
THE WILD CASCADES

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

SUMMER/FALL 2006



THE WILD CASCADES ■ Summer/Fall 2006

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COVER: *Mt. Shuksan emerging from a summer snowstorm,
viewed from Lake Ann.* — TOM HAMMOND

The Wild Cascades

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council

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

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

MEMBERSHIP

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

■

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

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Founded in 1957
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The President's Report

Summer/Fall 2006

Recent media reports have described the unhappy news that our state parks officials in Washington State have, like so many other government agencies, decided to sell advertising. Obviously, this advertising would be a complete change from our usual concept of a natural appearing outdoors. The advertising would be in a form to be determined but could quite possibly be signs, name changes, corporate sponsorships, or whatever you can imagine.

As you might expect, this information infuriated me to the point that I wrote an article for publication in this magazine deploring the practice and also relaying my infinite wisdom on how people could protest. I said that we must write to the offending officials to cease and desist. Our folks should also back this up with reasoned letters to their elected representatives extolling the virtues of fully funding agencies charged with operating and maintaining parks and other public lands. Guess what! Lots of citizens had the same thought and bombarded the State Parks and Recreation Committee with their own opinions on the subject. The idea of using the parks to raise money through advertising has been rescinded. That, of course, is great. And my article was out-of-date before it reached the printer.

The second step of my original proposal is still valid however. Please show similar vigor in writing to our state-elected politicians. Demand that they fully fund those agencies that are struggling to keep our natural areas natural. The problem occurs at the national level, as well as at the state, county, and city levels. Hardly a day goes by that we don't hear about a scheme to sell public land, rent or lease it, manage it with private companies, close it down, charge higher fees, or somehow develop it for money. This outrageous lack of foresight and misplacing of financial priorities simply must stop. Please follow through with a letter to at least one of your representatives, demanding that they fully fund agencies responsible for stewardship of our public land.

Marc Bardsley

A Fire District (with Phone Service) for Stehekin?

CAROLYN MCCONNELL

Thanks to a week of cool, rainy weather, the fire that threatened Stehekin for several months has mostly smoldered out. As usual, it was Mother Nature, rather than human firefighting, that took care of the fire.

Despite escalating evacuation notices in August and September, Stehekinites mostly stayed put. Visitors were evacuated, tourists prohibited from arriving, and, because near the head of Lake Chelan, the fire had gotten very close to the road and boat dock, residents were barred from coming to the dock to pick up mail and supplies. Instead, Chelan County sheriff's officers made deliveries upvalley. In spite of the service, most residents weren't thrilled to have so much government suddenly in Stehekin.

It may have been a sign of things to come. The pressure is on for Stehekin to form a fire district, which, except for a school district, would be Stehekin's first foray into having a government. The pressure is coming from the governor, who has warned the community that she can't release funds for firefighting in an emergency unless the community forms a fire district. At the meeting in Stehekin the governor attended, North Cascades National Park Superintendent Bill Paleck also put the pressure on. In the course of his speech he made the following jaw-dropping comment.

"When I arrived here 14 years ago, the question facing this community was whether the Park Service was going to allow the community to continue to exist. Now, I'm pleased to say, that is no longer an issue. Now the question is whether this community is going to step up and be a community."

It was a bizarre remark. To repeat, yet again: the Park never kicked anyone off their land in Stehekin, never in any way did anything that threatened the viability of the Stehekin community, and indeed has instead presided over a major development boom and a doubling or tripling of the valley's population.

To the extent a fire district encourages private property owners to take steps to reduce fire hazards on their own property, I suppose it's to the good. But it raises the specter of more bureaucracy and higher taxes for Stehekin. Still, I'm not sure the valley will be united around resisting it. The unified resistance to the proposed phone system seems to have weakened in the face of money to be made from the project and I fear the same motivation may help the fire district along. Some in Stehekin may support the fire district because they see it as a form of localism to be used in their struggles against the land protections the Park is supposed to ensure.

Incidentally, the fire district is likely to spur the phone system, as 911 service is a

component of a fire district. The latest on the phone scheme by Weavtel is that Weavtel has sued the Park Service. As readers may recall, the Park originally denied Weavtel a permit to run its lines on public land, then reversed itself (reportedly after lawyers warned the decision couldn't hold up), granting the permit conditional upon Weavtel getting easements from private landowners whose land the lines would cross. Then Weavtel shifted its proposal to a mostly wireless system. In response the Park has said the new system will require an entire new environmental assessment. Word from the Park Service is that they are likely to prevail and force Weavtel to pay for a new assessment.

Chelan County has so far held fast against Weavtel's request for permits and changes in flood plain maps for its proposed headquarters building. But Weavtel was engaged in legal wrangling with the county as well and may by the time you read this have gained its permits.

Meanwhile, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is examining Weavtel's books and considering whether to open the spigot of funds the moment Weavtel gets a dial tone.

And so the march of progress in Stehekin continues.

So What's Good about Global Warming?

A July AP report from Bullfrog, Utah, said, "Lake Powell is barely half-full and taking a quarter less runoff than expected this year — a sign the Colorado River basin remains in the grip of a multiyear drought. For some, Lake Powell is proving its value, banking scarce water for dry years. Others say the reservoir may never refill and should be drained to reveal the glory of Glen Canyon."

Richard Ingrebresen, founder of Glen Canyon Institute, believes Lake Powell eventually will drain itself, helped by global warming. It's 430 feet at its deepest right now, behind Glen Canyon dam, where it could take 520 feet of water. Says he, "There's just not enough water to refill it. You can only store surplus water, and there's no surplus to store."

Excuse an old mind from digging around in its memory basement, but way back, half a century ago, weren't Dave Brower & Company talking about this? Publishing Exhibit Formats?

The Colorado River basin is a source of water for 25,000,000 people and irrigation for millions of acres from Colorado to California. Too many zeroes there. The White House is boggled.

The "reclamation" breed of engineers who done the deed to Glen Canyon bragged up the recreation for stinkpots. The Hite Marina was left high and dry and shut down in 2003. The boat launch at Bullfrog resembles a tilted airport runway, a concrete slab more than a quarter-mile long. It was extended in 2003 and 2004, will go out of business when the water drops another 29 feet.

The Glen Canyon National Recreation Area is managed by the National Park Service. One seems to recall the primeval Glen Canyon was sought by the Sierra Club or somebody for a National Park. Could be wrong about that — the past is murky. Not so the future. It's dusty, though.

— H.M.

PALECK

Superintendent
William "Bill" Paleck
will retire as head
of North Cascades
National Park in
January.

