

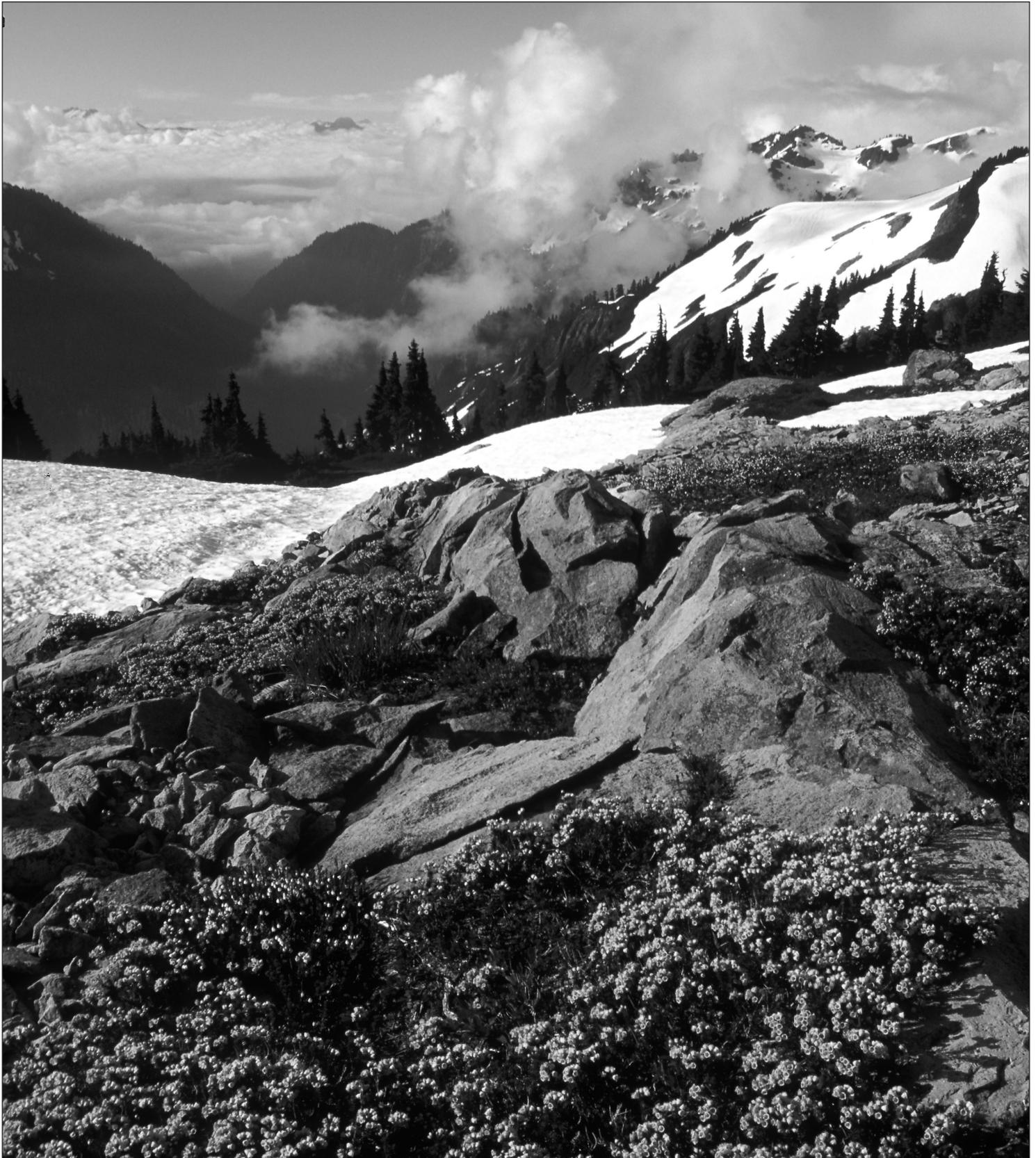
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# THE WILD CASCADES

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THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

WINTER 2006



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### The Wild Cascades

*Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council*

EDITOR: Carolyn McConnell

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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 2005-2006

### Don't Destroy What We Seek to Enjoy

As I was preparing a list of issues that needed consideration by your Board of Trustees recently, I was struck by my inability to include everything on two sheets of paper. It was even more of a shock to realize how the issues had changed from fights in the past. Thirty years ago, even 20 or so, and we were up to our eyeballs trying to create and protect new Wilderness Areas and National Parks. And of course there were hydro projects, egregious logging shows and a few mining proposals.

There are still logging developments disguised as "thinning" sales but, thankfully, they tend to be smaller. There are a few new Wilderness addition possibilities, but, alas, they seem like distant possibilities. In my opinion, the major new fights can be lumped into the general category of protecting what we have from "recreation." There are several components in this assertion. One of the more serious is the pressure on agencies to change their focus from resource management to the accommodation of more people, typically for a price. Another is more obvious; machines (and their masters) in conflict with the rest of us. The state legislature is reviewing a gaggle of off-road vehicle-related bills. The USFS is struggling with an endless number of ORV plans at national and local levels. Possibly the worst problems now are the repair and upgrade of roads that serve primarily the recreational interests of nearly everyone who leaves town. Even closer to my heart is the continual urge to repair Wilderness trails with motorized equipment at the expense of Wilderness Act provisions.

What to do? As I see it, we first must recognize the problem for what it is. More and more people are demanding what they see as their share of nature. For lack of a better idea, I propose that the green community become more vocal in educating the motoring masses that it is in their own best interest not to destroy the very thing they seek to enjoy. Don't ask me what the details of this initiative might be but at the very least, we should put the issue on the table. Your suggestions appreciated.

## Chelan County Puts Stehekin Phone Proposal Into Coma

The last time I wrote in this space about the proposed Stehekin phone boondoggle, I wrote that “this fight could get interesting.” It has. Not only have anti-Weavtel signs sprung up all over Stehekin and anti-Weavtel letters poured in to the Chelan County commissioners and planners, but Weavtel has hired a local contractor to pour a cement pad for an antenna at its proposed headquarters—though there was no mention of this antenna in its Chelan County permit applications. And the county had not yet issued any permit. Judy Clark, the Stehekin resident who has been leading the opposition to the phone project and whose lands adjoins the Weavtel headquarters site, threatened to chain herself across the entrance to the site. She was only half joking.

And then the county did what the National Park Service failed to do: Told the developers no. The Chelan County Planning Board on February 28 refused to allow the Weavtel headquarters site to be officially removed from the floodplain. As Stehekin residents, the NCCC, and the NPS wrote and testified, all around the property, marks are still visible several feet up on the trees where flood waters crested a few years back. Weavtel has clearcut its own property, perhaps to remove the evidence. The commissioners, perhaps annoyed by Weavtel’s brazen behavior in trying to build before receiving a permit, denied the request. This doesn’t quite kill the project, but it certainly puts it into a coma.

These are strange times when Chelan County, one of the most developer-friendly, conservative counties in the state (not for nothing did the state Republicans choose this county to challenge Christine Gregoire’s election win), holds firmer against development than the National Park Service. Perhaps this should be a lesson to environmentalists to reconsider long-known truths. The ground is shifting.

The 1996 federal Telecommunications Act that provides the enormous subsidies to enable remote communities to receive affordable telephone service got this whole mess started, but it fails to provide for input by the public—whose good these subsidized projects are supposed to promote. Stehekin is not a poor community “desperate for communication” (as the Chelan Mirror laughably put it), but a community of people who have chosen to live in Stehekin precisely in order to get away from intrusions like phones. Yet there’s no mechanism in the law asking Stehekin whether it wants phones.

A core feature of the National Environmental Policy Act is its provision for just such public input, and for a time my heart swelled with pride at how beautifully it did its job. The Park service issued an Environmental Assessment on a permit to allow Weavtel lines on public property and invited public comments. The public overwhelmingly opposed the project, and so North Cascades National Park Superintendent Bill Paleck refused Weavtel a permit.

