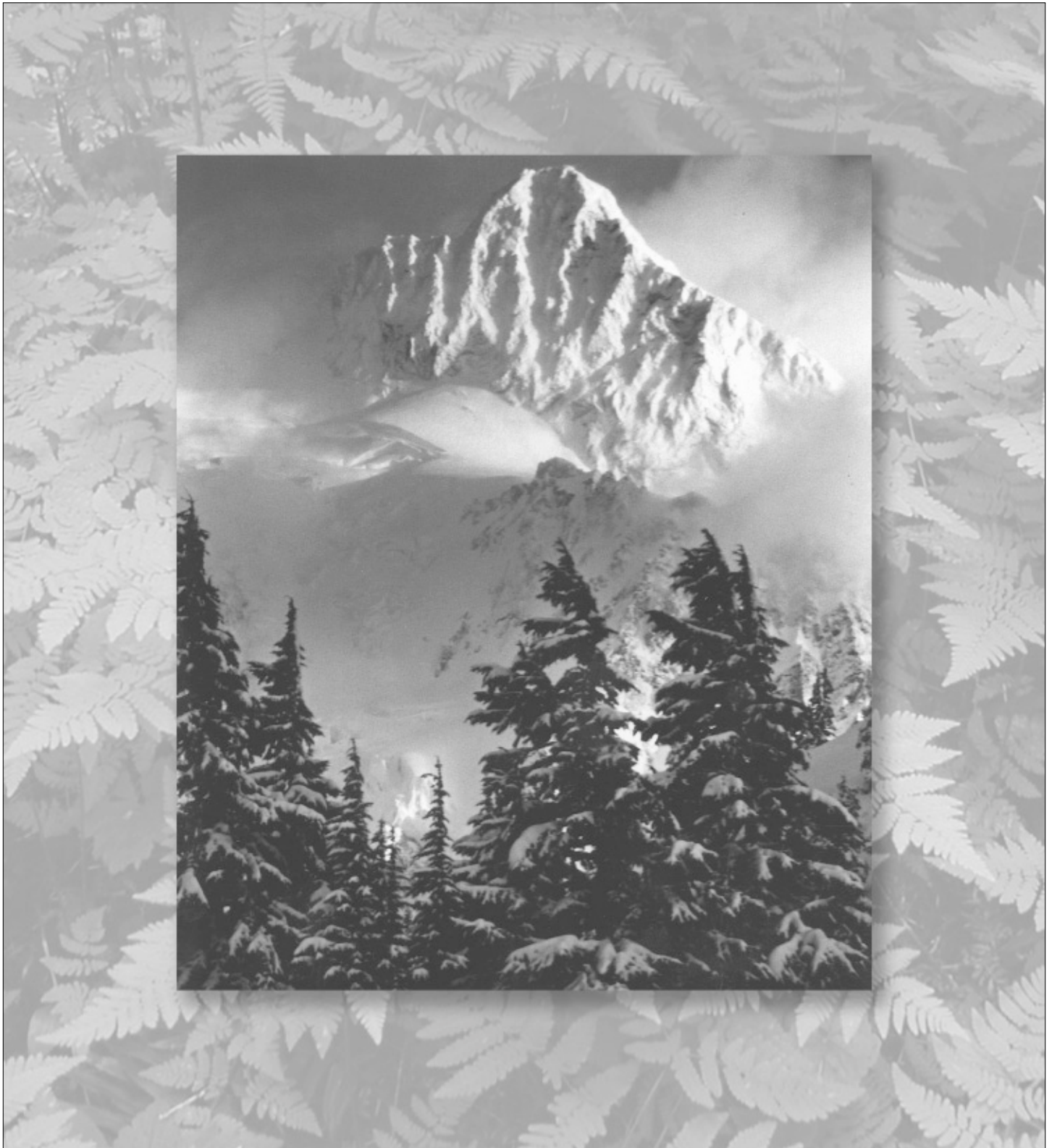

THE WILD CASCADES

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

WINTER 2003-2004



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The Wild Cascades

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council

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

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

MEMBERSHIP

The NCCC is supported by member dues and private donations. These support publication of *The Wild Cascades* and lobbying activities. (NCCC is a non-tax-deductible 501(c)4 organization.) Membership dues for one year are: \$10 - low income/student; \$20 - regular; \$25 - family; \$50.00 - Contributing; \$100 - patron; \$1000 - Sustaining. A one-time life membership dues payment is \$500.

■
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Founded in 1957
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The President's Report

Winter 2003-2004

The North Cascades Conservation Council, as most of us know, is a small but hard-hitting group with a reputation for mixing it up with politicians and bureaucrats that threaten the values we hold dear. The environmental community generally lets us look after issues in the North Cascades and follows our lead when an important matter surfaces.

Almost as important as being at the front of these actions is the follow through. In order to follow through, we need to have our members and readers help with the letters, emails and phone calls to officials. The more folks the better, of course. And now to the point — we would be more effective with more members. We need your help to recruit a few more people to read *The Wild Cascades*, provide funds, and help spread our message.

I am asking all of you reading this to please let me know the name and address of one or two of your like-minded friends or family members who might consider joining the NCCC.

Please check out our updated website at www.northcascades.org and use the convenient contact address there. Our membership chairman will send a small package of recruiting material to the lucky person and perhaps we will gain a little help in our collective efforts to stymie the pervasive commercialism of our time.

Marc Bardsley

NPS Plans More Building in Stehekin

CAROLYN MCCONNELL

The Park Service has issued another odd environmental assessment (EA) for a project in Stehekin. This latest one purports to deal with demolishing an old cabin used as Park Service housing and restoring the site. Having spent time at the Griffith cabin, I am pleased that the Park is considering removing this structure. It is dank, dark, dilapidated, and in the flood plain. It is not a place anyone would want to live, and its removal will be a step toward restoring the wildness of that bit of the Stehekin Valley. It is encouraging to see the Park considering taking a step toward reversing the rapid development of the Stehekin Valley that has occurred since the 1968 creation of the Park Complex and continues unabated.

However, this good step is not in fact what the current environmental assessment addresses, as the EA states there are no funds currently available for removing the Griffith Cabin. Under none of the alternatives considered would the cabin actually be removed. This makes the EA an altogether odd document.

Also odd about the EA is that nowhere in it are figures detailing the staffing levels in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. Thus, need for the additional housing is not demonstrated. Given the Park's mandate to protect the scenery and wildness of the valley, any proposal by the Park to introduce new development must meet a high standard of evidence that the development is absolutely essential for the Park's mission. In this case, such a standard has in no way been met.

Based on my own observation, I do not believe staffing levels in Stehekin have grown in recent years. Indeed, given the current funding environment, I would presume they have fallen or will fall. Even if they have held steady and continue to do so, the Park has already built one new staff house, which already should compensate for the possible removal of the Griffith cabin.

Even if one presumes, though the reader of the EA is given no evidence to

support this, that there is need for additional staff housing, there are other ways to fill that need than those considered in the EA. The most obvious is rental of housing from private owners, as in fact the staff who currently live in the newly built NPS housing did for a number of years. That house is now uninhabited and available. There is other unoccupied housing in Stehekin. Such an alternative would no doubt be less expensive, at least in initial cost, than building new Park Service housing.

Another unconsidered alternative is purchasing private land that has housing on it. Ultimately, the purported need to build new staff housing is just one of many bad results of the Park's failure to pursue land acquisition in the Stehekin Valley. It is ironic that as a result of a Park policy that fails to stem private development (and in conjunction with other Park policies that actively encourage development), the Park finds it must itself further develop the Stehekin Valley. The EA mentions that development in the Stehekin Valley has proceeded in the last ten years, but nowhere does it mention the possibility of any Park influence on the extent of private development.

Plans to build new staff housing in this area contradict the 1995 General Management Plan (GMP), which calls for construction of a large number of housing units around the emergency airstrip. I would grant that the GMP's proposal to build seven 3-bedroom houses, nine 2-bedroom apartments, and 25 efficiency apartments was preposterous (where is the need for such a city?), and I presume subsequent Park decisions regarding staff housing in Stehekin reflect unspoken acceptance that the airstrip plans were absurd. However, in other decisions the Park Service has treated the GMP as binding; such selective use of the GMP is capricious and casts doubt on whether the GMP can be regarded as having genuine force as policy.

I wonder at the EA's failure to mention Park Service plans to trade land across the road from the horse corral to the holder of

the conditional use permit on the corral. My understanding is that the corral would, or certainly could, be moved on to the newly privatized land. Surely some consideration of this eventuality ought to be included in assessing this option, which is "Alternative C" in the EA. It is not at all clear to me that clearing and disrupting otherwise undisturbed land, as envisioned in the "preferred alternative" is in fact preferable to placing a new house on the already disturbed corral site and restoring native vegetation to the remainder. This could include reforestation, which might well make this housing site not visible from the road in the future.

I applaud the Park for choosing as preferred, among the building sites, the site that is not visible from the Stehekin road (although I doubt that it truly is not visible in winter months; the house built by the NPS in 2003 is visible in the winter). Yet I cannot regard this as the truly preferable alternative. Indeed, the EA itself states that Alternative A is the "Environmentally Preferred Alternative," yet not the "Preferred Alternative." This is another oddity of the document. It is an oddity that has been found in other recent North Cascades National Park EA's; such a pattern ought to give Park Service management pause. Could it suggest a divergence of policy from the Park mission of protecting the environment under its jurisdiction?

I consider this EA entirely inadequate. That said, I regard Alternative A, the Environmentally Preferred Alternative, as by definition the preferable alternative among those considered.

A postscript on this matter offers a lesson in how little it can take to amplify one's individual voice: I managed to influence three fellow Stehekinites to write responses to this environmental assessment voicing similar concerns. Given that the last time the Park issued an assessment on a similar project there were a grand total of four responses, I suspect we were a resounding majority of respondents. We'll see how this influences Park decisions.

Management changes necessary in Forest Plan Update

January 31, 2004

Jim Boynton, Forest Supervisor
Wenatchee-Okanogan National Forest
215 Melody Lane
Wenatchee, WA 98801-5933

Subject: **Colville, Okanogan, Wenatchee
Forest Plan Update, Pre-Scoping
Comments**

Dear Forest Supervisor,

North Cascades Conservation Council submits these pre-scoping comments on the upcoming Forest Plan revision for the Colville, Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests. We believe that management changes are required and we want to participate in the Forest Plan Update process. The Forest Service needs to address the many significant changes that have taken place since the Forest Plans were first published in 1988, including a significant increase in off-road vehicle (ORV) use and damage, a continuing loss of roadless areas and excessive loss of wildlife habitat from an oversized road system. The new Forest Plan needs to recommend substantial additions to the existing Wilderness System.

Roadless Area Conservation

The current Forest Service inventory of roadless lands contains numerous errors and inaccuracies. Too many acres were never captured in the initial inventories and subsequent updates. Therefore, the Forest Service must complete a thorough, detailed review and re-inventory of all roadless areas, both inventoried and non-inventoried, before any credible Wilderness recommendations can be completed.

Wilderness

We strongly support Forest Service study of roadless lands to determine their suitability for Wilderness. We expect the Forest Service to recommend to Congress the maximum amount of roadless land for designation as Wilderness. The Forest Service has an obligation to the American People to ensure our wildlands heritage is passed on to future generations. The Forest Service must complete thorough, detailed reviews of all roadless areas, similar to the

study recently completed by the Wenatchee National Forest for the 15,000-acre wilderness study area on the south side of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. This study has set the standard for completeness, care, and lack of anti-Wilderness bias. Areas recommended for Wilderness must be managed the same as designated Wilderness until Congress acts. Please ensure that all timberlands within Wilderness recommendations are removed from the current timber base.

The Forest Service should consider recommending lands for addition to North Cascades National Park, such as the Golden Horn area adjacent to the park in the Okanogan National Forest.

In the Congressional Report accompanying the 1968 Act designating the North Cascades National Park and the Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas, Congress specifically directed the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service to cooperatively and collaboratively manage the natural resources on the contiguous North Cascades National Park Complex and Okanogan, Wenatchee, and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest lands.

