

THE WILD CASCADES

THE JOURNAL OF THE
NORTH CASCADES
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

Winter 2018

INSIDE:
Roadless Rule, or
tracks everywhere?

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COVER: The track to Monte Cristo is narrow, with no ditches, and very little surface gravel. With poor—or rather, no—drainage, puddles will become potholes when subjected to the wheel impact of vehicle traffic. And the Roadless Rule means the track shouldn't be there in the first place! Read more about the Rule on page 10. —ED HENDERSON PHOTO

The Wild Cascades

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council

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Tom Hammond, Ed Henderson, and Rick McGuire

Pat Hutson, Designer | Printing by Abracadabra Printing

The Wild Cascades is published three times a year (Winter, Spring/Summer, Fall).

Letters, comments, and articles are invited, subject to editorial review.

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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, N3C keeps government officials, environmental organizations, and the general public informed about issues affecting the Greater North Cascades Ecosystem. Action is pursued through administrative, legal, and public participation channels to protect the lands, waters, plants and wildlife.

Over the past half century N3C 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, the Wild Sky 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.

N3C is supported by member dues and private donations. These contributions support the full range of the Council’s activities, including publication of *The Wild Cascades*. As a 501(c)(3) organization, all contributions are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Membership dues for one year are: Living Lightly/Student \$10; Individual \$30; Family \$50; Sustaining \$100.

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Founded in 1957
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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

WINTER 2018

March 2018 will mark the end of my third year as president of the North Cascades Conservation Council. Given the timing of our board elections and the production schedule of this fine publication, I am set to begin my fourth year as president between editions, so allow me to say I am pleased the board wishes for me to remain president. I will also retain my role on the Editorial Committee. I have been very fortunate to serve the past three years, and I am thankful for the opportunity to lead such an amazing group of people that is the N3C. I take very seriously the responsibility of leading one of the last remaining all-volunteer conservation organizations in our area. I had the honor of being president as our organization celebrated our 60th anniversary, and now have the honor of leading during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of North Cascades National Park. The creation of North Cascades National Park is arguably the zenith of the accomplishments of the N3C (Glacier Peak Wilderness area, Boulder River Wilderness area, and a host of others notwithstanding)—and the N3C was the LEAD organization in its creation, which is why Patrick Goldsworthy is photographed with President Johnson at the signing of the law in October of 1968. This also calls attention to the importance of and need for **legislative protection** for our public lands.

One year into the Trump regime, the need for conservation activism is obvious. The leaders of the Department of Interior (Zinke) and the EPA (Pruitt) are going directly against the stated missions of the organizations they “lead” and are selling out the American public and our shared heritage to extractive industries. Not even the highest bidder is required—any will do. It is breath-taking and deeply disappointing to watch this happen, and the need for the N3C and volunteerism in general are more imperative than ever. The N3C is actively engaged with the greater conservation community as we share information, develop strategies and implement actions to protect our natural places—from the coastal strip of Olympic National Park to the low valleys of the Methow and Entiat. I would offer that the conservation community can no longer depend on administrative protections—notably the Roadless Rule and National Monuments—for our most important and vulnerable ecosystems. If ever there was a clarion call for seeking protection in the form of designated Wilderness and National Park, this is it! That’s why we’ve been supportive of American Alps Legacy Project and other initiatives seeking such protections—going along to get along and avoiding conflicts with other stakeholders just won’t cut it. Become more involved: write letters to your newspapers and to your elected representatives in government and let them know that formal protections for our last remaining wild places is not just a matter of economics, it is about our livelihoods and our quality of life.

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National Park System Advisory Board members quit over concerns about Trump administration park priorities

Nine of the 12 members of the National Park System Advisory Board quit in January, citing concern over the Trump administration's priorities regarding the national parks, CNN reported.

A letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke written by former Alaska Democratic Gov. Tony Knowles says the group has been unable to meet with Zinke and the Interior Department during his first year in the position. The board is supposed to meet twice a year, and Knowles said that previ-

ous administrations met with the board immediately.

"Here we were just being basically stonewalled. ... They had no interest in learning our agenda, and what we had to brief them on," Knowles told CNN. "The board said we need to make a statement. We can't make a statement to the secretary, then we need to make a public statement."

Eight of the nine who were part of the letter had terms expiring in May, and suspected Interior was running out the clock.

"For the last year we have stood by waiting for the chance to meet and continue the partnership between the NPSAB and the DOI as prescribed by law," the letter reads. "We understand the complexity of transition but our requests to engage have been ignored and the matters on which we wanted to brief the new department team are clearly not part of its agenda.

"I have a profound concern that the mission of stewardship, protection, and advancement of our National Parks has been set aside."

Gothic Basin a candidate for state-funded protection

By Marc Bardsley



Gothic Basin. —© ATHENA PANGAN PHOTO

Many of us have been unaware that the State legislature has authorized an excellent program for protection of some State land in many areas of the State. Some of these areas would include islands in Puget Sound, Alpine areas of the Cascades, and forested areas, both logged and unlogged. These areas are called Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCA). The legislation has outlined many protections that

in some cases mirror provisions of the federal Wilderness Act. This program is administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Of particular interest to N3C members is the large area known as the Morning Star NRCA, an amalgam of chunks of State Land in the Spada Lake, South Fork Stillaguamish River drainages.

One of the premier areas of the Morning Star NRCA is Gothic Basin. Surrounded

by such peaks as Del Campo and Gothic, and accessed primarily by a stiff hike from Barlow Pass and the Weden Creek trail, this Alpine area sees hundreds, possibly thousands of day hikers and overnight campers every year. With no facilities for protection of the Basin environment, a very serious amount of damage has been documented over the years from lack of sanitary facilities and hardened campsites and an abundance of social trails—all the features of unregulated use cropping up more and more frequently in our very best alpine areas.

At the request of the DNR, N3C members and other interested persons spent most of 2017 reviewing Morning Star NRCA to help determine where State resources could best be used for environmental protections. Field trips were taken to areas such as Ashland Lakes, Greider Lakes, and Gothic Basin. An extensive list of areas needing protection was developed and prioritized for the expenditure of State time and money. Gothic Basin was almost unanimously voted as the most deserving of help and protection. Possibilities discussed here were sanitary facilities, hardened camp sites, a permit system to limit usage and a temporary closure to allow some recovery of the Basin. At this time, the State DNR has not decided which choices will be adopted and whether Gothic Basin itself would actually "make the cut." *The Wild Cascades* will keep our readers up to date as decisions are made.

Ramping up on Skagit River Hydroelectric Project relicensing

by Dave Fluharty

It is hard to believe that round three of relicensing the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project is about to begin. Seattle City Light operates the three dams on the Skagit River (Gorge, Diablo and Ross dams) to produce about 18% of the power used by Seattle. The original project licensed by the Federal Power Commission in 1917 had been built over a period of 50 years with the license term ending in 1977. As part of relicensing, Seattle City Light applied to raise Ross Dam so as to flood over 8,000 acres of Canada with a larger reservoir. N3C among others pushed hard not to allow construction to raise the height of Ross dam. Due to that opposition or the realization that long-term power purchase from Canada was a cheaper way to go, the City of Seattle chose to strike a deal with Canada with the signing of the Skagit River Treaty in 1984.

While technically the Treaty was not a relicensing process, it set the stage for round two of relicensing by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), in which N3C was recognized as an intervenor. That process led to an innovative Settlement Agreement on mitigation of continuing environmental impacts between Seattle City Light and the intervenors in 1991 and that meant FERC agreed to extend the operating license for 30 more years starting in 1995. The Settlement Agreement has been heralded as a national model for effective mitigation and resulted in FERC instituting a new, more collaborative process for hydroelectric relicensing nationwide.

Now it is time to start ramping up for the third round of relicensing. In September 2017, Seattle City Light and FERC invited interested parties to an Informational Meeting on Relicensing Process and a Project site visit. In January and February, Seattle City Light began meeting with interested parties about scoping the nature of the relicensing process. Important topics for consideration in the last relicensing were fish, wildlife, recreation and aesthetics, erosion control, and cultural resources. N3C was especially involved with wildlife (\$17.5 million for wildlife land purchase), recreation and aesthetics (\$10.7 million for construction and maintenance of the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center), and erosion control (wild plant greenhouse and nursery named after N3C board members

Joe and Margaret Miller). In turn we supported the Skagit river tribes and state fisheries experts in mitigating fisheries impacts and tribal entities in their agreements with SCL on cultural resources.

The question now is how to transform elements of the previous Settlement Agreement into requirements for the 40-year term of a new operating license. Questions interested parties are seeking to address are:

- Did we capture all of the continuing environmental impacts of the Skagit River Project?
- Are there new environmental impacts that should be considered?
- How do we incorporate climate change into the calculus of environmental impacts of the Project?

The first step is proposing studies that

SCL should perform to provide answers to these and other questions.

In round two of the relicensing, N3C was the only environmental organization that had intervenor status so we worked with other organizations that did not have that status, e.g., The Nature Conservancy on wildlife and recreational lands, North Cascades Institute on the mitigation of recreation impacts by providing on site environmental education, wild river and white water advocates, etc. According to SCL, some 60 potentially interested parties have been identified. N3C intends to be integrally involved from now through the projected final operating license application date in 2023. If you have ideas for N3C to carry forward or wish to participate, please contact us at skagitrelicensing@northcascades.org.

NCI Youth Leadership Summit

Last November, N3C participated in the North Cascade Institute's Youth Leadership Summit. The Summit is an opportunity for youth aged 14 to 22 to participate in skill-building workshops, leadership development, and find opportunities to be involved in outdoor jobs and internships. N3C tabled at the resource fair and talked to dozens of outdoor-minded youth about the history of the North Cascades National Park, opportunities for citizen advocacy, and wilderness values. We're looking forward to staying involved with NCI at this event in the future and adding more members to our base! Meanwhile please encourage the youth you know to visit <https://ncascades.org/signup/youth/YLA> to sign up for upcoming Youth Leadership Adventures by March 26.