But then, startlingly, Paleck reversed his decision, apparently on orders from higher authorities. Freedom of Information Act requests by the NCCC and others found no smoking gun. Although Senator Maria Cantwell had sent in a letter on Weavtel’s behalf, it’s likely the reversal was not Cantwell’s doing but that of lawyers from within the Interior Department (who, word has it, warned Paleck that Weavtel would sue if not granted the permit).

Ironically, Weavtel has sued the Park anyway. The suit charges that the Park had no right to make the permit conditional on Weavtel’s getting easements from the private landowners whose property the phone lines will cross. And Weavtel threatens to sue property owners who refuse to grant these easements. These folks have made themselves real popular with the community.

So this is a story about democracy and its absence. This portion of the Telecommunications Act is well-intentioned, but without any requirements for public input, the law is just an invitation to corporate welfare. Another anti-democratic feature of the law is that the subsidies are administered not by a public agency but by a private consortium of the phone companies (just try even contacting this consortium). Senator Cantwell could make up for her small role in this affair by working to change these features of the law; I suggest readers urge her to do so.

—Carolyn McConnell

### In Memoriam

# KEVIN HERRICK

## 1966-2006

Executive Director, North Cascades Conservation Council, 1994-1995

Director, North Cascades Conservation Council, 1996-2006

*Condolence letters may be sent to*

*Ginny and Jim Herrick, 3037 Hillrise Drive, Las Cruces, NM 88011*

# Lawsuit to Halt Mad River Off-Road Vehicle Construction Moves Ahead



Hiker Tim Gould and passing motorcycle on Alder Ridge Trail. —KARL FORSGAARD

As *The Wild Cascades* previously reported, NCCC and several other organizations filed a lawsuit to halt off-road vehicle construction along the Mad River Trail. On February 10, 2006, NCCC's attorneys filed a motion for summary judgment in the lawsuit. Below are excerpts from the opening summary of argument. The government's cross-motion for summary judgment is due to be filed on March 10.

"[The U.S. Forest Service] proposes to construct an off-road motorcycle project in a roadless area that is a potential addition to Glacier Peak Wilderness. The Forest Service proposal violates the law and should be halted.

"The Mad River off-road vehicle ("ORV") project would create additional motorcycle facilities in the 200-mile Mad River-Entiat-Chiwawa trail system, which stretches from the Chiwawa River near Lake Wenatchee to the Entiat River and Lake Chelan. The project would relocate and reconstruct sections of trail, and construct a bridge over the Mad River.

***"The Forest Service project violates a 1999 ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Barbara J. Rothstein that stopped construction of the adjacent Goose-Maverick off-road motorcycle project.*** In a reported decision that the Forest Service never appealed, the Court ruled that the Forest Service violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by giving inadequate review to its motorcycle construction and expansion plans throughout the whole Chiwawa-En-

tiat-Mad River system, and by failing to study the impacts of off-road motorcycles on wildlife. [North Cascades Conservation Council v. U.S. Forest Service, Civil No. C99-0889-R, reported at 98 F. Supp. 2d 1193 (W.D. Wash. 1999)]

"In contravention of that ruling, the Forest Service *still* has failed to consider the cumulative impacts of the interconnected projects in the Chiwawa-Entiat-Mad River system. There are many components that did not even get *mentioned*, let alone analyzed, and there has been no study of the impacts of off-road motorcycles on wildlife in the Chiwawa-Entiat-Mad River system. The environmental review was impermissibly segmented and incomplete.

"In 2005, the Forest Service bragged nationally that the Wenatchee National Forest ORV system is a "World Class single track motorcycle trail system," "some of the best trail riding in the country" and "the standard" for ORV "collaboration" in the United States. ...Since the Forest Service's 30-year-long ORV construction project is so BIG and significant, why are they so reluctant to prepare a comprehensive EIS for it? Why not prepare an EIS that discusses (or even mentions)



Motorcycle couple at switchback on Alder Ridge Trail. —KARL FORSGAARD

all of its interconnected component ORV projects, as this Court instructed it to do, and as the Ninth Circuit requires? Why are they so reluctant to discuss the reasonable alternative of seasonal ORV restrictions to reduce the amount of ORV use and impacts? Why do they now ignore the area's Wilderness potential? What are they trying to hide?

"The Forest Service should be enjoined from constructing this ORV Project until it prepares the EIS that Judge Rothstein instructed them to prepare in her 1999 decision."

KARL FORSGAARD

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## Victory for Non-Motorheads in Washington State Supreme Court

Three years ago, the Washington state legislature began to reform the state's recreation funding statute to give less money to off-road vehicle projects, and more money to everyone else. In response, the Northwest Motorcycle Association (NMA) filed a lawsuit against the state, alleging that it would be unconstitutional to spend any funds on trails that are not open to motorized use.

NMA argued that the state constitution provides that gas taxes shall be used for "highway purposes," and that therefore gas tax funds can be used only on trails open to motorized vehicles such as motorcycles and other off-road or off-highway vehicles. NMA did not explain how one can be on a highway and "off-highway" simultaneously.

NCCC and several other organizations intervened in the lawsuit in 2003, to help the state defend its funding of non-motorized projects such as hiking, bicycling and

horse trails that are not open to motorized vehicles. The state constitution allows gas tax "refunds" to the people who pay the gas tax. The state's recreation funding statute is a constitutional mechanism for providing gas tax refunds to people who drive on backroads to get to trailheads, including hikers, bicyclists and equestrians.

The courts agreed with NCCC and the other intervenors. We won in the Superior Court and again in the Court of Appeals. In January 2006, the State Supreme Court denied NMA's petition for review, effectively terminating the case.

The intervenor group is grateful for three years of excellent pro bono representation that we received from attorneys John Bjorkman, Kristin Boraas and Jonah Harrison of the Seattle law firm Preston Gates & Ellis.

KARL FORSGAARD

# Laws, Executive Orders, Policy, and the Environment

BY TOM HAMMOND

To the casual observer, there has been a gradual erosion and relaxation of environmental laws since George Bush took office.

No one single law or executive order has spelled doom for our forests, waters, and public lands. But now, with the fullness of time, a systematic and relentless attack on the environment is revealed. Not one single thing, but a complex arrangement of changes is on the books or proposed that spell trouble for all of the common sense and science that have entered land-use policies and practices over the last four decades. Especially on public lands. Indeed, the concept of public lands itself is under attack.

To map this phenomenon, I've put together a list of the most recent and egregious of the laws, policies, and executive orders. And of course in classic Bush misinformation technique, many of the proposals and changes have fancy names that are the opposite of what the policies really mean.

The legislation and executive orders have been designed to serve corporate interests over the wishes and beliefs of a vast majority of the public, and indeed, against common sense from an economic, ecological, and practical point of view.

## LEGISLATION

### Logging

The timber industry supports HR 4200 (the Emergency Recovery and Research Act) and its Senate counterpart, S 2079 (Forests for Future Generations Act), because these bills would gut environmental laws that protect our national forests; declare war on nature by labeling natural events, like rain, wind, and fire as "catastrophes" to compel logging to "save" the forest. Both would put millions of old-growth forest acres and wild lands at risk of logging. Here are some points of interest, and later in this article, you'll see that two years of scientific research have already proven that these bills are based on falsehoods, plain and simple. Forest fires thin forests and promote forest health. Logging after fires damages sensitive soils and retards forest recovery.

1. HR 4200 and S 2079 bypass environmental laws that protect forests, fish, and wildlife

in order to rush logging after normal natural events, such as rainstorms, fires, and droughts.

HR 4200 and S 2079 would replace the bedrock National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) with a Bush Administration rule that will allow any and all kinds of logging, including clearcutting, after a so-called "catastrophe." The bills define a "catastrophe" to be all things natural that happen in a forest, like wind, rain, snow, soil erosion, and fire.