There will be an
indepth article in
The Wild Cascades.



OPPORTUNITY ON THE WHITECHUCK

An NCCC Proposal

RICK MCGUIRE

No place is more quintessentially North Cascades than the Whitechuck River valley. Flowing from the southern and western sides of Glacier Peak, the milky waters of the aptly named Whitechuck descend through one of the most scenic valleys in a range full of scenic valleys. Not only scenic, but wild. Since October 2003, the Whitechuck valley has been a lot wilder than it has been for the last 80 years. A massive flood obliterated the road in two places, removing it completely, almost as if it were never there, and also burying Kennedy Hot Springs under tons of debris. The North Cascades Conservation Council would like to keep the Whitechuck wild. NCCC is proposing that the Whitechuck road not be rebuilt, but instead be converted to a multi-use trail, re-wilding the entire Whitechuck valley, and concluding a campaign that started over 80 years ago.

The Whitechuck watershed starts at the summit of Glacier Peak, 10,541 feet. Glacier Peak has been called the last wild Cascade volcano. Other volcanoes may be taller, or bigger, but they have all been developed to some

degree. Rainier, Adams and Baker all have multiple roads to timberline. Rainier overlooks and dominates a vast stretch of terrain but few would call it wild. Adams and Baker have suffered logging on multiple flanks, and Baker has a ski area. Not so Glacier Peak. Its pleasing white symmetry is much the way it was when Europeans first arrived here. The closest road to it is the currently undriveable Whitechuck road, which ends about seven miles from the summit of Glacier. Without the Whitechuck road, the wild heart of the North Cascades has gotten a lot wilder, and NCCC believes that is a very good thing.

From Glacier Peak, the Whitechuck descends into a valley averaging two or three miles wide, flowing for the most part a bit north of west about 17 miles to a confluence with the Sauk. The upper eight miles above the road end are wild, and much of the middle and lower valley is also wild. Beginning in 1927, about five miles of the lower valley was railroad logged, but only the valley bottom and lower slopes. It was never replanted, and has grown back naturally into a respectable

second-growth forest, on its way to becoming old growth. A road was pushed up the lower valley after World War II. Starting about 1960, big time truck logging hit the valley, and the road was punched in to its current end. Spur roads were constructed, mostly on the north side of the river, to logging shows which climbed the flanks of Meadow Mountain. A ridiculous road was built over Rat Trap Pass into the Suiattle drainage, a precarious route requiring constant maintenance (and currently undriveable due to a bridge washout on the Suiattle side). The Whitechuck suffered as much as any valley from the logging onslaught of the '60s, '70s and '80s, and were it not for NCCC much of the remaining old growth would have been lost to helicopter sales which were planned for the slopes and benches south of the river around 1990.

The logging of the Whitechuck was done over the protests of those who had a different vision for the valley. In 1927, when the railroad logging, which had been chewing its way up the Sauk, reached the Whitechuck, the Everett Mountaineers put forth a spirited effort to save the valley — led by Stuart Hertz and John Lehman. It was perhaps the first

ABOVE: Lower Whitechuck washout. — RICK MCGUIRE

Continued on page 6

Opportunity on the Whitechuck: An NCCC Proposal

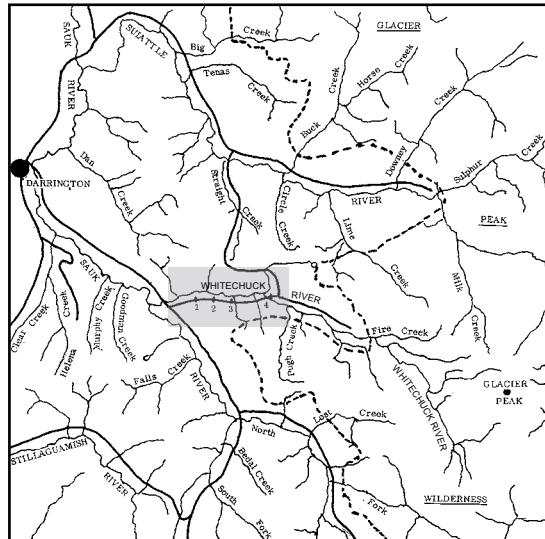
Continued from page 5

organized campaign to protect a significant piece of the Cascades, but the timber interests were firmly in control of the Forest Service and the logging went ahead. NCCC protested the 1960's road extensions and timber sales, but it wasn't until 1990 that conservationists finally managed to stop the timber beasts. Had the logging gone on there would likely now be little old growth left outside of the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

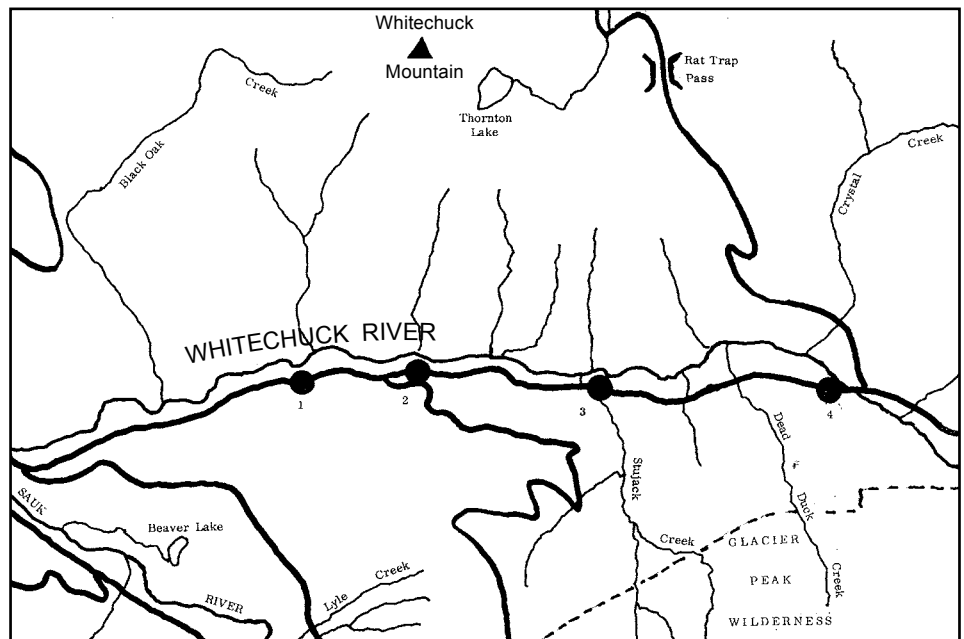
But trees grow quickly in the Cascades, and the land usually recovers if logged only once. The lower valley, which was one big clearcut in 1930, is now a carpet of green with naturally regenerated mature second growth forest almost 80 years old. Even the middle valley is now recovering from the truck logging of later decades. It is quickly losing the pockmarked look it had 20 years ago. If left alone it will be nicely forested again within a few decades.