President's Letter

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

I have a deep and abiding love for the landscape that is the North Cascades and I will let that love guide my actions through every year of my life—be it doing field work for the North Cascade Glacier Climate Project, attending meetings with the U.S. Forest Service on behalf of the N3C, writing letters and articles such as this one, and being present to support conservation in all forms. The time for action is now, and I call on every member of this organization to get active!

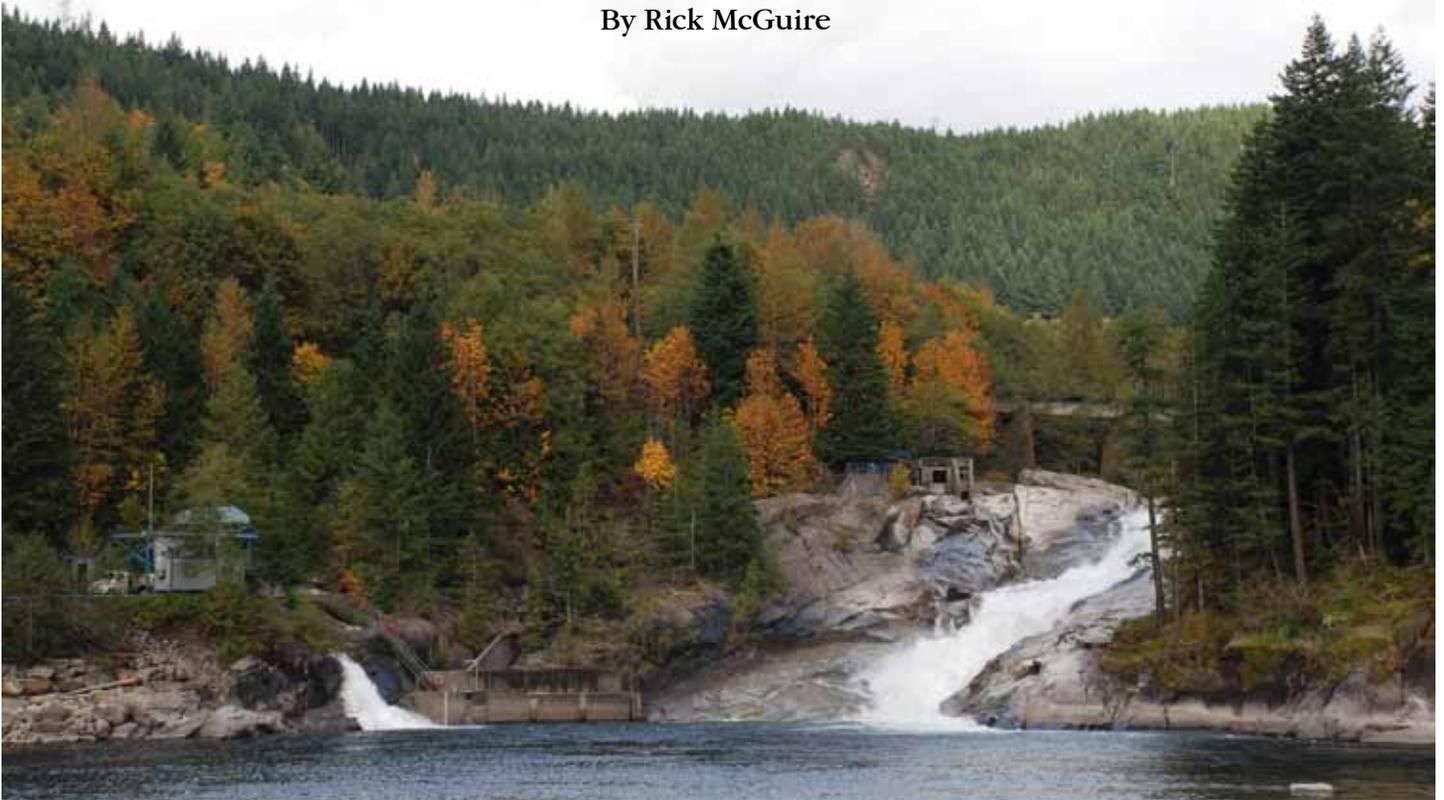


Join our N3C Facebook page!

We have over 100 friends already. You can help build our clout by friending us and then sharing posts with friends and others concerned about preserving the North Cascades. While you're at it, give a look to the American Alps page as well.

Snohomish P.U.D. forges ahead at Sunset Falls

By Rick McGuire



The Snohomish Public Utility District continues to pursue the construction of a destructive, wasteful, and totally unneeded low power hydroelectric project on the South Fork Skykomish river at Sunset Falls. If built, the project would divert water out of the South Fork into pipes leading to turbines and a powerhouse near the bottom of Sunset Falls. It would produce a small amount of very expensive hydroelectricity.

It is becoming more and more apparent that the real resource being tapped here is not the South Fork Skykomish river, but the customers of the P.U.D. That includes everyone who uses electricity in Snohomish County. In a low interest rate economic environment, lenders are excited at the prospect of loaning money to the P.U.D. and collecting interest payments for years, at interest rates which will likely be higher than almost anything else they could put their money into. Snohomish County ratepayers will find themselves in a kind of debt peonage, with electricity bills going up far more than whatever the P.U.D. gets from selling the modest amount of power generated by the project.

The other beneficiaries will be the P.U.D. staff, who will be guaranteed cushy, high paying jobs for years, and large numbers of consultants who will also be

on board the gravy train. The P.U.D. is theoretically run by a three-member commission, but the reality is that the commission is always controlled by the P.U.D.'s large staff.

Looking at Sunset Falls, one can't help but think that the era of public power in the Northwest is one whose time has come and gone. Snohomish P.U.D. was formed in 1949 to "cut out the middleman," which at that time was Puget Power, a private, investor-owned utility. The idea was that the P.U.D. would buy cheap power from the big Federal dams on the Columbia River and distribute it at low cost to Snohomish County residents, without Puget Power in the middle taking a profit for doing so.

And it worked, for a while. Electric rates went down, and Snohomish County had some of the cheapest electricity in the country. But, slowly at first, the P.U.D. staff began to swell, and pay itself handsome salaries. The P.U.D. gradually transformed from an entity providing cheap power to Snohomish County into an entity dedicated to providing well-paid jobs for its ever-growing staff.

Now the banks have joined in with the P.U.D. staff to provide financing for the unneeded, uneconomic project at Sunset Falls, so they too can make money

through debt service, with the P.U.D. raising the price of electricity in Snohomish County. This is becoming a problem with public utilities all across the U.S. and Canada. At least with private utilities, shareholders provide some protection against the organization getting fleeced in the way that the P.U.D. is at Sunset Falls. Private companies usually have some sort of board of directors that is supposed to look out for shareholder interests. Private companies have of course made innumerable bad decisions, but theoretically at least, there are people who are supposed to keep the company from making wildly uneconomical decisions.

That is not the case with public power utilities. More and more public utilities are throwing huge amounts of money into projects that simply do not pay, and that will put them in debt for decades. The Site C dam on the Peace River in British Columbia is a giant, uneconomic project where good money keeps being poured in after bad, in the billions. Perhaps the worst example is the Muskrat Falls dam in Newfoundland, where the government has poured well over ten billion dollars into a fairly small dam built on unstable clay, that will never produce much power. Despite



N3C objects to proposed South Fork Stillaguamish vegetation management project

By David Gladstone

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has proposed to cut/thin trees, under the guise of restoring old-growth forest habitat for spotted owls and marbled murrelets (euphemistically calling it a “Vegetation Management Project”) on up to 3600 acres within a 65,000-acre portion of the South Fork of the Stillaguamish River Late Successional Reserve (LSR)/Riparian Reserve. This logging would include areas like the Heather Lake trail area.

With Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS) taking the lead, PAS and N3C filed a lengthy Objection Letter response to the proposal, primarily focusing our objections on the use by the USFS of an Environmental Assessment (EA), rather than a full-blown EIS, in light of the size of the Proposal.

The proposal would target 97.5 million board feet of thinning/logging, using approximately 60 miles of new/reopened/reconstructed roads (approximately 31 miles of new and reconstructed; and 29 miles of ML1 reopened roads). The USFS stated

that decommissioning and/or closing of these roads would occur after the end of the project (potentially many years in the future), but that an unspecified portion of the decommissioning would depend on uncertain funding, and that some roads might be maintained for future use. Another issue of concern was a proposal for “daylighting” along these 60 miles of roads. To us this meant potentially significant additional logging—although the USFS representatives stated that “daylighting” referred only to trimming of branches and other hazardous material overhanging the roads. Since this “trimming” would be at the discretion of the loggers, we have concerns that limited USFS staffing would not sufficiently oversee this aspect of the project. Since the project covers broad geographical areas in a 65,000-acre LSR, another of our concerns was to limit trimming in only one unit at a time and to decommission or close the new/reopened roads in that unit after project completion. Another of our issues was that funding for related projects (e.g., road decommis-

sioning—that portion not paid for by the logging operators; and fish passage via affected culverts) be obtained prior to project commencement.

In response to the objections filed, the USFS set a meeting for 12/19 for objectors to meet with USFS officials to discuss the proposal. Subsequently, on 12/15, PAS and N3C met with District Ranger Peter Forbes, Project Leader Phyllis Reed and MBS Environmental Coordinator Lori Wisehart to discuss our objections. Then, on 12/19, PAS and N3C, along with two other interested objectors and two Sierra Club reps by phone, met with five USFS reps in the General Objector meeting.

We are now awaiting the results of a US Fish & Wildlife biological assessment of the project, and then further refinement of the EA before the USFS either asks for further public comments or issues a Decision Notice (DN). It will probably be at least a few months before this occurs. Together with PAS, we are considering our options, including potential litigation.

warning after warning, the government utility went ahead with the project in 2010. The current premier, who replaced the one who approved Muskrat Falls, calls the decision to build it “ill-conceived and reckless.” The tremendous debt burden will double electricity prices in the province, adding \$150 per month to everyone’s electric bill - forever.