2. HR 4200 and S 2079 limit public involvement regarding logging activities after normal natural events.

3. HR 4200 and S 2079 promote logging that harms water quality, spreads noxious weeds, and destroys large live and dead trees that are vital to old-growth forests.

4. HR 4200 and S 2079 are all about misrepresenting natural processes to exploit our national forests for the timber industry. Salvage logging after forest fires not only harms

the environment, it costs taxpayers more than the burned trees are worth.

6. HR 4200 and S 2079 have the full support of the Bush Administration and its former timber industry lobbyist, Undersecretary of Agriculture Mark Rey. They are endorsed by the leading anti-environmental legislators in the House of Representatives and Senate. Call and write your representative and senators today at (202) 224-3121. Tell them that "HR 4200 and S 2079 will be a catastrophe for our national forests." Your phone call and letter will help prevent these bills from passing in 2006.

### House Budget Reconciliation Bill

As part of the Federal Budget Reconciliation Bill, Rep. Richard Pombo (R-CA), the chairman of the House Resources Committee, introduced legislation to sell off parts of our National Park system. The Coalition of National Park Service Retirees (CNPSR), a watchdog group of 425 NPS veterans accounting for 12,000 collective years of park management experience, has expressed its "outrage and astonishment" at Pombo's attempt to sell 16 national parks—including a memorial for a Republican president—in order to enrich energy and real estate specu-

lators. The Pombo plan emerged just one month after CNPSR warned on August 26, 2005, of a secret Interior Department attempt to rewrite and override 90 years of laws, rules and court rulings governing the 388 sites in the U.S. National Park system.

Commenting on the Pombo proposal, CNPSR Executive Council Chairman Bill Wade, a former superintendent of Shenandoah National Park, said: "Between the Interior Department's widely panned rewrite of the National Park Service rulebook and the new Pombo plan to sell off about one out every four acres in the National Park System, it now appears clear that there is a full-scale assault being waged today by Washington against our national parks. As the people who have dedicated their professional lives to preserving America's crown jewels of the outdoors for future generations, the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees is today calling for a cease fire in the war against our national parks."

### Gutting the Endangered Species Act

Representative Pombo introduced legislation in September 2005, the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act (HR 3824), that would reduce the role science plays in making species assessments. It would eliminate the current requirement that federal agencies consult first with biologists before proceeding with actions that could harm fragile species. As it is currently structured, the ESA ensures that the best available scientific data are the primary basis on which listings are determined. Additionally, HR 3824 would remove restrictions on the use of certain pesticides such as DDT, reversing the very protections around which the ESA was initially based. These are only some of the alarming provisions in a bill that threatens our landmark environmental law.

Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID) introduced S 2110, which would severely weaken the protections of the Endangered Species Act and undermine recovery of endangered species in Colorado and across the country. Some of the bill's more important features include the creation of new, arbitrary roadblocks to protecting endangered species and habitat, greatly increasing delays and political manipulation in conservation decisions, and cutting federal oversight of projects that threaten endangered species.

"Just like Pombo's 'Extinction Bill', today's counterpart in the Senate would rip the heart out of the Endangered Species Act," said Jacob Smith, director of the

**Representative Pombo is out to get the environment. So our best hope may be from indicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff, whose ties to Pombo may weaken Pombo's power as they come to light.**

Colorado-based Center for Native Ecosystems. "It removes the safety net on which our many endangered wildlife depend."

## Re-write of National Environmental Policy Act

As if the attack on the ESA weren't enough: Now Congressman Pombo and other pro-industry members of Congress are seeking to gut NEPA under the guise of "improving and updating" the Act. Anti-NEPA legislation could be introduced sometime this year. Please help us build momentum to stop this rollback by letting Congress know you want a strong National Environmental Policy Act.

You may be beginning to sense a theme here; Representative Pombo is out to get the environment. So our best hope may be from indicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff, whose ties to Pombo may weaken Pombo's power as they come to light.

## Bureau of Land Management and NEPA

The federal Bureau of Land Management has a proposal to expand the use of Categorical Exclusions (CE) to avoid carrying out necessary NEPA analyses for grazing, logging, vegetation treatments, and oil and gas exploration activities. NEPA requires the agencies to take a "hard look" at proposed federal actions that affect the environment, and the CE proposal would do away with the requirement to conduct any analysis.

The BLM should not exempt the proposed activities from NEPA analysis. Grazing permit renewals, temporary grazing permits, vegetation treatments, fuel reduction logging, and oil and gas exploration all affect our public lands in irretrievable ways. The public should be informed and have a say when the agency is planning any of these actions.

## EXECUTIVE ORDERS

### Repeal of the National Forest Management Act

It's official. The Forest Service and the Bush Administration have stripped the National Forest Management rules of all their teeth. The Administration signed its decision on December 22, 2005—timed to ensure that few would pay attention during the holiday season.

The Administration has also proposed that the Forest Service no longer evaluate the environmental effects of forest plans. This new policy, hidden in the obscurity of the Forest Service's Handbook, eliminates all public disclosure of environmental harm and any evaluation of alternatives that would be less environmentally destructive.

The 1982 rules have had more positive influence on National Forest management than any other law or regulation. If the undoing of these rules remains unchallenged, the doors will be open for untold damage to be done to our public lands.

### Appeals Reform Act

The Bush administration, by way of the "Healthy Forests Initiative," has tried to introduce the same Categorical Exclusions (CE) to U.S. Forest Service land. The effect is the same: negate NEPA requirements for scientific/environmental review of proposed projects, and reject public input on said projects. Indeed, search the

internet for "Categorical Exclusions" and you'll find an alarming number of them.

### Suppression of Scientific Research

It appears only science that backs exploitation is welcomed by the Bush administration. The Bush administration is trying to stifle scientists who dare to express views inconvenient to the administration's business-friendly agenda.

The BLM has abruptly suspended funding for Oregon State University research that concluded federally sponsored logging after the 2002 Biscuit fire in southwest Oregon impaired the recovery of forests. The action came after a team of scientists from OSU and the U.S. Forest Service published their results last month in *Science*, the nation's leading scientific journal. Administrators at OSU and scientists elsewhere said they could not recall another instance of the federal government suspending funding for research after controversial results emerge.

"It's totally without precedent as far as I can recollect," said Jerry Franklin, a professor at the University of Washington who

has studied Northwest forests for decades. "It says, 'If we don't like what you're saying, we'll cut off your money.'" "The study, which found salvage logging killed naturally regenerated seedlings and increased, in the short term, the amount of fuel on the ground to feed future fires, contradicts the aforementioned House bill 4200, which seeks to speed salvage logging on national forests after wildfires and other disasters.

After the study came out, OSU Dean of Forestry Hal Salwasser expressed regret when it was revealed that some professors had tried to get Science to delay publication while they produced arguments against it.

Among them was John Sessions, lead author of a report that pressed the U.S. Forest Service to expand salvage logging to speed regeneration after the 2002 Biscuit fire in southwest Oregon. Salwasser has testified in favor of the salvage logging bill. The College of Forestry receives some of its funding from the timber industry and a tax on logging. Andy Stahl, executive director of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, characterized BLM's actions as censorship, initiated because the study "threatens one of the long-held myths of forestry, and that is that only man can create a forest, not nature." Stahl said, "It sends a chilling message to all researchers. If you don't get the right answer, you don't get the money."

### New Mission Statement and Direction for National Parks

Mr. Paul Hoffman, Deputy Assistant Secretary For Fish and Wildlife, working under mining lobbyist-turned Secretary of Interior

Gale Norton (who recently resigned amid escalating evidence of departmental connections with Jack Abramoff), has drafted and released a new policy and a departmental statement. The Department of Interior has proposed changes to the management policies that govern how our parks are protected and preserved. The proposed changes to the policies will weaken long-standing legal mandates requiring resource protection its highest priority, weakening its mission.