Fire

The Forest Plan update must reflect the long-term objective that fire management treat fire as an integral part of the landscape. As a natural process, fire should be allowed to occur when and where feasible.

The plan update should reflect the benefits of prescribed burning so that the kinds of extensive, costly, and ecologically damaging fire suppression efforts can be reduced. Prescribed burning has already proven to be a valuable tool in order to return fire to the landscape and thus reduce the need for intensive fire fighting.

The updated plan should address the effects of fire suppression and burnout areas; cooperation between adjacent landowners both in Washington state and Canada; public education so that let-burn policies are better understood outside the Forest Service; needed research to support the analysis of fire recovery in the different fire regimes.

Adaptive management techniques should be applied to dry forest restoration.

Burned areas must be evaluated to define what actions, if any are appropriate after a fire. Wildlife Urban Interface (WUI) areas are a high priority for treatment in order to protect private property.

The most modern fire management plans that have been completed since the Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) was last revised must now be incorporated into this plan update.

It is not expected that the Forest Service will use fire risk reduction mandates to enter roadless areas or expand the existing road system.

Off-Road Vehicles (Summer and Winter)

Off-road vehicles (ORVs) are creating tremendous impacts to wildlife, watershed health, and other types of recreation in ways not imagined when the original Forest Plans were prepared in the 1980s. Snowmobiles are now far more powerful and able to penetrate deeply into wild backcountry areas, disturbing wildlife and creating other unforeseen impacts. Dirt bike access to many hiking trails has been facilitated with the use of state gas tax money. Some of this money has been used to 'harden' trails for wheeled vehicles. In addition, an explosion of ATVs (four-wheeled "all-terrain" vehicles) is starting to cause major damage to fragile backcountry vegetation, soils, and trails. This vast expansion of ORV use has been allowed to proceed without any detailed studies assessing environmental damage. Too many areas have been opened up with user-built trails, and then "grandfathered" into formal designation later.

The Forest Service should carefully consider these environmentally sensitive points:

- Re-examine off-road vehicle use across all three national forests.
- Close all areas of the forest to motorized use unless specifically designated open.
- Prohibit all off-trail, cross-country motorized use.
- Conduct formal studies of the impacts of motorized use (both summer and winter) that include the damaging potential of the latest motorized equipment.

Continued on page 20

Crumbling Roads Taken Out

October 2003

RICK MCGUIRE AND KEVIN GERAGHTY

In late October 2003, nature stepped up to the plate and took a swing at the three-thousand mile network of roads blighting the west side of the North Cascades. The fourth "hundred-year" flood in the last quarter-century ruined large bridges, caused rivers to migrate into road paths, and left behind scores of culvert failures, debris flows, and scoured roads.

Most of these roads were built on the cheap during the heyday of federally subsidized National Forest logging in the years 1950 - 1990. Most of them have not been properly maintained for years, and as Forest Service budgets continue to diminish, many are being closed through neglect.

To a casual observer, an old road revegetating with alder seems to be benignly reverting to nature. Deep culverts fills and unstable perched earth on these roads are better thought of as ticking time bombs, slowly failing and setting the stage for destructive collapses and landslides. These collapses can dump many of tons of debris into salmon streams.

NCCC and other conservation and fisheries groups have been pressuring the Forest Service for years to do more about these problem roads. If culverts are dug out and unstable fill areas removed, the threats they pose can be greatly lessened. Such "decommissioning" is very hard to carry out if the road is already undriveable. Some road segments have been dealt with, but only a small fraction of what is needed. The Forest Service has been hampered by lack of money, which is both good and bad, good because it has kept many destructive projects from going ahead, but bad because it keeps them from doing some good things. A particularly vexing problem has been the continuing mindset of many Forest Service managers that roads are good, and should be kept open wherever possible. One unfortunate example of this was the misuse of money specially appropriated by Congress for watershed restoration in the mid-1990's. In the Skykomish district, this money was used mostly to keep roads open rather than to decommission them, even roads to nowhere such as the San Juan Hill road near Jack Pass.

Thanks to the flood, there may now be a transient opportunity to effectively pressure on the Forest Service to decommission many of these mostly useless roads.

Although the Forest Service must play a role in this process, much of the funding can come from external grants, and much of the actual decommissioning can also be orchestrated by external groups with strong interests in aquatic conservation. The Forest Service just has to let it happen.

NCCC is taking a great interest in the possibilities which have now presented themselves. On the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (MB-SNF,) some of the areas in question include, moving north to south:

BACON CREEK

This tributary of the Skagit between Marblemount and Newhalem has an extensive road system which goes nowhere, and intrudes into the national park lands which surround it. The creek is a surprisingly important producer of fish. The road has washed out near the bottom of the valley, and there is now an opportunity to decommission the entire system.

SUIATTLE RIVER ROAD

A couple of washouts have cut this road which offers access to the Glacier Peak Wilderness. Fixing the lower one would mean bulldozing a stretch of magnificent "young old growth" a 120- to 150-year-old forest of splendidly tall Douglas firs growing on a rich, productive site. Further upstream, the bridge over Downey Creek is gone. NCCC is recommending that the Suiattle River trailhead two miles beyond be moved back Downey Creek, rather than expensively replacing the Downey Creek road bridge, endangering an important Chinook spawning stream.

SUIATTLE VALLEY SOUTH SIDE

The road bridge across the Suiattle which leads to Rat Trap Pass and the extensive network of crumbling logging roads on the south side of the Suiattle valley is now a bridge to nowhere, the Suiattle River having moved away and left it high and dry. The Suiattle is critical salmon habitat, and perhaps nowhere else on the MB-SNF is there such a chance to solve so many problems at one swoop. Tribal groups focused on fisheries protection dislike many of these roads. NCCC would like to see this spaghetti bowl erased from the map, and the re-creation of that mostly lovely of cartographic features, a big blank

spot on the map. One of these roads, over Rat Trap Pass, stands out as one of the most idiotic products of the roadbuilding frenzy in the 60s. It should never have been built, and is crying out to be closed.

WHITECHUCK ROAD

The Whitechuck valley, as its name implies, is the recipient of regular debris and lahar flows off Glacier Peak. One such flow, part of the October 2003 events, buried Kennedy Hot Springs along with erasing the Whitechuck road in a number of places. Keeping a road open in such a place is a precarious proposition in the best of times - Glacier Peak and the Whitechuck are works in progress, and will keep wiping out this road no matter how many times it is rebuilt. The Whitechuck was the object of possibly the first conservation battle in the Cascades. In 1927, railroad logging pushing up the Sauk valley reached the mouth of the Whitechuck. The Everett Mountaineers, led by a photographer for the Everett Herald named Stuart Hertz, mounted a campaign to protect the valley and keep the loggers out. They were unsuccessful, though, the lower reaches of the Whitechuck were railroad logged, and after World War II the Forest Service pushed a road far up it, part of its efforts against the creation of a National Park and Wilderness area.

NCCC is still considering its position on whether to reopen this road. Clearly, any fix will be only temporary, waiting for the next move by the river and Glacier Peak. The road does access a popular trail, but the trail could be lengthened and restored along its original course if the road were shortened or eliminated, making for a belated victory for the vision of a wild Whitechuck first promoted by the Everett Mountaineers nearly 80 years ago.

EAST-SIDE SAUK RIVER ROAD

This is the "old" Mountain Loop road, running south along the east side of the Sauk valley from the Darrington area down to and across the Whitechuck. In the mid 1980's the Forest Service put in a paved highway along the west side of the Sauk, but the old road was left in place. Much of this road is in the floodplain, and NCCC is urging its closure, there being no need for roads closely paralleling the Wild and Scenic Sauk on both sides. The bridge over the Whitechuck at its mouth on this road has been damaged irreparably for automo-

tive use, although it could be converted into a pedestrian access for the Whitechuck Bench trail.

SOUTH FORK SAUK ROAD, "MOUNTAIN LOOP":

The Mountain Loop road along the South Fork Sauk between Bedal and Monte Cristo lake has been quite spectacularly erased for at least 600 feet. This road has been washed away numerous times, the latest event being the most dramatic. There is no way to replace a road in this inherently failure prone area without extensive riprapping of the South Fork Sauk, a designated Wild and Scenic River, which the road ran right alongside. Such massive construction would have huge impacts on

salmon.

The Mountain Loop road has been considered by some as an important recreational asset, connecting Granite Falls and the South Fork Stillaguamish with the Sauk valley and Darrington. If this section were not replaced, though, it would still be possible to drive to all major trailheads, though not from Granite Falls to Darrington. NCCC is considering its position on this road, weighing the benefits of recreational driving versus the impacts on salmon habitat. An important factor in shaping NCCC's position will be the total Forest Service response to all these washouts, whether or not the response to all of them together is a plus or a minus for the health of the North Cascades.

There are numerous other places where roads have failed in ways big and small. Virtually the entire network of logging roads throughout the Cascades should be looked at as a very temporary phenomenon, having been built as a result of taxpayer-subsidized liquidation of old-growth forests. The Forest Service will never be able to maintain more than a fraction of these roads over the long term. If they are allowed to crumble away, the impacts on streams and rivers will be severe and long lasting. But the October 2003 floods have provided an opportunity to step back, look at the big picture, and decide just which roads we can really afford to keep in place. NCCC will be closely involved every step of the way.



Ross Lake — KEN WILCOX

How odd and unpredictable the future, the unexpected turn of events.

Who would have thought that the fight of the North Cascades Conservation Council to prevent Seattle City Light (SCL) from raising the height of Ross Dam on the Skagit by some 125 feet would result in the creation of a multimillion-dollar Environmental Learning Center? This Center is and will be of significant long-term benefit to the environmental health of the North Cascades. The Center will be operated by the North Cascades Institute, which in 2003 reached more than 10,000 people, a formidable performance. Saul Weisberg, the Institute's Executive Director states, "Without the participation and support of the NCCC, the Environmental Learning Center would not exist as we know it."

Longtime members and supporters of the NCCC well remember the 13-year (1969-83) struggle, to prevent the High Ross proposal. Without that effort the dam would have been raised, Big Beaver Valley and Ruby Creek, flooded, and several thousand acres of the lower Skagit Valley in

Canada inundated. The NCCC's resistance bought time, sufficient time, so that a new Seattle Mayor, Charlie Royer and Deputy Mayor Bob Royer, and a new Premier in British Columbia, Dave Barrett, concluded an agreement, followed by a treaty, that kept the lake level where it was. As is also fairly well known the treaty created the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission (SEEC) that today administers a trust fund of some eight million dollars, and spends about \$300,000 annually to insure the environmental protection of the Skagit Valley above Ross Dam.

But that is only part of the High Ross story; the rest is not so well known, and that is where the efforts of the NCCC resulted in the Learning Center.

Operators of dams must secure an operating license that is effective for a definite number of years, after which a new license must be obtained. This relicensing procedure is a full-blown federal administrative proceeding. By the end of the Ross Dam fight, SCL had to go through a relicensing for its Skagit dams complex, which proceeding began in 1988. The NCCC, primarily through its long time President and Chairman, Pat Goldsworthy, and board members Dave Fluharty, a marine affairs professor at the University of Washington, and Joe and Margaret Miller, originators of the Cascade Pass restoration project, continued to be on hand to insure that environmental issues were protected. Other interveners included Indian tribes, the Department of Ecology, and the

Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The NCCC representatives were wary, given the past practices of SCL, that the city would want to consider mitigating any of the significant environmental impacts of dams. Our group anticipated the usual mitigation proposals—landscaping, picnic tables, power house colors and overlook structures—instead of restoration of lost habitat and mitigation of the continuing negative impacts of dams. But the unanticipated occurred: the city's engineering division, that had been the driving force behind the raising of Ross Dam before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), was now replaced by the Environmental Affairs Division, which was staffed by serious professionals, who were sensitive to broader issues. Superintendents Joe Recchi and Randy Hardy, and Environmental Affairs Division heads, including Kathy Fletcher, all recognized that times had changed, and that City Light needed good relations with all parties. The city strongly wished to avoid the divisive conflicts of the High Ross fight, and approached the relicensing with the hope of developing a consensus-building process. A seed of cooperation had been planted.