The torrential rains which came after the long hot summer of 2003 took out a number of roads, trails and bridges in the North Cascades, including the Suiattle and Mountain Loop roads. But none were so thoroughly erased as the Whitechuck. At about 1.9 and 2.4 miles above the beginning of the road, the Whitechuck River reclaimed its own, and sent the roadbed downstream, taking it out entirely. The washouts are about 300 and 700 feet long. The road is not damaged, it is gone. Rebuilding it would require moving the entire river back to where it once was, and would be a massive undertaking. All the other roads which were taken out by the October 2003 flood are being put back together, and it is only a matter of time until the next flood takes them out again. With the Whitechuck, NCCC says "enough now." Leave it be. Let's not try to put this Humpty Dumpty back together again. In a place like the Whitechuck, any road is a temporary road. Rather than patching it back together at enormous cost, both financially and environmentally, let's step back and take a look at what is best for the valley. Let's make it wild again, while enhancing its recreational values.

NCCC proposes that the remaining Whitechuck road above the washouts be converted into a multi-use non-motorized trail, along the lines of what is being done in the Middle Fork Snoqualmie valley above Dingford Creek — a valley bottom trail, snow-free much of the year, for use by hikers, horses and mountain



Maps by Patrick Goldsworthy



Whitechuck Road Washouts

- 1 Road 23, Milepost 1.9 – T31N, R11E, Section 18. Damage: Floodwaters removed approximately 200 feet and undermined an additional 75 feet of Road 23 along the Whitechuck River.
- 2 Road 23, Milepost 2.4 – T31N, R11E, Section 17. Damage: Floodwaters removed approximately 700 feet of road along the river. River occupies previous road prism.
- 3 Road 23, Milepost 3.5 – T31N, R11E, Section 16. Damage: Floodwaters from a side stream damaged approximately 50 feet of road due to a plugged culvert.
- 4 Road 23, Milepost 5.7 – T31N, R11E, Section 14. Damage: Floodwaters removed approximately 66 feet of riprap and embankment under south end of the bridge over the Whitechuck River.

bikes. What until recently has been just another road could be made into an attractive recreational asset. Moreover, the Whitechuck valley could be returned to a near-wild state, finishing the job which was started 80 years ago. Better late than never.

NCCC proposes:

- construction of a trailhead at an appropriate site at the bottom of the valley below the washouts.
- construction of bypass trails around the washouts on the slopes above, at grades and widths suitable for both hikers and bikes (horses?).
- reconstruction of the “Whitechuck Bench” trail along the lower north side of the river, to provide a loop hike opportunity in the lower valley
- proper decommissioning and conversion to trail of the road above the washouts, with removal of culverts, and grading of the road surface to render it suitable for bikes. Since the bridge across the Suiattle will likely be repaired, equipment to do the decommissioning could be brought in over Rat Trap Pass, and could go back out that way, decommissioning the road as they go.
- establishment of suitable camping areas along the decommissioned road.
- establishment of a bike storage area at the end of the decommissioned road, with the trail beyond open to hikers and horses only.

NCCC believes this is the best solution for the Whitechuck valley; re-wilding a place which never should have been logged, while making the best use of the infrastructure left over from the logging era. We invite others to join us in making it a reality.



TOP: Upper Whitechuck washout.

MIDDLE: Obviously, this has happened before...

BOTTOM: Whitechuck Bench trail used to be here.

—RICK MCGUIRE

Wilderness in Washington: 1964/1987

HARVEY MANNING

The North Cascades Conservation Council spends most of its necessarily limited energy on federal lands of the North Cascades. (For the record, let it be noted that when the NCCC was founded in 1957, it defined "North" as all the Cascades north of the Columbia River, placing the "South" Cascades entirely in California, the portion of the range between the two being the "Oregon" Cascades.)

There is a plenty to keep us busy on federal lands. However, as the accompanying article testifies, opportunities exist on state lands, including those managed by the Department of Natural Resources.

Members of the NCCC would do well to obtain several DNR publications for musing:

The map, Major Public Lands in Washington State (2006 edition). Includes the 5,000,000 acres in DNR stewardship. For a copy, see DNR web page at www.dnr.wa.gov

Shows 143 recreation sites, with more than 1000 miles of "trail," if motorcycle roads are included.

Fact Sheet No. 04-174, March 22, 2004, Washington's Natural Area Preserves. Contact Natural Areas Program, 360-902-1600. www.dnr.wa.gov/nap/publication/nap_fact.html

Descriptions and sample photos of 49 preserves, 30,900 acres, throughout the state.

Fact Sheet No. 04-175, March 22, 2004, Washington's Natural Resources Conservation Areas. Contact Natural Areas Program, 160-902-1600. www.dnr.wa.gov/nap/publications/area-fact.html

Map, descriptions, sample photos of the 30 sites, 85,000 acres, as of 2006.

Puget Sound birdwatchers and tree-huggers were astounded when our man Brock Evans reported discovering that far away from Blue land, in the deep Red Okanogan, he had discovered members of the Sierra Club. How could these sons of the pioneers, brought up to believe that the Constitution and the Bible guarantee that "them as can figure how to make a buck from the land owns it," have heard the Glad Tidings preached on the mount by Zahniser and Brower? My sense of the matter is that winds blew from the Exhibit Formats 'round the planet, to dark jungles and white wastes and even the home where the buffalo roamed until they were replaced by cows and sheep. However it happened, these anomalies got hold of Brock's phone number and gave him a holler.

They had a gripe. In being partly transformed into the proposed Pasayten Wilderness, the North Cascades Primitive Area had been stripped of its glorious farthest east. Brock went for a look-see. He then went to the U.S. Forest Service supervisor of the area — a person of whom many of us say, "had he been calling the shots there never would have been a North Cascades National Park." The happy result was that Horseshoe Basin was rescued from the multiple-use waste basket.

Even so, the Pasayten Wilderness failed to secure the whole of that glorious east. The very easternmost, where the North Cascades abruptly terminate in the awesome scarp of Chopaka Mountain, is not federal, is managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Some of us went over there to go walking with that little band of anomalous Sierra Clubbers. A vision was generated of a state sibling of the National Wilderness System. Starting with Chopaka.