The Sunset Falls project may not be quite as outrageously stupid as Muskrat Falls, but it is only a difference of scale. Snohomish P.U.D. can buy all the cheap power it will ever need from the Bonneville Power Administration. The amount of power from Sunset Falls will be a drop in the bucket, but a very expensive and unnecessary drop. It will also be very damaging to the fish in the South Fork Skykomish. The South Fork is in a Northwest Power and Conservation Council “protected area,” meaning dams should not be constructed unless there is some “extraordinary environmental benefit.”

Currently, a trap and haul facility captures salmon at the bottom of Sunset Falls

and transports them to a point upstream of the three falls, Sunset, Canyon and Eagle, that block anadromous fish from reaching the upper South Fork watershed. Young fish moving downstream descend the falls, which are more like steep rapids rather than a vertical “falls,” apparently with few ill effects. But there will be no effective way to keep the young fish from going through the powerhouse turbines, which will chew up and kill many or most of them.

Snohomish P.U.D. is claiming that a one-time upgrade to the trap and haul facility will be an “extraordinary environmental benefit” that should allow them to build the project in the protected river reach. But the Tulalip Tribes are not buying it. They know that the fishery will be greatly harmed by young downstream-bound fish getting sucked through the turbines. In their comments on the Draft License Application, the Tulalip Tribes stated that “the project threatens to do irreversible damage to populations at risk as well as to critical habitat required by Chinook salmon.”

The Sunset Falls project benefits no one except P.U.D. employees, their consultants, and the banks which will finance the project in order to collect interest payments for decades. Electricity rates will rise because of the debt burden. The small amount of power generated will do nothing to offset the expense of the project. Everyone in Snohomish County will end up paying the price of this folly. Fish populations, already under assault, will be decimated.

The Snohomish P.U.D. has become a self-serving, out of control bureaucracy. It was formed with noble motives, but much has changed over the nearly 70 years since it was created. With the Sunset Falls project, it is harming rather than benefiting Snohomish County. Perhaps the time has come to ask whether it still serves any public purpose. Perhaps it is time to ask whether the county would be better off if it were privatized. Snohomish P.U.D. is starting to look like Exhibit A of the failure of the public power movement in the Northwest.

Suction dredging threatens Illabot Creek and other rivers in Washington

By Dave Fluharty



Many of us have seen recreational suction dredging taking place in North Cascade rivers and streams. It seems incongruous to see divers in wetsuits bobbing around with a hose connected to a loud pump sucking up bottom sand and gravel in pursuit of elusive riches of gold...in the same reaches of rivers where salmon, bull trout and other species are spawning or rearing and caddis fly larvae and other tasty and nutritious foods are collecting. Washington State still permits this arcane practice to the detriment of benthic habitats in streams, water quality and salmon recovery. California and Oregon have banned suction dredging from state waters.

NCCC's initial interest in recreational suction dredging was prompted by the Department of Fish and Wildlife issuing approval of a Hydraulics Permit Application for Illabot Creek in the Skagit drainage. This seemed to be totally contrary to the concept of DFW protecting salmon species and bull trout in this watershed, much less its Wild and Scenic character. Seattle City Light, with the support of NCCC, notified the HPA holder that it would not permit its lands in Illabot Creek to be used for suc-

tion dredging. Despite the recent decision by Congress to include Illabot Creek in the Skagit Wild and Scenic River designation, the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest seemed reluctant to exercise its responsibilities to protect its lands in the Illabot Creek watershed. Fortunately, as best we can discern suction dredging under this HPA did not take place and the permit is now expired.

N3C has taken a position to support banning suction dredging from State waters

Besides degradation of stream habitats, the practice of suction dredging is likely in violation of the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. N3C has taken a position to support banning suction dredging from State waters. N3C is in support of the efforts announced January 10, 2017 by the Center for Biological Diversity and Cascadia Wildlands to bring suit against the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to stop allowing this activity. N3C also supports the efforts of the state legislature to reduce the impacts of suction dredging, e.g., HB 1077 introduced by Rep. Joe Fitzgibbon and HB 1106 introduced by Rep. Gael Tarleton. However, we feel these legislative efforts are too timid for such a complex problem and urge the legislature to amend these actions to promote a complete ban on suction dredging.

The Trust has protected more than 2,000 feet of critical salmon habitat along the federally designated Wild & Scenic Illabot Creek.
—SKAGIT LAND TRUST PHOTO.

As the price of gold on the world market fluctuates and trends upwards, interest in recreational suction dredging seems to increase. However, we have yet to hear of anyone who has gotten rich or even repaid the cost of equipment and operations by destructively dredging for gold in cold clear mountain waters. Should the public trust allow recreational activities, however rewarding, to diminish river and stream habitats? Why not encourage the wet-suited recreationist to help perform stream counts of fish and contribute to fish habitat assessments?

As important as either litigation or legislation may be, we should not expect that the Legislature will prioritize a suction dredging ban. According to Washington Watch, legislators introduced 2,365 bills in 2015 and submitted another 1,251 bills during the 2016 session. "Of these, 363 were enacted into law in 2015 and another 270 in 2016, less than 18 per cent of the total number of introductions." 2018 seems to be on the same course. N3C continues to track this legislation and litigation and will report back to members in the TWC.



The Southern Pickets, a fence chiseled out of rock

By Ethan Welty

This trip was to the Southern Pickets, a range that looks like what it sounds like: a picket fence chiseled out of particularly hard rock. About 99 percent of Washington's North Cascades National Park is pure wilderness with only a few roads running through it.

Most months out of the year the region is covered with snow, but there is a brief period each year when flowers and waterfalls glimmer together in the sun. It's hard to gauge when exactly that will happen since the timing changes every year, but on this trip I got lucky.

We set out on our adventure with only helmets and ice axes as climbing gear, scrambling up the modestly-angled West Ridge of West McMillan Spire (3rd class). From there, we had planned to continue over the Barrier, a wall of rock

separating Terror Basin from the Crescent Creek drainage to the west, to access the Pyramid. Once at the base of the Barrier, though, after watching a herd of mountain goats climb nearly vertically up the harrowing ascent route, we changed our minds.

Instead, growing weary, we decided to set up camp for the night and each of us made beds for ourselves on the heather benches. When we awoke, the waterfalls were flowing playfully among clumps of wildflowers and the sun was shining. It looked so beautiful.

North Cascades is different from other national parks. Its focus has not been on access and infrastructure – it's really been the opposite – and that's why I love going there so much. If you want to see the core of the park, you need to know what

The Southern Pickets at sunset from The Roost, North Cascades National Park.
—ETHAN WELTY PHOTO

you're doing and the conditions have to be right. But whenever I do manage to get there, I am abundantly rewarded.

Ethan Welty, a former member of The Climbing Club at the University of Washington, studies tidewater glacier dynamics in the Arctic with time-lapse photography and photogrammetry for a PhD at the University of Colorado. He walks, talks, eats, and photographs his way across continents.



The Swen Larsen quarry prior to its impending expansion against the Twin Sisters roadless area, from a Weyerhaeuser clearcut.

Atowering achievement of Northwest conservationists, the Roadless Rule helped thwart the U.S. Forest Service's decades-long strategy of building new roads quickly to pre-empt Wilderness designation—which takes many years to achieve—and then logging at their leisure. By ending roadbuilding in many places, the Roadless Rule has protected ancient forests in Washington State. But the Roadless Rule is an administrative, not a legislative, protection. This section gives a brief history of the Rule, summarizes major incursions like the Monte Cristo track and how N3C is working to prevent or end them, and offers Brock Evans's perspective on how we can protect lands outside Wilderness.

A short history of the Roadless Rule

By Scott Crain

Thousands of acres of wildlands in Washington State are moderately, but not permanently, protected through the Roadless Rule. They have been removed from consideration for road building and resource extraction and have been designated Inventoried Roadless Areas. Even with this protection, we continue to see proposals that would undermine the purpose of the rule, including proposals to maintain or build new roads in Monte Cristo and Twin Sisters in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The failure or success of these proposals to punch roads into roadless areas depends on the Forest Service and citizen advocates willing to go to court to uphold the law. The Forest Service's website describes the purpose of the rule:

The 2001 Roadless Rule establishes prohibitions on road construction, road reconstruction, and timber harvesting on 58.5 million acres of inventoried roadless areas on National Forest System lands. The intent of the 2001 Roadless Rule is to provide lasting protection for inventoried roadless areas within the National Forest

System in the context of multiple-use management.

In the final version of the published rule, the Forest Service noted the problems with maintaining the existing road system, including the harm that rebuilding roads causes to the environment, the fragmentation of ecosystems, and the sheer lack of funding to maintain existing roads to meet current standards. Put simply, maintaining the roads to meet the "multiple use" mandate is simply not an option and would create greater harm to the forest than benefit.

Even before the adoption of the rule, industry groups and some states fought its adoption through the Bush administration and the courts. Starting in 1998, when the Forest Service began to review the need for a permanent rule, industry groups challenged the roadbuilding moratorium the Forest Service put in place during the creation of the rule. These challenges were dismissed. After the most extensive federal rulemaking in the history of the federal government, spanning 16 months, and re-

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History of Roadless Rule

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sulting in more than 2.5 million individual comments (95% supportive) and more than 600 public meetings, the Roadless Rule was eventually adopted in the last days of the Clinton administration.

During the Bush administration, officials friendly to industry groups settled some lawsuits that allowed logging in previously off-limits areas, demonstrating the potential weakness in any administrative protection like the rule. Most recently, federal courts dismissed the last of the possible challenges to the rule in which the state of Alaska tried to overturn it, and by doing so the courts barred logging and roadbuilding in the Tongass National Forest. This dismissal is an important milestone in the history of the rule because further challenges to the validity of the rule are barred by the statute of limitations.