A relicensing involves lots of different issues, one of which, as noted above, is mitigation of the impacts of the dam. Recreation issues are part of the mitigation process. As part of the recreation group, Goldsworthy, Fluharty and the Millers

Continued on page 8

From ROSS DAM to the ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

TOM BRUCKER

From ROSS DAM to the ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

Continued from page 7

believed that education was a component, and put that on the table. The geographic reality of the Skagit area is that much of it is difficult to visit, and the idea was that public education about the area could be a non-structural component and thus relevant to the relicensing

It was an inspired idea. The educational idea was embraced by all – Seattle City Light, National Park Service, Forest Service—as an opportunity and all wanted to be a part of it. To help with the educational component, the NCCC turned to the North Cascades Institute (NCI), and Saul Weisberg. Founded in 1986, the Institute focuses on natural and cultural history, and has as its mission “to conserve and restore Northwest environments through education.” Teaching all ages, we encourage hands-on discovery and stewardship of the North Cascades. . . .” NCI had been working with the Park Service to obtain classrooms and laboratories in any new visitor center constructed by NPS. The seed of education grew and prospered. Negotiations among all parties to the relicensing took place, with all working hard to make

the educational component succeed. The result was the creation of an Environmental Learning Center, to be built on land owned by the Park Service, designed, constructed, paid for and owned by Seattle City Light, and administered and run by NCI. In April 1991, a Memorandum of Agreement Concerning the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center was signed, which detailed the responsibilities of all parties, including the NCCC. This Memorandum states, in part:

An environmental learning center is the centerpiece of the City’s proposed recreation plan. The NPS and the North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) strongly desire such a facility. The City agrees that an environmental learning center can provide vital support to a management philosophy for the North Cascades as an ecosystem. The City also accepts this action as appropriate to increasing the depth and breadth of public appreciation for the North Cascades ecosystem.

The Park Service provided the land on Diablo Lake, previously occupied by a fishing and boating resort, and strongly endorsed the project.

Today the Learning Center is in the final stages of completion. The city has funded the design and construction costs of this facility, which has multi-media classrooms, research library, and outdoor learning shelters; lakeside dining hall and amphitheater; overnight accommodations for 46 participants, 12 staff and graduate students, as well as access to a network of park trails that lead deep into the surrounding wilderness. Over the 30-year license period Seattle City Light will contribute almost \$9,000,000 to the construction, maintenance and program support and endowment for the Environmental Learning Center.

NCCC members and supporters can indeed be proud of this result, so unanticipated, stemming directly from the decision, now some 35 years ago, to take on Seattle City Light and its High Ross proposal.

The Pacific Crest Trail

WILD and WILDER

In recent years about 300 hikers annually have set out from Mexico in spring and reached Canada by fall. However, the Deluge of '03 took 39 miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Freeway out of play until perhaps 2009 or so. Until then it is predicted that each year approximately 10 detouring end-to-enders will end not in Canada but the Napeequa River, which the Forest Service hasn't tried to bridge since the nation's "guns and butter" strategy failed during the Southeast Asia peacekeeping. The Freeway repairs (replacing seven bridges and "huge amounts of trail" in and around the Glacier Peak Wilderness) will cost millions of dollars, all in hard federal money that must be appropriated by Congress, since the damage lies beyond the work-party range of the hardhats who volunteer their services in exchange for free parking. The Fish and Wildlife Service is figuring how many vultures will have to be brought in to pick hikers' bones as clean as those of the sheep whose skulls gleam along the trail crossing Little Giant Pass, which has not been maintained since the Basque shepherds went back to Spain for the Civil War.



N3C Board field trip to NCI construction site, June 2003.

Bottom row: Ken Wilcox, Saul Weisberg

Top Row: Karl Forsgaard, Laura Bedford, Tom Brucker, Charlie Ehlert, Nick Forsgaard, Marc Bardsley, Anders Forsgaard, Laura Zalesky, John Edwards, Phil Zalesky, Dave Flubarty. — KARL FORSGAARD PHOTO.

A GREAT and FAMOUS VICTORY for HIKERS

Hobnobbing at Stehekin with Lloyd Bell, who had retired there after years as aide to Ol' King Cole, that merry gypo from Forks, I asked who in Bert's office (State Land Commissioner, head of the Department of Natural Resources) was on the motorcycle payroll. Lloyd took the question in good humor, as he always had my on-going campaign to have his boss drawn and quartered, "Darned if I know. Bert hated the machines, himself."

Actually, I never thought Bert was technically corrupt, though he sure sailed close to the wind and thoroughly deserved defenestration by Brian Boyle. But his DNR made no bones about publishing motorcycle guides to state lands and shamelessly sponsored razzer hullabalos from Idaho to the ocean.

I trusted Lloyd's word and shifted my suspicions to the legislature. I've known a number of excellent legislators, dedicated public servants. Yet influential insiders seem always to be available for a price, if the occasional convictions are any indication.

That motorcycles were ruling Olympia was flagrantly and conclusively demonstrated in 1972. A measure was adopted to set aside 1 per cent of the gasoline fuel excise tax (collected at the gas stations) to fund a Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) program. Fair enough. Not so the implementation. The motorcyclists called NOVA funds "our money" and through the cupidity of manipulators and witlessness of the manipulated, so it has been.

Hikers clearly saw the math was phony. The term "nonhighway" designates roads that are not under state jurisdiction — including the roads on national forests, the ones we drive to trailheads. Gas taxes paid by us for "nonhighway" driving should be "refunded" by NOVA just as are those paid by motorcyclists for their travel on trails. Moreover, state studies have established that only 20 per cent of NOVA revenue is from motorized trail users. "Their money" indeed!

A quarter-century of simmering discontent finally blew the lid off the pot and the legislature moved toward a fair

allocation.

In the spring of 2003, in the state Superior Court of Kittitas County, the Northwest Motorcycle Association and Washington State Motorsport Dealers Association filed suit against the state Interagency Commission for Outdoor Recreation, declaring a fair allocation was unconstitutional. They wanted 100 per cent of NOVA money to go to the ORV, 0 per cent to motorless motion.

Intervening in the lawsuit were the Issaquah Alps Trails Club, Kittitas Audubon Society, The Mountaineers, North Cascades Conservation Council, Sierra Club, and Washington Trails Association.

January 28, 2004, the judge ruled against the motorcycles. The Court said NOVA spending on hiking trails is a constitutionally permissible refund of gas taxes to the people who paid those taxes.

In March 2004 Governor Gary Locke signed the trail users' consensus legislation to make NOVA fairer.

— H.M.

NCCC Wins a Couple Rounds in the Thinning Wars

RICK MCGUIRE

There's been a bit of good news of late in the struggle to save the naturally regenerated, low-elevation second-growth forests of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest from "improvement" through logging. NCCC and other conservation groups teamed up to appeal two destructive timber sales, the "Sky Forks" sale in the Skykomish ranger district and the "Forgotten Thin Plus" in the Darrington ranger district. With the assistance of environmental attorney Susan Jane Brown, an experienced timber sale litigator, a major reduction was obtained with the Sky Forks sale and the Forgotten Thin Plus sale has been withdrawn, at least temporarily.

The Sky Forks sale, which had been in the works since 1996, proposed to log roughly 6-million board-feet from three different areas around the Skykomish district. Of greatest concern was the Salmon Creek component, where logging was planned for de facto roadless areas, and along aptly named Salmon Creek, an important spawning stream. A meeting was held with Forest Service staff to discuss conservationist concerns with the sale.

Although there were concerns with all parts of the sale, concern was greatest over the roadless Salmon Creek units. An agreement was reached with the Forest Service to withdraw those parts of the sale in exchange for conservation groups dropping their appeal of the sale, thus giving up the right to litigate against it.

Although failing to address other concerns with the sale, the removal of the worst parts of it is still a big improvement, and should be considered as a win.

Further north, the Forgotten Thin Plus sale on the Darrington district proposed to cut ten-million board-feet of timber from naturally regenerated post-fire and post-railroad logging forests along the Sauk River southeast of Darrington. Another meeting was held with Forest Service staff to discuss conservation concerns, but no agreement was reached which satisfied both parties.

NCCC and the other groups were considering whether to file a court challenge of this sale when word came down that the Forest Service decided to withdraw the decision to proceed with the

sale. The full meaning of this is unclear at this point, but it does mean that these forests have been spared for at least the time being. NCCC will monitor the situation closely, and is ready to respond should the sale be re-introduced.

Previous articles in *The Wild Cascades* have detailed the importance of low-elevation, naturally regenerated second-growth forests of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. These forests grow on some of the most productive sites on the entire national forest system. Most surviving old-growth forests are on poor and/or high-elevation sites, thus making it critical to protect these natural second-growth forests with their high species diversity. If left alone they will become old-growth forests in little more than the span of a human lifetime from now. In recent years it has become fashionable in some parts of the Forest Service to try "improving" these forests, "accelerating the development of old-growth characteristics," through logging and roadbuilding. NCCC views this as absurd and plans to continue doing what it can to protect the forests of the Cascades, both young and old.

Varieties of Wilderness Experience

A trail by definition is not wilderness even though it be a corridor of civilization barely a foot wide.

Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills, first edition, April 1960, Chapter 4, "Wilderness Travel," page 57

PART ONE: WHERE IS THE THERE?

The top of the line has no trails; no sights or sounds of other people; no extraneous noise or commotion; and extends over at least several days (and nights).

No Trail

A fellow I know climbed many a High Sierra peak that was not named on any map nor described in any guidebook. He took care to leave no trace so that subsequent climbers could share the virginity — until one of them "fired" for a journal. Relocated in Seattle, he set out to investigate its mountains. By choice, his only guide was a map picked up at a gas station. Intrigued by a feature of the scenery, he parked and walked toward it until halted by a river too big, a thicket too much.

For his tastes, that was as good as "there" gets. Still, he did occasionally hanker for broader perspectives. The Climbing Course lessened the purity of his wilderness experience but got him up where he could look around. Trails are good at that.

No Sights or Sounds of Other People

My wilderness epiphany came in 1938 in a Boy Scout multitude. Less than a decade past boyhood I was a mobmaster in the Climbing Course. Two decades later I was a Pied Piper leading masses of pedestrians into the Issaquah Alps.

The epiphany, though, was on a twilight walk, alone, to Marmot Pass. Because of it, upon returning home from Camp Parsons I spent many an hour, many a day exploring the anomalously virgin forest that extended from our house to the Whulge. Always alone.

Three decades later, in the half-year before and after summertime clammers in Cascades and Olympics, I walked a round

thousand miles in the Issaquah Alps. Alone. (The politicking came later.)

Alone, too, were the several thousand miles described in the four volumes of *Footsore*, my extension of politicking to the entirety of our "wildness within."

As for the "wildness without," I continued in company of family and friends. But increasingly without them. Grandmother Hawthorn gave me for Christmas, her last, a book of Bible stories. Before and after learning to read I was fascinated by the brilliantly colorful picture of John the Baptist striding shaggily "into the wilderness where he could be alone with God." A time came in my life when I stopped telling people where I was going. My whereabouts were a secret between God and me and if it turned out there was no God, so much the better for the aloneness.

No Extraneous Noise or Commotion

In the 1950s we were mystified in the Pickets by a plane circling above. Later we learned it was the USGS taking photos for what was to be the Challenger quad.

In the 1970s we'd not have known what to make of the speck flying high in silence (trailed by the roar of jet engines) had not one of our group taken the SAS over the Pole to Europe.

In the 1990s, asleep in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, I was repeatedly jolted awake by low-flying jets hurtling between Seattle and the efficiently centralized national sorting center. (For a parcel to get from Ballard to Bellevue it first must take an 8000-mile sidetrip.)

