints, 40 in all, which team members had to pass through. There were “transition points” where participants changed one kind of gear for another. Each four-person participant team had a two-person “support team” to marshal and move their gear about, feed them, and so forth. There were also large numbers of volunteers, paid helpers, handlers, minders, media people, photographers, and clattering helicopters. The entry fee was a stiff \$7500 for each of the 56 teams.

There was much about this event which I

initially found nonsensical. What was adventurous about roller-blading or wheeling kayaks across the Skagit delta on dollies? What was the point of jumaring up and rappelling down fixed ropes? Climbers would regard such an activity as mere tedious exercise, potentially hazardous, of course, but not demanding any actual climbing skills.

And in what sense were these groups of four “teams”? Certainly no activity they were engaging in really demanded more than a single person. The natural unit for climbing (as opposed to going up and down fixed ropes) is two, but no real climbing was done during this race. Kayaks commonly come in singles and pairs. Why not, then, have pairs and singles in the race? And why the requirement of three men and a woman? Would it not make more sense to have men’s and women’s divisions, as is the near-universal custom in other forms of racing?

No, none of this seemingly gratuitous baroque complexity made the least sense until one recognized that the design of the event was shaped by marketeers and driven largely by commercial considerations. The event was the raw material for a TV show, to be viewed by ignorant and jaded sofa-nauts, so it really didn’t matter that going up and down fixed ropes demanded no skill at all. What mattered was that it provide spectacle and look adventurous on TV.

And as for roller-blading, scootering, and kayak-carting, it offered variety to the viewer and an opportunity to model yet another kind of outdoor gear, and hence attract another group of corporate sponsors.

The mandatory inclusion of a woman in each synthetic team would of course open up a number of human-interest angles and speculations to the viewers, and perhaps serve to attract more female sofa-nauts. Anyone with the stamina to watch network Olympic coverage is familiar with the corporate strategy of sweetening sports broadcasts with extraneous human interest treacle. As regards the basic requirement of a “team”, allowing individuals or pairs to race would, perhaps, let the cat out of the bag that this course, admittedly arduous, was in fact not some death-defying route only to be attempted by a “team of experts.”

The decision to make this a continuous, as opposed to a stage race, was a striking one. “Grueling” is not a bad description of a five-to seven-day continuous race, of any sort, even, say, an egg-and-spoon race. Were one interested in athleticism, in appreciating and re-

warding physical and mental skill, a stage race would arguably be a better format. Participants punch-drunk, gibbering, and hallucinating from sleep deprivation do not demonstrate much style nor think or perform at their best. But they do offer some compelling viewing, at least in small doses, and they certainly add to the story line that this is an “extreme” event.

Clearly the format rewarded physical fitness, endurance, and the willingness to tolerate sleep deprivation. Skill in route-finding, mountain biking, and paddling were also requisites. None of the disciplinary skills required were of a very high order, however. Some browsing of race accounts, on-line team biographies, blogs, and publicity shots available on line revealed a few patterns. Most of the participants (52 of 56 teams) were not from the Northwest. Most did not appear to have any deep familiarity with mountains, marine environments, or traditional wilderness travel skills. Aside from one Northwest team, there were no self-described climbers, wilderness enthusiasts, or sea kayakers. The common thread was participation in aerobic fitness events like triathlons, ultramarathons, and mountain-bike races.

The race did not work out as planned. September snows on Mount Baker led to the cancellation of the Easton Glacier loop. And on the third day of the race a member of one of the two leading teams, who were traveling together at that point, was killed on Illabot Peak. This led to a hiatus of over a day, and when the race resumed it was effectively shortened significantly by replacing two difficult off-trail segments (on one of which the fatality occurred) with road biking.

Illabot Peak, is an obscure 3rd- or perhaps low 4th-class summit, overlooking the Sauk valley and just west of the Glacier Peak Wilderness. The summit block is exposed and unforgiving of clumsy errors, but a straightforward ascent in good conditions for someone who does North Cascades scrambles. In the dark, in the wet, or under conditions of sleep deprivation and inexperience, it is hazardous. Third-class climbing, because typically traveled unroped, is in many respects riskier than technically more difficult, but belayed, 5th-class climbing. One of the lead group of two teams, roughly four hours ahead of their nearest pursuer, stated in an account of the accident that on the ascent “The terrain was very loose, slippery and exposed. We’d all discussed how technical the climb seemed and wondered why there wasn’t a fixed rope.” The accident occurred on the descent, when the party of eight, spread out, were descending a gully:

“[It was] a steep, rocky gully with quite a bit of loose rock, but we could at least see that it ran all the way to the bottom. Nigel started down into the gully first to check it out. We all followed in, one by one. With six of us in the gully, a large rock dislodged from the top bit-

ting John Jacoby in the leg and pinballing down past the rest of us in the gully. Nigel was furthest down, and the rock ended up hitting him in the head.”

Other accounts make clear that the rock was set moving by one of the party, perhaps by one of the two at the top who had not yet started to descend. Party-induced rockfall is, of course, a classic gotcha of alpine climbing. It is one reason why small parties of two are preferred, and why party members stay close together when descending loose gullies. Stringing a large group up and down a loose couloir is asking for trouble.

In hindsight, it’s pretty easy to see that Illabot should not have been included in the race. A pleasant outing, perhaps, for a small party, experienced with 3rd-class terrain and loose rock, but an accident-in-waiting if traversed by several hundred tired, underslept contestants, many of whom lacked experience moving on steep subalpine ground. And unfortunately, the knack of moving through this kind of terrain efficiently and in relative safety isn’t something that can be learned in a book, or practiced at the local climbing gym if one lives in a mountain-free area. Imposing “certifications,” and equipment checklists, as this race did, is a flawed answer to skill and knowledge deficits. It’s easy enough to require people to carry some totemic item of safety equipment, or make sure they know the mechanics of rappelling, but very hard to test them on whether they know how to move in the mountains and whether their mountain judgment is any good. It is sobering that this classic novice accident occurred to the two lead teams, presumably among the strongest and most competent in the race.

An account of the 2002 “Primal Quest” in the January 2003 issue of *Outside Magazine* recounts situations very similar to the Illabot mishap, but with luckier outcomes:

“... we noticed boulders rolling past us and scampered to the sides of the chute, where we stopped and shouted at the teams above us to cut it the hell out. Too late. A boulder the size of a truck tire came rumbling out of the darkness. Illuminated by someone’s headlamp, the rock wobbled through the air like an onside kick, picking up speed. Two teams froze in the middle of the chute. It plowed right through the trailing team, and a woman screamed, from either fright or pain.”

It may be that the California Sports Marketing, Inc. corporate creator of “Primal Quest”, will be chastened by this death. Maybe not, though. After all, what better indicator of the coveted quality of “extremeness” than a contestant’s death? And there is, arguably, a structural problem here, a problem endemic



Illabot Peak

KEVIN GERAGHTY

to what one might call the “safe danger” or “pre-digested adventure” industry. That is, an aura of risk, of hazard, of derring-do, is what draws participants and sponsors. At the same time, it is understood on some level by the participants that the organizers of this activity will keep them safe and that the substantive risks and requirements of skill and experience are in fact low. This in turn, leads participants to blindly trust the organizers, to abrogate their own judgment, or never to develop any in the first place. And it would appear that in pursuit of zip, pizzazz, extremeness, and good visuals, the race organizers ignored or forgot how little in terms of mountain or paddling savvy could be expected of their retreat triathlete participants.

If “Primal Quest” were nothing but a manufactured reality TV sportainment presented with transparent disingenuousness as exploratory high adventure, it wouldn’t merit much more than a laugh. But the PQ represents an unabashedly commercial and arguable heavy-handed recreational use of public lands. If “adventure racing” is, as some claim, the coming thing, it behooves us to take a close look at the effects of this first high-profile event on local wild public lands.