Some of the Inventoried Roadless Areas in Washington include stunning and wild places that surround North Cascades National Park, Lake Chelan-Sawtooth Wilderness, and the Alpine Lakes. On the east side of the Park, the Liberty Bell and Pasayten Rim roadless areas surround Highway 20 and are designated within the Inventoried Roadless Areas. These designations cover over 100,000 acres, though the Forest Service has recommended less than 15,000 acres for Congressionally designated wilderness protection.

Like any protection that lacks a formal Wilderness designation, the Roadless Rule can be undermined in several ways by an administration looking to do so. The rule is not the permanent protection envisioned by the Wilderness Act. The rule does attempt to avoid future road construction through areas with potential for Wilderness designation, and these lands are still constantly threatened by resource extraction. Environmental advocates like Earthjustice fought to protect the rule through litigation for nearly two decades, without which millions of acres of forest would have been open to logging. Wilderness lovers must be vigilant over the Forest Service's administration of these lands to prevent encroachment, as the history of the rule demonstrates.

Encroachments threaten Roadless Rule

The difference between administrative protections and legislative protections matters—here's why.

The Roadless Rule is an administrative protection. Because of this, it is susceptible to interpretation and ultimately can be rendered meaningless when it comes to actual protection of the landscape.

With more than one-half of America's National Forests already open to logging, mining, and drilling, the Rule was intended to preserve the last third of undeveloped forestlands as Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRA) as a home for wildlife, a haven for recreation, a source of clean water and a heritage for future generations. A wide-range of activities is permissible in inventoried roadless areas, but building roads is not.

Yet people keep trying! Indeed, locally the Roadless Rule has been compromised, as there is an incursion in to an IRA to build the mine remediation track in to Monte Cristo. While the intent may be positive, the fact the track is there is very disturbing, as now some folks want to make the track in to a permanent road. This would negatively impact water quality, and habitat for marbled murrelet and bull trout.

There are two other planned incursions: the Swen Larsen mine and the Excelsior mine near Mount Baker each require additional road miles through IRA to support operations. There are also attempts to exempt the entire state of Alaska from the Roadless Rule.

N3C has signed on to letters objecting to all three of these incursions.

Swen Larsen Quarry

N3C was one of nine conservation organizations that wrote to Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Supervisor Jamie Kingsbury to object to the U.S. Forest Service's draft decision to move forward with the Swen Larsen Quarry expansion into the Mt. Baker West Inventoried Roadless Area after completing an environmental assessment on this issue. Our objections:

- The Draft Decision Notice and Final Environment Assessment does not adequately identify and acknowledge the impacts to Old-Growth and late successional forests
- The Draft Decision Notice and Final Environmental Assessment does not provide meaningful mitigation to the loss of Inventoried Roadless Area.

Excelsior Mine

We joined many of the same organizations in drafting a letter to Todd Griffin at the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest to provide scoping comments on the proposed plan of operations for the Excelsior Mine located in the Mt. Baker Ranger District of the MBSNF. We stressed that building a new road into the Mt. Baker North Inventoried Roadless Area is unacceptable. Access can still be provided to the mine site using existing roads outside the roadless area. As well, the mine would encroach on the Eligible Wild and Scenic River designation of Wells Creek, a tributary of the North Fork Nooksack River, impact Spotted Owl Critical Habitat, and take place in a Riparian Reserve area.

Tongass National Forest, Alaska

We joined 66 signers in a letter asking all members of congress to strenuously oppose two particularly egregious, poison pill riders affecting Alaska's national forests in the Senate's fiscal 2018 spending bill for the Interior Department and related agencies that would undo existing protections for extraordinary public resources and open the doors to even broader attacks on public lands.

Section 509 of the spending bill would bar application of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule to national forests in Alaska, including the largest remaining intact temperate rainforest in the world, the Tongass. **Section 508** would nullify a Forest Service plan for moving the Tongass away from taxpayer-subsidized old growth clearcutting long since abandoned elsewhere in the national forest system. Far

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On the road again to Monte Cristo

By Ed Henderson

A century and a quarter ago Monte Cristo evoked dreams of untold riches. The miners hauled away a modest amount of gold but left behind huge piles of mine tailings and waste rock. For nearly a hundred years, Monte Cristo town site slept in its mountain valley, becoming a popular recreational destination. Fifteen years ago a court determined that the mining waste constituted a hazard and ordered remedial action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response,

Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) to protect the environment.

As reported in *TWC* Fall 2015, Spring/Summer 2016 and Fall 2016, a temporary track was punched through an Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) to allow access for heavy earthmoving construction equipment to remove the mine waste to a repository. This work was accomplished during the summer of 2015. The Monte Cristo area was then reopened to the public in 2016. The temporary track has been closed to the public with a locked gate. For the

past two years the track has been used for motor vehicle access to the town site for monitoring of the waste repository. The monitoring is expected to continue for at least another three years. The Darrington Ranger District of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie (MBS) National Forest has been lending gate keys to property holders and members of the Monte Cristo Preservation Association (MCPA) allowing them motor vehicle access along the temporary track to the town site. N3C has objected to this policy as contrary to the terms of the exception granted to the Roadless Rule for the CERCLA Mine remediation and the explicit instructions in the Removal Action Memorandum (RAM).

It is not too soon to start thinking about the long-term management of the Monte Cristo area. The Forest Service is seeking public comment on the scope of the NEPA process. Before commenting let's consider the current situation.

- There hasn't been motor vehicle access to the town site for the general public since a gate was installed at Barlow Pass and a flood wiped out the road in 1980.
- There hasn't been motor vehicle access for anyone since another flood washed out the old Snohomish County mine to market road in 2006.
- The CERCLA track was deliberately built below Forest Service Maintenance Level 2, 4WD, high clearance vehicles standard and is unsafe for public travel.
- The CERCLA track passes through an IRA that is potential habitat for Marble Murrelets, a threatened species.
- The Forest Service acknowledges that they have no obligation to provide motor vehicle access to the Monte Cristo town site.
- In 2017, 70 percent of the vehicle traffic on the CERCLA track (41 of approximately 60 trips) was by private individuals who borrowed a gate key.
- The Forest Service estimates in 2017 over 6,000 individuals parked at Barlow

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The CERCLA temporary track to Monte Cristo, which N3C believes should be removed as planned and legally required.
—ED HENDERSON PHOTO

On the road again

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Pass and hiked into the Monte Cristo town sites and points beyond.

- If the public is allowed to use the CERCLA track, the track will have to be rebuilt to bring it up to safety standards.
- If the CERCLA track is not removed in accordance with the granted exception to the Roadless Rule and the RAM, it will require administrative action by the Secretary of Agriculture to adjust the IRA boundary.

A number of issues must be considered in planning for the long-term management of the Monte Cristo area. N3C will

focus our attention and comments on the removal of the CERCLA track and protection of the environment. We will leave to others the preservation and interpretation of the historic mining village.

N3C believes that the CERCLA temporary track should be removed as planned and legally required. The Monte Cristo area has managed without motor vehicle access for ten years. Upgrading the track to acceptable safety standards will require expensive construction, money that MBS doesn't have. It is well documented that MBS has a backlog of road maintenance and only 25 percent of the necessary funds. Upgrading the track will take money away from needed projects on existing roads. In addition upgrading will require widening the road, straightening curves, excavating to reduce steep grades, extensive drainage work and generally cutting trees.

Records this past summer show that the vast majority of motor vehicle use was by private individuals, both property in-holders and members of the MCPA. We do not believe that the Forest Service and ultimately the American citizens should build and maintain a road for the exclusive use of any private group. So if the road is opened to the any of the public, it will have to be opened to all of the public.

Once the CERCLA monitoring is com-

pleted there will be very little need for Forest Service motor vehicle access to administer the Monte Cristo area. They were able to manage the area for ten years without being able to drive in and can do so again.

Since the county road was closed to the public in 1980, the four-mile hike from Barlow Pass to Monte Cristo is a rare opportunity to experience a beautiful forest valley without contending with motor vehicle traffic. Harvey Manning says it so much better. (*100 Hikes in the Glacier Peak Region*, Hike 27, page 82):

The authors don't want to bear any bikers whimpering about the December 26, 1980 flood that ripped up the road to Monte Cristo and forced them to walk the 4 extra miles, each way. The flood was the best thing that happened to this valley since the railroad shut down. The four miles now free of automobiles are the most scenic valley walk, forest walk, river walk in the area, with many excellent

backpacker campsites, a terrific place to introduce little children to life away from automobiles. Further, those four mile multiplied by 2 convert certain former day walks amid crowds to lonesome wildland backpacks.

There is no question that a public motor vehicle road will release a flood of day trip visitors into an area that isn't capable of absorbing them. N3C is opposed to that.

The Forest Service is collecting public comments on the potential scope of a NEPA process. Two public meetings have been held, heavily attended by MCPA members who are very much in favor of maintaining the CERCLA track at least for their use beyond the monitoring period. N3C is preparing comments reflecting our belief that the CERCLA track must be removed and access to Monte Cristo should

be by muscle power, either on foot or by mountain bicycle. The Area should retain its wild character.

Personal comments to the Forest Service to: comments-pacifisnorthwest-mtbaker-snoqualmie-darrington@fs.fed.us by March 5, 2017

Encroachments

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

from ending that practice too fast as the region's vestigial timber industry and its political protectors claim, the plan is for a 9-15 year transition, slower than requested by hundreds of thousands of Americans who commented on the plan.

If these lands were protected through congressional/legislative process, we wouldn't need to keep fighting these incursions and writing these comment letters. While the Roadless Rule is good, lands designated as Wilderness Area and/or National Park are by far a better deal and our members are encouraged to speak up and speak out to the conservation community and our lawmakers in support of Wilderness and National Park



Brock Evans: *Find the true believers, get them involved, make one last push to finish what was started 50 years ago*

In part two of our interview with Brock Evans the day before the 2017 solar eclipse, the former N3C board member and activist offered strategies for making “one last push” to protect lands without Wilderness or National Park protection.