Helicopters, four-wheelers, motorcycles, snowmobiles. . .

. . . And "single-trackers." Two wheels plus body make about the same noise and occupy little more space than two boots plus body. They do, that is, any particular moment. Over time, though, the 10mph wheels impact five times more space than the 2mph boots. However attenuated by distance, the presence shatters the mood throughout. Seething continues after the wheels are far away as the walker steels himself at every bend in the "single track" for another shattering.

Trail-runners: "To your left!" That's where to aim your quarterstaff, Friar Tuck.

At Least Several Days (and Nights)

How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

How tiny a space can contain wilderness? Close my eyes and I'm there, immersed in river, birds, wind. Lands faraway and years long ago can flood the braincase, sustain the beat of the heart when it knows no other reason.

Yet it is when that braincase is in a sea of flowers that fills the nose and a lone raindrop from a purely blue sky scores a direct hit on an eyelid, that is the home where the buffalo and the angels roam.

A fellow I know whose back would feel no pain carrying a ton of stones nevertheless insists, "Come night and I want to be at home tucked in my little beddy-by."

To wake from uneasy sleep in a city and hie thy ass to forest and stream, meadow and sky, wait out the sunset on a summit, and dash by flashlight and freeway back to the city and easy sleep, that's the difference between Mercer Island and Manhattan Island.

Yet day is less than half the wilderness. Night binds days into a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

The mess hall at Camp Parsons had on the wall Kipling's command:

*Something bidden. Go and find it,
Go and look behind the Ranges.
Something lost behind the Ranges.
Lost and waiting for you. Go!*

I went and at Marmot Pass heard with Wordsworth:

*Low breathings coming after me,
and sounds*

*Of undistinguishable motion . . .
With what utterance did the loud
dry wind*

*Blow through my ear! The sky
seemed not a sky*

*Of earth — and with what motion
moved the clouds!*

In 1938, the Poopout Drag, Camp Mystery, Marmot Pass, Home Lake, and

Sunnybrook. The next summer, Honey-moon Meadows, Anderson Glacier, and Flypaper Pass, then Dosemeadows, Hayden Pass, and Deception Basin. The third summer, from Lillian Glacier along Lost Ridge in the Three-Day Blow to Lost Pass. Three-summer total, a dozen and a half days, the binding nights, and getting on toward 200 miles.

The *deeps*. That's where the *there* is at.

PART TWO: THE EDGES

In 1960 The Mountaineers published *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills*, done in the Climbing Course tradition by unpaid volunteers. The receipts from sales that would have gone in royalties to the doers went instead into a Literary Fund to further the club purposes enunciated in 1906.

Also in 1960 Dave Brower published *This Is the American Earth*, first of the Exhibit Format series that propelled the Sierra Club into a national force. The Literary Fund Committee pondered ways to complement Sierra Club efforts at our regional level.

Thus, in 1966, the inception of *100 Hikes*.

Defending the Edges

The edges of wilderness, the shallows, take the least travel time from urban homes, require the least equipment and experience, and thus are most accessible to those with limited money and leisure. They are, as well, the most fertile grounds for recruiting new defenders of wildness. Further, by reducing or eliminating overnight camping, they lessen human impact and leave more room (the nights) for the freedom of the wildlife.

Trails are not wilderness. They invite boots. Civitas. But boots in sufficient numbers can defend wilderness at its vulnerable exterior and buffer the interior from chainsaws and wheels.

The Literary Fund Committee adopted the proposal by Tom Miller, based by him on a German-English model. (Credit for the idea subsequently has been claimed by others. Memories grow creative when there's a buck in it.) We canvassed the club's wildland veterans for favorite trips. The list we adopted for *100 Hikes* heavily stressed the edges.

The Dark Side of Edgism

Deepists celebrate the shallows as well.

Those of us who have suffered such disasters as having our tarp ripped to ribbons at White Rock Lakes appreciate the desire to be always at night tucked in home's little beddy-by. Sorry to report, the tolerance sometimes is not a two-way street. There are edgists who clamor that no matter how holy and enchanted a deep may be, if a hiker can't get home for supper it must be shallowed.

The Cascade Pass controversy caused my abandonment of a half-century membership in The Mountaineers. For 40 years the club had persevered in the goal of shortening the Stehekin River road. Two or three edgists whined and moisted at a meeting of the board of trustees. Flip-flop went the club and out I went.

The issue that turfed me out of Mountaineers Books was the road up the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River. I argued in a book manuscript that it be gated shut at the Taylor River. The publisher (behind my back) permitted the photographer to edit my manuscript (behind my back) to "save" two lakes for the edges he loved.

Not too long ago the environmental community was taking a hard look at the roads up the Icicle and Cle Elum. Not any more. If word got to the edgists, Minute Men would leap from the bushes brandishing flintlocks.

Dupers Leading the Duped

James Watt, Secretary of the Interior for President Reagan, has been our favorite poster child since he proposed to issue leases for the drilling toward (possible) hot magma underlying the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Environmentalist Republicans (it then was possible to be such — Dave Brower claimed to be one, keeping a completely straight face) apologized, "Ronnie got bad advice and made a boo-boo, but he'll fix it." He didn't, though, until Watt laughed in public at what he considered the comical stumblings of a handicapped person.

President Bush's Secretary of the Interior is Watt's hand-raised protégé. The continuity. The tip of the iceberg. But beneath the surface of the poster is the menace to our ship of state.

There is nothing secret about it. Since Reagan's time the Washington City think tanks have been issuing streams of White Papers perfecting and elaborating the campaign scheduled to commence on Der Tag. At the sound of the trumpet announcing the Supreme Court's appointment of the runner-up, the Republican panzers

struck. Shock and awe. The fog of war. Approximately half the nation doesn't know what a think tank does (conspires) and can't read White Papers. Close eyes and ears and follow the leader — that's the Patriot Act thing to do.

We would hope for something better from our environmental brethren. We are disappointed. Granted, the Fee Demo plot had a surface plausibility, what with the Republican Congress systematically starving to death the nation's social infrastructure ("the better to privatize, m'dear"). But most of us soon saw through the fog.

I outlined the White Papers plot in the frontmatter of a 100 Hikes volume that was up for revision. It was shock and awe for me when the volume appeared in print with an impassioned plea for Fee Demo by the book's photographer. In the third of a century of our 100 Hikes business association, he had prudently stuck to his last, leaving the writing and the thinking to me. Now, duped into a terminal passion, he became the dupe of The Mountaineers, and other organizations as well, causing or aggravating the on-going civil war among traditional environmental allies.

The final book of our association carried — at his behest and without my concurrence — an essay by some M.D. or other connected somehow to the event where President Bush stood on the White House steps and urged Americans to get healthy, take a walk.

A confab of federal and state officials and the American Recreation Coalition (read, Walt Disney Inc.) was titled "Opening Doors Wider of America's Public Lands — Our Natural Health and Fitness Centers." I understood my former photographer's enthusiasm when I read that among the group's recommendations was the expansion of "the capability to successfully use volunteers on public lands and encourage additional volunteerism through the Take Pride in America initiative."

Some of us, the Issaquah Alps Trails Club the example I know best, were building and maintaining trails, unpaid and full of pride, before the privatizers/commercializers were born again.

Is it true what they say, that the sky is falling? Clap your hardhat on your head, hoist your pulaski, and sing "Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to work the trails we go."

Edging into the Deeps

Yosemite Valley is largely privatized

Continued on page 16

FEE DEMO



—JOHN JONIK

PAY TO PLAY (AND PAY, AND PAY . . .)

In an attempt to make the program “more palatable,” the Forest Service is contemplating offering free parking at 400 or more trailheads, getting more from picnic areas, boat launches, and other sites easier to police and capture scofflaws. In Mount Baker–Snoqualmie National Forest, 152 trailheads presently are pay-parking and 19 free; no change there is expected. The next step probably will be to give concessionaires more loot plus gun permits.

Also in the stew pot is a “Universal Pass” for access to national parks, national forests — and state parks!

A bill is in Congress to make Fee Demo permanent for NPS, USFS, BLM, USFWS, and Bureau of Reclamation. Failure to pay the fees would be punishable by 6 months in jail plus a \$5000 fine!

“Recreational development is a job not of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind.”

—Aldo Leopold

Once More unto the Fee Demo, Friends!

February 6, 2004

Secretary of Interior Norton (natural daughter of former Secretary Watt) sought to amend S. 1107 to make recreation fees PERMANENT and to make failure to pay the fees punishable by 6 months in jail plus \$5,000 fine! (Why not internment at Guantanamo?)

February 11

The Senate Energy and Resources committee advanced S. 1107 by limiting permanent authorization of fees to the national parks, where they long have been charged anyway, and allowing the fees to LAPSE December 31, 2005 on national forest (and etc.) lands.

Alastair Coyne of Keep the Sespe Wild hailed it as “an accomplishment of incredible proportions.” Scott Silver of Wild Wilderness said, “We went toe to toe with some powerful players and this time the people won.”

February 17

An editorial in Idaho’s *Twin Falls Time News* says “the program which charges citizens for merely visiting their national forests is ripe for termination. Watching Idaho Senator Larry Craig join forces with environmental groups is like watching Haley’s comet. Few observers live long enough to see it twice.”

February 18

An editorial in the *Idaho Mountain Express*, headlined “FIE ON FOREST FEES,” says it “. . . was a bad program when it began, is still a bad program, and needs to be scrapped.”

The editor imagining a jail conversation:

“Whatcha in for?”

“Hiking without a license.”

“Man, talk about getting tough on crime! Did they confiscate your boots as evidence?”

We won at the committee level in the Senate, but we have far to go

Fee Demo's Current Status

The Senate Energy Resources Committee unanimously endorsed Senators Craig-Thomas' National Parks ONLY fee-demo bill – S 1107. Under normal circumstances, any bill that the full committee passes unanimously would be approved by the full Senate without debate and without a roll-call vote.

Unfortunately, the Bush Administration is adamant that fee-demo be permanently authorized and they are lobbying hard to have fee authority for other agencies AMENDED to the Craig-Thomas Bill. Whether they succeed is anybody's guess. Meanwhile the action turns to the House of Representatives where Ralph Regula's horrible bill, HR 3283, still looms.

The next step for our team will be to get a bill comparable to Craig-Thomas' S 1107 introduced and passed in the House. The next step for Gale Norton *et. al.*, will likely be to ram through language that is much like that contained in Regula's bill. It's unlikely that they could do this in stand-alone legislation and so I'd expect to see such language added to a larger bill — perhaps added at the last moment.

As of today the Western delegation of senators (and to a lesser degree congressmen) has no great desire to pass permanent fee authority. Unfortunately, there are a few officials in both the House and the Senate who are likely to push for permanent fees. Tragically, in the Senate, the Minority Leader, Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) is most likely to cause our side problems — he, and Tennessee's Republican Senator Lamar Alexander. In the House, it's still too early to say how things will play out.

— SCOTT SILVER
March 9, 2004

A National Park Service PREDICTION *But say it isn't so!*

SCOTT SILVER

There was a time when the National Park Service was perhaps the best-run land management agency in the USA. That is no longer true. Today politics rule supreme within the Department of Interior and the integrity of those at the helm must be challenged. Today it appears to me that when the leadership of the NPS is not misdirecting the media and the American public, they are speaking out of both sides of their mouths.

Recently the NPS made headlines in a story that it was quietly and secretly cutting visitor services and reducing park hours due to a lack in appropriated funding. The National Park Service and their private partners in the tourism industry are attempting to stem the decline in park visitation through efforts to aggressively lure additional paying customers back into the parks.

Clearly something is afoot within the agency and that being the case, I'm about to make a prediction. Perhaps someone would be so kind as to bury this prediction in a time capsule and unearth it 6 months or a year from today. Or better yet, perhaps people will chose to appropriately act upon it. (By acting today, perhaps we can alter the future.)

***** I PREDICT *****

Budgets will be starved while money is instead put into marketing and promotion of the parks.