The vision was doomed, of course. Ol' Bert Cole, that merry gypo soul, occupied the throne

of the DNR. The eve of the High Country Hunt, the Big Money oligarchy that had had Horseshoe Basin taken away from them still owned Chopaka. They would feed up Bert on ribs and bourbon and put him to bed. Come dawn they would pry his eyelids open, help him from the cabin to the fat buck tethered outside the door, load and aim a rifle and help the gypo from Forks pull the trigger.

Our Washington State Wilderness System died a-borning. With what joy, then, did I learn that Cole having been defenestrated by Brian Boyle, the vision had risen again. In rapture I called Bob Rose, who had been maestro of the DNR creation of Tiger Mountain State Forest. Yes, there had been splendid happenings in 1988-1989. But as Jane Ace used to say, "you have to take the bitter with the better." Chopaka hadn't made the final cut. It would (it will) bye and bye. Meanwhile...

The Miracle of 1987

I urge all you of the NCCC to hie thee to a library and look up the Summer 1988 issue of TOTEM, publication of the DNR. Headlining the story of the 1987 establishment of the Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCA) is "MIRACLE LEGISLATION." The measure "spent more time on the endangered list than many of the plants and animal species the money will help protect."

A time when Brian Boyle called me for lunch, I asked, "Are you going to bring your brains?" He replied, "Oh yes, Bob will be there." I'd known Bob from other doings. He led in the creation of the City of Anacortes Community Forest Lands, where public ownerships of Mount Erie and environs have been placed in the nearest parallel I know to the Issaquah Alps, and he devised a new DNR policy for the San Juan Islands. He presently is executive director of Skagitonians Preserve Farmlands (SPP), the man to see if you wish to tiptoe through the tulips. Most

extensively we worked together in the planning of Tiger Mountain State Forest, me with comrades of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club, he as the DNR man in charge. It was a measure of Brian's excellence as head of the DNR that he put the Rose Brains to such good use.

So long as there is a sufficient supply of Boyles and Roses to outweigh the Bushes and Roves, American democracy will survive. Rather than pray to the asteroid to get a move on, I prefer to celebrate such events as that of May 18, 1987, when Governor Booth Gardner signed SSB 5911.

In a letter of July 5, 2006, Bob tells me the beginning of the miracle came while he was "coordinator, that is, gadabout, for the putting together of the Transition Lands Policy being developed." At a picnic table behind the Public Lands Building, John Chambers, Brian's executive assistant, assembled a group to think about gaps in DNR policy and how to fill them — Craig Partridge, Glen Yeary, and Bob.

John had engaged Joel Kuperbeg, founder of the regional office of Trust for Public Land, to help with Cypress Island, where the DNR had a Natural Area Preserve (NAP) that included Eagle Cliff, whose olivine-derived soils sustained a collection of plants of particular research interest to Professor Art Kruckeberg of the UW. John was noodling some sort of new designation not as strict as the NAPs that are managed as museum/scientific benchmarks, something akin to preserves of the Nature Conservancy. DNR needed a designation to secure a larger portion of the island. He also sought a designation that would allow some recreational use but would stipulate less intensive development than was typical of state parks.

Bob was assigned to look about the nation for ways and means to address ecosystems, including some level of recreation, where recreation is not intended to be the primary purpose. Connecti-

cut to Ohio, Tennessee to Florida, Bob found nothing suiting Washington needs. A new class of lands had to be invented: “natural resource conservation area.”

Mount Si–Cypress–Woodard Bay

Mount Si was unique. Uproar over a quarry had caused the legislature to create a sort of state park. State Parks had done nothing, and legally couldn't, because much of the property was in trust (managed by the DNR) for the “common school lands.” The lands could not be touched for non-economic purposes until some way was found to compensate the trust.

Cypress Island was a much bigger problem. To do what was wanted, Raymond Handson's 2400 acres, of the island's 5500, had to be somehow acquired.

The fall of 1986 the conference table in Brian's office was ringed around by Art Stearns, John Chambers, Craig Partridge, Cleve Pinnix, Pat McElroy, Pat Harper, and Bob. Bob submitted his draft of proposed legislation. Approval was swift, only minor corrective comment. The phrasing was canny. No angels singing, as in Zahniser's National Wilderness Act of 1964. Bob refrained from poetry, taking care not to awake the lip-movers who were snoring off their whiskey. The miracle faced a rough enough road without a chorus of the rebel yell.

The need was seen for “area balance.” As if by magic, Cleve, a deputy of Brian's and nominally Bob's boss, had been phoned by a Weyerhaeuser mucky muck. The company was shutting down its Chehalis railroad, which dumped logs in Woodard Bay for rafting to the mill. Its property included waterfront that could be lined with picture windows and a second-growth forest well on its way to semi-ancient. Market value, big bucks. However, touch one hair and the citizenry of nearby Olympia and masses of environmentalists would rally around the most important seal rookery of Puget Sound, a major bird sanctuary, and a stopover on the Pacific Flyway. It would take a lot of big bucks for magazine

ads showing “tree farms” bursting with squirrels to repair the public relations damage. The Gentle Giant suggested a “win-win” — Weyco takes fewer bucks, the people get a ton of seals and birds and old old trees.

Done and done. Woodard Bay would guarantee Olympia. Cypress Island would nail down the Skagit valley. Mount Si would enlist the legions of Puget Sound City who esteemed Lois North (properly) as a saint. What about east of the Cascades? Bob called Elliott Marks of Nature Conservancy. He had just the thing, grasslands and vernal pools of Dishman Hills, on the outskirts of Spokane.

The draft (introduced as SB 5522) the DNR brought to the legislature in January, 1987, called for \$7.9 million for NRCAs, plus \$4 million to fund (for the first time) the companion Natural Areas Program (NAP). Nancy James, now John Chamber's wife, was at that time legislative aide to Jim McDermott — a brilliant person, never mind what Connelly of the P-I says. John and Jim were good friends. As chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, Jim well knew that the real estate industry yearned to eliminate the tax stamp on real estate transactions. His staff calculated that an increase of 0.06 percent in the state-wide excise tax would generate the dollars required by the DNR plan. He got an amendment that eliminated the tax stamp while yielding an additional 0.06 percent. The bill flew through the committee so fast that by the time the real estate folks awoke to cry, “Hey, wait a minute!” it was too late. So they fired their lobbyist. SSB 5911, completely rewritten under McDermott's watchful eye, responded to criticisms by restructuring the dollar transactions just a little bit. The bill squeaked through the Rules Committee but failed on the Senate floor, 23-25-1. A move for reconsideration gave a new lease on life. Two days of intense lobbying by DNR, local governments, and environmentalists brought the bill up for its last chance in the Senate. Victory! 25-23-1, the single switched vote being that of Jack

Metcalf, for this action formally awarded an “attaboy”.