There is a full-scale assault being waged today by Washington against our national parks.

### Farming and the Environment

The EPA and factory-style farms have made a deal on pollution, aided by Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kansas).

The Bush administration will let thousands of factory-style farms escape severe penalties (up to \$27,500 per day) for fouling the air

*Continued on page 8*

# Low Creek Road Compromise Reached



*Dying salmon, Lowe Creek.*

—RICK MCGUIRE

NCCC board members, along with members of the Alpine Lakes Protection Society (ALPS) met recently with Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest staff and

agreed on a plan for gating the Lowe Creek road, which follows the south side of the South Fork Skykomish River downstream from the Money Creek camp-

ground, between Skykomish and Index. The Forest Service plans to rebuild the road to provide access to some landlocked in-holdings, private lands owned by Longview Fibre Company.

NCCC and other groups objected to the rebuilding of this old road, because of the adverse effects of re-introducing vehicles onto the road, much of which has been undrivable for years. NCCC also didn't like the idea of scarce public money being spent for the benefit of Longview Fibre when the Forest Service cannot maintain the thousands of miles of roads it already has.

But faced with the prospect of a possibly long, expensive and uncertain legal battle, NCCC and the others decided to accept a compromise whereby its legal appeal was withdrawn in exchange for the Forest Service

placing a permanent gate to keep vehicles off most of the road, including segments currently open. Keeping vehicles other than Longview's trucks off the road will help insure the safety of the coho salmon spawning grounds the road passes close to. Spur roads off the main road will also be blocked, and culverts enlarged. Lowe Creek will get a bridge instead of the ford initially proposed.

Although NCCC would have preferred no rebuilding of the road, settling for the gate addresses most of the concerns, and allows NCCC to focus on other efforts. A gated Lowe Creek road will make an attractive lowland winter walk or bike ride, with the possibility of watching spawning salmon in lower Lowe Creek.

RICK MCGUIRE

## Laws, executive orders, policy, and the environment

*Continued from page 7*

and water with animal excrement in exchange for data to help curb future pollution. This will be done by not enforcing laws for another four years.

The Environmental Protection Agency has signed agreements with 2,681 animal feeding operations in the egg, chicken, turkey, dairy and hog industries. Jon Scholl, EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson's agriculture adviser, said the agreements are the most efficient way of obtaining the data needed to determine whether the animal feeding operations are complying with federal air-emission laws.

By signing on, the farm companies agree to abide by clean air, hazardous waste and emergency reporting laws after the data are collected. They also agree to pay a civil penalty of anywhere from \$200 to \$100,000, depending on the size and number of farms they operate. Those fines would cover presumed violations, past and present, and fend off potential liability four years into the future, when the EPA

expects to issue its air standards.

And now the Bush administration has proposed selling off US Forest Service land to the highest bidder. This is the largest Forest Service land sale in decades, listing 309,421 acres in more than 30 states—including nearly 7,500 acres in Washington state.

The BLM said it will sell another 125,000 acres, the land to be identified at the local level. The proposal follows a failed move last year to allow the sale of public lands for mining.

Bush tries to pass this off as a means of financing schools. Rural county officials fear swapping taxpayer dollars for slimmer, and more uncertain, revenue generated by land sales. Administration officials project that even if all sales go as planned, rural counties would still wind up, on average, with half as much federal money to fund roads and schools.

Al McKee, a Skamania County commissioner, said he could support some land sales within the Columbia River gorge if

that would help spur development and create jobs. But he says federal support for the county, which provides nearly 30 percent of school funding, needs to be maintained at current levels. If that money fades away, the county will have few options. "Other counties might be able to transition, but for us, we just kind of drop off a cliff and pick up the pieces," he said.

In Washington, the potential sale acreage is scattered across the state, including tracts in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and the Colville, Wenatchee, Olympic, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan and Wenatchee national forests.

One of the largest proposed sales involves seven tracts—totaling more than 1,300 acres—in a remote Sultan River corridor in Snohomish County popular with kayakers.

The administration has provided little information on the specifics of the plan, even to federal officials.

"For many in our agency, today [the day the plan was publicly announced] is the first day we could see it," said Alan Gibbs, a Puget Sound regional public-affairs official.

Forest Service officials say the tracts have yet to undergo a full review, and some parcels could be dropped from the proposed sale list.

The U.S. Forest Service property that will potentially be sold can be viewed on the Forest Service Web site: [www.fs.fed.us/land/staff/rural\\_schools.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/land/staff/rural_schools.shtml).

Is this how you want to be represented by your government?

*The Associated Press, Center for Biological Diversity, Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, Seattle Times and Western Environmental Law Center contributed to this article.*

# Helicopter Use in Glacier Peak Wilderness

March 1, 2006

Dawn Erickson  
Darrington Ranger District  
1405 Emens St.  
Darrington, WA. 98241

**RE: Glacier Peak Wilderness  
– use of helicopters**  
*Pacific Crest National Scenic  
Trail #2000*  
*Upper White Chuck Vicinity*  
*File Code; 1950/2320*

Dear Ms. Erickson,

The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed use of helicopters to repair trail and bridges along a nine-mile portion of the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) in the Upper White Chuck area within Glacier Peak Wilderness, per your scoping letter dated January 25, 2005. We offer the following comments:

As you may know, NCCC has been concerned about the Glacier Peak Wilderness since it was first created. Indeed, NCCC was instrumental in having the present area so designated, and our interest in the Wilderness is ongoing. Please continue to include us on any mailings regarding this or any similar proposals.

As a conservation organization, NCCC does not generally support the idea of helicopter flights into the Glacier Peak Wilderness, or any other Wilderness area. Wilderness is the most protective designation for public lands, and the National Wilderness Preservation System includes many of the crown jewels of our public lands. One of NCCC's jobs is to protect the sanctity of designated Wilderness areas. Thus, we have a high level of concern about a proposal such as you describe.

Our reading of the Wilderness Act leads us to believe that motorized access into Wilderness areas should be allowed only for truly compelling reasons, not for reasons of convenience. As we look at the proposal for use of helicopters for these trail



*Glacier Peak*

—TOM NAWALINSKI

repairs, we cannot help but think that this may be more a matter of convenience rather than of compelling necessity.

We appreciate the Darrington District's efforts to repair the storm-caused damage. We are amenable to case-by-case consideration of reasonable exceptions for use of mechanized equipment in Wilderness. However, the scoping letter says bridge repairs will use "on-site materials" with "decking materials" flown in by helicopter for some but not all of the bridges; helicopters will be used to access all eight of the sites in this nine-mile segment; crews (people) may be dropped at perhaps only one central location, but "material and gear drops are expected at all locations." Thus the proposed use of helicopters is extensive, presumably many trips, but the estimated number of helicopter trips is not mentioned.

Furthermore, there is little or no explanation of why the Forest

Service believes helicopters are needed instead of non-mechanized means of transport. The scoping letter says that "Due to the severe and extensive storm damage to the trail system," all eight sites "need to be accessed by helicopter." The scoping letter does not say whether this is a matter of physical impossibility, or cost, or speed, or some other "need." The letter quotes a Forest Service Manual provision allowing motorized use in Wilderness when something is "impossible" due to "time or season limitations, safety, or other material restrictions," but the scoping letter does not say whether any of those factors apply. There is no explanation of why the crew members, or their gear and tools, or their materials, could not be brought to the sites by non-mechanized means. We question whether there are truly compelling reasons to authorize helicopter landings in the Wilderness for these repairs.