Three months from now (give or take), the Bush Administration will announce that the National Parks are in decline and must seek creative new funding solutions.

Gale Norton and Fran Mainella will announce a new public-private partnership initiative. Legislation to facilitate new private, commercial, development and private participation within park management will be introduced. It will be a foregone conclusion that the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program must be permanently authorized and expanded. The President's legislation will attempt to accomplish that objective as part of their larger privatization package.

Frolics in the Federal Forests

Primal Quest Adventure Race Announced

The 2004 Primal Quest Adventure Race, scheduled for September 19-28, 2004 on the Mt. Baker, Darrington, and Skykomish Ranger Districts promises to be the mother lode of photo ops for the press and TV.

Contestants (125 4-person teams, each with 1-4 assistants in 1-2 vehicles), 140 managerial staff, Forest Service monitors and post-race course inspectors, 12 checkpoints each with 1-2 volunteers equipped with a vehicle and a tent and garbage bin and honey bucket, 47 medical personnel and ambulances, Search and Rescue volunteers, county sheriff staff, and 2 helicopters for evacuation, battery replacement, SAR, and filming, and an audience of race-watchers should, in total, create quite a spectacle on the 400-mile race course of which 120 miles are on National Forest roads and trails, the rest on state, county, and private land. (Not taken into consideration in this roster are the press coverage, and the TV helicopters.)

March 4, 2004

Larry Donovan
Project Coordinator
Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
21905 64th Ave W
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

Sirs:

This letter constitutes NCCC's comments on the proposed special event permit for a "Primal Quest Adventure Race" to be held during September of this year.

We perceive this proposed event to be a synthetic made-for-TV "sportainment" whose primary purpose is to amuse the television-viewing public for commercial ends. It is not a citizens' race; nor is it an elite race in some recognized sporting discipline; rather, it is a team mish-mosh designed with jaded viewers in mind. The structure of the event suggests that the organizers know little and care less about the natural environment of western

Washington. We note with some bemusement that the race is to include a river-rafting component, yet it will be held in September, generally the low point of the annual hydrological cycle, when there are frequently no wild rivers high enough to run. What rocky, riffly section of the Sauk or Skykomish will the participants be forced to drag their rafts over? No doubt arduous and frustrating for the participants, but not exactly compelling TV viewing. The inclusion of a ropes course in the event also leaves us scratching our heads. What does this have to do with the landscape of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie? Why should National Forest lands be used for an event which, presumably, requires the setup and erection of structures? A county fairground would seem a more appropriate venue. The logistics would certainly be easier. Perhaps a borrow pit or old log landing, devoid of any vegetation to be trampled, would be an acceptable site.

We are also concerned about the off-trail segments of any such event. We wonder if the organizers have any experience with west-side Cascades brush. We are concerned about concentrated human use, flagging, and informal route creation in such places. We are wholly unwilling to acquiesce to this event without first seeing a detailed map of the proposed route.

Given that this event is best described as a commercially motivated entertainment, rather than public use and enjoyment of National Forest lands, we would also object to traditional public uses such as hiking or recreational forest driving being inconvenienced or hindered in any way. This event should occupy the absolute lowest spot on the priority totem pole.

It doesn't sound terrible, just dumb, pointless, and inappropriate, with some troubling side effects. Show us the maps, show us the details, and we might go along with it if our criticisms are addressed.

Kevin Geraghty
North Cascades Conservation Council
Board Member

Tourists Heli-ski the Mendenhall

As five cruise ships reach port in downtown Juneau, sightseers spill onto the docks, smitten by the wild allure of the Inside Passage . . . Many have their eyes set on the Mendenhall Glacier. To reach it, more than 89,000 adventurers a year will enlist helicopter guides this year . . . \$199 for a 55-minute ride, to buzz over Tongass National Forest and land on the Mendenhall.

"Every day we get clients so blown away by what they've seen they literally jump up and down with joy," says the vice-president of tourism marketing for TEMSCO, Alaska's largest heli-ski operator.

Consumer demand from cruise ships, which this summer brought 770,000 passengers into Juneau alone, more than the entire population of Alaska, has transformed the heli-ski industry. "Without helicopters, tourists would have no way to see some of Alaska's major wilderness attractions."

— CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Mountain Sheep on Chelan Butte

The Wildlife Department recently established on Chelan Butte a colony of mountain sheep from Cleman Mountain, another step in restoring the species to habitat from which it was expelled by the diseases and appetites of ranchers' enormous bands of woolies. A half-century ago an NCCC member played a starring role in the program's infancy. The Game Department it was then, the preserving of wildlife incidental to its basic charge of providing targets. A pioneer plantation of sheep had so thrived that harvest could begin. A lottery was held to select from thousands of applicants two lucky winners. A pair of splendid semi-tame trophies were (not quite literally but in fact) staked out. The inaugural slaughter was attended by a throng of press and dignitaries. But the master of ceremonies recoiled in horror upon noting that one of the winners, Ellis Ogilvie, had no equipment but a camera. "Where, sir, is your rifle?" "Oh," answered Ellis, "I don't want to kill my sheep."

A Second Chance for Salmon

Court Orders Bush Administration to Rewrite Columbia-Snake River Salmon Plan

SAVE OUR WILD SALMON COALITION
WINTER 2004

No Northwesterner can deny the valuable role salmon play in our economy, culture, heritage, and ecology. And with the once mighty Columbia and Snake Rivers, our region has been blessed with the world's most prolific salmon producing rivers and one of our nation's most important natural resources. Unfortunately, today our notable salmon are at a crossroads and the decisions we make now could decide both the fate of this imperiled species and the long-term endurance of our economy.

The "Federal Salmon Plan," the current plan of actions to recover the waning populations of Columbia and Snake River salmon is little more than expensive and ineffectual. Accordingly, in May 2003, U.S. District Court Judge James Redden ruled the plan illegal and ordered the Bush Administration to revise and improve it by June 2004. He referenced a previous judge's conclusion that the federal recovery effort suffers from "serious flaws" that "need to be addressed and remedied in the immediate future."

With the recent temporary rise in some salmon species due to momentarily improved ocean conditions, one might expect federal agencies to use the positive situation to benefit their work towards long-term salmon restoration. Instead, the Bush administration seems intent on wasting more taxpayer dollars on costly, futile measures like trucking and barging salmon around the dams. In another administrative failure, dams on the Snake River broke temperature pollution standards for sixty-seven consecutive days, greatly exceeding what is typically considered lethal conditions for salmon. Moreover, in December 2003, the Bonneville Power Administration, an arm of the Bush administration, announced its intent to eliminate what is known as "summer spill," an action widely regarded as the safest means of helping young salmon travel past federal dams and avoid deadly turbines.

The Bush administration is charting a course toward another severe decline in salmon populations once the current



favorable ocean conditions subside.

In the last several years, numerous studies and hundreds of scientists have concluded that removing the four dams on lower Snake River must be included in any effective salmon recovery plan. Even the invalidated Federal Salmon Plan acknowledges, "Breaching the four lower Snake River dams would provide more certainty of long-term survival than would other measures." Removing those dams, coupled with smart investments in our regional energy and transportation infrastructures, offers a win-win solution to recover our salmon, strengthen our economy and communities, honor treaties with regional tribes and Canada, and uphold our Nation's laws.

During the first half of 2004, Pacific Northwest citizens have a window of opportunity to ensure safety for salmon. A free-flowing Snake River will restore salmon to self-sustaining, harvestable populations and bring economic recovery to long-suffering fishing communities. All should demand a legal, scientifically credible, cost-effective salmon plan that includes removing the four lower Snake River dams.

YOU CAN HELP

Send a message to the Bush administration:

1. Salmon are important to the culture and economy of the Northwest.
2. Please restore wild salmon to abundant, self-sustaining, harvestable populations.
3. Please include the removal of the 4 lower Snake River dams as a mandatory recovery action in your new Federal Salmon Plan"
4. Please include my letter in the comment period for the revision of the Federal Salmon Plan.

It is extremely important that you add your name, and the names of other salmon advocates to the public record in support of effective salmon recovery in the Columbia-Snake Rivers. SOS is working to gather more than 100,000 comments to submit to the Bush Administration. Please be sure that your name is part of the record! Visit our website: www.wildsalmon.org, or send your comments care of Save Our Wild Salmon at 2031 SE Belmont St., Portland, OR 97214. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE!

Please send your letter to:

President Bush
c/o Save Our Wild Salmon
424 Third Ave West, 100
Seattle WA 98119

You can also visit

www.wildsalmon.org
to submit your comments via email

For more information or to get involved, please contact:

Joseph Bogaard (SOS)—206.286.4455,
x13 joseph@wildsalmon.org.
<http://www.wildsalmon.org>

Varieties of Wilderness Experience

Continued from page 11

(profitized) and fears exist that the Stehekin Valley is at similar risk. The edges must be defended and, where necessary, rescued. How secure are the deeps?

In 1938 I sucked a prune pit from lunch while lugging my Trapper Nelson up the Poopout Drag of the Big Quilcene, refusing to surrender it to the big guys. In my pocket were nickels and dimes for ice cream and root beer at the candy store the big guys said was awaiting us at Marmot Pass. Come night at Camp Mystery and I crawled in my primitive bag and shivered to dawn under the roof of cold stars. That night was the other half of the epiphany.

Ice cream and root beer are now for sale in the deeps, and pancakes and fried eggs and little pigs, and ham sandwiches on bread hot from the Dutch oven, and steaks and salads and apple pie, the same delights as on the groaning table at the home ranch. No stone on the back, only the camera and the book of verses for reading underneath the bough. Civitas is transported into the Deep by horses, mules, burros, llamas, goats, and dogs. The outfitter's commodious tents exclude the Three-Day Blows, the stars, the night.

The Summer 2003 *Highland News*, journal of the Kettle Range Conservation Group, notes, "Unlike private wilderness outfitters who guide people into wild places to make a living, KRCG leads nearly 300 people a year into northeastern Washington's wild places to inspire them."

Customers of the outfitters also are inspired. But not for nickels and dimes.

PART THREE: THE WILDNESS WITHIN

My bag was concealed behind a driftwood log well-removed from the kempt shore of the state park, as secure as could be from urban murderers and police, the sleep peaceful. Until a monstrous silhouette reared up against the stars. Surely doomed, in a futile last gasp I howled, "PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO SLEEP HERE!"

The silhouette vanished. From the far side of the log rose a groan. Then an apparent head. In a quaver it whimpered, "Man, you lak to skeer me half to death."

There proving to be no People to finish him off, he friendly-like extended an invitation (politely declined) to join him and his pals at the illicit campfire on the

park beach to smoke a toque.

Camp Two was atop a massive block of concrete barged in against the base of a glacial-till cliff, intended as the site of a boathouse to be connected to a view window atop the cliff by staircase or elevator. That was long ago and forgotten, defeated by the formidable cliff. The shore bent around the corners of the bluff north and south, putting civitas out of sight and sound and mind. In the night's high tide the water rose nearly to the top of the block. No police or murderers could disturb me without getting wet to the neck.

Across the black waters was the dark shore of an island, uplands sparsely speckled by pinpricks of electricity. The Whulge was as empty and silent as it was before the arrival of the windships from Europe. Scarcely louder than my breathing was the lap-lap-lap of the wavelets.

The sky . . . Above was that gigantic glow the astronauts reported from space, the glow I have seen from summits in the Olympics and the North Cascades and from Columbia Crest — the wildness without.

Why had I come here? To hitch the Whulge to the Issaquah Alps, which are hitched to the wildness without and, said John Muir, "to everything else." At the 200-meter hut I'd hoisted the Kelty, walked down Cougar Mountain to the Metro stop, rode three buses (one at a time) to Tacoma, and set out on my illegal four-day expedition.

The final morning I was cut off from my beach route by jutting condos. Fortuitously, I spotted a friend taking a morning soak in his backyard hot tub. His wife brought out their baby to say good morning to daddy, served me a cup of hot coffee (alcazám), and led me through the house to the public street. The first American to climb Everest congratulated me on being likely the first person to backpack the beach from Tacoma to Seattle.