Climbers familiar with the granite climbs of the Clear Creek watershed near Darrington were one group who turned out to be vocally dissatisfied with the way “Primal Quest” was conducted. Exfoliation Dome, the biggest hunk of exposed granite in the Clear Creek valley, was described by Fred Beckey as “quite possibly the most difficult 4,000-foot peak in the state of Washington. This same Exfoliation Dome, spotted from a helicopter by race organizers, was the site of the “ropes” segment of the “Primal Quest”.

Continued on page 20

Tales from the Walla Walla Toll Road

HARVEY MANNING

THE SEATTLE-WALLA WALLA TOLL ROAD

In 1883 A.A. Denny and H.L. Yesler opened the Seattle-Walla Walla Toll Road, the first dependable cross-Cascades wheelway. In 1892 the

6.2 miles of 14-foot right-of-way up Grouse Ridge were signed over to King County. Trees fell, creeks gullied, weeds grew. But in 1905 the first cars crossed Snoqualmie Pass, helped here and there by ferry, teams of horses, and shoulders to the wheel.

Poking about in a pile of yellowing guidebooks, I came upon this manifesto in the 1978 edition of *Footsore 2*:

The South is the Fork of the Snoqualmie River that everybody knows. The valley is a straight shot from Seattle-Tacoma. . . One would suppose the authorities long ago would have provided a wealth of recreational opportunities. One would suppose wrong. The recreational development is mostly up in the snow country. Hikers smother the Alpine Lakes Wilderness with affection . . . To divert boots from tender wilderness, to lengthen the hiking season, to give North Bend something to do now it has lost the highway through town, haste should be made to develop a Cascade Gateway Recreation Area.

However, not until the 1990 extravaganza by the Issaquah Alps Trails Club, the five-day, 88-mile "Mountains-to-Sound March," did those Authorities get the wax out of their ears.

The "gateway" was not my invention, my Newton's apple or funny-papers light-bulb. Nor was it new to me in 1978. Half a century earlier I'd flown high in the swings, bumped up and down on the teeter-totters, and whirled around in the kid-gang, foot-powered whirligig at Maloney's Grove, then roasted weenies and

#1 BANDERA MOUNTAIN

marshmallows over the campfire and been lullabied to sleep by the river. But the Olmsteds, whether or not they ever hoofed it up the overgrown Walla Walla Toll road of 1883, surely got the glimmer as they stuck steak knives in T-bones that had walked over Snoqualmie Pass from the Okanogan.

The North Bend Ranger District was notoriously oblivious to humans being differentiated from other animals not by attached wheels but efficient bipedal propulsion. The rangers did not — upon Tom Miller's throwing the switch that zapped the lightning bolt into the wildland — exclaim (as did the lab assistant in the Frankenstein movie) "IT'S ALIVE!" Our *100 Hikes in Western Washington* found, in 1968, only one trail between Mount Si and the Pin Peaks of Snoqualmie Pass worth our focus: Mac's Butt.

In 1971 our first edition of *100 Hikes in the Alpine Lakes* doubled the number. No thanks to Smokey Bear. His favored clientele was the multiple-abusers who in the name of the "greatest good" bang motorcycles through the stumps and blast pistols at rockchucks and anything else that moves. Bandera Mountain was my idea.

A springtime Sunday of the late 1960s I set out by beetle to survey the South Fork, accompanied by five-year-old Buddy Pal, Claudia, and

the Sheep Dog with the Piebald Eyes, Natasha. Buddy Pal asked "Where we going, daddy?" I replied "Exploring." Several destinations I'd been eyeing rebuffed us (other tales for other times). The hour had come to let Natasha into the snack sack she'd been sniffing and go home. Wise to the ways of wildlands, Buddy Pal counseled me, "Daddy, you don't get no place 'sploring."

However. . .

In 1958, returning home from peddling books in the Rocky Mountains, I'd passed a forest fire on slopes of the ridge above the Bandera Air Strip. Now I turned off the highway on a logging road that switchbacked to the lower margin of the burn. Cat tracks, then a clamber over and under blackened logs brought us out in subalpine fields — a charcoaled Buddy Pal and sheep dog and an explorer guilty of gross cruelty to children and animals. The final ascent to the summit — which for guidebook purposes I called (perhaps christened) "Bandera" — had a splendid show of beargrass in bloom. On the descent, after the snack sack was plundered, I found the firefighters' scramble path at the burn edge, trail enough.

Supplied route directions, my then photographer got as far as the beargrass. In 2004 a shrine was built there in memory of his camera.

#2 MOUNT DEFIANCE

The Bandera road crossed Mason Creek, tumbling from one of the Boy Scout Lakes, holes in the ground filled with water and hatchery trout, ringed in summer by troops of boys slapping mosquitoes and barfing raw bacon and uncooked hotcakes. I'd heard that fishbaggers had booted out a path to Mason Lake. That was of minus interest to me but as a shortcut to the Middle Fork Snoqualmie-Denny Creek mainline trail enabled an easy day's ascent of Mount Defiance. The highest geography in the neighborhood, this peak was required by the second edition of *100 Hikes in the Alpine Lakes*, due out in 1985, to join Mac's Butt and Bandera Mountain as a third destination between Mount Si and the Pin Peaks.

I hadn't climbed far from the road before realizing the fishway must be across the creek but

feeling muscular that morning I elected to stick with my mistake. Sidehilling the creek canyon was a hip-dislocator, so I drifted westward onto the gentler grade of the Snoqualmie valley wall. Scrub forest and brush opened out nicely to the felsenmeer that is nigh-ubiquitous in the area, granite blocks the size of refrigerators, Volkswagens, and prospectors' cabins. Hop-skippping, grasshopper-like, from block to block was deserving of choreography by Balanchine, a spice of peril added to the dance by looking down the gaps to darkness.

I intersected the mainline trail where it contoured the southwest slopes of Defiance in a flower field as gaudy as any I've seen in the Snoqualmie area, and the closest of the sort to the Cascade front. The trail obviously was fated to become a famous favorite of the new Alpine

Lakes Wilderness. Already, in 1975, it had been the final leg of Stan Unger's solo walk from Seattle's Discovery Park to Snoqualmie Pass, waving the flag for a group wishing to stress the spiritual connection of the Whulge to the Cascade Crest. In 1981 it had been the opening leg of the March to Gasworks Park led for The Mountaineers by Jim Whittaker to protest the Reagan-Watts scheme to drill holes in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness to get the magma on the Northwest Power Grid.

There's more history in that area than is dreamt on in our guidebooks. In 'sploring Bandera, we'd come upon a small granite felsenmeer traversed by a trail built long ago to packhorse standards. I followed it east and west to the edge of the rockery — to vanishings in subalpine greenery. Where did it come from?

Where did it go? Who built it? When? Why? A ghost trail in the sky . . .

Buddy Pal, knowledgeable in mountain felsenmeer, had informed me, "Marmots live here." I expressed a doubt, heard the squeals of a rock rabbit, and said, "Well, *conies*." A whistle. Score one for the kid. That's the farthest-west Cascades marmot I've ever heard.

The summit of Defiance was a quick amble. The mainline then took me easterly toward Mason Lake. Not immediately to it. The mountain rounded to an easterly exposure. The trail entered felsenmeer and disappeared under snow. Between granite blocks holes were melting out. At any step my boots might make a

new hole. They'd never know where to look for my bones. On glaciers I've often stepped in holes but usually was roped and always had companions to laugh at the comical look on my face.

The basin of Mason Lake was solid white, no clue in the forest to the fishbagger path. A short plug up snow to the shoulder of Bandera took me back to the beetle.

For guidebook purposes I returned another day to check out the trail. Expletives deleted. Witless Dan'l Boones equipped with many-colored ribbons had flagged many many treacherous routes in a Minotaur's labyrinth of jumbled granite and bottomless pits. Ribbonry without

end, hardhats with no brains, and the saints come marchin' in, ignorant volunteerism run amok.

I later learned the wilderness rangers were equally disgusted. In *55 Hikes Around Snoqualmie Pass*, 2001, I opined that the rational route to Mason Lake was over the Bandera shoulder. My opining carried no weight with the Smokeys and their free-parking volunteers. However, in 2004 somebody suffered an attack of smartness and caused the right thing to be done. A convocation of hardhats carried bouquets and pebbles, tokens of devotion, to the Bandera shoulder to dedicate the "Ira Spring Trail."