TWC: One of our challenges now, Brock, is getting meaningful cooperation between conservation groups. They seem to be splintering and not working together. How do we get conservation groups to rally together for lands protection like Wilderness designation and National Park expansion these days?

BE: That’s a good question and reminds me of an old adage, you know, “be careful what you wish for, because you might get it!” Back in the old days when we, well when anybody, even the powerful “Sahara Club” (it was described to me as the “Sa-

hara Club”), which had 40,000 members nationally and 4,000 members up here—we pleaded for unity among groups. The Washington State Sportsman’s Council fought us bitterly over the North Cascades Park because you can’t hunt in National Parks. I perceived a need for a statewide group to bring us all together, and we did form the Washington Environmental Council. I was given the job of researching what others were doing in other states. And we formed it to somehow bring together all the groups that were fighting over the Park or whatever and get to know each other. People in various groups didn’t know each other! We did the same thing in Oregon and Idaho. We formed Environmental Councils in 1968 because the WEC was so effective, and having it made us so effective in all those issues in those early days. And that was the way we were all

bound together then, in smaller numbers then of course, and of course we’d only work on the issues we all agreed on, but there were *plenty* of those.

Now, my perception is that people look at the 1963 map that N3C proposed for the North Cascades National Park, at 1.3 million acres, and if you draw a line around them and all the areas that are Wilderness inside them you have almost all of it now. Plus the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness around Monte Cristo, for example, plus



Upper Snowy Lake and Mount Hardy on the Cascade crest—the headwaters of the Skagit River (Snowy Lake) and the Methow River (below Mount Hardy). Everything in this photo is unprotected save the backsides of the distant high peaks, which mark North Cascades National Park. —© TOM HAMMOND PHOTO

my old Barclay Lake! Y'know, what's left of it is still in that. And Boulder River, I wrote an article back in 1966 about that, it was my favorite place, it's saved too, much to my happy surprise, you guys did that! So most people, I'll bet, think "Well, it's all safe now. It's all good, these are the places I go to." So what do we do now? I would suggest something like making a new list of the real eco-warriors that we know. Not just people who talk a good game but we need people willing to fight to protect more places, and really believe in it. True believers, in other words. I would hold a not-too-well-publicized conference, maybe, several get-togethers around the State. The way we organized WEC, we didn't have one big Kum-By-Yah conference in Seattle or someplace, we had regional meetings in Spokane, and Walla Walla, and Yakima, and get all the leaders there so we could get to know them better. I would suggest hire a dynamic Executive Director, who's well spoken and knows these things too and can get people together. And say "We want to make one last push." We can call it whatever we want. We want to finally finish the business that we started 50 years ago, and now's the time.

I went to the Hells Canyon Preservation Society's 50th anniversary dinner last May and spoke there and got elected President and so-on, and we had a table full of the Originals who were still alive, and we introduced them all including Senator Packwood. There were all these new people I didn't know, and everybody was saying congratulations on the first 50 years, we saved this great Canyon, it's safe, now let's finish the job in the next 50 years. And we formed what we called a "connector's program," for wildlife connections. You can give it any new name you want, call it the "Ronald Reagan Save America Program," I don't care what you call it, but we can have a conference of true believers, we've had enough of this collaboration stuff, which usually means we only cut off one finger instead of four. I'm all for being nice and collaborating, if we get something out of it. If all we get is "nice" out of it, that won't do it. I'd make a list of all the places that are really prized, I'd make a picture book of them, "Washington's Last Remaining Wild Places." Let the foresters deny that they're going to touch it—they will try, the

first time there's a forest fire there. We can call ourselves "The New Conservationists", "The New Wild Ones," who really are for a wild One. Since I'm out here again I'd love to go living room to living room, I'll bet we can fire up all kinds of people about finishing the job!

As you know now they allow hunting in National Parks, you can have Park Preserve, we did that in the Alaska campaign in the 1970s. You can designate the, let's say "Methow-Winthrop Park Preserve," the rich people around it shouldn't be against it, you can smoke it out with them... there are so many ideas! Get True Believers together, who are really willing to be warriors, and I'll bet they'll flock to your banner—our banner.

TWC: You wrote a book about 3 years ago called *How to Fight and Win*. You addressed your book to "a new generation of eco-warrior." But some worry that the millennials they encounter don't even follow Leave No Trace on the trail, they leave big messes and treat the wilderness like a big playground—let alone aspiring to be eco-warriors. Do you share some of these concerns about the millennials, and how do we reach

them?

BE: No, I don't. Because it's always been that way. It's always been one generation, the older one going *barumpf* and saying the younger one just isn't doing it right, and so on. I'm one of the 'harumpfers' now, maybe, but I was one of the younger generation once. And remember, I'm the one that went to all the meetings at the Conservation Committee of the Mountaineers and no one ever called on me. We need to find those who love people and know how to organize them and give them things to do that won't hurt us if they don't do them well, but can prove them in the field of battle. Like coming to a hearing, things like that, and we can train them. You don't do it like boot camp, but you *do* sort of. If I was here and younger I'd want to go into Winthrop, say, and talk to the town council, and I'd go back to Chelan, the old enemy bastion down there, and to Wenatchee. *The Wild Cascades* published my story about the last chance hearing for North Cascades Park, how the guy who wanted to kill it in Congress [Wayne Aspinall] decreed hearings on the spot for Wenatchee, but he said nobody who had

testified in Seattle was allowed to go. So we went to Wenatchee and called on High School students to be witnesses, and they spoke passionately.

Once people know there's a chance to be involved, they'll be there. The millennials will be there, too, if they feel they're going to lose something otherwise. Our way is to dramatize it, what's there and what may happen to it. It doesn't have to be an immediate threat, we can just say "We've seen the Forest Service transportation maps for the National Forest, and we saw by God, they're going to go up to Twisp to the War Creek Valley, did you know that? Here are some pictures of the War Creek Valley." I'd like to see, I'll bet that's still on a map somewhere. It's gonna happen someday, so you either force the Forest Service to deny it, and take it off the list, or you stand and fight. Before I did that I'd go to the movers and shakers and leaders in the affected region and say here's what we're going to do, we'd love your thoughts and your input, there are ways to do those things.

There are always people, young or old, who will fight for things if they feel threatened, and so will the Millennials. A lot of them are busy, but you don't need a majority. Margaret Mead once said it, don't worry that you only have 4 or 5 people on your side, that's all it takes! And that's true, I've found that to be true. And more will come. If you raise the banner, more will flock to that banner. You don't need 100%, you need 50% + 1 vote, that's all you need. Normally, the other side fights so hard back in Congress to keep any environmental issues coming to a vote, because they know we'll blow them away on the floor. That's why they stack all the committees with all their biggest anti-environmentors in Big Timber and Big Oil. Committee votes are close but once they get to the floor—the Endangered Species Act passed 390 to 12. So, they are there, the people are there. If they feel it's threatened.

Read Brock's passionate argument for a North Cascades National Park, published in the September 1968 *Land*, the magazine of the Harvard Conservation Club:

http://www.northcascades.org/public_html/Evans_The_Land_article_PDOC.pdf

Bad news for bears in the Cascades, good news in British Columbia

By Rick McGuire

The North Cascades Conservation Council is saddened, though not surprised, that the Department of the Interior has pulled the plug on the effort to reintroduce grizzly bears to the North Cascades. After years of trying, money was finally found to do an Environmental Impact Statement on the project. But apparently word has come down from the Trump administration appointees, including Interior Secretary Zinke, to halt work.

Abundant source populations to provide bears which could be moved to the Cascades were identified in the Northern Continental Divide ecosystem, basically Glacier National Park and surrounding National Forest Wilderness areas. Other bears from areas in British Columbia closer to the Cascades were to be also brought in to add genetic diversity.

The good plan that was taking shape to make reintroduction of grizzly bears to the North Cascades a reality has now been thrown away by the Trump appointees at the Interior Department. The Trump administration has proven in countless ways that it is no friend of the environment and its conservation.

Long-sought land protections which were administratively designated under the Obama administration, such as the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah, have been rolled back in part. The conservation movement is gravely worried about the future of the Northwest Forest Plan. For the first time in many years, the resumption of large-scale, subsidized logging on the National Forests of Washington state seems like a real possibility. The administrative rules protecting National Forest roadless areas are under attack, particularly in Alaska, but Washington's roadless forests are in danger too.

The administration does at least seem to have stepped back from some of the very worst initiatives. The wholesale privatization of public lands appears to be off the agenda for the time being, thanks in large part to pressure not only from conservationists but from sportsmen, people who like to hunt and fish, and who realize that if America's public lands are sold off there will no longer be many places to do that for anyone but the super rich.



VALHALLA WILDERNESS SOCIETY PHOTO

Another horrible project that came back to life with the Trump administration is the proposed Pebble mine near Alaska's Bristol Bay, home to the most productive salmon fishery in the world. The ore body at Pebble is so low grade it would yield only about one part per million in gold, and a bit more in copper. Mining it would require tremendous energy to move and process vast amounts of earth. It was thought to be essentially dead until the Trump EPA gave it a new lease on life. In a rare bit of good news from the Trump administration, EPA administrator Scott Pruitt appears to have recently backed away from his support for the proposal. If ever built, the tremendous scale of earth-moving, roadbuilding and other construction would guarantee severe damage to, if not the effective end of the Bristol Bay fishery, where 30 to 50 million salmon return to spawn every year.

In the context of the many other anti-conservation moves from the Trump administration, the stop work order on North Cascades grizzly bear reintroduction may seem almost minor. But it is a big deal for the Cascades, negating years of hard work, and likely setting back the time when we might again see grizzlies in the Cascades by years, or possibly decades. N3C and others who hope to see the return of the Cascades' top animal will just have to keep trying in years ahead, and restart efforts when the political climate turns more favorable.

Good news to the north

In British Columbia, the recent news for grizzly bears has been good. A new government was elected in in 2017 after

years of rule by the anti-conservation "Liberal" party. The new government is a coalition comprised mostly of the New Democratic Party (NDP) along with three members of the Green party, who together provide just enough votes to form a government under B.C.'s parliamentary system.