— H.M.

Comments on Forest Service Outfitter-Guide EA

16 February, 2004

District Ranger Glenn Hoffman
Leavenworth Ranger District
22976 Hwy 207
Leavenworth
WA 98826

Dear Sir,

First, I would like to compliment those who put together this detailed Outfitter-Guide document examining "the public demand and need for outfitter and guide activity on the Districts, and also . . . the effects of the Outfitter and Guide program on District resources". Good job—it can't have been easy. But because of the many complexities involved in National Forest outfitting, especially in wilderness areas, it would have been helpful to have more than the several weeks after mailing to go over the Environmental Assessment adequately, contact those interested in the issues who may not have been aware of the EA, and come up with a well-informed response. Did you hold any informational hearings? If so, they slipped by me, and by others I know in this area who would have been interested in attending them. This issue certainly deserves public attention – more, I suspect, than it will be receiving. I'm not sure how it best could have been done, but it would have helped to have the wilderness parts of the plan more clearly separated from the rest.

The wilderness areas involved are the Icicle, Chiwaukum, and Ingalls Creek drainages in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, the east side of the Jackson Wilderness, and the east side of the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

The basic unit of measurement is the "client-service day" (CSD) – one day or part thereof that one client is provided service by a guide. Stock-supplied drop-camp CSD's are based on pack-in and pack-out time, not on number of days the party stays in camp. Drop camps reduce stock damage around camping areas, but double the stock on-trail time required for the party – and impact on others using the trail.

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Comments on Forest Service Outfitter-Guide EA

Continued from page 16

The EA offers four alternatives: A, B, C and D. The “proposed alternative” is D, which would entail a very large increase over current outfitted use in wilderness areas.

A involves allowing all existing permits to expire – there would be no outfitters on the districts.

B “was formulated to minimize the potential conflicts between users, minimize resource impacts, and reduce the permit administration workload on the districts, while still providing some minimum level of public need for outfitting services”. Wenatchee National Forest claims there would be a future reduction from current outfitted use levels as existing outfitters go out of business or relinquish their existing permits.

C “was formulated to fully provide for the public need for outfitting services on the districts, while also reducing the conflicts between users and minimizing resource impacts.”

D “was formulated to fully provide for the public need for outfitting service . . . and to allow for some additional commercial recreation use to satisfy the additional demand for services.”

In my opinion, increasing outfitter allocations for wilderness, as would happen under both C (see below) and D, artificially and unnecessarily increases use. Many areas are already out of compliance with some standards in the Forest Plan, and even if outfitters are kept away, expanded outfitter trips elsewhere would tend to displace non-outfitted parties into greater use of those areas. Growth is generally the sign of a healthy business. In wilderness, though, there has to be a limit. In my opinion we are already at that point in these districts. Is there a danger that individual outfitters could not operate viably at current levels? I doubt it. Basing outfitting levels on “need” or “demand”, and separating the two, will always be tricky. Once levels are set it will very difficult to reduce them in the future, no matter how much non-outfitted use increases. I doubt that you are anxious to go through this process again soon.

For these reasons and those that follow, I strongly recommend that you adopt some variant of B, that there be very little or no increase in the outfitter presence in wilderness.

Some miscellaneous remarks:

Alternate B could have been formu-

lated to roughly match existing levels when “unique services” are included. I note that even under B there is a combined increase, not a decrease, for day-riding. I would think that day-riding is most appropriately conducted outside wilderness, or at least on wilderness trails (such as some of those off Ingalls creek) that get very little hiking use.

For those whose chief interest is in the effects on wilderness, the scale of proposed increases in outfitted use in wilderness under C and D is not immediately obvious. Alternative C is presented as allowing “commercial outfitter and guide activity to continue on the district at a level that approximates the existing program, but does not add much additional commercial recreational use.” What is “much”? When the “unique services” are added in (and it is not clear to me why they should not be), the backpacking allocations for wilderness trails go from current 980 CSD’s to 1407, a near 50 per cent increase. Stock day-trips almost double, from 150 to 287. In this small amount of wilderness acreage during a brief summer season, I would call those very large increases.

“Unique services” are defined in such a broad and varied way that almost any commercial guiding program could be easily made to fit the definition. They should be considered part of the basic allocations, not a potential add-on.

Giving commercial operators a greater stake in the overall wilderness picture can effectively reduce management flexibility in some areas. Opening forest trails to stock or replacing bridges, for instance, can be far more difficult and expensive in some years than others, and leaving things ride for a year or two can be in the best wilderness tradition. However, there could develop strong pressure to concentrate maintenance efforts where business operations are most affected (promises to scheduled clients, etc.), though you might otherwise tend to use them elsewhere. Commercial stock operators are a large and valuable part of the wilderness scene on these districts. I would also say: large enough.

Two areas of confusion: If stock handlers are not required to camp at designated stock camps, as they are not in most areas open to them (e.g. Boulder Basin), what restrictions on camping locations are there, if any? Does the table on E-9 imply that more than one outfitted party may visit the South Fork Napeequa at the same time?

Before reading the EA I was unaware that stock use off-trail is permitted. I think it is important that non-outfitted stock as well as outfitted be prohibited from leaving the formal trail system. Private stock very likely do more terrain damage per animal than the more experienced trail horses of outfitters. I know there has been illegal trail-cutting activity off the White River trail by hunters bringing stock into higher basins, and I’m certain it has happened elsewhere.

I note that maximum wilderness party size is 12 people and/or livestock combined in all WROS zones. I would say that this is way too large for the Pristine/Trailless, and that livestock should not be permitted at all off-trail. Allowing stock practically guarantees that trails will develop in off-trail locations.

Your party size limits appear to be unduly elastic. We have the following: In the Pristine “A total of not more than 6 people will be encouraged”. “The majority of outfitted trips in W shall comply with this party size limit of 12...” “Approval for stock parties over 12 may be given...” “Party sizes over 16, in W, will rarely be approved.” “Off-trail hiking trips will rarely exceed a group size of 6 except for pre-existing use that strongly emphasizes Leave No Trace skill development”. It’s not clear what you mean by that. Perhaps simply that NOLS can run oversize parties? “Outfitters will make a reasonable attempt to reduce group size and the amount of gear being packed before requesting party sizes over 12”. Managing for primitive and unconfined recreation requires that you avoid undue rigidity, but party size limits are essential and should be easy to abide by if outfitters let clients know in advance what the rules are. It is, after all, almost always preferable that party size be much lower than the maximum allowed. These are outside limits, not recommended standards. There’s not much wilderness solitude available in a party of 6, let alone twice that.

In assessing the “need” for backpacking services, we should first acknowledge the wealth of information that has accumulated and been made widely available over the last 20 years. We have now many more mountain guides anxious to sell their services, at the same time as it has become increasingly easy to learn things on one’s own. Nothing about the wilderness terrain in these districts is a closely guarded secret except to those unwilling to spend a few hours in a library or bookstore, or on a trip

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Public Supports Grizzly Bear Recovery in the North Cascades

JIM DAVIS

CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP CENTER

CHRIS MORGAN

INSIGHT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

NAN LANEY

GRIZZLY BEAR OUTREACH PROJECT

Grizzly bears are often portrayed by the media as voracious predators. However, grizzly bears are generally shy creatures that avoid human encounters, if at all possible. Negative encounters with grizzly bears are rare, and typically associated with defensive reactions in response to being startled or feeling threatened by human actions around cubs or food caches. Interior grizzly bears, such as those found in Washington's North Cascades, are omnivores with a typical diet of less than 10 per cent fish or meat. More than 100 plants in the North Cascades have been identified as part of the grizzly bear's diet. Much of the meat in the grizzly bear's diet is carrion from winter killed deer and elk. Grizzly bears in coastal areas are an exception: for these bears, fish (salmon) comprise a larger proportion of their diet.

Today, grizzly bears are present in less than 2 per cent of their former range in the lower 48 states, with fewer than 1,100 bears remaining. The estimated resident population in Washington's North Cascades is 5 to 20 bears. There may be some interaction of Washington's grizzly bears across the border with a small population of 5 to 20 grizzly bears in the British Columbia North Cascades.

In 1975, the grizzly bear was listed as "threatened" under the US Endangered Species Act. In 1983, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) was established with the goal of recovering the grizzly bear population in the lower 48 states. The IGBC includes representatives from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, US Geological Survey, state Fish and Wildlife Departments, and the British Columbia Ministry of Water, Air, and Land Protection.

The IGBC identified six ecosystems for grizzly bear recovery, ranging from Yellowstone to the North Cascades. The North Cascades recovery area is one of the largest in the US, encompassing nearly 10,000 square miles. More 40 per cent of



—JOHN HECHTEL

the recovery area is designated wilderness, 90 per cent is federally owned, and 68 per cent has no motorized access. The North Cascades recovery area is bounded on the north by the Canadian border, approximately the western boundary of the Mount Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest, the I-90 corridor, and approximately the eastern border of the Wenatchee/Okanogan National Forest and the Loomis State Forest.

Grizzly bears are often portrayed by the media as voracious predators. However, grizzly bears are generally shy creatures that avoid human encounters, if at all possible. Negative encounters with grizzly bears are rare, and typically associated with defensive reactions in response to being startled or feeling threatened by human actions around cubs or food caches. Interior grizzly bears, such as those found in Washington's North Cascades, are omnivores with a typical diet of less than 10 per cent fish or meat. More than 100 plants in the North Cascades have been identified as part of the grizzly bear's diet. Much of the meat in the grizzly bear's diet is carrion from winter killed deer and elk. Grizzly bears in coastal areas are an exception: for these bears, fish (salmon) comprise a larger proportion of their diet.

Resources are currently unavailable for the US Fish and Wildlife Service to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluating specific alternatives for recovering grizzly bears in the North Cascades. One barrier to funding for an EIS is the widespread belief that large segments of the Washington State population are opposed to grizzly bear recovery, especially rural populations in and adjacent

to the North Cascades grizzly bear recovery area.

However, a fall 2003 telephone survey of rural residents from Skagit and Whatcom Counties has revealed substantial support for grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades. A majority of respondents (52 per cent per cent) reported strong support for recovery and 24 per cent reported moderate support for recovery. Very few (11 per cent) said that they strongly oppose grizzly bear recovery and only 5 per cent said that they moderately oppose recovery. Support for grizzly bear recovery was about the same in Skagit and Whatcom Counties.

The findings for Whatcom and Skagit Counties reinforce the results of an earlier survey conducted in 1996 (*Washington Residents' Opinion on Grizzly Bear Recovery in the North Cascades Mountains*, Responsive Management, 130 Franklin Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801). That survey found 41 per cent strong support and 36 per cent moderate support for grizzly bear recovery from a statewide sample. Among respondents living within the recovery area west of the North Cascades, 42 per cent strongly supported recovery and 31 per cent moderately supported recovery. Among respondents living within the recovery area east of the North Cascades, 32 per cent strongly supported recovery and 32 per cent moderately supported recovery.

The more recent 2003 survey also examined attitudes toward several of the specific alternatives that could be proposed to further grizzly bear recovery. The survey revealed that 33 per cent of the respondents would be "more supportive" of grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades if 5-10 bears had to be added. Another 43 per cent expressed the same level of support for recovery if grizzly bears had to be added to the North Cascades. Only 15 per cent said they would be "less supportive" if bears had to be added.

The survey also found that Skagit and Whatcom County residents would be "more supportive" of recovery if some land use restrictions were required, such as closing some roads and trails at certain times of the year. Majorities of respondents also reported that they would be "more supportive" of grizzly bear recovery if a program was available to compensate ranchers for grizzly bear related livestock losses.