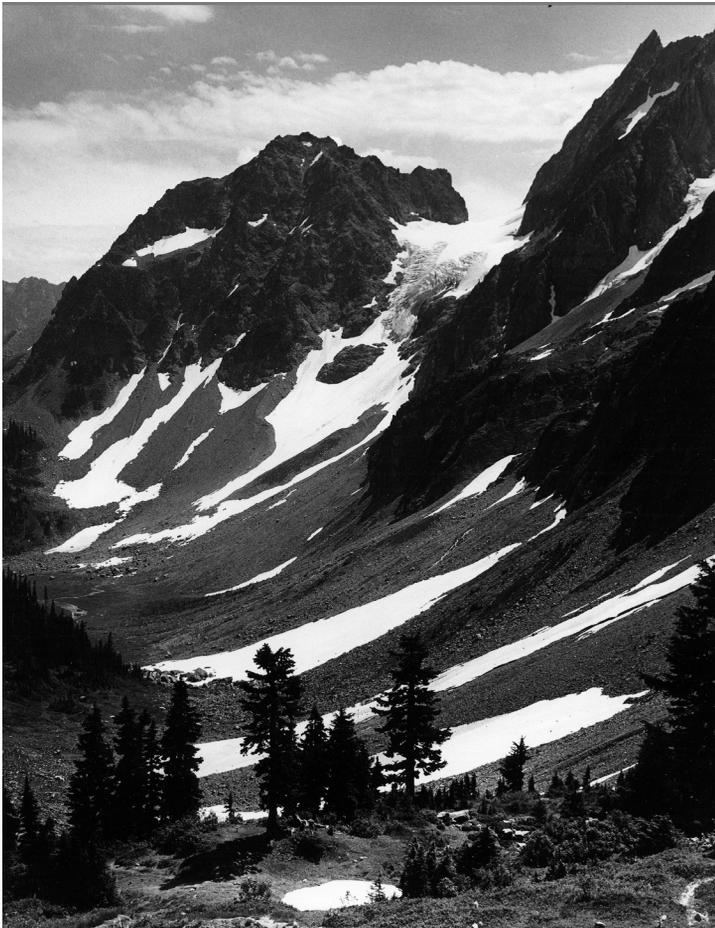
One of our concerns is that the standards for Wilderness protection, including allowing helicopter landings, seem to be steadily slipping over time. There were stories in the *Everett Herald* about helicopter studies of mountain goats in this area within the last few years. There have also been prior scoping letters in 2004 and 2005 about other connected trail repairs of damage from the same October 2003 storm. Please let us know what the recent history has been regarding authorizations of helicopter use in the Glacier Peak Wilderness. We are curious to know what the trend is, including future plans.

Furthermore, the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requires assessment of cumulative effects, including a sufficiently detailed catalogue of past, present, and future connected projects, and adequate analysis of how those projects impact the environment. This responsibility cannot be avoided by segmenting a project into small component pieces, and then categorically excluding each piece from review. The other past, present and future helicopter projects need to be considered together in a single NEPA analysis.

The scoping letter asserts that a categorical exclusion (CE) is allowable because it asserts "There are no exceptional circumstances related to the proposed action..." We disagree. "Exceptional circumstances" are defined in the Forest Service Handbook as including "Congressional designated areas, such as wilderness..." FSH 1909.15, section 30.3, subsection 2c. We certainly have that here—it is a Congressionally designated Wilderness.

Handbook section 30.3 goes on to say "The mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion. It is the degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions that

# Retiree Decries New Park Policies



Pelton Basin

—TOM NAWALINSKI

## Helicopter Use in Glacier Peak Wilderness

*Continued from page 9*

determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist.” In this case, the degree of potential effects on the Wilderness resource conditions constitute extraordinary circumstances precluding a categorical exclusion.

NEPA also requires the agency to assess a full range of reasonable alternatives. The Forest Service should analyze alternative means of making these repairs, including alternatives that involve less or no use of helicopters in Wilderness.

We also note that the Forest Service website’s SOPA announcement of this project does not mention the use of helicopters in Wilderness: [\[sopa-110605-2006-01.html#3\]\(http://sopa-110605-2006-01.html#3\)](http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/components/reports/</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Since the public was not properly notified of the potential magnitude of the project impacts, we ask the Forest Service to extend the comment period while expressly noting the use of helicopters, so that more informed comment can be submitted by the public.

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

Sincerely yours,  
Marc Bardsley, President  
North Cascades  
Conservation Council

Roger Contor  
Port Townsend, WA

Dear Roger:

The North Cascades Conservation Council is writing to you, hoping for your urgent help to preserve our national parks. The NCCC received a copy of the statement of the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees in which they “reject Hoffman light version of National Park Service management policies.”

The NCCC also received from the National Parks Conservation Association their “significant concerns regarding proposed revisions in the National Park Service’s management policies.”

As you will recall, I was highly involved in promoting the creation of the North Cascades National Park and my subsequent NGO participation, under your excellent direction, of the initial management of this new park.

I am still committed to preserving the National Park System and am greatly disturbed by the Bush Administration’s aim of promoting corporate political management policies that would seriously degrade our national parks.

Comments from you, as the first superintendent of the North Cascades National Park and hopefully as a member of CNPSR would be exceptionally and uniquely valuable.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Goldsworthy  
Chairman NCCC

Bernard Fagan  
National Park Service Office of  
Policy  
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Fagan:

I was Secretary general of the Second World Conference on National Parks held in Yellowstone in 1972. There for two weeks we had nearly 100 nations pay tribute to one of the greatest contributions the United States ever made to civilization—the National Park Idea. This conference was sponsored under a Republican Administration. Mrs. Nixon very nicely gave the rededication address.

Thirty years later, the concept lives on in even the most unstable, chaotic countries of the world. A most classic example is in war-torn Angola. People on all sides of the political turmoil are proud of their new national parks. The parks are among the few things which allow people to feel good about their country.

Don’t expect me to listen to your proposed “policies.” They are not policies. They are a childish obvious attempt to denigrate, commercialize and basically wreck a proud (and bipartisan) edifice our nation has been building for almost a century and a half.

To the victor belong the spoils, apparently. But is the Bush/Norton gang so dense they can’t realize the victors include millions of Republicans who also don’t want their National Parks spoiled? Even Cody, WY, has a lot of citizens who are proud of Yellowstone “as is” without cheapening it in a spate of misguided greed.

If you want to give the rest of the world another prime example of America “gone amok,” you are on the right track.

Disappointed,  
Roger Contor

Volunteers have always been the life blood of the environmental movement. Many dedicated people have given greatly of their time, energy, talents and treasure to preserve and protect the North Cascades and to leave that part of the world a little better for the next occupants. This is a brief look at the lives and careers of two NCCC members who have given fully to that effort—Joe and Margaret Miller.

Married almost 60 years and retired now for the second time, the Millers live in the same Bellevue, Washington, house where they've lived for the past 49 years. Framed certificates of service and appreciation from the City of Bellevue, the Washington Native Plant Society, the National Park Service, and the President's Council on Service hang on a wall. Pictures of mountains, a couple of striking Tony Angel drawings of birds, bits of driftwood, stones, arrow point flakes, and other souvenirs of a life outdoors adorn the house. Books about trees, wildflowers, birds, gardening, horticulture, vascular plants, Washington lakes, and hiking in the North Cascades, as well as Shakespeare's plays, fill bookshelves. A pillow on a couch in their home is embroidered with the words:

*"May all your weeds  
be wildflowers"*

Outside are trees and shrubs lovingly planted and cared for nearly half a century—rhododendrons and camellias, apple and plum trees, a piñon pine grown from seed collected in Arizona and a bristlecone pine from a Colorado seed. Bird feeders draw visitors. A garden in the yard supplements a larger Pea-Patch garden several blocks away. A small greenhouse has had many years of use, propagating plants from seeds and cuttings, for their home and for distant subalpine meadows. On a rooftop weathervane a pair of metal owls keeps a proprietary watch.

Joseph W. Miller was born May 7, 1915, and grew up in Kansas City, Missouri. Family trips to the Colorado mountains planted seeds of adventure and love of

## JOE AND MARGARET MILLER

### *Profile of a Partnership*

BY CHARLES EHLERT



Joe and Margaret Miller at Ross Lake, 2002.