#3 MOUNT WASHINGTON

When the state decided to pave the highway east of North Bend, Dad lucked into a job shoveling sand, gravel, and Portland cement into the concrete mixer that spewed slurry into a parade of wheelbarrows. A couple of Sundays that summer Mother and I drove up to visit him at his tent camp beneath Mac's Butt. Neither that nor any other South Fork summit triggered my conquistador instincts until 1947, when a prankster inveigled Betty and me up the South Face of The Tooth, whereupon I set to work wiping out the Pin Peaks.

The portal peaks at the Cascade front lacked whatever it was that got my blood racing on the South Face. My blood boiled instead as I watched log-haul roads climb, year by year, to the highest reach of forests.

They stopped only because the Northern Pacific Land Grant failed to privatize the clouds. Conrad Kain, legendary guide of the Canadian Rockies and Selkirks, is said to have said, "Men can go where clouds can go, but they must be sturdy men." We local sturdies had to supplement the steadily dwindling close-to-home wilderness with the steadily growing ex-forests. When the boiling slowed to a simmer, a mas-

ochist could take sick satisfaction in the handiwork of Paul Bunyan and the Blue Ox. Truckways abandoned to become footroads gave viewpoints for reflecting on civitas. So Mount Washington called me.

The obvious access from the Snoqualmie Pass Highway was a one-truck-wide half-road at the terminal moraine of the Canadian glacier. The turnoff, though, was so sharp that I had to slow nearly to a foot-pace, and every time I considered doing so an over-the-hump behemoth attached to the rear bumper of my beetle. Above the moraine, the highway shoulder was parkable and a short clamber gained the railroad tracks but a long trestle guaranteed that when a train came (and they still did) the night's menu would be hamburger and no potatoes. A trail from Herpicide Spire (another trip, another place) was wanted. A group of Issaquah Alpinists announced intentions. I haven't checked recently to see how they are coming.

The *Bulletin* of The Mountaineers, to which I paid dues for a half-century until expelled as a troublemaker, began announcing walks to the "Owl Hike Spot." Lo, it started from where the half-road had been before US 10 became I-90

and Olallie State Park was established. In *55 Hikes Around Snoqualmie Pass*, 2001, I wrote how "off I went until my Shelties were shivering in belly-deep (theirs) snow." The North Bend Plain spread below from Rattlesnake and the Issaquah Alps to Si. The half-road was a gas, ingeniously threading over and under cliffs. I pictured Dirty Harry (another story, another place) in his beat-up old truck, the outer wheels hanging partly over space, him singing "Nearer My God to Thee."

I never bothered with the summit. Low adventure, the jest of our chosen few, was becoming what Pin Peaking used to be for clubbies. (My *Footsores* presumably had something to do with this, though mine eyes were far from being first to glory in the wildness within.) A subculture had beribboned the maze of cat tracks on Washington and championed favorite routes in letters to the editor, wall posters, and fist fights. Our private fun was spoiled.

I do not guarantee the details of the route in *55 Hikes*. I concluded my translation from ribbonry-entangled prose with a note to the reader: "There now, wasn't that fun? Somebody owes you a pin."

#4 MAILBOX PEAK

Chances are nobody ever spent as much time as me trying to figure how to get up the Portal Peaks at the mouth of the hanging trough of the South Fork Snoqualmie. The joke (on me) is that I never "summitted" either one. Will Rogers used to conclude his humorous reflections on the political scene in Washington City, such as wondering whether Silent Cal, when the photographers made him wear an Indian war bonnet, ever felt the urge to give a war whisper, by saying, "All I know is what I read in the papers."

The top of the ridge extending west from Mount Defiance was tantalizing. The views certainly had to equal or surpass those from Mount Si. More significantly, whenever driving by on the way to postholing in the Pin Peaks, I noted

that this peak's southwest slopes were melted to the felsenmeer while Snoqualmie Pass remained crotch-deep in winter.

I hypothesized approaches from every side and scouted a couple. Then, in 1991, a *Signpost* article render my pioneering obsolete. Sally Pfeiffer described a trail to the summit, for which she suggested the name "Mailbox" because the register book was in an old, heavy, green mailbox (a "collectible" that some Collector now has in his secret trophy room for private gloating). Notes in the box dated to the 1950s. Sally estimated the trail was built no later than 1940.

Warren Jones later informed me the trail originally began at Valley (sic) Camp, retreat

of the Lutheran Layman League. Clearcutting has obliterated the first mile. I found the existing start off a logging road at a tiny sign, "4841".

Sally and Warren and company initiated the public march-march-march. My 1991 guidebook, *Hiking the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway*, doubtless set more feet in motion.

Not mine. Dan'l Boone's work had been done by others. I followed the example of Mark Twain, who for his book *Innocents Abroad* did the mandatory tourist walk to the Riffelalp, where he dutifully boiled the thermometer (and also the barometer, not sure which instrument tourists were supposed to boil) but despatched his assistant to do the obligatory climb of the Matterhorn.

#5 DIRTY HARRY

The first I heard of him, in 1977, was an unimproved road shown on a State Highway engineers' map, labeled, "Dirty Harry's Logging Road." This struck me as a gratuitous slur by a public agency, but not so. "Dirty Harry" was what he liked to be called by his North Bend friends, who were legion, looking on him as their local (sort of) Paul Bunyan. For many years his business and pleasure was purchasing cutting rights to timber on private land that didn't interest big operators and chainsawing scraggly, next-to-worthless forests to desolation, practicing logging methods subsequently outlawed, thanks in no small part to the horrors he committed in full view of travelers on the Main Street of the Northwest. He was the despair of the Forest Service and Weyerhaeuser, which tried in vain to shunt him off to out-of-the-way places where he wouldn't give the timber industry such a flagrant black eye.

—from *Hiking the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway*, 1983, and *55 Hikes Around Snoqualmie Pass*, 2001.

My great regret is missing out (several times by minutes) on meeting Harry Gault, Quintessential Gypo. (A note in passing: the spelling "gyppo" is the usage of journalists who never

met one. The correct spelling derives from the Old Country, as in Gypo Nolan, the Irish Republican Army traitor in Flaherty's novel, *The Informer*.) The Forestry Club at the University once invited me to a friendly evening's shootout. They tried to get Harry to come for a face-to-face but Seattle was too far off the edge of his world.

His road system and forest-mangling were familiar sights from US 10 for years but by the time I tried to get there his timber bridge over the Snoqualmie River was gone. My first entry, therefore, in 1977, was from the North Bend Plain via the 1882 Seattle-Walla Walla Toll Road. Atop Grouse Ridge, as the moraine of the Canadian glacier is called at this point, I gazed over the plain to the smog of Seattle. In mind's ear I heard the putt-putt-bang of AYP road-racers, the creaking of wagon wheels, the mooing of Okanogan cattle en route to the butcher shop, the muttering of Original Inhabitants on the way to attack the real estate speculators in their Seattle stockade, the glacier dropping boulders.

Turning to face east, I boggled at the hugest gravel mine in the Western Hemisphere if not the Solar System, a vast silence of naked glacial drift (subsequently to become a state fire-fighting training center). At 6.2 miles from Ken's Truck Town (the official distance, the bankrupt toll road having been deeded to King County), was the site of Harry's fallen bridge and the junction of the Walla Walla-road-that-was with

the concrete of the I-90-that-was-becoming.

Harry's road didn't fool with switchbacks, went straight up the fall line, boulders and snowmelt torrents be damned. Where it finally slanted off west, I sidetripped east to "Dirty Harry's Balcony" and its cliff-brink view down to bugs scurrying east and west on the Main Street. At 3000 feet, where the road crossed a creek, was an impressive assemblage of machinery scavenged from junkyards and kicked and cussed up here for a final rest in "Dirty Harry's Museum."