Responses to attitudinal questions about grizzly bears were very informative. Majorities of respondents agreed with positive statements about grizzly bears and grizzly bear recovery. Nearly everyone (91 per cent) agreed with the statement, "Residents and visitors to the North Cascades can prevent almost all problems with grizzly bears by taking a few precautions such as keeping a clean campsite and avoiding areas with heavy bear activity." Results for the statement, "Grizzly bears were here before humans and have an inherent right to live in the North Cascades," revealed 55 per cent strongly agreeing with the statement and 22 per cent moderately agreeing with the statement. For the statement, "Grizzly bears in the North Cascades Mountains should be preserved for future generations," 66 per cent strongly agreed and an additional 20 per cent moderately agreed.

Majorities, and in some cases strong majorities, of respondents disagreed with negative statements about grizzly bears. For the statement, "There is no need for grizzly bears in the North Cascades Mountains," a strong majority (79 per cent) disagreed, and a majority (58 per cent) strongly disagreed. For the statement, "Grizzly bears from the North Cascades will kill many livestock and pets," 68 per cent disagreed and 38 per cent strongly disagreed. For the statement, "Grizzly bears are very dangerous to humans," 56 per cent disagreed and 36 per cent agreed.

The survey also showed that the public needs more information on grizzly bears. Few people knew that meat and fish comprise only 10 per cent of the grizzly bear's diet in the North Cascades. Very few realize that full recovery of the grizzly bear population in the North Cascades will take around 100 years and that a fully recovered population will include only about 200-400 grizzly bears. Fortunately, nearly everyone knew that it is legal to kill a grizzly bear in self-defense or defense of other people. However, almost a third did not know that it is illegal to kill a grizzly bear if it were to attack livestock.

All participants in the survey lived east of Highway 9 in the rural areas of eastern Skagit and Whatcom Counties. Adults were selected at random from the area to participate in the survey. Survey telephone calls were conducted during September and October of 2003. A total of 508 adults age eighteen and older completed the survey. The results are accurate to within plus or minus 4 per cent.

The telephone survey was sponsored by the Grizzly Bear Outreach Project (GBOP) and funded by the Skagit Wildlife Research Grant Program managed by Seattle City Light. The survey was conducted by Responsive Management, a nationally recognized survey firm based in

Bear Attitudes About Humans

KEN WILCOX

I wish I could do a poll and ask those burly big grizzlies, what few that are left in the North Cascades, what they think about all the gangly humans skipping across their blueberry fields and bottom swamps on the very best days of the year.

Are you 1) satisfied, 2) nearly satisfied, 3) moderately irritated, or 4) hopelessly oblivious to the region's accelerating population of those same two-leggers — you know, the ones who reside in all those multi-colored square dens just beyond the ragged, familiar, mountainous horizon, out where the rivers lead to an inland sea that once belonged to the salmon and the orca, and where noisy crates on rubber wheels zoom around in smelly hordes across a large flat place that was scraped clean of bear habitat not that long ago?

Maybe I could survey them, but I suppose I would have to learn the language first. Anticipating our first interview, I would have to ask, somewhat sheepishly, about that classic Orwellian verse from *Animal Farm*: 'Four legs good, two legs bad!' Say it isn't true! In 1982, when a friend and I stood face-to-face

Virginia.

The GBOP is a community education project providing accurate information on grizzly bears, the grizzly bear recovery process, and ways to make our homes and communities bear safe. GBOP education activities in the North Cascades have been funded by multiple partners including the US Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, Defenders of Wildlife, and Woodland Park Zoo.

The GBOP was first implemented in 2002 as a pilot in Okanogan County. The GBOP was expanded to the west side of the North Cascades in Skagit and Whatcom Counties, beginning in the fall of 2003. The west side project includes an evaluation funded by the Skagit Wildlife Research Grant program managed by Seattle City Light. The two-year evaluation consists of baseline and follow-up telephone surveys, quarterly key informant interviews, and a media content analysis. The survey results reported in this article are derived from the baseline survey conducted in the fall of 2003.

For more information on the GBOP, visit the website www.bearinfo.org.

with two young grizzlies on the ridge above Thornton Lakes, our eyes locked almost long enough to have that conversation. Then we all relaxed; the big furballs ceded the berries to us and trotted down the hillside and out of view. In that brief encounter, it felt as if we had been educated about bears in a way no human could possibly emulate. I'm not sure what the bears said to us, but it sure was profound.

Ursine platitudes aside, if all goes well, it's fathomable that Washington's half a handful of grizzlies might produce a cub or two in some secret hollow in the wild North Cascades in 2004. Most likely, no one will know if it happens.

Also in 2004, the number of humans living within easy access of the North Cascades will likely increase by many thousands. Happily, the humans can rest now, having secured for themselves what we may presume to be a viable population size. The bears, on the other hand, have a real challenge on their paws, with no room for complacency.

As the Grizzly Bear Outreach Project, or GBOP, (www.bearinfo.org) is making very clear these days, humans have a major role to play in the future of these amazing creatures with whom we share the bogs and the blueberries. Humans and grizzlies can not only coexist quite nicely in our mountains, we can probably help each other out considerably.

Humans, naturally, are in a great position to aid in grizzly bear recovery. There is much we can do, from augmenting the population with another half a handful of bears (so few that most of us would still never see them), to speaking up on their behalf when the bureaucrats and politicians get to messing around (or not) with studies, budgets, and plans. Those who represent us simply need to be reminded regularly that bears matter, that taking real action toward recovery matters.

So make that occasional phone call, send that card or letter to your member of congress, attend a meeting, write a letter to the editor, support GBOP's work, in short, be a voice for the bears and for civilized people.

The grizzly may help us out in return by surviving, by recovering its population to a healthy, viable size, and perhaps by someday thriving once again, just as they did a century and a half ago. The grizzlies can help us by just being there. Their presence in the wild places we've all worked so hard to protect is an enormous gift, not just to us, but to the generations who will follow us. We will know, by their recovery, that we two-leggers are a civilized species after all.

Management Changes in Plan Update Necessary

Continued from page 5

— Tolerate no ORV resource damage on any forest, even if such motorized use is deemed to be otherwise lawful.

— No expansion of snowmobile, dirt bike or ATV use, including addition of any new groomed snowmobile trails, shall be considered without completing formal NEPA studies. Such studies must address soils, vegetation, wildlife, watersheds, recreation opportunities and other forest resources.

— Hardening trails for motorized use does not work. The Forest Service must study in some detail the effectiveness of 'trail hardening' methodologies and disclose the results in the forest plan update.

— Close motorized areas where Wilderness trespass is documented, either on an occasional or habitual basis.

— Any area opened up to motorized use as a result of this forest plan update must be accompanied by an equivalent reduction of motorized use elsewhere on the forest.

— Study and assemble an inventory of all unauthorized, user-built and non-system trails.

Road System/Access

The existing road system was largely developed to support a huge timber harvest program. The timber harvest program is now much reduced over the cutting levels experienced in the 1980's. The remaining road system produces unacceptable damage to soils, wildlife and fisheries. The forest plan revision must direct the closure and elimination of unneeded roads. . . Closures and decommissionings will benefit wildlife and recreation.

A complete road system analysis is needed, including the rationale for each road that is to remain open or be closed or be decommissioned.

We expect that the Forest Service will maximize decommissioned road miles and budget for increased rates of road decommissioning.

— Close or decommission road segments with high maintenance costs and/or environmental risks and/or a history of environmental damage.

— Consider conversion of suitable closed and decommissioned roads to trail use.

— Develop an access assessment criteria for both roaded and unroaded lands

Other Issues

There are many other issues that the Forest Service needs to address in this forest plan update.

Old Growth

Eastern Washington old-growth forest ecosystems have become rare and merit full protection. Protect all old growth on the parts of the Wenatchee and Okanogan that are addressed by the North-

west Forest Plan amendment. Protect old growth in the Okanogan east of the Chewuch River and all of the Colville. . . We expect that no old growth as defined by proper scientific evaluations will be cut on a scheduled or unscheduled basis.

Timber Harvest

We do not expect scheduled or unscheduled timber harvest levels on any one of the three forests to increase for any reason above current levels. . . Eliminate the timber management emphasis standards and guidelines where the management areas (MA's) are inconsistent with ecosystem and restoration focus.

Trail System

The trail system has shrunk over time on most national forests because of timber harvest and road construction. Too much of the remaining trail system has been allocated to motorized use. Do not allow 'mudding' anywhere on the forest. The plan update must recognize that dirt bike and hiker use is generally incompatible on the same trail segment. The plan must direct that trail damage caused by motorized use be fully inventoried. If a use eliminates trail mileage, develop the lost trail mileage in an alternate but suitable location. The updated plan must adopt the concept of "no net loss of trail mileage." Do not allow motorized use on trails that dead end on Wilderness, non-motorized management area land allocations, or other non-motorized trails.

Integration and Relationships with Other Plans

The updated forest plans must be compatible with other currently existing plans, laws and agreements. Do not reduce the protections for the sustainability of all resources

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Comments on Forest Service Outfitter-Guide EA

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to REI. Much of the more essential and helpful literature is available in ranger stations. Hikers and backpackers can equip themselves adequately and very cheaply, if they so desire. For those living in the major metropolitan areas surrounding these districts, The Mountaineers offer non-commercial mountaineering instruction. In sum, the areas covered by this EA are very readily accessible to any able-bodied person who wants to visit it. Most people have become familiar with our wilderness areas gradually, viewing them first from outside the boundaries. They would hike up Dirtyface, Mt Si, to Lake Serene and similar locations before venturing farther afield. Yes, given the choice and the funds, many would probably prefer to be competently guided directly into spectacular remote wilderness, without having undergone a self-directed apprenticeship. But does that preference constitute a real need? I think not.

I am particularly bothered by the obscure note, which I missed on first reading, that the Stuart Range and Snow Creek Wall would under C and D be opened to increased commercial guiding. I think this would

be a terrible mistake. Leave these two wonderful but very limited climbing areas to self-guided parties. Guides can teach on Castle Rock and in Icicle Canyon everything that their clients need to venture out later and on their own to the north ridge of Stuart or Outer Space. Again, the "need" for this type of guiding is really just a need for a shortcut. If you can follow as a rock-climbing client on one of these routes, you can also assemble the wherewithal and devote the practice time necessary to lead it. Unless, of course, one just happens to be in a hurry. I don't think that in wilderness you should be catering to this type of impatience masquerading as "need."

Sincerely,
Phil Leatherman

For in-depth information on Outfitter-Guides see *The Wild Cascades*, Spring 2003, pages 6-7.

e-mail: comments-pacificnorthwest-wenatchee-lakewenatchee-leavenworth-inbox@fs.fed.us

Mailing address: District Ranger Glenn Hoffman, Leavenworth Ranger District, 22976 Hwy 207, Leavenworth, WA 98826

Bear Experts Urge BC to Protect 68-84 Percent of Occupied Grizzly Habitat to Avoid Grizzly Extinction

A report by five independent bear biologists released today concludes that most of British Columbia's occupied grizzly bear habitat must be protected to avoid a long term slide into extinction.

To halt the decline of North America's landmark species, the report concludes that 68-84 per cent of currently occupied grizzly habitat, roughly 360,000 km² of BC, must be protected from all damaging human development including industrial scale logging, mining and motorized vehicle activity. The authors also state that protected areas must be roadless, and the majority must prohibit grizzly bear trophy hunting.

Last month, the European Union suspended imports of grizzly hunting trophies from BC after a unanimous decision by the 15 member nations that the provincial government was not acting on commitments to protect grizzly populations.

The BC government has proposed setting up three small coastal grizzly bear management areas; however, they are too small and would still allow for resource extraction. The report clearly demonstrates that the number and size of government management areas is inadequate, and will not do enough to maintain viable grizzly bear populations in the future.

Dr. Barrie Gilbert, lead author of the report said today, "The science in this document points to the need for the BC government to end 10 years of broken promises and act immediately to protect adequate habitat for grizzlies."