—CHARLES EHLERT

the outdoors. As a teenager Joe once set out on his bicycle for the Colorado mountains, until after five days the 110° heat of a Kansas summer brought him to his senses. Dreaming of becoming a writer, he graduated from the University of Kansas in 1936 with an English degree. Jobs for English majors were scarce during the Great Depression and when an opportunity to work for the federal Railroad Retirement Board came up, Joe took it. He once described working for the federal government as "like peeing in your pants while wearing a dark suit. It gives you a warm feeling, but no one notices." With time out for the Army in World War II, he worked for the Board for the next 31 years, eventually retiring as a district manager. Before the war intervened, Joe spent summer vacations hiking in Rocky Mountain National Park, climbing 14,259-foot Longs Peak several times, as well as lesser peaks there.

Drafted in November 1941, the English major was sent to Officer Candidate School and turned into a 2nd Lieutenant and a combat engineer, then sent to train with a regiment of black soldiers in Au-

gusta, Georgia, and then assigned to the 20th Engineer Combat Battalion. Besides building roads, bridges, fortifications, port facilities and whatever else is needed, combat engineers blow things up, clear minefields and barbed wire obstacles, disarm bombs, booby traps and land mines—often at the front and under fire. The Army did give Joe a chance to do some writing: He was assigned the job of writing the WW II combat history of his battalion.

In November 1942 Joe left Staten Island with his unit aboard the "Cristobal," a converted banana boat, and, with a great flotilla of troop and cargo ships and their escorts, crossed the Atlantic, headed for North Africa. He landed at Casablanca, where his battalion spent several weeks working on port facilities, training, and providing security for the site of the momentous Roosevelt-Churchill Casablanca Conference in January 1943. With his unit he then crossed Morocco and Algeria, and went on into Tunisia, building roads and clearing mines. In Tunisia his unit was temporarily attached to the Corp Franc d'Afrique, a Free French unit manned with French-

men, Moroccans, Czechs, Poles and Russians. After the Germans were driven out of North Africa he landed with his battalion on Sicily on D-Day in July 1943 and campaigned across Sicily with Patton's 7th Army, defusing land mines and replacing bridges destroyed by the retreating Germans.

Dawn of June 6, 1944 found the lover of Shakespeare and poetry a 1st Lieutenant and leader of a platoon of 37 men heavily laden with rifles, ammunition, radios, mine detectors, TNT, Bangalore torpedoes, machetes, picks, shovels, and other tools of his trade on a landing craft plowing through heavy seas off the Normandy coast of France toward a place called Omaha Beach. Surviving a direct German artillery hit on his landing craft, he waded ashore with his platoon, into what a unit citation would later describe as "savage artillery, mortar, rifle, grenade, machine gun and small arms fire," through bodies, wreckage and barbed wire for a long day clearing a path across the beach for infantry and vehicles and getting himself and his platoon across a few yards of sand. He repeatedly led his reluctant men, a few at a time, under fire and exposed, to safer ground in the dunes behind the beach. He would later be awarded a Bronze Star and cited for bravery and leadership in getting all of his platoon through the landing alive and completing his assignment of opening an exit road from the beach to the hedgerows above. He dismisses the award as a "good conduct medal, for doing my job."

From France Joe continued across Belgium and Luxemburg, through the murderous Huertgen Forest battle and the snow and bitter cold of the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes Forest, across the Rhine into Germany and on to Czechoslovakia, at the end of the war in Europe. He would finish the war as a Captain, with eight battle stars and a longing to get back to Longs Peak and the mountains in Colorado, the happy memories of which he had carried with him through four years of war.

Margaret McAlpine, the girl

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## JOE AND MARGARET MILLER: *Profile of a Partnership*

*Continued from page 11*

back home, was born September 18, 1922, in Little Rock, Arkansas and also grew up in Kansas City. She graduated from the University of Missouri in June 1943 with a double major in math and biology, she taught math in Normandy in St. Louis County, Missouri for a year. With barely enough money to support a year of graduate study, she returned to the University of Missouri to work on a Masters Degree. Her project, suggested by an adviser, was a study of the animal users of sand bars on the lower Missouri River, which no one had done before. She spent the summer of 1944 collecting data from tracks, scat and other observations from a stretch of the Missouri near Columbia. In October that year, without any explanation, her Committee ordered her to discontinue her sand bar project and to find something else to work on. Evidently some alarm had gone off within the Army Corps of Engineers about the potential usefulness of data from her project in the ongoing controversy over the giant recently finished Fort Peck Dam higher up on the Missouri. (At this point Joe interjects, "But we got even, with Ross Dam, didn't we kid?"). Starting over with a new topic, Margaret received a Masters Degree in math in 1945. She received the University's E. M. Carter award for teaching math and science at an experimental class of the University's demonstration school. A job teaching high school math took Margaret to McAllister, Oklahoma for the 1945-1946 school year.

Joe and Margaret were married August 31, 1946, in Kansas City, Missouri. They spent their honeymoon hiking in Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, as the aspen leaves began to turn. Margaret spent the 1946-1947 school year teaching math at the University of Kansas City. Joe returned to his old job with the Railroad Retirement Board.

Over the next few years a series of transfers by Joe's employer took them to Denver from 1947 to 1953, to Reno from 1953 to 1955, to Salt Lake City from 1955 to 1956 and finally, to Seattle in 1956.

Margaret taught general science at a junior high school in Denver. She did field work for the Museum of Biology at the University of Nevada, collecting snakes, lizards, pup fish and other desert critters. She taught high school biology in Salt Lake City, where she found the chapter on evolution razor-bladed out of

in 1958 and the restoration of Lake Washington's water quality. Margaret considers Edmondson a major influence on her, the source of general ideas of ecology as well as inspiration to rescue damaged environments and confidence that it can be done.

In later years, she would make the time to serve on the Bellevue Park Board for eight years, a consistent voice for green space.

Along the way Joe and Margaret joined the Colorado Mountain Club, went on many CMC hikes, climbed 20 Colorado fourteen-

joined a three-week Sierra Club burro trip in the Sierras, from Bishop Pass to Dusy Basin, along a section of the John Muir Trail, over Muir Pass, through Evolution Basin and back to Bishop, seeing only one other party the whole time. Joe made the first of several 16mm films of outdoor adventures on this trip. In the summer of 1954 they toured Cascade volcanoes, climbing Lassen, Hood, St. Helens and most of Rainier, while Joe made another film of the climbs. Other hiking, backpacking, ski and snowshoe trips took them to the San Juans, the Uintas, the Wasatch, Yellowstone and Glacier Parks and the Beartooths in Montana.

In Seattle, Joe and Margaret stayed active with the Sierra Club. Joe became president of the Northwest Chapter. He and Margaret became friends with Pat Goldsworthy, Polly Dyer, Phil and Laura Zalesky, Harvey Manning and others. Through them they learned of the campaign to create a new national park in the North Cascades. They joined the three-year-old NCCC in 1960 and pitched in the fight for a park. Joe served as NCCC Treasurer for 32 years, from 1962 to 1994. Both Joe and Margaret served on the NCCC Board for 34 years, from 1960 to 1994.

During the 60s on a trip with a couple of friends, their children, and the Millers' dachshund "Rudy," from Stehekin up the valley to Bridge Creek and on to Horseshoe Basin, Joe made the third of his outdoor films, called "*Family Camping in the North Cascades*". The film follows the group hiking through low forests, along mountain streams, through wildflowers and snow fields, picking huckleberries, and cooking pancakes and freshly caught trout over a campfire. In it the former combat engineer shows the children how to make a water wheel for a mountain stream and a non-lethal trap for deer mice out of a tin can. He and Margaret showed the film to many organizations to create support for the proposed park. Joe also prepared a North Cascades slide show to promote the proposed



Joe and Margaret Miller at Big Beaver Creek, 1972.