The rollercoaster proceeded to the House. With bipartisan backing of Sim Wilson and Harriet Spanel, the Natural Resources Committee quickly approved — but 10-5-4 warned of chuckholes ahead. However, a move to hold the bill in Ways and Means (until Hell froze over?) was blocked. The Rules Committee was next hurdled. Then commenced a languishing on the House calendar, wide open to amendment, which would send the bill back to the Senate for concurrence — or burying. Thankfully, none were offered. With baited breath Majority Leader Pat McMullen, Louise Miller and Natural Resources Committee Chair Jennifer Belcher counted votes, fearing a squeak at best. But SSB 5911 breezed, 53-42-3.

“Attaboy” Jack Metcalf

The turning point was “Attaboy” Jack Metcalf making his big switch. Bob had taken him aside, explained that the bill permitted some possible management — to improve or accelerate ecological betterment — and that income from such “resource management” would go into a stewardship account, to be used not for the revenue but for managing recreation and other human activity. This concept was essentially dismissed in the administration of Jennifer Belcher; the plan became one focused on the sort of wilderness that Zahniser had in mind.

In the 1989 legislature, the funding for the legislation of 1987 was up for renewal. Additions were floated for testing, including Yakima Canyon and Chopaka Mountain (causing my moment of glee, followed when I called Bob to cheer, glum). There also was a stab in the back.

Brian clearly recalls that a deal had been struck with Senator Scott Barr about the amount of land to be added to the protection package. Barr backed out. The funding, slated to expire after two years, was in jeopardy. Joel Kuperbeg, Brian, and John convinced Raymond Hanson that

if he didn't sign the agreement to sell his Cypress land, whatever moneys were still in hand would be spent on Mount Si and elsewhere. Joel and Hanson signed the agreement, for \$4.9 million, on a fine March morning of 1989, champagne toasts were drunk at lunch, and in afternoon the Senate Neanderthals led by Brad Owned repealed the very tax that was depended on to make the Cypress transaction possible. But there was also good news in 1989. The state was running a surplus. Dan McDonald, Elliott Marks, John Chambers, and co-conspirators found a way to dodge the bullet. (Now listen carefully, you-all, this is tricky going.) They would use the budget surplus to purchase timber from the DNR as if in a timber sale for school construction, leave the timber alone, deposit the money in the school construction account trust, and use the residual appraised value of the land to buy replacement property. (Got all that? Tough chewing for civilians. Thank golly the right folks were in place to perform the hocus pocus — and within the law — as is not universally true of what goes on in Olympia, as certain famous felons can testify).

The vehicle employed was the Natural Resources Conservation Act. The 1989 legislature appropriated \$71.5 million to transfer school trust lands into NRCA and NAP status, bringing the total of ecosystems so preserved (as of 2006) to over 116,000 acres. Not bad. Pretty darn good.

To the tolling of the Wilderness Bell, let us recite some of the roster: Greider Lakes, the south side of Nanga Pilchuck, ancient forests ringing Spada Lake (Everett's drinking water), Mount Si, “expanded” to include Teneriffe and Green, Neemah Cedars and not to forget, West Tiger Mountain. In sum, 30 sites, 85,000 acres.

The DNR “special lands” also now comprise, as companions for the NRCAs, the smaller Natural Area Preserves (NAPs) totaling some 31,000 acres.

Bob Rose ends his July 5 letter to me:

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ECO-COLLABORATION: Finding a Shared Vision With Who?

RICK MCGUIRE



Pierre Laval

Collaboration. It's a word one sees more and more in the world of forest and public land conservation. As with many words, it means different things to different people, perhaps more so than most words. Webster's dictionary gives two definitions: "to work together, especially in literary, artistic or scientific work," as well as the more sinister "to co-operate with an enemy invader of one's country." The French version, "*collaborateur*," has never shed the stigma it acquired during World War II. In conservation, the word is increasingly used to describe cooperation and often dealmaking among environmentalists and their erstwhile "enemies," timber, grazing, mining and motorized recreation interests. It often leads to a carving up of public lands, with legislation codifying the collaborative deal in law. Such bills have come to be known as Quid Pro Quo, or "QPQ" Wilderness.

Quid Pro What?

So, good or bad? Well, like most things, it has the potential for both. But a number of recent examples have been worrisome, or, at best, controversial. It all depends on the details of who is giving up the quid and who is getting the quo, and how much and what kind of each. And, as in the old real estate maxim, where, where, and where. All public lands are not created equal. Some are biologically rich, others tend toward the bleak and barren. Some are beautiful, some forgettable. Some

contain valuable resources that can be converted into money, others face few threats. It's difficult for those not familiar with the different places on the maps to tell who is winning and who is losing. Often, hard info is lacking, and what little there is comes in the form of low resolution GIS-generated maps depicting places preserved in one uniform pastel color, places sacrificed in another, conveying little sense of how the scales are really weighted, of what kind of real places the colors represent.

Whose Hand Draws Those Maps?

It's not only the maps that can obscure the picture. Many, if not most, of these collaborative and QPQ efforts are the product of private negotiations among the various parties involved. One or more environmental organization negotiates with one or more extractive or motorized interest, a process sometimes referred to as "articulating a shared vision" or some other such term. When the various entities involved think they have a plan, it is presented to legislators who are asked to turn it into law. It's usually a self-selected group that produces the plan, and those who do not "share the vision" are seldom part of the process.

Obviously, there is potential for good and for bad. But to this outside observer of the admittedly tree-hugger bent, some of the deals look troubling indeed. One case in point is the Montana Wilderness Association's "New Path to Wilderness." The MWA has put out many professionally produced, full-color flyers about various wild places in Montana. But the latest one has a dramatic new twist: the "Beaverhead Strategy," a "shared vision for the management of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, a strategy that proposes 573,000 acres of new designated Wilderness in

the forest and a timber base of 710,000 acres." It's worth quoting the announcement at length:

"Timber companies and conservation groups coming together in a proposal for Wilderness, jobs, fish, and wildlife values, the health of the forest - words like groundbreaking and milestone come to mind. And it could be a step towards the first new Wilderness designation in Montana in over twenty years.