The road ended on the 4650-foot summit of "Dirty Harry's Peak." I tried to count rings in the skinny little stumps but lacking a magnifying glass had to give up. Most of the trees were rotten at the core — Harry hauled perhaps one in five to the mill, left the rest of the tiny ancients to lay where he felled them. What sort of mill would bother with his scrawny mountain hemlock? A peckerwood, sibling of the gypo.

Curiosity had bested my good sense. The summit was no proper place to be watching the sun set. The shades of night were falling fast. Legs quailed at the miles of gravel mine and Grouse Ridge to Ken's Truck Town. I stumbled across the river on not-yet-open lanes of new freeway. My thumb, Depression-trained, was caught in the headlights of an over-the-hump trucker, Depression-trained Samaritan. Betty would not have to call my buddies, who would save me from the mercies of Mountain Rescue but would laugh and laugh and laugh.

ORVs: *Lullaby of the Wheels*

In a recent issue of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Robert McClure reported reactions to President Bush's telling the U.S. Forest Service to designate "trails available for ORV use." Some 5.2 million acres in Western Washington, or nearly one-eighth of the state are affected. "Nationally, ORV users increased seven-fold over the past three decades to more than 36,000,000. Much of the increase came in the past decade. The number of ATVs, for example, grew 40 percent from 1997 to 2001. The number of ATV drivers rose by over a third and the number of hours driven went up 50 percent."

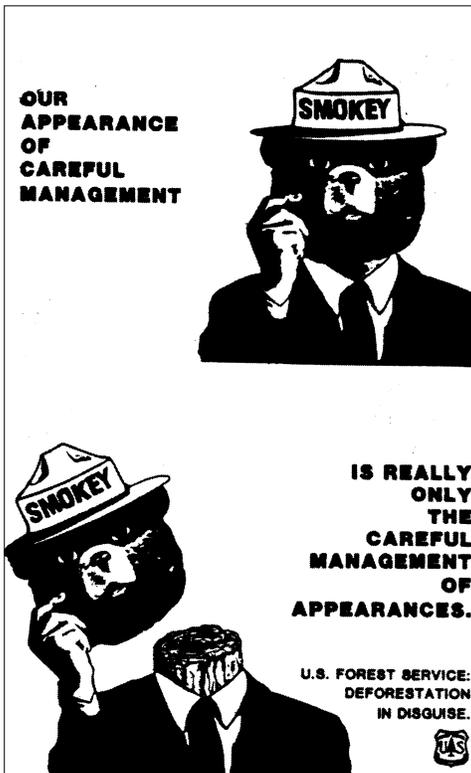
Chief Forester Dale Bosworth, who a year ago listed unmanaged ORV use as one of the four top threats to the ecological health of the National Forests, "waxed eloquent" about Bush's order. However, the Washington Wilderness Coalition pointed out that no deadline was set for re-examining trail-use policies and that "neither the Forest Service nor ORV riders would have a strong inducement to get the job done." In other words, same old same old. No progress is promised in settling such ORV-en-

vironmentalist disputes as those on the Dark Divide, Teanaway-Taneum, Mad River-Entiat, Manastash, and Foggy Dew.

Edward Jensen, a Ballard ORVer, is quoted by McClure: "What they (environmentalists) think is appropriate is for dirt-bike riders to be relegated to riding in a gravel pit in Federal Way."

Karl Forsgaard, responding to the statement that Mount Baker-Snoqualmie, Wenatchee, and Gifford Pinchot National Forests already have designated trails for ORVs, said "If they designated (trails for ORV use) without even having a look at what's appropriate, we'd say they need to go back and take that look. Where do we have sensitive wildlife? Where do we have sensitive soils? Where do we have an ecosystem that's more vulnerable to this kind of use?"

Forsgaard concluded, "In many cases they didn't go through that thought process. They simply designated as open to ORVs what they saw on the ground being used by ORVs."



Ring-A-Ding-Ding

A climbing party of three is the minimum. . . Rope up on all exposed places. . . Never let judgment be swayed by desire. . . la de da. . . There were, in the climbing community, surreptitious smirks and subdued snickers about the Climbing Code as “the ABC for Sissies.” However, 1960s orthodoxy approved the Climbing Course for distancing its textbook, *Freedom of the Hills*, from Gnostic Deepes, observing the model of the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. Similarly, the Golden Age of Hollywood segregated married couples in twin beds, hovered over by wings of the stork, and made sure that unmarried lovers watched their hands.

The times they did some changing. Millennium-end cable television unleashed in the suburban subdivisions a jamboree of naughty bits. Big-league climbing swung wide open the closet door on solo and ropeless. The Mount Everest industry shaved the “margin of safety” to accept into the glamorous Death Zone anybody with a \$65,000 ticket.

Times have a way of changing back. The Seventeenth-century Civil War in England ended when the country decided it wasn't ready for a Commonwealth and invited the Stuarts home from their wanderers. The continent of Europe, in 1550 half Lutheran-Calvinist-Anabaptist, after the Thirty Years War had all but a fifth returned to the Pope. The freedom of religion, of sex, of the hills — where might they lead, forward or back, oh dear oh dear what is to become of us?

Take the cell phone . . .

Terry Wood in the September 2 *Seattle Times* considered the pros and cons.

PRO: The search-and-rescue coordinator for the North Cascades National Park said: “About half our first notifications are by cell phone. If an accident happens at noon, we'd rather get the call then than at 8 p.m.”

CON: A spokesperson for National Parks and Conservation said: “Convenience and safety are two issues that get traction with the public, especially safety. Wilderness isn't supposed to be convenient or safe. That's not its purpose.”

Howard Zahniser, drafting what in 1964 became the Wilderness Act, was thinking Deep. The bureaucrats who now administer the law dare not wade beyond the pension-friendly Shallow end of the pool. The pedestrian public meekly stuffs heads in hardhats, pins a Northwest Forest Pass to shirts, seig-heils Smokey, and snuggles into bags murmuring, “Now I lay me down to sleep and pray the Asteroid my wilderness to keep.”

Cell phones, helicopters, wilderness outfitters, freedom of the wheel, money money money makes the world go round, the world go round.

H.M.

FAIR EXCHANGES AND RIPOFFS

When “unowned” lands were abundant and people few, the American citizenry was generally complacent about the Great Giveaway — the transfer of “unused” lands (that is, unused by humans, especially those of European descent) to hands which could put them to “good” uses (homesteads, railroads, mines). Eventually critics spoke up, notably Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot.

There was, however, an opposing view. Richard Ballinger, Secretary of the Interior from 1909 to 1911, said, “The chaps who are in favor of this conservation program are all wrong. In my opinion, the proper course to take with regard to this (public domain) is to divide it up among the big corporations and the people who know how to make money out of it.” Ballingerism is alive and well. But the spirit of “This is my land” also is thriving. See *Cascade Checkerboard News*, newsletter of the Sierra Club's Cascade Checkerboard Project, directed by Charlie Raines. Indispensable reading. (Contributions are welcome to the Sierra Club Foundation, 180 Nickerson #200, Seattle, WA 98109.) See too, *Land Exchange Update* from the Western Land Exchange Project, directed by Janine Blalock, covering the nine Western states. (Tax-deductible donations, P.O. Box 95545, Seattle, WA 98145-2545.)

Other groups working our side of the street include Cascade Conservation Partnership, Cas-

cade Land Conservancy, Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land. Confusing. But the more the merrier.

One major front is setting limits to urbanization of the between-mountains trough from British Columbia to the Columbia River, to preserve the quality of life in cities by protecting “the wildness within.”

Another is defending de facto “wildness without” by preventing recreational subdivision of commercial timberlands, as in the I-90 Mountains-to-Sound Greenway.

The laundry list is long. On the gigantic end of the scale, it includes a huge land-privatization bill promoted by the Nevada congressional delegation that would lead to selling off public steppe throughout the West. On the small end of the scale is the pending sweetheart deal in the Stehekin Valley between the National Park Service and the Courtney Empire.