For many years public anger over the killing of grizzly bears in B.C. has grown. The revulsion was focused particularly against the "trophy hunt," where mostly foreign hunters would pay large fees to guide outfitters to be taken out to some suitable spot for killing a grizzly bear. Usually this meant cutting off the head of the bear as a revolting "trophy" for mounting, something straight out of the Dark Ages.

The new NDP/Green government declared an end to the trophy hunt very soon after taking office. But it was still legal to hunt and kill grizzly bears in general. Merely banning the trophy hunt was unenforceable and did not solve the problem. The "meat hunt" was almost as bad. Grizzly bears, while still fairly numerous in some parts of B.C., have been under attack for years from hunting, logging, mining, roadbuilding, overfishing and other threats.

B.C.'s Valhalla Wilderness Society (VWS) has been one of the lead groups working to protect grizzlies in the province. VWS pushed for years to establish grizzly refuges, and along with others successfully did this in some areas, notably the Khutzeymateen valley in northwestern B.C., and the very large Kitlope valley to the south of it.

In spite of these big steps forward, the grizzly bear slaughter went on in the rest of the province, which is bigger than Washington, Oregon and California combined. The grizzly population continued to decline. VWS and other groups such as Pacific Wild, as well as many native peoples, never stopped campaigning to end the grizzly hunt. The new government's action in ending the killing is probably the best news ever for grizzly bears in B.C. Bear viewing already generates more revenue than grizzly hunting ever did, and has the



potential to generate far more. A number of First Nations bands are now in the bear-watching business and have been among the most ardent and persistent advocates for ending the grizzly hunt.

While N3C mourns the end of efforts to bring back grizzlies to the Cascades, we also celebrate the long-sought end of the grizzly bear slaughter north of the border. We hope that the other threats can be addressed, and that their populations will grow over time. The more these magnificent animals can find a home in British Columbia, the more likely that they will eventually find their way back to the Cascades, despite the actions or inactions of politicians and agencies.

N3C recommends that anyone interested in grizzly bears read the material posted on the Valhalla Wilderness Society's website, including the "Reflections on the End of the Grizzly Bear Hunt" by Wayne McCrory, chairperson of VWS and someone who has devoted most of his life to protecting the bears of British Columbia.

Wayne McCrory, well known B.C. bear biologist and chairperson of Valhalla Wilderness Society, on the recent B.C. decision:

When I learned that the government had banned the grizzly bear hunt, I was too stunned for words. This battleground for the grizzly bears has been one of the longest and dirtiest political environmental campaigns I have ever witnessed in B.C., not the least due to pro-hunting, entrenched government biologists attempting to discredit or ignore any biologist who spoke out and documented that management of the hunt was not scientifically credible. To be honest, I thought I would never see the end of the grizzly bear hunt.

The B.C. government's decision to end trophy hunting is a momentous milestone. While I regret their failure to acknowledge that grizzly bears face serious risks to their long-term survival, nevertheless, at least they stepped out of the conventional pro-hunting mindset enough to recognize that the vast majority of the public wanted an end to it for both ethical and scientific reasons, and even to recognize the far superior economic return of grizzly bear viewing. I hope that will be just the beginning of the changes we need.

Members submit comments for Snowy Lakes

N3C members Harriett Cody & Harvey Sadis recently submitted the following comments to Kelly Baraibar of the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, which is asking for input from users of the Snowy Lakes area as it finalizes plans for improving the trail from the Pacific Crest Trail to the Lakes, improving campsites, protecting the environment, and making other necessary improvements to protect and area from over-use and degradation by hikers and other backcountry users. Their willingness to advocate for this area is a model for all N3C members. Their comments:

1. **Limited use & required permits.** The Snowy Lakes Basin should be *limited use during peak summer months, requiring permits for backpackers planning to camp there*. This area seems to be sort of the North Cascades "Enchantment Lakes", with high alpine lakes, fishing and swimming, amazing scenery, and access to many peaks for climbing in the vicinity. We urge the USFS to open the conversation for discussion about requiring permits for overnight camping use. This conversation could begin now, while the USFS proceeds to make the necessary trail improvements contemplated.

2. The Snowy Lakes Basin should **restrict dogs and be off-limits to dogs accompanying those who wish to camp overnight there**. We have witnessed, on many occasions, dog owners giving their dogs complete free off-leash reign of the entire basin, in and out of the lakes, racing all over, chasing birds, deer and other wildlife. AND pooping freely everywhere, with no owner clean-up! This fragile area should prohibit (a) dogs off leash entirely, (b) dogs overnight, and (c) signage should be clear and obvious that dogs are not allowed either off leash or overnight. This protection is basic in such a fragile area.

Furthermore, the fact that a number of the more vocal opponents to including this area in the North Cascades NP were arguing in favor of unrestricted dog access along this entire stretch of the PCT, and the Snowy Lakes (and other trails north and south of Harts Pass) in particular, indicates that there is much local contemplation of free-reign-off-leash usage of this entire area—and the Snowy Lakes in particular. There is virtually *no signage re-*

minding hikers of the requirements of dogs being on leash in the backcountry. Horses are managed and supervised, dogs should be no less.

3. **Necessity of latrines.** The USFS should provide one substantial latrine in the Upper Basin. This would be an ideal area for a solar composting toilet, like those the NP has in some of its most fragile areas. Because of the compact terrain above treeline, and because of the over-use of the area, the remains of human defecation and toilet paper are—or soon will be—out of hand. Again, this area is comparable not only to the Enchantment Lakes Basin, but also to the Robin Lakes Basin in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness—trashed by over-use and careless leftover piles of human poop and toilet paper. This issues needs to be addressed as part of your sustainability plan.

4. **Campsites should be designated and limited in number—and subject to use by permits only.** Because of the compact terrain, and fragile ecosystem, there should be campsite "pads" for tents, clearly numbered and designated and reserved for permit holders. Even if you are unprepared to impose permits *now*, at a minimum, designated campsite pads should be prepared and clearly marked. (We saw these throughout the NCNP backcountry in the NW portion of the basin, along the Copper Ridge Trail, Whatcom Pass, and other high above tree-line hiking and camping areas. Campsite pads to protect the fragile and short-season plans and tell campers where to pitch their tents.

5. **Necessity of limited use to accompany all improvements to the trail and basin area.** WITHOUT limiting use via permits for camping and stock camps, any and all improvements made by the USFS to the trail to the Snowy Lakes Basin will *only result in increased use and degradation of the entire basin. Both should go hand-in-hand.* As you well know, improving a trail, making it "easier," only opens it up more to hikers and horse groups, with increasing negative environmental impact of the area sought to be protected.

Corvid's eye

Inscrutable, obscure, abstruse, beclouded. These are terms that warm the corvid's heart, the more so when applied to mountains. Let the world revel in the overly known glories of Yellow Aster Butte, Cascade Pass, and Image Lake. These natural masterpieces well deserve their fame, their pilgrims and groupies, their social media saturation. All the better to concentrate the masses, thus leaving the lesser prominences and forests to carry on in comparative anonymity; reserved for probing sorts who derive no pleasure quite like encountering places where their friends and acquaintances ain't, and perhaps have never been. One irony of the North Cascades is that many such locales are notably closer to population centers than the celebrated scenic highlights.

Not too deep into the windy wilds of Whatcom, "out in the county," a cluster of medium-sized peaks and ridges with precipitous canyons separating them rises abruptly from the Nooksack River bottomlands. Although impressive in their ruggedness, recreationalists and sightseers making a beeline for Mount Baker and beyond into the heart of the Cascades scarcely notice these mountains (don't call 'em foothills). Since last century, they've been the domain of loggers, hunters, assorted corvids, and a nascent movement to restore a portion of the land to some hint of its former glory. And despite the long-running abuse from a conservationist's point of view, a tiny fraction of the old wilds stands to this day as a reminder of what used to be.

This montane subregion, roughly circular and amounting to thirty thousand acres (give or take), has its periphery crisply defined by the Middle Fork Nooksack to the south and southwest, followed by the North Fork to the north and northwest. By contrast, the eastern extent is equivocal, though may be practically defined by the ridge running generally south to north from Stewart Mountain to Lookout Mountain, thence down the Gallop Creek gulch to the North Fork. Aside from this chain of named summits directly beneath the menacing gaze of Baker's west face, where the high point of Groat Mountain gestures, only Slide Mountain is privileged to have a geographic name bestowed upon it across the rest of this ample acreage. Numerous Chuckanut sandstone peaks of four-to-five thousand feet elevation



remain cartographically nebulous, which we shall call good.

The chief streams of this high-relief terrain, Clearwater Creek and Racehorse Creek, both rivers in all but name, nearly bisect the whole. But brawling torrents are everywhere, reminding us of the larger chain of mountains of which this area is irrevocably part. Along with the aforementioned Gallop Creek, counterclockwise we may encounter Rocky, Cornell, Hedrick, Wildcat, Kenney, Canyon, Porter, and Falls creeks. Geographers may have been a bit less bashful with naming streams than peaks here, though a bevy of lesser cricks flow onward without the encumbrance of a moniker. Lakes, meanwhile, aren't abundant; though 45-acre Canyon Lake, believed to have been formed by an earthquake-triggered landslide in the 19th century, more than makes up for their scarcity elsewhere. Other small lakes may be found above 4,000 feet and are known hardly to anyone.

By this point, the reader may have noted some uncharacteristic circumlocution on the part of the corvid. Beating around the slash pile bush so to speak. How does one write about and properly revere the attributes of this massif without also providing a catchy, easily-recalled handle; coined by some renowned local naturalist who lived and studied at the base of these slopes for some 114 years? Facts are, there was no such naturalist and no lyrical name has been ascribed to these more-than-foothills, or at least none known to the ever-nosey corvid. And although there is deeply held reluctance to superimpose the labels of the English language upon natural features which have so far escaped such a fate, flagrant advocacy as seen here compels it. Henceforth, with poetic license

and until someone smarter comes up with something better, these may be known as the Delphic Mountains.