"The conservation partners in this unique agreement with Montana Wilderness Association are Montana Trout Unlimited and the National Wildlife Federation. The timber partners include Sun Mountain Lumber of Deer Lodge, Pyramid Lumber of Seeley Lake, RY Lumber of Townsend, Roseburg Lumber of Missoula and Smurfit-Stone of Missoula.

The Road to "Peace in Our Time"

"It's a partnership for Wilderness, conservation and timber such as has never been seen in Montana...It's a new day."

Indeed. Most QPQ proposals are touted as "groundbreaking," each one of them "unique." But it is worth trying to tease out some of the real numbers behind this particular "new day." The accompanying map (graced with the corporate logos of all five of the timber companies along with those of the enviros), suffers from the common problem with crude GIS of obscuring as much as it clarifies. But it does say certain things even to an observer who knows nothing of the country and has seen it only from airliner windows. First, the 573,000 acres of proposed Wilderness: It does not require any familiarity with the country to see that the vast majority of those acres are along or backed up against the spines of the major mountains. High country. Threatened, perhaps, by mining and motorized recreation, but likely not threatened or cov-

eted by the timber "partners" of the Strategy.

The Old (New) Shell Game

More intriguing is the fate of the 710,000 acres of "timber base" at the heart of the deal. They are not depicted on the map, and one is left wondering just where and what they are. Little is said about them, probably for good reason. Nowhere is their present status made clear, but it appears that at least some of these acres are currently roadless, and thus would have been eligible for Wilderness protection, but under the plan no longer will be. It seems reasonable to assume that if five timber companies have signed on to this deal, there are vastly more trees on the 710,000 acres of "timber base" than the 573,000 acres of proposed Wilderness. Lower elevation lands are more productive than high-elevation lands, especially in a cold place like Montana. It may be an oversimplification to say that under the Beaverhead Strategy, the timber industry gets the trees while the enviros get the rocks and meadows, but the map they show certainly makes it look that way.

We learn that only about 1 percent of the 710,000 acres will be "harvested" per year. But that's still 7,100 acres, over 11 square miles, of now-intact forest falling each and every year. We are told that "new roads will be constructed in a way to have the least impact, and all new roads must be removed within five years." Well-intentioned, no doubt, but it's long been apparent that there is no such thing as a temporary road. All roads are highways for invasive non-native species, all roads disrupt natural water flows, and few temporary roads are ever effectively blocked off from continued ORV use. We are also told that "stewardship" will be the "guiding philosophy" of timber

cutting. Supposedly a means of keeping receipts from timber sales for local projects rather than sending them back to the other Washington, stewardship is another word that means very different things to different people. In the Olympic National Forest, it has meant some very damaging timber sales and many miles of new “temporary” roads, all done in the cause of yet another slippery word, “restoration.” One more devil in the details.

Strategy for What?

The “Beaverhead Strategy” is just one of a long list of QPQ Wilderness proposals appearing all across the western United States. According to the Montana Wilderness Society’s president, quoted in the same flyer promoting the Beaverhead Strategy: “We’ve entered a new era where western states are gaining Wilderness acres that are created as part of larger conservation/economic growth packages. Nevada, New Mexico and Utah have recently had Wilderness bills passed by Congress and signed by the President.” One wonders what devils in the voluminous details of such bills prompted the Republican House Resources Committee, led by Richard Pombo, and Mark Rey, Undersecretary of Agriculture and former timber lobbyist in charge of the Forest Service, and George W. Bush, to sign on.

One QPQ Wilderness bill that has become particularly controversial is CIEDRA, the Central Idaho Economic Development and Recreation Act. Analyzing it would take pages, but suffice it to say that it is another land-for-wilderness trade that involves not only mandates for motorized recreation but outright privatization of public lands as well.

For a detailed look at it, see <http://lowbagger.org/boulder-whitecloud.html>.

The bill is supported by The Wilderness Society and by the Pew Campaign for America’s Wilderness. Another QPQ bill would “protect” some areas of Idaho’s Owyhee canyonlands while enshrining motorized access, even in areas of supposed Wilderness. And the list goes on...

For a description of the Owyhee legislation and some other QPQ deals, see www.westernlands.org/assets/QPQ4.pdf.

The Slaughter of the Innocents?

Why, then, are some environmental groups, some of them with illustrious histories, now signing onto Wilderness bills with price tags they would have thought shocking just a few years ago? Why now the drive to collaborate with loggers and motorcyclists whose interests in public lands are diametrically opposed to the values espoused until recently by almost all environmental groups? The answer may be as complex as some of the collaborative deals being cooked up. But a large part of it may be in the changes in the environmental movement over the past decade or so, with paid staffers gradually supplanting and taking over from volunteers.

Here in Washington state the public lands wing of the environmental movement was until recently run mostly by volunteers. NCCC volunteers brought about the creation of the North Cascades National Park. Volunteers made the Alpine Lakes Wilderness and the 1984 Washington Wilderness Acts a reality. Volunteers sued over the spotted owl and were largely responsible for bringing about the Northwest Forest Plan, which radically reduced national forest cut levels, especially in the North Cascades, and was probably the greatest forest protection act of all time, at least around here.

The Privatization of Volunteerism

But the face of the conservation movement has been changing over the last decade or so. Large foundations and hi-tech and other wealthy individuals have poured in millions of dollars, professionalizing what was once a shoestring effort, manned largely by part-timers spreading out maps on kitchen tables. The other side is obviously well-financed, with well-paid, polished professionals advancing their agenda. Shouldn’t the environmental



Melakwa Lake — less than a two-hour bike from I-90.

— TOM HAMMOND

movement respond in kind, fighting fire with fire, meeting them dollar for dollar where possible?

Well, maybe. Money can do many things, but can it do everything? It can certainly buy threatened lands, and the list of places preserved through philanthropy is long and impressive. But can it help lands that are already public, and insure that they are protected to the greatest extent possible? Has the increased funding of the environmental movement in recent years actually made our public lands, specifically national forests, any safer? It’s not an easy question to answer, and perhaps there is no one answer. But the mere fact that the question needs to be asked, and that the answer is clearly not an unqualified yes, is troubling. The rise of QPQ

Wilderness bills and the nature of some of the deals now being made is even more troubling.