John Maynard Keynes said in 1928, “The love of money is a somewhat disgusting morbidity, one of the semi-criminal, semi-pathological propensities which one hands over with a shudder to specialists in mental diseases.” Keynes was wrong. We don't hand them over to doctors, but to public officials who consider the plague to be no worse than a bad cold.

RUNNING

A runner is quoted at length in the October 21 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*: “Day hiking the whole Enchantments — about 18 miles with a gain of about 4000 feet — might be approaching the popularity of overnight visits. It's a major grunt . . . but strong hikers can do it without problems. My longtime best hiking buddy, his 29-year-old son, and I made it in 13 hours recently.”

Running is an invasion of public space. The runner takes over shared places — the narrow riverside, sidewalk, and nature path — for himself. With his speed and narcissistic intensity the runner corrupts the space of walking, thinking, talking and everyday contact. He jostles the idler out of his reverie, races around pedestrians in conversation, opposes sociability and solitude by publicly sweating on them.

When exercise does become truly shared, as in the aerobics that come close to dance, or the hard-core bodybuilding that is always erotic and fraternal, it nears sport or art. When done in a private home or in untenanted landscapes, or spontaneously, without formal method, apparatus, or counting, it recovers certain eccentric freedoms and private techniques of the self. Exercise that is not concerned with the creative process of reproduction or the pure discoveries of solitude, is a struggle to incarnate the shape and capabilities of others in the material of one's own body, without invention and without exchange.

— MARK GREIF, in *n+1*

MOUNTAIN GOAT RESEARCH IN THE NORTH CASCADES

POLLY DYER

John and I were ploughing through a couple feet of fresh snow on Mount Rainier when we came upon puzzling “ski” tracks. Around a bend we surprised the “skier,” who instantly rounded another bend and was gone. Two years later, in 1953, I was waiting in a meadow while John, Tom Miller, and Harvey Manning were making a third ascent of the couloir route on Forbidden Peak, when a nanny and kid strolled past, oblivious to my presence. Never again, in half a century of climbing and hiking in the Cascades, have I had the privilege of meeting a mountain goat. Call me unlucky, I guess. Some of my friends have hobnobbed with so many, so often, they run out of anecdotes. Betty Manning tells of being wakened in the night by a kid jumping up and down on her sleeping bag, the nanny standing by watching with maternal pleasure.

The North Cascades Conservation Council was alerted to the Cascades Mountain Goat Research Project by Phil Leatherman. The June 16, 2003 deadline for public response to the scoping document prepared by Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie

National Forest had passed. Thus we had no opportunity to comment. Following are excerpts from the 2003 scoping:

“The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest [MBS] proposes to allow the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife [WDFW] the use of helicopters to capture and collar mountain goats in the Mount Baker, Glacier Peak, and Boulder River Wilderness Areas, as well as non-wilderness areas, to accomplish a mountain goat research study. The study proposes to capture 20 goats in the North Cascades and outfit the goats with global positioning system (GPS) tracking collars. The goats would be tracked over several years . . . Mountain goats . . . have been declining for several decades. Multiple causes have been proposed to explain the decline; however, to date, none of these possible

causes have been verified in the decline of mountain goat numbers. Although the Mount Baker population appears to be increasing since hunting ceased in 1996, other populations do not appear to be recovering.

“ . . . Both trapping and stalking attempts to capture goats on the MBS were unsuccessful in 2002, so the use of helicopters is proposed to assist in the capture methods of darting (w/ tranquilizers), and net gunnings (shooting nets over animals from a helicopter). . . . Based on the unsuccessful attempts with drop nets and



Mountain goats in the Enchantments

ing and an animal on White Chuck that died sometime late this winter. There were no deaths due to capture last year.

“The only real results so far are from blood analyses. Based on those analyses, there is no indication that disease, selenium, or parasites are a factor in the regional population decline. Although not learned from the research itself, I did model the impacts of sport hunting on the population of goats and Mount Baker. I used detailed information on hunting reports from 1964 – 1995 and an estimated population size in 1961. The model results indicate that hunting was very likely a significant factor in the population decline. This may be true for other mountain goat populations, but none have been assessed yet. “The research has also revealed the location of wintering areas that were previously unknown.

“This summer WDFW will begin collecting data on how many goats are seen when conducting population surveys. Data will continue to be collected on habitat use. Other than some basic information on home range size, I would not expect any significant findings until next spring at the earliest.”

MARY LOU KRAUSE

I had also inquired about the “relation-

ships/effects, if any, on the Cascades populations from the mountain goats non-native to the Olympic Peninsula that may have been transported into the North Cascades some years ago.” [Note: Mountain goats did not occur naturally in the Olympics. Twelve from Alaska and British Columbia were introduced into the Olympics in the 1920s by hunters. These mountain goat numbers increased dramatically, with resultant impacts on rare and endangered plants in Olympic National Park and adjacent areas.]

stalking, the use of helicopters to net-gun or tranquilize goats is proposed as the minimal tool to capture and collar goats for the research project.

I contacted Don Gay, Wildlife Biologist with the Mt. Baker Ranger District. Following are excerpts from Mr. Gay’s e-mail response (June 2004):

“Since the research began less than 1 year ago (goats were collared in September of 2003), there are few detailed findings at this point. . . . Goat captures occurred last September and were successful, except in the Glacier Peak area. These goats seem to move off of Glacier Peak in the summer/early fall. An attempt will be made to capture goats on Glacier Peak earlier this year. There will also be some additional captures to replace collars that are malfunction-

ing about the “relation-

ships/effects, if any, on the Cascades populations from the mountain goats non-native to the Olympic Peninsula that may have been transported into the North Cascades some years ago.” [Note: Mountain goats did not occur naturally in the Olympics. Twelve from Alaska and British Columbia were introduced into the Olympics in the 1920s by hunters. These mountain goat numbers increased dramatically, with resultant impacts on rare and endangered plants in Olympic National Park and adjacent areas.]

Don Gay commented: “From what I know of the earlier transplants from the Olympics, goats were released on Pilchuck Mountain and in the Finney Block. Neither of these efforts established a population, so there should have no genetic impacts to the population, since it

appears that all of these animals eventually died. I don't believe that any of the Olympic goats were released in areas that were occupied, or near, native mountain goat populations."

Clifford Rice of WDFW shared with me some of the research concerns. From a 1983 study by R. L. Johnson, it had been observed fairly large numbers of mountain goats had been diminishing for some fifty years, particularly noticeable in several areas of the North Cascades, with lesser losses in other locations. Rice indicated there is very little "baseline information" relative to mountain goats in the state is to gain a comprehensive understanding of mountain goat habitat, how it is used, and what mountain goats appear to need. Further research access will be mostly on the ground; however, it is anticipated helicopters may be necessary at some times. A reference to research in other mountain goat areas (not the Cascades), mentioned the possible loss of nearby forests affecting mountain goat winter habitat.

Douglas McMurtrie, EPA Project Coordinator for the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, commented it has "never really been clear as to the cause of decline of the mountain goats." Mr. McMurtrie told me the reduced numbers of mountain goats in the Cascades was first noticed by Art Ryalls, a long-time Darrington resident. It was in the 1960s when the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe started to notice a rapid decline. It is possible research might reveal impacts from urban areas; such as, air pollution perhaps changing vegetation patterns. He also mentioned possible effects for mountain goat population decline might be from trophy hunting and from increased snowmobile access in the winter.

The Cascades mountain goat ecology research is anticipated to continue for several years, contingent, of course, on continued funding. In addition to the U.S. Forest Service and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, others participating in the research studies are the National Park Service, Western Washington University, the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, and the Stillaquamish Indian Tribe. Funding assistance is also being provided from Seattle City Light's Wildlife Research Program.

As the mountain goat ecology studies continue and reports are available, readers of *The Wild Cascades* will be kept informed. In the meantime, a quote from NCCC's Phil Leatherman is pertinent: "One question (probably unanswerable) is what are the combined effects of low-level hunting pressure and large-scale hiking-climbing use? Climbers, for obvious reasons, commonly seek out goat trails, which on popular climbs and scrambles can be mobbed most summer weekends. Might the MBS consider limiting total numbers and party-size in such areas, where it is abundantly clear that, at least for limited periods, goats are being displaced from their chosen routes?"