Delphic for their obscurity and resulting mystery. Delphic for their views from on high to the bolder Olympic Mountains, 70 miles southwest and county seat of the gods. The Committee on Geographic Names need not be bothered, for this title's purpose is merely heuristic: a tool for awareness of and affinity with a far northwestern corner of the North Cascades long unappreciated. Ah, but let us not mistake this for some new discovery. The Washington Department of Natural Resources and private lumbermen (currently Sierra Pacific Industries) have been familiar with the landscape hereabouts for some time. It shows, too, with aggressive, Canadian-style logging nearly everywhere one looks, with no slope or headwall too steep to pluck out a bit more doghair for toothpicks. In the eastern reaches of the Delphics, though, the U.S. Forest Service makes an appearance, while Whatcom County and the Whatcom Land Trust are players in other important spots.

The big valleys, Clearwater and Racehorse, were until recently an unbroken sea of second-growth forest. Now, however, the good times appear to be coming to an end, illustrating once again that unmolested, rewilding second-growth is well on its way to becoming the rarest forest class in the Pacific Northwest. Even old growth will soon be more abundant, if it isn't already. DNR's Northwest Region, which no one would ever accuse of extractive reticence, has inflicted several recent pockmarks in the lower and middle reaches of Racehorse Creek, as well as on the slope rising steeply west of Clearwater Creek. (The slope east of the Clearwater has, for now, no active

road and remains attractively green.) Meanwhile, poor Porter Creek valley on the southwest flank of the Delphics is seeing its regenerated forest vacuumed up by Sierra Pacific as we speak.

Still, the objective here isn't merely to lament the 20th century despoliation of the Delphics by way of an orgy of roading and logging, nor the renewed 21st century assault on part of what's been able to grow back. Better to take stock of what survived the initial onslaught, the areas of subsequent recovery, and latter-century potential. Where the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest overlaps the eastern Delphics, a significant block of inventoried roadless area remains: candidate acreage for expansion of the Mount Baker Wilderness Area. Contiguous with this same block is DNR's largest holding of primary forest in the area, draped across the upper basin of West Cornell Creek and with a finger continuing into the headwaters of Racehorse Creek.

A few more isolated stands of old forest haunt the ridgelines nearby, but the real prize for both preservation and rewilding is also the most (relatively) famous spot in the entirety of the Delphics. The 2,260-acre Canyon Lake Community Forest is the best of all worlds and a model for generations to come. Essentially the entirety of the broad upper basin of Canyon Creek is included in this nature reserve, conceived

by the Whatcom Land Trust (WLT) and now managed cooperatively by Whatcom County Parks and Western Washington University. While the reserve allows formerly logged areas to regenerate along their natural trajectories, the slopes above Canyon Lake also sport several hundred acres of ancient Alaska yellow cedar forest, reputed to be a thousand years old. The ever-industrious WLT has also been busy down on the Nooksack, at the foot of the Delphics, with holdings including the big spruce floodplain at Wildcat Reach (a favorite of the corvid), the mouth of Racehorse Creek, and the Kenney Creek Eagle Roost, among others.

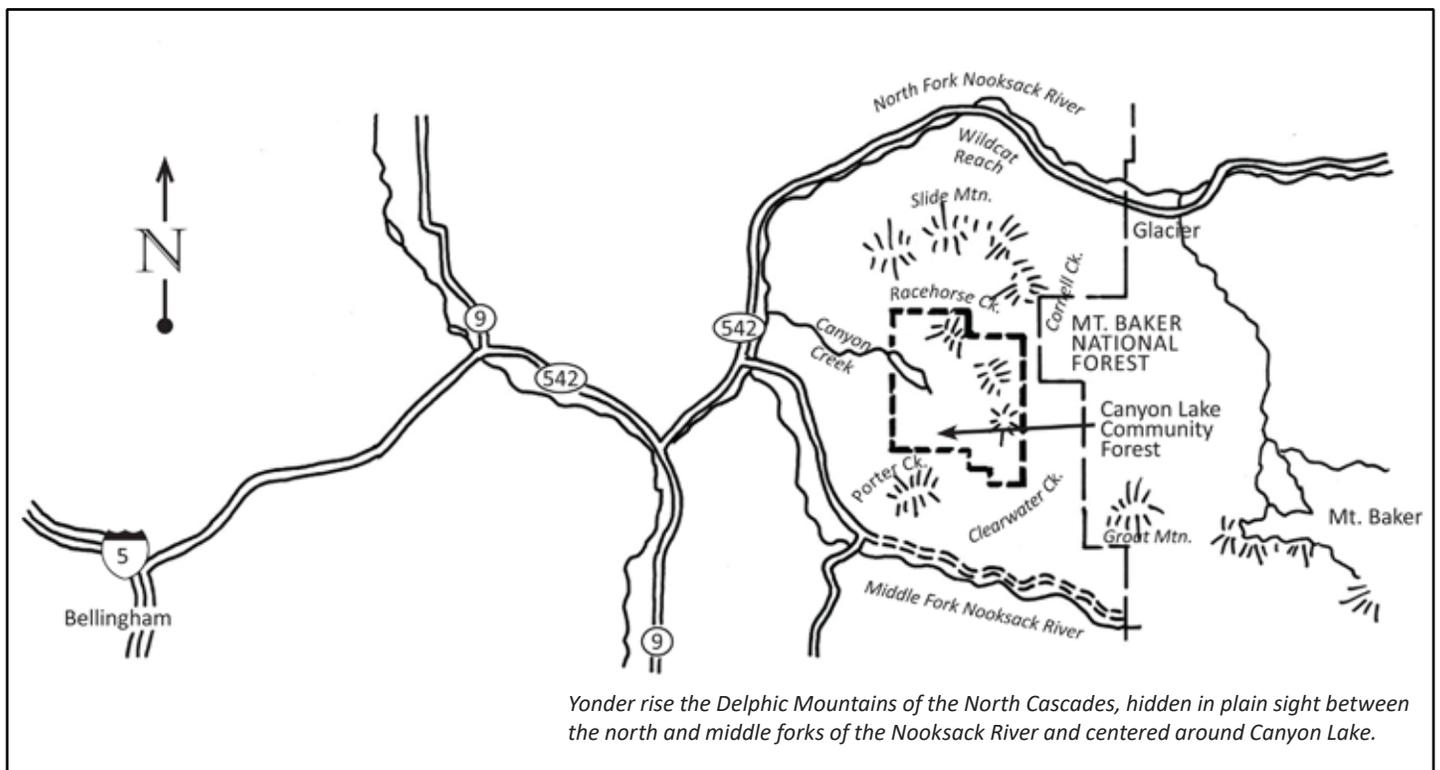
One might submit that the Delphics will serve as a barometer for the quality of the growing human community's interaction with its land and waters. This pinky toe of the North Cascades, covered in primeval forest since the final retreat of the Last Glacial Maximum and denuded only in contemporary times, has become a subject of somewhat divergent philosophies. There will be more logging, this much is certain, though hopefully with an improved conservation ethic on state land; particularly if DNR's Northwest Region can be persuaded that the 1980s are well and truly over. Opportunities for designation of natural resource conservation areas and natural area preserves may present themselves, preferably coupled with a lighter, more landscape-conscious approach when

the revenue-generating chainsaws do come out.

For the national forest land, continued benign neglect is agreeable enough if no new Wilderness designation is in the offing, though it must be acknowledged that the Mount Baker Ranger District is currently overseeing two new incursions into inventoried roadless areas elsewhere (at Excelsior and along the northwest flank of the Twin Sisters) on behalf of mining interests. Official roadless areas are useful for preventing logging, but not so much for staving off quarries and mineral speculation. As for stricken private holdings like Porter Creek, targeted conservation purchases will be the happiest of outcomes where they make sense. The battered, reclusive, yet noble soul of the Delphic Mountains is braced for what comes next, all while hoping for the best.

N3C supports Whatcom Land Trust's work to protect lands outside National Forest near Mt. Baker Wilderness. To read more about the area described above, see

<http://www.whatcomlandtrust.org/land-trust/canyon-lake-old-growth-community-forest/>



Celebrating 50 Years of North Cascades National Park

We're kicking off our anniversary observance of the Park—which amounts to the 50th anniversary of NCCC's greatest organizational accomplishment—with Harvey Manning's comments from the December 1968-January 1969 issue of The Wild Cascades, immediately after the Park had been created.

So we've got our Park: What do we do with it?

Gaze back fondly now, still semi-delirious, on a conservation administration ranking right up there with those of the two Roosevelts.

Almost it was much greater. Secretary Udall proposed a mind-expanding lame-duck use of the Antiquities Act, creating by presidential proclamation National Monuments in Alaska and elsewhere. But our friend from the 19th century, Congressman Aspinall, got wind of the plan and succeeded once again in sabotaging the efforts of the men with the grand vision. What President Johnson did in his last days was good, but far from the Theodore Roosevelt-style burst of glory that Udall sought.

To put an episode of North Cascades history in the public record, the N3C Directors heard last fall that something splendid might happen and petitioned for inclusion of parts of the North Cascades in the rumored "Christmas present to the nation." For various reasons (mainly, perhaps, fears of massive Forest Service reprisals) we didn't make the Udall list. But only a tiny fraction of the proposals were accepted anyway, thanks to a little old man from Colorado and a president who flunked his final exams. For us there will be no easy way. It is our fate to fight for every inch of ground.

And this we will, this we will indeed. Phase One concluded with the 1968 North Cascades Act. Now Phase Two begins. We'll soon announce in these pages the next objectives north of Stevens Pass, seeking proper protection for lands in the Mount

Baker, Glacier Peak, Lake Chelan, North Cross-State Highway, and other sectors omitted from the 1968 Act. We'll also set forth proposed boundaries for an Alpine Lakes Wilderness and Recreation Area and get down to cases on the Cougar Lakes Wilderness Area and boundary revisions of Mt. Rainier National Park. Nor have we forgotten Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Adams, and the Goat Rocks.