The professionalization of much of the environmental movement has inevitably led to institutions and bureaucracy. Institutions are driven to perpetuate themselves and grow. Large environmental organizations need to bring in substantial sums of money to keep the lights on and the computers running. The Bush administration and Republican Congress have pushed countless anti-environmental efforts, sometimes openly, sometimes surreptitiously, and there have been few victories in recent years. To environmental organizations struggling to meet payrolls, col-

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laboration and QPQ offer a way to produce something that can be sold to funders as a victory. In an environmental movement driven more and more by fundraising, the funders increasingly call the tune. The funders want results, and collaboration and QPQ do produce results. Whether those results are an improvement on the status quo is often debatable, but that is usually noticed only by those few who really study the maps and look closely at the details. Those troublesome few can usually be brushed off as malcontents while the collaborators celebrate the dawning of their "new day."

No rational person gets involved, or stays involved, in environmental activism in order to make money. It would be ridiculous to say that the people involved in these questionable QPQ deals are "in it for the money." There are far better ways to make money than working as an environmentalist, and any intelligent individual motivated by moneymaking would soon find more lucrative paths to pursue. The changes in the environmental movement away from amateurism have come about slowly, almost invisibly. Most organizations started out as volunteer, or mostly volunteer, efforts. But it's difficult to keep on top of things by relying solely on volunteers. NCCC itself could be looked upon as an example. Almost everything NCCC has accomplished over the decades has been accomplished by volunteers. But when NCCC did for a couple of years have a (very low) paid executive director, it became more effective. Someone was there to answer the phone, to keep track of people and events, and to keep things from falling between the cracks as so often happens with all-volunteer groups. Things got done, and it worked out well. But NCCC policy was always set by its volunteer board, and fundraising was a means, not an end. For better or worse, NCCC stayed (and stays) small.

The problems seem to occur when organizations get big, when they have lots of paid staff, lots of overhead, and when the need to keep the wheels turning starts influencing the decisions. Boards of directors once composed of local activists become filled by people perceived to have money or influence rather than ties to any particular place. Most of the staff people do good work most of the time, and it's understandable that they would want to keep doing so. But things change, perhaps imperceptibly, and the need to keep the organization going becomes the driving force, which sometimes gets in the way of doing what is best for public lands. It doesn't always happen. With some organizations it never happens. When it does happen, it happens to varying degrees. But more and more frequently, it does seem that the judgment of some environmental organizations has been clouded by the need to keep the dollars flowing in. One does not have to be any sort of tub-thumping, "everyone is a sellout but me" militant to be appalled by the details of many of the collaborative and QPQ proposals being developed.

"Ignore That Man Behind the Curtain"

What might all this mean for the Cascades? Most of the collaborations and QPQ bills have been in what from our Left Coast vantage point can seem like politically benighted places. Many of these efforts are quite secretive, and it is difficult to know what might be happening. But there have been reports of a collaborative effort to carve up the Colville National Forest in northeastern Washington. It's all hearsay, perhaps just speculation, but supposedly a plan will dedicate one third of the forest to some sort of as yet undefined protection, one third to "restoration," (usually a codeword for logging) and one third to outright, no-apologies exploitation. One shudders to think what the real details would be, and who would get the trees, in any plan that might garner

the support of U.S. Representative Cathy McMorris, 5th district Republican, who was chosen by Richard Pombo to chair his "NEPA reform" task force.

So far, the Cascades themselves have escaped these collaborations. But that may change. Many of the big foundations that fund environmental organizations are located in Seattle, and the Cascades could be very high profile, located as it is close to several million people. They present a tempting target for organizations that may want to mount a high visibility campaign. Just what environmental benefits such a campaign might claim is hard to imagine. Most of the North Cascades are already protected in either national park or Wilderness areas. The timber cut on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest has fallen from the neighborhood of 240 million board feet per year to about 7 million. More logging occurs on the east side, but it is still just a fraction of what it was a decade or so ago. The timber industry in the North Cascades has largely been shut out of federal lands, and operates on state and private lands in the foothills. The prospect of inviting them into some sort of collaboration targeting the federal lands of the North Cascades is alarming.

How to Get Nothing for Something

This raises the broader question of why "environmental" organizations should be pushing for any logging at all on the national forests. During the great privatization of the public domain that occurred a century or more ago, the timber industry got in first and got just about all the good stuff, at least as it was regarded back then. The national forests were for the most part leftovers, higher elevation, remote, mountainous lands that were not considered very valuable by the timber industry. Of course, once the industry had cut most of the old growth off its own lands, attitudes changed. With taxpayer-funded roads, and ignoring the true costs of liquidating the old-

growth forests, a subsidized timber industry found it profitable to cut the public forests as well. But almost all the really productive timberlands in the United States are in private hands, and they are more than capable of supplying all the wood the country needs. Other than some limited thinning and pruning to reduce fire danger in areas immediately adjacent to houses and communities, there is little or no reason to cut trees on national forests other than to subsidize a timber industry which would never operate in such places without those subsidies. Seeing environmental organizations making deals mandating timber cuts in exchange for Wilderness on national forests, encouraging timber programs in which private companies make the profits and the public absorbs the costs, is quite disturbing.

A few areas of the North Cascades, such as the Golden Horn area east of the national park, and a few others, might be considered as candidates for new Wilderness legislation. But these areas face few threats at present, and they hold little in the way of commercial timber. There may be some threat of mining, and of course it would be nice to fill in some of the (not very large) gaps in the map with darker green Wilderness. But what would the price tag be? The one ongoing Wilderness effort, the Wild Sky proposal, is a stand-alone Wilderness bill, with no QPQ strings attached. It hasn't been able to get past Richard Pombo, the chair of the House Resources Committee. As long as the current people control Congress, it is unlikely that any Wilderness legislation could pass that did not include substantial concessions to extractive and motorized interests. Quids for the Quos.

The status quo in the North Cascades is not too bad, thanks to the work of NCCC and others over the past decades. It's troubling to think about what high-budget, funding-hungry environmental organizations

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might try to offer industry and motorized recreationists in order to secure some sort of “victory” in the North Cascades they could take to the funders. The possibilities abound. It could be mandated timber cut levels, bringing the timber industry back into places they have been kept out of in recent years. This might be done under the guise of “protecting communities.” Another threat would be some sort of legislative dedication of areas to motorized recreation, whether ATVs and ORVs in summer or snowmobiles in winter. Heli-skiing is another possibility. There isn’t much of it at present but many companies want to expand operations. There could also be a push for a big increase in automobile-oriented tourism development along and near the major highways, such as the Stevens Pass and North

Cascades roads. Although most of the North Cascades National Park is protected as Wilderness, the 7 percent of it which is not is located largely along the highway corridor. Areas along the highways in the national forests could be targeted for new developments, which could range from new private lodges to RV camps. We could even hear about such things as tramways to high viewpoints, although the boundary of the Mather Wilderness in the national park would have to be changed in order to build the once planned (and stopped by NCCC) Ruby Mountain tramway above Ross reservoir.