"THE LARGEST FOREST-CONSERVATION DEAL IN THE COUNTRY"

RON SIMS, KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Gene Duvernoy, president of Cascade Land Conservancy, has been working on this deal for years. In 2003, a spin-off group failed in an attempt to buy 104,000 acres of Weyerhaeuser's Snoqualmie Tree farm. Hancock Timber Resource Group, a Boston-based company, stepped in and paid \$185,000,000, a neat little going-away gift for the chief thief of the Northern Pacific Land Grab.

Hancock vows to continue the land as a "working forest," including concomitant social responsibilities as assumed by DNR's Tiger Mountain State Forest. Good vow. However, vows are not necessarily forever. The Damocles sword still dangled over Puget Sound City.

No more. Thanks to Duvernoy's efforts, King County has paid Hancock \$22,000,000 for development rights on 90,000,000 acres, the purchase funded by the county's Conservation Futures tax, devoted solely to open space and resource lands.

This is part of a regional program to conserve 600,000 acres in King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties — "the wildness within."

PERC Gives Bush a C+ on Environmental Policy

On October 21, 2004, the Political Economy Research Center (PERC), an anti-environmental think-tank located in Bozeman, Montana (where Interior Secretary Gale Norton previously served as a Senior Fellow), gave President Bush an 'End of Term Grade' for his environmental performance. And while bona-fide environmental organizations have been consistently giving Mr. Bush a grade of 'F', PERC has rewarded him with a very generous C+.

Not surprisingly, in the "Public Lands Management" category, the president received his very highest mark — his only "A" — for the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program.

PERC has been a long time supporter of fee-demo and clearly they are pleased with the President's efforts to make this loathsome program the permanent law of the land.

Boise-Cascade Bails Out

Long-time members of the North Cascades Conservation Council recall the Reverend Riley explaining from pulpits in Chelan, then Yakima, the objections God had to a North Cascades National Park. In public debate our board member Phil Zalesky reminded him that Jesus Christ was known to walk in the wilderness. The Rev shouted out, "The Devil chased him there!" Was it Christianity that the Boise-Cascade executives in the Rev's congregation heard in Sunday sermons, or Manicheanism?

Whatever, not until my expose in *Not Man Apart* was it widely known that overlapping boards of directors made B-C in fact a unit of Weyco.

Never mind, the 91-year-old Boise-Cascade is no more. It has conveyed 2,300,000 acres of timber plus its name to Madison-Dearborn Partners, a Chicago equity investment firm. The designated manager of the forests is an entity traded on the Big Board, Officemax. In Washington the sale involves 475,000 acres, many of them very dear to our hearts.

B-C had been suffering the financial staggers and badly needed cash. The *New York Times* quotes Mark Wilde, a forest product analyst for Deutsche Bank, as expecting Madison-Dearborn to sell their land, as have Louisiana Pacific, Georgia Pacific, and the rest of the good ol' boys. Says Wilde, "The smartest guys in the industry are viewing their timberlands as prime real estate."

H.M.

The Recent Very Commercial Adventure Quest

Continued from page 13

The infrastructure needed to get several hundred non-climbers to near the summit and back was substantial. A climber comments:

"One leg of the race required the participants to follow a fixed line up the Granite Sidewalk, then jumar 600' long static lines up the "beadwall" of rock possibly between Jacobs Ladder and Rain Man. At the top they were switched to a rappel setup by hired guides and retraced their steps back to the logging road.

"Approximately 30 bolts were placed for anchoring 12(!) 600' static lines on the beadwall along with all the other lines used to access it. About a dozen of these bolts were placed on the Granite Sidewalk and below the beadwall. All bolt hangers were [subsequently] removed and about 1/3 of the bolts were pried out and expoxied.

"In addition 1/4" buttonheads were used to anchor edge padding on the beadwall. Considering the onionskin-like nature of X-Dome there were probably numerous edges to pad. These were in theory all removed.

"While there are already LOTS of bolts up there, the placement of bolts for short-term use and their incomplete removal seems like really poor form.

"Of greater real environmental impact, evidently there was no waste management. I was told 'people were leaving their dookies and TP everywhere' With support staff, TV crews, guides etc., that's probably 400 people in the

area over a 36-hour period. No honeybuckets, no nothing.

"X-Dome is somewhat of a sacred place for many of us. Remote, adventurous, pristine. Kinda makes my skin crawl to think of the blast of commercial exploitation it just experienced."

The issue of the excrement generated by several hundred participants and several hundred minders, volunteers, and publicists was probably more acute at Exfoliation Dome than anywhere else, for the simple reason that there was a lot of infrastructure there, a high concentration of minders and organizers, and there were bottlenecks which led to a lot of participants spending a lot of time there in a rather restricted area. But it was probably an issue at other spots on the route where, for one reason or another, people tended to gather and spend time. Contestants were not allowed to kayak the Skagit at night, for example, so the river put-in "transition area" accumulated significant numbers of waiting contestants. The official method of dealing with the issue was a "blue bag" system, but it's pretty clear that it was not widely observed.

Other obvious concerns were raised by the trailless sections of the route, particularly those passing through or near wilderness-quality lands or more sensitive areas such as subalpine zones, areas which by definition had no hardened infrastructure to cushion the effects of all these people. In these areas, the effects of a sudden mass human inundation on vegetation and wildlife were potentially significant.

The twin chances of weather and fatal accident contrived to reduce off-trail cross-country sections of the route, and their attendant impacts, by something like 80 percent, or, counting the Easton Glacier segment, something like 87 percent. But there remained at least two noteworthy

segments. One was, officially, a "mountain-bike" segment. Across the southern toe of the Sisters Range, the route followed the decayed mining road up to the Three Lakes basin. The check-point, just over 4000' at the lakes was about 400 yards from the southern boundary of the Mount Baker Wilderness.

The contestants were then required to get down to the South Fork Nooksack road. A small number of savvy early contestants apparently traversed north for a half-mile toward the Heart Lake basin to pick up the Forest Service's 1260 road system fairly high, after no more than a mile of moderate cross-country bike-dragging, but the mass of participants, close to two hundred of them, plunged 2000' down the fall line, dragging their bikes through the thickening brush, never reaching the 1260 road system, and ending up on a roadless section of the river floodplain. Many wasted many hours blundering around on the hillside and the river flats with their bikes before extricating themselves.

Race officials did not anticipate this. Participants reported being told by the checkpoint official that a "trail [sic] down the east side of the mountain was flagged for a while and then we could just follow the makeshift trail blazed by all of the other teams that preceded us." But from the end of the flagging, successive teams, lemming-like, reinforced the route-finding mistakes of earlier teams, who had been seduced by the fall line instead of angling or traversing north.

One contestant describes this racer-created trail:

"The trail started out as freshly stomped underbrush. As the bill got steeper, it quickly turned into a wide bare strip of freshly mulched soil, with just a hint of morning dew on it to create a nice slide..."

The trail-swath eventually came to a bad end in the bottom of the

minor ravine which drains east from the Three Lakes plateau. From that point, the groups, scattering in multiple directions, did not create a single clear trail. The passage of several hundred bike-draggers thus created a highly erodable fall-line trail for some distance downhill. The creation of a followable trail from Three Lakes to the 1260 road system, which the organizers seemed to expect, would have been a worse outcome. But the participants' route-finding mistakes forestalled this.

The longest surviving cross-country travel section in the race was the cross-country "trek" that led from the check-point at Independence Lake, drained by Coal Creek in the South Fork Stillaguamish watershed, over to the base of Exfoliation Dome in the Clear Creek valley. As the majority of teams ended up doing this, it was perhaps four or five miles of cross-country travel. The logical route was to go to the north side of the divide past Helena Lake, re-cross the divide just south of Helena Peak, and follow the obvious shoulder down to the end of the Clear Creek road, a short distance below Deer Creek Pass, just skirting the edge of the Boulder River Wilderness. But there were any number of variants, not to mention outright mistaken routes, and many teams took far longer.