—BOB & IRA SPRING

her text books. And from 1960 to 1970 she taught general science and then biology at Bellevue Jr. High School, then at Tye Jr. High School and then at Sammamish High School in Bellevue. In their early years in the Seattle area, Margaret took courses at the UW in anthropology, geology, dendrology, oceanography, marine zoology (taught by future Governor Dixy Lee Ray) and ecology, the last taught by Prof. W. T. Edmondson, limnologist, zoologist and ecologist widely credited with sounding the alarm that led to the creation of the regional sewage disposal agency, Metro,

ers, and climbed Longs Peak again (first for Margaret, fifth for Joe). One morning in the summer of 1952 Joe left home in Denver early, drove 60 miles to the Longs Peak trailhead, hiked 6 miles to the base of the 1800' very steep-to-vertical and breathtakingly exposed East Face of Longs Peak and soloed the face via the airy Alexander's Chimney/Upper Kiener's route, then walked down and went home, a feat few people in that day would think about attempting. In Reno they joined the Sierra Club and went on weekend hikes in the desert. In the summer of 1953 they

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new park, which he showed to more than one hundred groups.

A walk to fabled Cascade Pass in the early 1960s proved eventful. The pass was still administered by the Forest Service, and large patches of the once green and beautiful subalpine meadow there had been pounded and trampled into dust and mud by hikers, climbers and campers. A field survey in 1969 would later identify numerous boot-made trails and 42 worn out camping areas at and near the Pass. The experience shocked Joe and Margaret and opened their eyes to the destructive consequences of over-using fragile terrain. It would later shape their lives and bring restored life to Cascade Pass and other ill-used places.

After many years of hard work by proponents, the new North Cascades National Park was created in October 1968, along with the adjoining Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas.

By the late 1960s Joe and Margaret had come to believe that the natural wildlands they loved so much needed help staying wild and natural, and that they ought to devote themselves to providing it. They decided to retire in 1970 so that they could work as volunteers for the National Park Service. Joe and Margaret made the decision as partners, recognizing a shared obligation, retiring together, embarking on a new career together.

The ink was hardly dry on the legislation creating the new National Park when Seattle City Light began gearing up to implement its long held plan to raise Ross Dam by 125 feet, which would raise the level of Ross Lake, flooding eight miles of British Columbia and the lower six miles of the valley of Big Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Skagit River.

Alarmed that it was not even known what was about to be lost in the seemingly imminent flooding of Big Beaver Valley, which had never been inventoried or studied, in early 1969 Roger J. Contor, the first Superintendent of the new National Park, asked

Pat Goldsworthy about getting some help collecting data about what lived and grew in the wilds of the 12-mile-long valley. He added that he had no money to pay anyone. Knowing of their plans to retire and do volunteer work, Pat suggested the Millers, who, as it happened, had already written to Contor offering their services. Margaret remembers Contor telling her that there was enough work for them in

1970 and 1971. Between summers they spent weeks in the Forestry School library at the University of Washington teaching themselves botany, forest ecology, and research methods. They identified and collected 240 species of plants, including orchids and rare insectivorous "sundew" plants, 21 of which were not previously known to be in the Park complex. They recorded their findings in an 83-page report



The Millers on Pumpkin Mountain above Big Beaver.

—BOB & IRA SPRING

the Park complex for a lifetime.

In August 1969 Joe and Margaret went up into Big Beaver Valley for two weeks to begin an inventory of plant and animal life there. They spent over 60 days in Big Beaver over three summers, sleeping in a tent, swatting mosquitoes and meticulously identifying, measuring and counting flora and fauna. They explored the beaver dams, sphagnum bogs and stands of western redcedar, some of the trees 10 to 15 feet in diameter and 1000 or more years old, in the valley. They filled notebooks with field notes, took hundreds of photographs, made plaster casts of animal tracks, and pressed stacks of plants. Sometimes in the evenings they sat quietly with their supper beside a beaver pond, watching the beaver swimming and working on their dam. They continued the work through the summers of

entitled *A Preliminary Ecological Survey of Big Beaver Valley, North Cascades National Park Complex*, which they submitted to the Park Service in 1971.

In the course of their work at Big Beaver they became friends with Arthur Kruckeberg, a botanist and expert on native plants who taught at the University of Washington, who was generous with his help to the Millers in identifying plants. This association led to the formation by them and others of the non-profit Washington Native Plant Society in 1976. Joe served as president for two years, in 1983 and 1984.

As the fight over City Light's High Ross Dam proposal continued, the western redcedar stands in Big Beaver Valley became a focus of much interest. Forest Service researchers had been looking for stands of good unroaded and unlogged valley bottom western

redcedar for designation as a Research Natural Area, a protected category preserving selected areas to serve as baselines for ecological studies and as unadulterated gene pools of their flora and fauna. The stands of large western redcedar in the lower part of Big Beaver Valley seemed to make it a likely candidate. Dam proponents disagreed and claimed that western redcedar stands above the new floodline in upper Big Beaver and in other valleys were more suitable. Roger Contor asked the Millers for help with that issue too. So in the summer of 1970, besides continuing their general inventory work in Big Beaver, they spent several weeks visiting and making a comparative study of western redcedar and associated species in both upper and lower Big Beaver and in Little Beaver Creek, the Chilliwack River and the Baker River Valleys. Applying the criteria for research natural areas, among them the density and dominance of western redcedar, individual tree size and overall stand size, all determined with meticulous measurements and arcane mathematical analysis (in the days before pocket calculators), they concluded that the stands in lower Big Beaver Valley were "best suited for protection and designation as a western redcedar research natural area". They published the results of their study in a 50-page report entitled *Phytosociological Reconnaissance of Western Redcedar Stands in Four Valleys of the North Cascades Natural Park Complex*, in December 1970.

Joe and Margaret energetically threw themselves into the fight against High Ross Dam. Copies of their two reports were submitted to the Seattle City Council, the Washington State Ecological Commission, the Federal Power Commission, and the International Joint Commission. The Millers testified before these bodies about their findings and held their own as they were cross-examined aggressively by City Light lawyers who hadn't been there themselves but who challenged their lack of academic

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## JOE AND MARGARET MILLER: *Profile of a Partnership*

*Continued from page 13*

credentials for botanical and ecological research. Meanwhile, Joe wrote clear and caustic articles reporting on the hearings



*Margaret Miller measuring large cedar in Big Beaver Valley.*

—JOSEPH W. MILLER

in a somewhat less objective and more partisan manner for THE WILD CASCADES, as the “Kerosene Kid” and later the “Kaopectate Kid.” Harvey Manning describes him as the “lead pamphleteer of the High Ross years.”

The Kaopectate Kid went on to torment the always obligingly combative Governor Dixy Lee Ray in the pages of THE WILD CASCADES, with cartoons, articles and quotations of her own words. The Governor had supported High Ross Dam and had, among other amazing things, declared her opposition to wilderness areas in Washington because there weren’t any potties there, leading “KK” to offer to name the grand open-air throne on the hill above Image Lake with the magnificent view of the vast Glacier Peak Wilderness the “Dixy Lee Ray Memorial Potty,” if the Governor would visit it.

When the tax-exempt North Cascades Foundation was formed in March 1971 to help raise funds for the High Ross Dam fight, Joe

was one of the founders and initial directors and served as a member of the Board and Treasurer for 32 years, from the establishment of the organization until 2003.