Meanwhile, how about the far north, where the 1968 Act introduced a new federal agency and inaugurated (in theory) a new era of inter-agency cooperation? What's going on up there?

Plenty. The Forest Service is discovering diseased trees that must be surgically excised in the name of sanitation, Seattle City Light is bragging on the one hand that it created the new Park and on the other is considering drowning the best parts of the brand new Ross Lake National Recreation Area, Kennecott and other dirty miners are lurking (does a helicopter "lurk"?), and the highwaymen are cranking up bulldozers, and golly knows, golly knows.

The Park Service is busy too — doing what? How much different will the North Cascades be in 1969? Will there be new improvements, new restrictions? And what plans are underway for 1970 and years beyond?

My remarks, here, are made without consulting Park Service officials. Later we'll ask them to outline in WC the general nature of management to come, but

just now they're so busy moving in and looking around we'll give them a breathing spell. (Ultimately the Irate Birdwatcher may stage a shivaree, but the Park Service deserves to be spared that for at least a few months. After all, the Forest Service was allowed a half-century of peace.)

We know from the terms of the 1968 Act that within 2 years the Park Service people must recommend portions of the Park and Recreation Areas for placement in the National Wilderness Preservation System. They have little more than one summer — next summer — to rough out a proposal. That alone will keep them (and us) busy.

The transportation system — by foot, horse, automobile, tramway, boat, etc. — must be studied. The Roads and Trails Committee of N3C has delivered a preliminary report to the Park Service and is conducting further investigations, involving more people and more organizations; further reports will be prepared — and described in WC to obtain membership comments. In brief, we're proposing such things as trail-less areas, "super-wild" wilderness cores; limitation of automobile travel on certain roads, service to be provided by a Park Transit System; concentration of trails on the peripheries of wildlands; a routing of the Cascade Crest Trail from Rainy Pass south to Suiattle Pass that is not only scenically superior to the

*It is our fate to
fight for every
inch of ground.*

route urged by the Forest Service, but avoids bringing heavy traffic into wilderness cores which would be irreparably damaged by such use.

Will there be Visitor Centers in Summer 1969? Park naturalists offering lectures and guided walks? Any new tourist facilities? We guess that time is too short, funds and staff too limited, and too much long-range planning required. We suspect Summer 1969 will be little different from summer 1968. Except in a few places where guns have been common they now will be absent; a few trails the Forest Service opened to machines will now (thanks! Thanks!) be blessedly quiet again.

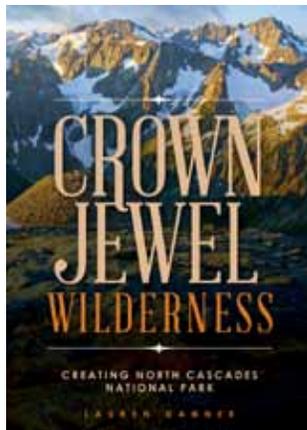
These are personal predictions and may be contradicted by events. But I believe we'll scarcely notice the Park Service presence in the North Cascades for a while. Which doesn't mean they won't be there, and busy.

And we'll be there, too, also busy. Right?

H. M.

Recent books highlight North Cascades, conservation movement

By Phil Fenner



Crown Jewel Wilderness

Lauren Danner

Washington State University Press, 2017

Congratulations to the author for adding to the composite history of the North Cascades National Park (aka NOCA). It's certainly very useful for the public to be reminded of how NOCA came to be in light of its 50th Anniversary this year. Ms. Danner offers a very thorough listing of key documents—a valuable bibliography for present and future scholars. It's a must read for NOCA employees and any serious user of NOCA. We might take issue with her frequently repeated claim in her publicity that no one had written a book about it before hers. One can find a pretty thorough discussion of it in Harvey Manning's *Wilderness Alps: Conservation and Conflict in Washington's North Cascades**, which we helped edit and published in 2007, and which will probably continue to be our primary reference book on the subject. But Danner achieves a certain academic-style detachment and thoroughness that are certainly enviable. We recommend it for all our members, who will just need to add a dash or two of Harvey's passion to motivate. And as we know, there's plenty left to be done!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23



Many events mark the Park's anniversary

▶ The National Park Conservation Association and N3C are partnering to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of North Cascades National Park and the Wild and Scenic River Act from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. on October 2 at the Seattle Program Center.

▶ Find a calendar of 50th anniversary events planned by the North Cascades Institute (including a book signing by author Lauren Danner, (above) at <https://ncascades.org/>

[discover/north-cascades-national-park/50th-anniversary](https://ncascades.org/discover/north-cascades-national-park/50th-anniversary)

▶ North Cascades National Park will celebrate in August (when there are visitors aplenty, the park is fully staffed, and the weather is better) rather than October. Watch for details in the next issue of *The Wild Cascades* or on our Facebook page.

In memoriam

Ted Beck

Theodore (Ted) Richard Beck died on May 28, 2017 at the age of 91. Born in Seattle, he earned BS, MS and PhD degrees in Chemical Engineering at the University of Washington, where he made life-long friends with whom he explored the mountains and trails of the Northwest. He was a 50-year member of the Seattle Mountaineers and a board member of the North Cascades Conservation Council who was a stalwart during N3C's campaigns for the North Cascades National Park and against the High Ross Dam.



Ted Beck (left) was part of "The Elderly Birdwatchers Hiking and Gripping Society," whose other members included Harvey Manning, Pat Goldsworthy, and Dick Brooks, shown here on one of their annual North Cascades hiking trips.

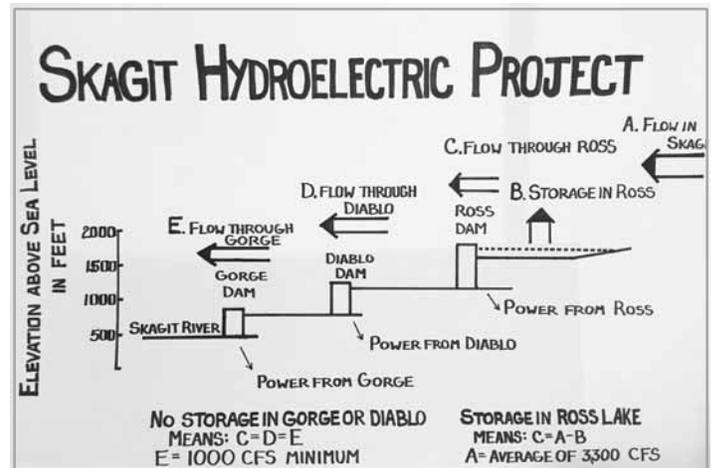
Ted Beck a personal remembrance and tribute

by Dave Fluharty

With the passing of Ted Beck last May, N3C lost another of the giants who led us through some tough fights.

In Ted's case I associate him most with the High Ross campaign, where his analytical and engineering skills contributed to winning the war after losing the battle that went all the way to the US Supreme Court (I am not making this up—see more detail in Harvey Manning's Wilderness Alps). Ted was one of the original foursome, threesome, fivesome gangs of N3C Board Members (including Patrick Goldsworthy, Dick Brooks, Harvey Manning and others) who did annual treks into the heart of the North Cascades to marvel at their jumbled beauty and to plot how to protect the area. High Ross dam was a tangible threat to the upper Skagit Valley with the proposal to raise the dam by 125 feet, flooding a lot of Canadian territory. Ted and others conspired to demonstrate to the Seattle City Council that there was a cheaper, less environmentally damaging and much more Canada-friendly option than raising High Ross dam. The solution consisted of long-term, 100-year contracts to purchase an equivalent amount of power from BC

Ted Beck created graphics that helped win the Ross Dam battle.



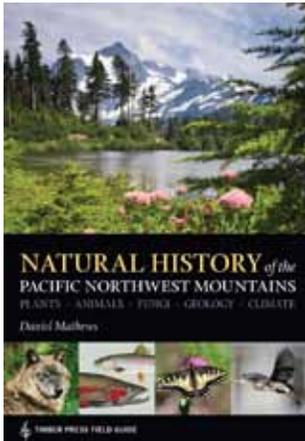
Hydro. Seattle City Council eventually was convinced by N3C and others that power purchase was the way to go and it withdrew support from Seattle City Light Plans.

Ted left the N3C Board to attend to family and business concerns but stayed a member. I ran into him often. I remember

him fondly as tall, handsome gentleman with a distinctive shock of white hair. He was always eager to hear about N3C's current efforts to protect the North Cascades and encouraging us to do more. Thank you Ted!

Recent books

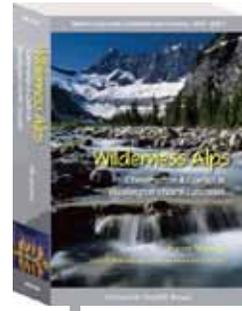
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21



Natural History of the Pacific Northwest Mountains

Daniel Mathews
Timber Press, 2017

What an exceptional and fun nature guidebook this is! I was an avid reader of its predecessor Olympic-Cascade Natural History but this new expanded edition is even more useful and enjoyable. Mathews is that rare combination of scientist and storyteller who can portray the facts about our region and its inhabitants as lucid depictions with anecdotes that entertain and amaze as well as inform. You can open this book anywhere and start reading - no need to be linear - and you'll be delighted at what you discover about our "wild nearby." It's a bit bulky and heavy to truly use as a "trailside reference," but this new edition is also available as an e-book if you carry any e-reader with you outdoors.



*Remember, you can always buy a copy of *Wilderness Alps* at our online bookstore, <http://www.northcascades.org/wordpress/wild-alps-book>



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Wildflowers (lupin and heather) and waterfalls below the Southern Pickets in Terror Basin, North Cascades National Park. Inspiration Peak (center) and McMillan Spires (right) are visible in the background.—ETHAN WELTY PHOTO