This area of rocky subalpine peaks and tarns is part of the 30,000-acre Helena Ridge roadless area, proposed as part of the Boulder River Wilderness, but lopped off during the political scrum preceding the 1984 Wilderness Bill's passage. Conservationists did, however, manage to keep a little thumb or panhandle within the Boulder River Wilderness proposal which effectively sealed off Deer Creek Pass to roads, preventing the threatened connection of the Clear Creek and Deer Creek road systems. This little panhandle guaranteed the contiguity between the existing wilderness and any future Helena Ridge addition. It also sealed off Deer Creek Pass to easy travel

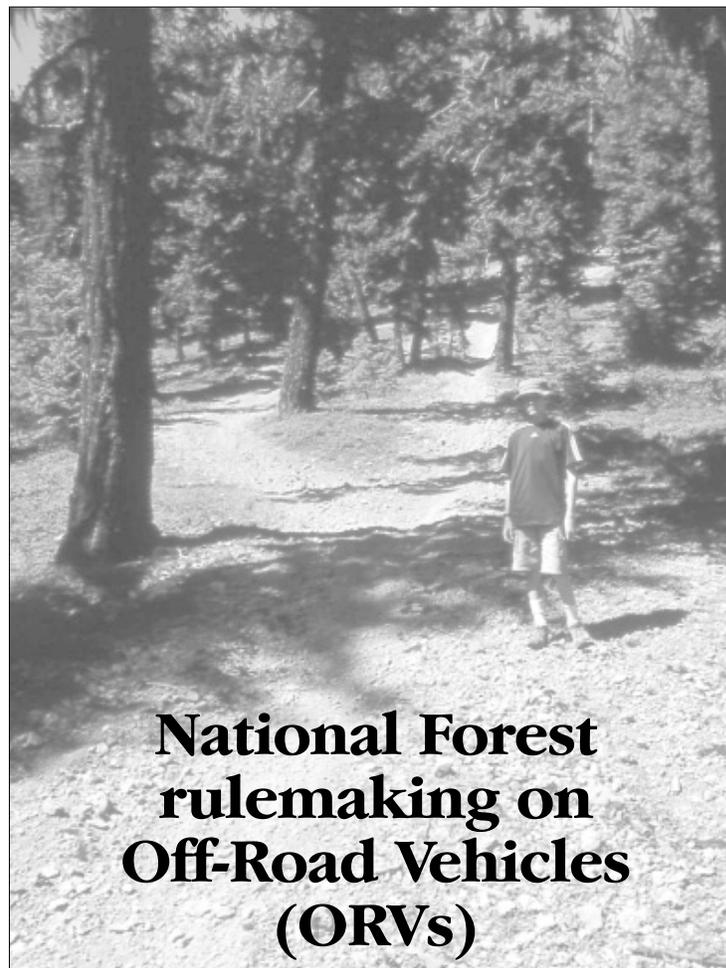
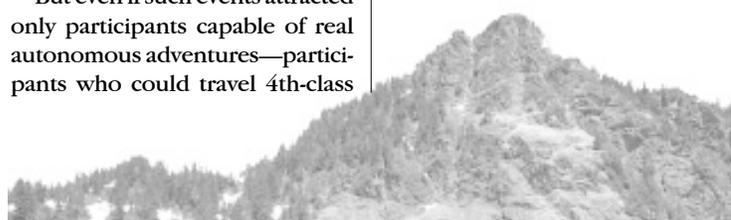
by “Primal Quest” participants, since the Wilderness was a “No Travel Zone” which could lead to disqualification if they entered it. For those traveling cross-country largely on the north side of the divide, this was a lesser issue. But the lure of easy travel on roads was strong, and roughly a quarter of the teams chose to use the Deer Creek road on the south side of the divide, and grapple with the wilderness panhandle at the head of the pass. Some teams went so far as to “trek” the Coal Lake road all the way back to the Mountain Loop highway, two- and a-half miles of the highway, and the Deer Creek road in its entirety, to effectively eliminate cross-country travel, at the cost of an extra nine miles and a 3000’ climb. Most of these Deer Creek road travelers made some effort to avoid the wilderness panhandle, but, plain to see on the GPS tracks, most did not succeed, since the panhandle had been deliberately placed by conservationists to block the easy low-angle routes across the pass. Roughly a quarter of the finishing teams should probably have been disqualified then and there for wilderness trespass. None were. It would, after all, have been bad publicity.

To those who know how to engage natural landscapes on their own terms, it’s obvious that big-time adventure racing contains a generous helping of humbug. The tension between, on the one hand, the participants’ modest competence in the mental and physical skills that make unassisted travel in mountains, wild landscapes, wild rivers, and marine environments enjoyable and reasonably safe, and on the other, the need for spectacle and the appearance of “wilderness challenge”, lead to armies of nannies and aids such as route flagging and thousands of feet of bolt-affixed ropes.

But even if such events attracted only participants capable of real autonomous adventures—participants who could travel 4th-class

terrain unroped with easy confidence, who could climb “X-dome” without the assistance of fixed lines, who could read terrain and travel forested hillsides in the dark without losing orientation, who wouldn’t blunder into wilderness areas, who wouldn’t have to be told that log jams on rivers are best avoided — the human-phalanx format of “adventure races” makes them damaging to wilderness-quality lands which receive little human traffic. “Party size” limits of twelve are imposed on many federal lands in recognition of the disproportionate affects of large parties. Why then should a “party” of two or three hundred be acceptable? The mountain goats of Twin Peaks probably go years between encounters with human beings. The shortening of the race this year spared them the trauma of invasion by hundreds of hominids within a 48-hour period. The passage of several hundred competent, well-oriented bike-dragging participants from Three Lakes to the South Fork Nooksack road would have probably led to the creation of a mile-long followable, continuous trail to the 1260 road system instead of a swath to nowhere. In the Cascades, where genuinely wild, pristine-feeling country is a much-treasured resource, such impacts are unacceptable.

A partial answer to these impacts is to keep “adventure races” on public lands on roads and trails. The Wenatchee-Okanogan National Forest, which hosts several day-long smaller-scale “adventure races” every year, imposes precisely this requirement. The staff of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, however, appear to have put up little resistance to the well-oiled public relations machinery of Primal Quest’s organizers. Next time, conservationists and backcountry recreationists need to hold them to account.



National Forest rulemaking on Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs)

Unauthorized ORV routes on Taneum Ridge. KARL FORSGAARD PHOTO

KARL FORSGAARD

In September 2004, the US Forest Service completed a public comment period on its draft rule governing all-terrain vehicle (ATV), motorcycle and other off-road vehicle use on National Forests. Off-road vehicles (ORVs, also known as off-highway vehicles or OHVs) are a growing problem on public lands, damaging wildlife habitat and creating user conflict with hikers who seek peace and quiet. Forest Service Chief Bosworth said that unmanaged ORV use is one of the greatest threats to America’s National Forests.

In its draft rule, the Forest Service proposed several policy changes that would be beneficial if effectively implemented on the ground. These include:

- Prohibiting cross-country travel by motor vehicles except under limited circumstances; and
- Authorizing ORV use only on roads and ORV routes specifically designated as open for such use.

North Cascades Conservation Council submitted comments on

the draft rule, urging the Forest Service to include additional measures in any final rule, including:

- Set a two-year deadline for the process of designating roads and routes that are open for ORV travel;
- Designate roads and routes based on full and public analysis of site-specific environmental impacts and user-conflicts caused by ORVs;
- Immediately prohibit use of all unauthorized, renegade routes; and
- Authorize ORV use only to the extent that effective monitoring and enforcement are annually funded and implemented.

The agency received about 83,000 comments, is now reviewing them, and anticipates issuing a final rule in early 2005. Then the real work begins, with site-specific battles over route designations that will require close participation by conservationists, in virtually every District of every National Forest.

Every recreationist — whether biker, hiker, backpacker, horsepacker, or posey sniffer — should not begin by asking, “What’s best for ME? But rather “What’s best for the bears?”