The Raincoast Conservation Foundation's website is:
www.raincoast.org

Mount Rainier National Park Expansion and the Carbon River Valley Update

Keep your fingers crossed, a plan to expand Mount Rainier National Park with 800 acres of old-growth forest and prime habitat for threatened and endangered fish and birds has gained another congressional supporter. Senator Maria Cantwell has formally joined Representatives, Jennifer Dunn (R-Bellevue) and Norm Dicks (D-Bremerton) with the filing of Senate legislation that would authorize the addition to the 235,625-acre park. Dunn has long sponsored a House version of the same plan. It passed the House Resources Committee last fall, but never came up for a Senate vote. Now, with the support of Democrats Cantwell and Senator Patty Murray, the proposal could gain ground.

Management Changes in Plan Update Necessary

Continued from page 20

on National Forest lands. New scientific information was developed in the Inter-agency Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project for the Okanogan and Colville that was not available when the original plans were written in the 1980s. We expect the Forest Service to apply these findings from ICBEMP to the updated forest plans. We expect the Forest Service to retain the most protective features of the ICBEMP study.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

We strongly support the retention of the current Wild and Scenic River recommendations. We expect the Forest Service to restudy rivers that were excluded in the initial round of forest plans to determine if additional recommendations are appropriate.

Economics

Because of changes in eastern Washington, there is no economic justification for a large timber sale program on these national forests. We expect the updated plan to reflect this economic shift.

Wildlife and Fish

Grizzly bear and wolf recovery must be recognized and dealt with through provisions of the forest plan, including dedicating and protecting critical habitat, as well as establishing strict limits on new development in grizzly and wolf habitat. These issues were not addressed in the initial forest plans. Roadless area protection and road decommissioning will help Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species recover.

Recreation

The Forest Service must update carrying capacity estimates where new data has become available since 1990. Recreation use must be adjusted in order to account for critical wildlife needs, including Threatened and Endangered species. The updated forest plan must include a quantitative analysis of negative recreation impacts on wildlife.

Research Natural Areas (RNA)

The system of Research Natural Areas should be further expanded to protect areas of representative or unique ecologi-

cal character. Please consider the addition of areas that have been affected by fire.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this planning process.

Sincerely,

NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

Karl Forsgaard, Board member

(For complete text online see:
www.northcascades.org)

The Wild Sky

55 Hikes Around Stevens Pass: Wild Sky Country.
Rick McGuire (and Ira Spring). Mountaineers Books, 2003.
208 pages. \$14.95.

The significance of the Sky Peaks Wilderness-to-be is far more than scenery: 1. It connects three existing wildernesses, a step toward restoring a wildlife freeway from the Columbia River to Canada. (Doth the grizzly thereby cometh? And thus a deeper wildness? Rumania has established preserves that have given it the largest brown bear population in Europe. A commentator has urged other nations to follow suit: "More of us would once again find ourselves facing the scintillating challenge of sharing our lives with things that eat us.") 2. It is not confined to rock

and ice but extends to biologically rich low elevations. 3. It busts the logjam of jostling proposals that has been piling up since 1984.

Rick McGuire made his bones getting the Boulder River Wilderness in 1984 and presently is a general staffer of the Wild Sky. He knows wilderness in general, and this one specifically, not as rush-in, rush-out photo ops but as a whole community of trees and devils club, birds and beetles and bears, and such pedestrians as by right of respect for the good of the order belong in such company.

His trip descriptions are clean and crisp, brisk and eloquent. His frontmatter essays, "The Wild Sky Country" (pages 22-24) and "the Wild Sky Mountains" (pages 57-77) are comprehensive-concise treatments of geography, climate, forests, meadows, fish and wildlife, politics, and the history of trails. Magnificent.

A merciful veil is best drawn over the evolution of this book before Rick agreed to participate. Ira expected me to be his partner as I had been for a third of a century. However, he refused to heed my criticisms. Unaware though I was of his physical condition, I realized his mind was not the one I had known so well so long. His project was a doomed ship steaming at flank speed toward the rocks. So I jumped ship — or better say I walked the plank, encouraged by the point of the Mountaineers' snickersnee.

With or without a book, the Sky Wilderness was clearly on the way to victory. However, the impending shipwreck definitely was going to cast a pall over the festivities. Rick bit the bullet and rode to the rescue. The book he salvaged serves very well as a centerpiece for the celebration. We must hope and pray that a Second Edition will eliminate the grievous faults of this First. They are not Rick's fault. The publisher, who in a letter informed me, "You are breaking Ira's heart," thought to properly venerate him by a policy of — "what Ira wants, Ira gets."

The book cover is a nightmare, cluttered with inconsequential that barely spare room for the book's Big Message: WILD SKY COUNTRY." The cover photo is captioned, "Lake Serene and 5979-foot Mount Index." But the lake was left on the cropping room floor and the pictured summit is not the Main (South) Peak but the Middle and North Peaks. (Incredibly, the Eiger-like "Nordgipfel" that wakes up climbers in screaming nightmares years after their ascents is shown here as a hum excrement of ugly rock.)

Rick was unable to do anything about that. But with Ira gone, he was allowed to replace many mediocre shots with salon-quality images supplied by Wild Sky comrades. (To sample the riches awaiting

CASCADES FOOTHILLS INITIATIVE

The time is not long past when the advance of Puget Sound City through the Issaquah Alps, into the Snoqualmie River valley, and over the North Bend Plain inexorably pointed the Bottom Line Imperative toward Fuller Mountain and the Mount Si scarp. The Real Estate Division of the "Tree Growing Company" went so far as to sneakily seek a rezoning to jump-start the platters.

That may not happen, now, thanks to Gene Duvernoy and his Cascade Foothills Initiative. The CEOs of King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties and the state Department of Natural Resources have signed, on February 2, a letter of intent to "immunize" 600,000 acres from citification. Ron Sims, King County Executive, speaks of "a permanent wall between sprawl and greenery, a wall that will not come down . . ."

One supportive factor is that Weyerhaeuser is choking on its glut of riches stolen from the public domain. By taking the 600,000 acres off the real estate market, the value of the hoard retained for exploitation by its Real Estate Division is miraculously magnified.

The way was pioneered on Tiger Mountain. The proposal made by the Issaquah Alps Trails Club in 1979 for an "urban tree farm" was restated more elegantly by Brian Boyle when he despatched Ol' King Cole into outer space. He

designated Tiger Mountain State Forest as a "working forest in an urban environment."

The then Dean of the University of Washington College of Forest Resources, voice of the troglodytes, cynically called it a first step toward Tiger Mountain State Park. I am in a position to say without contradiction that a state park absolutely was NOT what we sought, contrary to the conventional wisdom of the editorial pages. Our aim was twofold: (1) to give the north end of Tiger, whose slopes and soils are not economically practical for sustained-yield logging, wilderness-like protection; (2) save the rest of Tiger from housing tracts and thus guarantee the logging industry room for perpetual sustained yield of the wood and jobs the economy needs.

When the DNR staged its initial timber sale under the new regime, the old bandits called upon their ilk to boycott the auction and thereby force a return to the good ol' days of Ol' Bert. To general amazement, the DNR was deluged with bids from those in the industry who looked not to the past but the future. The "working forest in an urban environment" was an instant and resounding success and forms a platform for Gene's "permanent wall" to eliminate forever the threat of "Fuller Mountain Estates."

— H.M.

Goose-Maverick

Off-road vehicle trail project back on track

WENATCHEE WORLD
MICHELLE PARTRIDGE
MARCH 25, 2004

LAKE WENATCHEE — Seven years after the project was halted by environmentalists, the U.S. Forest Service is again proposing to build new off-road vehicle trails near Lake Wenatchee.

The agency released on March 8 a new environmental analysis saying the Goose-Maverick ORV Tie Trail would have little or no impact on wolf and grizzly bear habitat, old growth forests and northern spotted owl habitat, mule deer, birds, and sensitive plants.

The proposal is being reviewed by seven state and national conservation groups that challenged the project in 1997 in U.S. District Court, said Karl Forsgaard of the North Cascades Conservation Council, one of the seven. Their earlier concerns included impacts to wildlife and fish, and increased noise and erosion caused by

motorcycles.

The other groups that plan to comment on the latest proposal include the Sierra Club, Mountaineers, Wilderness Society, Washington Trails Association, Northwest Ecosystem Alliance and Washington Wilderness Coalition, Forsgaard said. They will submit comments before the public comment period ends in early April, he said.

The project's initial environmental study was completed in 1997 and work began on the trails. A U.S. District Court judge later issued an injunction on the project after ruling that the Forest Service had not adequately addressed impacts to wildlife.

The new trails would connect the Lower Chiwawa Trail east of Lake Wenatchee with Maverick Saddle in the Entiat Ranger District, allowing motorcycles, mountain bikes, horses and hikers to reach the Mad River trails.

Motorcycles can now use the Chikamin Tie and Alder Ridge trails to reach

the Entiat Valley late in the summer season. But there are no trails between Lake Wenatchee and Entiat that are open to motorized vehicles earlier than mid-July.

Many riders of non-street-legal motorcycles have illegally used a Forest Service road between Goose Creek Campground and Maverick Saddle to reach the Mad River trails, according to the analysis.

The proposal is to build more than three miles of new trails and a new bridge over Deep Creek, convert sections of roads to trail, and obliterate roads that are already closed to vehicles and about a mile and a half of unofficial trail that was created by users.

Forest officials estimate that about 1,700 motorcycles use the trail system each year, which would increase by about 10 percent with the new trails.

Copies of the document are available at the Lake Wenatchee Ranger District, 22976 Highway 207, Leavenworth, WA. 98826

55 Hikes

Continued from page 22

the Second Edition, check out the website, <www.wildsky.org>.)

Irrelevant to this book review but indicative of the problems within Mountaineers Books is the publisher's encomium on page 205:

"A master hiker, photographer, and author, Ira Spring is considered the father of Pacific Northwest hiking books."

His legs and his camera speak for themselves, but author he never was and never could be. The "fathering" was done by the Literary Fund Committee of the 1960s. Hired by that committee to do a job he did it adequately, saw the main chance, and made a brandnew and lucrative career for himself, serving diligently until nearly the last months of his life. His "authorship" was made possible over the years by a series of well-wishers who valued him as a sweet guy and admired his pluck. Rick was the last in a long line of literates who translated his field notes into publishable English.

— H.M.

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):

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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.

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Wild Sky deserves our delegation's support

EVERETT HERALD EDITORIAL

February 24, 2004

Bipartisan politics has apparently worked its way into the Wild Sky Wilderness legislation. Dare we even bother to ask once more for a bill that has backing on both sides of the aisle and the OK from a senior Bush administration official to finally pass?

Retiring Rep. Jennifer Dunn has thrown her support behind the bill; she's a co-sponsor of the legislation that is the work of Rep. Rick Larsen and Sen. Patty Murray. At different times the past two years the bill looked so close to passing. Then politics got in the way.

Great ideas with the support of politicians and the majority of citizens die quick deaths each year in this Washington and the "other" Washington. But Wild Sky has been around for more than two years. It started in September, 2001 as an invite by Rep.

Larsen and Sen. Murray to a "wilderness workshop" at the Monroe High School cafeteria. It has passed the Senate twice but is stuck in the House Resources Committee.

It would help if the rest of our state's Republican delegation would offer its support, but that's where the partisan politics comes into play. It's election year and Rep. George Nethercutt is running against Sen. Murray in the upcoming Senate race. Nethercutt's people say the race has nothing to do with the fact Nethercutt hasn't decided whether he supports the bill, and that he's still studying the issue. And another Republican congressman from California is now referring to the bill's wilderness designation as an "extreme" measure.

That's a far cry from last June when Agriculture Undersecretary Mark

Rey complimented our state's delegation for "its collaborative approach and local involvement that resulted in bipartisan support of the bill."

This legislation is the result of community input. If it passes, Wild Sky will be the first new wilderness area in this state in 20 years. It will set aside 106,000 acres of forest land in east Snohomish County and part of King County that will be protected while remaining available to the public for many types of outdoor activities.

This is an important environmental bill for our state and one that has the backing and praise of Republicans and Democrats. Plenty of information has been made available. Members of our state's delegation should have finished studying this issue a long time ago.

THE WILD CASCADES

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council

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