Despite massive public opposition and after many days of hearings over several years, one by one the High Ross Dam proposal passed through the checkpoints in the approval process. The Seattle City Council held the first public hearing on the proposal in October 1969, and in December 1970 directed Seattle City Light to proceed with an application to the Federal Power Commission. The FPC approved the application in July 1977. And finally the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit upheld the agency decision in June 1980. The damage to Big Beaver Valley was one of the most conspicuous and incendiary issues raised by the High Ross proposal and the Millers’ testimony, findings, and reports, which became part of the record throughout the process, brought it powerfully to life as nothing else did and added their eyewitness and scientific gravitas to the case for the opposition. And although the project was finally halted by opposition from British Columbia, the years of work and unrelenting pressure by opponents here in Washington, including the Millers, helped to buy the time that it took to arouse a sufficiently strong and broad opposition among Canadians to stop the project. In 1983, after 14 years of opposition, a treaty embodying an agreement between the City of Seattle and the Province of British Columbia, in which Seattle agreed not to raise the dam and British Columbia agreed to provide Seattle with the incremental amount of electricity that the higher dam would have generated, was approved by the International Joint Commission, a body set up to resolve disputes along the U.S.-Canadian border. And in December 1984, more than 15 years after the first Seattle City Council hearing, the United States Senate ratified the treaty incorporating the agreement.

Meanwhile, the 50-year federal license for the three-dam Skagit project, issued in 1927 without any consideration of environmental consequences, expired. In March 1979 NCCC intervened in the relicensing proceeding before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC, the successor to the FPC after October 1, 1978) and an extended series of meetings of representatives of City Light, NCCC and eight other tribal and agency interveners ensued. Joe and Margaret represented NCCC at many of those meetings and discussions, followed by Dave Fluharty and Pat Goldsworthy. In May 1995 the FERC issued a new license for the Skagit project, approving a series of Settlement Agreements worked out between the parties incorporating various mitigation measures, including City Light’s agreement to fund construction of an environmental learning center at Diablo Lake.

In 1989 the 3,356-acre Big Beaver Creek Research Natural Area was established in lower Big Beaver Valley, as the Millers had recommended 19 years before.

Roger Contor was quick to stop the meadow damage at Cascade Pass and to begin to repair the damage already done. After closing the Pass to camping in 1970, in August that year he invited the Millers to attend a staff meeting there, which they did. Longtime gardeners, the Millers agreed to try to revegetate the beaten-up areas at the Pass, using only local plants so as not to introduce exotic genetic material. Thus began 25 years of revegetation work by the Millers, who would become the experts on subalpine revegetation.

As if the summer of 1970 were not already busy enough for them, in late summer the Millers made five trips to Cascade Pass, until the snow stopped their work. They collected and planted seeds from nearby plants and dug up and planted 140 plugs of Partridge Foot from the

area. Neither they nor anyone at NCNP had any experience with subalpine horticulture or revegetation. In the winter the Millers spent many days at the Science and Forestry School libraries at the University of Washington searching for information about subalpine revegetation but finding nothing helpful. They were on their own and would have to learn through trial and error.

The summer of 1971 was another busy season for the Millers. Besides continuing the general inventory of Big Beaver Valley, they began a new project for NCNP surveying plant succession at the sites of three forest fires the previous year, one site at Silver Creek and two in Thunder Creek. And in the late summer they made five more trips to Cascade Pass carrying shovels and other tools and backpacking half a yard of peat moss 1800 feet up the three and a half miles of switchbacks. They found that virtually none of the seeds they had planted had germinated and only about a third of the plugs they had planted the previous year had survived. So they began to experiment with off-site propagation, collecting cuttings and divisions from healthy meadow plants at the pass, driving them 130 miles to Bellevue and planting them in their greenhouse at home.

By the next summer, Roger Contor had been transferred to Rocky Mountain National Park. In August the Millers received a short letter from Lowell White, the new NCNP Superintendent, instructing them to stop their revegetation work until a scientific plan was prepared. Unimpressed with the need or usefulness of such a plan, the Millers appealed to the NPS Regional Scientist in Denver and the suspension was rescinded, but too late to get anything done in the 1972 season.

Meanwhile, the cuttings and divisions taken in 1971 thrived in the Millers’ greenhouse in Bellevue and in 1973 they began backpacking them back to Cascade Pass and replanting them in the beaten up areas. In 1974 they enlisted friends to help them pack 340 pounds of greenhouse-propagated plants to the Pass.

These first years convinced the Millers that trying to revegetate Cascade Pass by planting seeds there wouldn't work, and that there wasn't enough undamaged plant material at the Pass to use for transplanting plugs. They became convinced that off-site greenhouse propagation of plants and seeds taken from the Pass offered the best hope. By 1975 they found that 85 percent of the greenhouse propagated plants they had returned to the Pass had survived, confirming their conclusion.

The arrival of Bill Lester, the new backcountry ranger, at NCNP in 1978 added new energy and resources to the revegetation work. Lester, transferred from Olympic National Park, saw revegetation and restoration of damaged areas as an important part of a wilderness management program and strongly supported it. Before his arrival, at the Millers' urging, the Park Service had built a small coldframe at Marblemount in 1975 and a small plastic-covered greenhouse in 1977. Bill Lester's wife, Kathy, volunteered to run the greenhouse. In 1980 Bill Lester built a large greenhouse for propagating plants at Marblemount, greatly increasing the amount of rooted plants that could be transplanted at Cascade Pass. The Millers and the Lesters shared a similar environmental ethic and management view. They worked closely together and became good friends. Bill Lester was resourceful in getting more volunteer help for revegetation work from the Student Conservation Association, the Washington Native Plant Society and elsewhere, Joe and Margaret continued year after year hauling loads to Cascade Pass and replanting plants from the Marblemount greenhouse. At Lester's request they conducted revegetation workshops for NCNP personnel at other damaged places in the Park complex, including Lake Juanita (near Purple Pass), Whatcom Pass, McAlester Pass and Park Creek Pass. Other requests for revegetation workshops took them to Snow Lake, and to Tipsoo Lake in Mt. Rainier National Park, the Elwha River in Olympic National

Park, the Eagle Cap Wilderness and Mt. Jefferson in Oregon.

In 1990, on the 20th anniversary of the Millers' first revegetation efforts at Cascade Pass, they joined Bill Lester and others there and celebrated the occasion by planting 4,000 plants brought up from Marblemount by helicopter. In May 1993 at a small ceremony at Marblemount, Superintendent William Paleck made Joe and Margaret "Honorary Employees of the National Park Service" and the greenhouse there was named the "Joe and Margaret Miller Greenhouse." The Millers made their last North Cascades revegetation trip in 1995, 25 years after they began their work at Cascade Pass.

Always interested in learning, the Millers have found time to participate in 66 Elderhostle programs over the years, in Australia, Costa Rica, Great Britain, France, Canada, Hawaii,

the Cook Islands, New Mexico, Arizona and Wyoming. In 1996 they spent their 50th wedding anniversary on an Elderhostel service project in Grand Canyon National Park working with picks and shovels to revegetate a former road bed along the South Rim.

Joe is now 90. Margaret is 83. Neither sees very well anymore. The legs that carried them to Cascade Pass and Whatcom Pass and up Big Beaver Valley so many times need help now—a cane, a walker. But they got to the opening of the new North Cascades Environmental Learning Center at Diablo Lake last June, and enjoyed seeing old friends and comrades-in-arms from the great battles, their embroidered honorary National Park Service patches sewn to their jackets. And they enjoyed riding the Lady of the Lake

up Lake Chelan one day last July, taking in the peace of a summer evening and staying for a night at Stehekin. Their outrage with polluters and despoilers who mess up the environment, or let others do it, hasn't faded. And their love of wild places still burns brightly. After nearly 60 years together, 50 of them devoted to caring for the North Cascades, these partners, without a guide book and following their own improvised way, have helped to leave a great legacy for the next occupants. Evidence of it can be seen in places they love. A spectacular National Park now guards the wild heart of the North Cascades. Beaver still make their evening rounds up in Big Beaver Valley. And Cascade Pass is once again carpeted with green meadow and sprinkled with wildflowers.

## Membership Application

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

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

**Please check the appropriate box(es):**

I want to join the NCCC

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

I wish to support NCF

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

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*Left: Mossy rocks and stream below Rainbow Falls, Stehekin Valley.*

*Below: Rainbow Falls.*

—MIKE ANNÉE



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