— TOM BUTLER

THE IMPACTS OF MOUNTAIN BIKING ON WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

MICHAEL J. VANDEMAN, PH.D.

July 3, 2004

Click on:

<http://home.pacbell.net/mjvande>

About 7,000 words

In 1984 Dr. Vandeman, after devoting 8 years to “fighting auto dependence and road construction” “became interested in the problem of mountain biking.” His paper demolishes the “science summed up by the International Mountain Bicyclists Association (IMBA): Studies show that bike impacts are similar to those of other non-motorized trail users.”

Says Dr. Vandeman, “Don’t you believe it.”

He began with “a favorable view of my fellow bicyclists as environmentalists. I turned to them to help me campaign to keep bicycles out of natural areas. Was I ever surprised! I discovered that many bicyclists (e.g., many mountain bikers) aren’t environmentalists at all, but are

simply people who like to bicycle — in the case of mountain bikers, many of them just use nature as a kind of playground or outdoor gymnasium!”

IMBA likes to distinguish itself from the ORV thugs whose mantra is “If it feels good, do it!” Gentrified as the fat-tire frontmen are, they realize they must for political purposes cuddle up to environmentalists by adopting a “scientific” posture.

In 2004 the heaviest of their (pseudo) science to date was trundled out, Gary Sprung’s “Natural Resource Impacts of Mountain Biking.” Sprung says, “empirical studies thus far do not support the notion that bikes cause more natural resource impact. . . we should make rational, non-arbitrary, less political decisions regarding which groups are allowed on particular routes.”

The flim is followed by the flam. Having done proper obeisance, Sprung flaunts the canons of science with the sophistry of anti-science — to support irrational, arbitrary, political decisions.

Vandeman thanks IMBA-Sprung for saving him days of research, by bundling all their flim-flam in one big balloon for easy puncturing, which he does in 7000 well-chosen words spelling out in detail the real world of wheel impacts on soil erosion, plants, and animals.

For purposes of this paper he does not go into other aspects of mountain biking, explaining that “trail-walkers do not need any research to know that we shouldn’t step in front of a speeding truck. Or mountain bike.”

H.M.

Park Service Under Attack by Adviser

New York Times

Oct. 29, 2004

A committee of experts urged the government last March to do much more to preserve biological diversity and ecological integrity in the national parks.

A panel member, Dr. Sylvia Earle, an oceanographer who is explorer in residence at the National Geographic Society, said she and her colleagues had expected that the National Park Service would distribute the report and take action on its findings. Instead, she said, “it has just languished.”

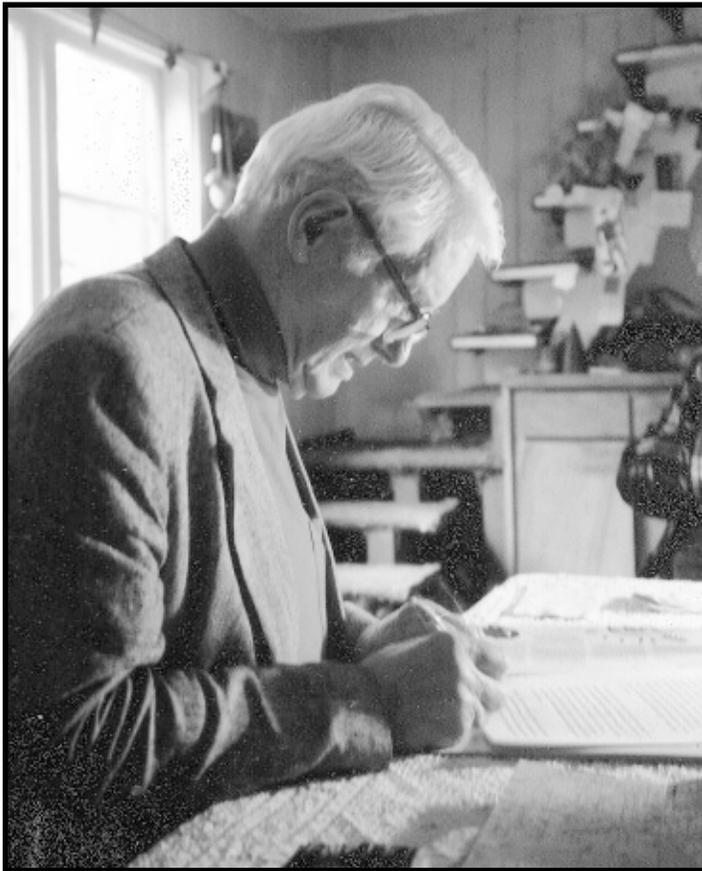
. . . . The report did not appear on the Web until this week, when a coalition of retired park employees posted it, accusing the Bush admin-

istration of hiding it because of its emphasis on science over recreation.

“The report is being held hostage to the Bush administration’s campaign of ignoring science in order to clear the way for controversial steps — such as opening up Yellowstone National Park to snowmobiles,” the group said.

. . . Fran P. Mainella, director of the park service, had intended for the report to be online in September and that the failure to post it was inadvertent.

The report can be found at the retirees’ site, www.npsretirees.org, or at the agency’s “Science and Research” page, www.nature.nps.gov/scienceresearch/index.htm.



“MONUMENTAL, David Brower’s Fight for Wild America”

Patagonia Inc. has sponsored a documentary to “inspire wilderness lovers to put environmentalism ahead of all other issues this November 2. “ Written and directed by Kelly Duane, the 77-minute film “chronicles Brower’s saga via old photographs and home movies, Sierra Club educational films, and interviews . . . “ Reviewing the film in the October 1, 2004 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, William Arnold says, “the film is an inspirational profile of the man who transformed the Sierra Club into a powerful environmental lobby.”

Reviewer Arnold says, “the film makes a very strong case” that Brower was “the greatest conservationist of the 20th century,” that “his extremism in the ‘60s was actually visionary prescience and his unwillingness to accept any compromise in the interests of Mother Nature is his legacy.”

The individuals who in company with David founded the North Cascades Conservation Council in the 1950s would not disagree with the judgment by Duane and Arnold. Many of those still more or less vigorously extant are spiritually sustained by the memory of him at board meetings. One recalls him at the last of these he attended, on a summery afternoon, listening to the discussions, eyes following the butterflies as they fluttered by. Studying them had been his childhood passion. Now, when a board member sitting next to him, whispered a query, he identified each. Companions of a lifetime. The ancient Greek symbol of immortality.

Dave Brower — BETTY MANNING

—HARVEY MANNING

Membership Application

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

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

Please check the appropriate box(es):

I want to join the NCCC

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

I wish to support NCF

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

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

This is a Donation to NCF NCF \$ _____

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

Total \$ _____

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CASCADES
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**
Membership Chair City _____ State _____ Zip _____
L. Zalesky
2433 Del Campo Dr. Phone _____
Everett, WA 98208

After November 2

... AN EDWARD ABBEY QUOTE WHICH MIGHT HELP A LITTLE...

We're in this for the long haul. The community of wilderness advocates/managers/lovers will simply have to "outlive the bastards" as Cactus Ed adjured us. Be kind to each other. Fight like hell for the resource.

"One final paragraph of advice: Do not burn yourself out. Be as I am — a reluctant enthusiast . . . a part-time crusader, a half-hearted fanatic. Save the other half of yourselves and your lives for pleasure and adventure. It is not

enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. While it is still there. So get out there and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forests, encounter the grizz, climb the mountains. Run the rivers, breathe deep of that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, that lovely, mysterious and awesome space. Enjoy yourselves, keep your brain in your head and

your head firmly attached to your body, the body active and alive, and I promise you this much: I promise you this one sweet victory over our enemies, over those deskbound people with their hearts in a safe deposit box and their eyes hypnotized by desk calculators. I promise you this: you will outlive the bastards."

— EDWARD ABBEY

**Please help NCCC meet
the matching grant for publication of our
North Cascades history book.**

See page 4 for details!

THE WILD CASCADES

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council

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