The Cascades suffered terribly from the logging onslaught starting in the early 1950’s and reaching its peak in the late 1980s, before conservationists managed to turn the tide. The subsequent decade and a half has been a

time of recovery. Moonscapes created during the logging binge are now regreening. Places once appreciated only by connoisseurs of ugliness are now looking much better. The vast, now crumbling network of logging roads carved across the landscape on the cheap need to be decommissioned, or at least have the culverts pulled out before they all blow out, causing horrific damage to streams and fish. There is great scope for rewilding some places, such as the upper Stehekin and the Whitechuck. Invasive plant species must be eradicated. New trails to viewpoints on the periphery of wild areas would provide more access without disturbing wildlife. For those willing to do the work, there is much to be done in the Cascades.

Unfortunately, such necessary but unglamorous tasks are unlikely to be the focus of future

collaborations. The need to make a big splash, to have something to show the funders, may instead lead to high-profile efforts to designate more Wilderness, in places facing few threats, and carrying high price tags. It is ironic that after the great conservation successes we’ve seen in the Cascades, certain segments of the environmental movement itself may become the threat.

Addendum: of the 710,000 acres proposed as “timber base” by the Montana Wilderness Association’s Beaverhead Strategy, some 200,000-odd acres are inventoried roadless area. The Strategy would triple the timber cut on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest from what the Forest Service has proposed. For more information, see: <http://lowbagger.org/icecreamwilderness.html>

Wilderness in Washington: 1964/1987

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“...The legislation was the result of that simple question by John Chambers. I guess you could say I was the nominal scholar and drafter of the legislation and of course I kept busy along with many others with the lobbying. It remains one of the proud moments of my life. The biggest ‘thank you’ belongs to Brian, who gave John and the others permission to turn me loose.”

Get Dreaming in Gear

Final notes...

My eyebrows go up when I realize that the “miracle” did not originate from the usual suspects of the environmentalist establishment, nor did its legions contribute much to the 1987-1989 jungle warfare in Olympia. Indeed, I am shocked, simply shocked, to discover that a great many (most?) of my friends still don’t know what a NRCA is. Personally, though I’ve written

some letters and made phone calls to Olympia and even been there a few times, my gut feeling is that down there it’s a nest of snakes and scoundrels. I have some justification, I read the papers. But if our American way of government is to survive the Bush-Cheney-Rove conspiracy, it will not be because of my sideline ranting and moaning, but the people of the sort named herein.

The road to the Miracle of 1987-1989 was rocky, but the wagon of state got through. Let all of us keep our eye out for other jewels worthy of the state treasure chest. To be sure, the Twenty Good Years are over, a clone of that merry old soul, Bert Cole, has recaptured the DNR throne. But not necessarily forever. Take a look at the 2006 map of public land ownership in the state. Do a bit of dreaming.



Rainbow Creek – Stehekin, Washington. — MIKE ANNÉE

2006 North Cascades Glacier Climate Project Field Season

TOM HAMMOND



Research team on Columbia Glacier with Columbia Peak rising above in the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness Area.

— TOM HAMMOND

Members:

Dr. Mauri Pelto, Director

Ben Pelto, Mauri's 16-year-old son

Erik Budsberg, 22 years old; WWU geology student

Tom Hammond, Field Scientist

Gathering hard data (boots on ground) across glaciers — especially many glaciers on a single trip — is physically demanding. In such terrain as the North Cascades, there are objective dangers. Things to fall off. Things to fall into. Things to be fallen upon. Studying glaciers is no summer camp. During this field season, we did some 74 miles and 37,000 vertical feet in about 13 days. Hard, hot, heavy work.

Wednesday, July 26 – Saturday, July 29
Columbia Glacier, Monte Cristo Peaks
1750m-1450m, .9 sq km.

The hike in was brutally hot, indeed, this would end up being the most unpleasant hike of the entire field season. The Blanca Lake camp was cool, but a bit buggy.

Thursday was nice, and an easy measure day. The amount of snow still on the glacier is encouraging, but anything is after the last two years. Friday, the clouds (no rain) hindered measurements. Finally, in the late afternoon the clouds dissipated enough to complete longitudinal profiling, making for an 11-hour day. The peaks surrounding the glacier (Columbia, Monte Cristo, Wilman Spires, Kyes) and their connecting high rock ridges display tremendous relief — the reason this glacier exists at such a low elevation. In a process known as orographic lift, moist air masses off the Pacific Ocean are forced high in the air over these peaks, where they cool and drop their moisture, often in the form of glacier-nourishing snow.

To get to Monte Cristo Pass, we had to scramble under a huge snow arch. Because of its low elevation, this glacier is in disequilibrium and will disappear in a few decades under current (and accelerating) climatic conditions. A bright spot: the wildflowers were exploding — six species in a two-meter square area, and 12 or 13 overall (lupine, pink monkey flower, heather [two colors], arnica, partridge foot, phlox, bistort, daisy, and some Latin names I forget).

Total mass balance: minus 1 meter across the entire glacier (again this is an area of about a square kilometer). Terminus now established lake(s) and a melting chunk of rock-filled ice.

Saturday, July 29 – Monday, July 31

**Lower Curtis Glacier, Mount Shuksan
1850m-1470m, area of about 0.8 sq.
km.**

Be Careful What You Wish For

It has been a hot summer, and over the last few weeks Seattle has seen four consecutive days of over 90°F. I had hoped for clouds and cool temperatures to help make this project season bearable, and even dared to say to some folks that I hoped it rained. We arrived Saturday evening at Lake Ann in mixed clouds and sun. Shuksan was mostly hidden, but occasionally the Lower Curtis would emerge from the mists, a large cube of blue ice in a sea of white-gray cloud.

Sunday called for “cloudy, occasional showers” for the North Cascades. Now I’ve been around long enough to know NOT to go to the Cascades with such a forecast, but of course this trip was business, so I was on site. The rain started at about 2 a.m. Sunday. By daylight it was really pounding. The storm (fortunately not much wind) finally ended after 16 hours of continuous rain, hail, snow, and even a little graupel. We basically spent 20 hours in tents. I asked Mauri which glacier would be the “odd one out” since we had just lost a day on a very tight, already demanding schedule. Mauri quickly said “None — we do Lower Curtis Monday and still hike in to Ptarmigan Ridge the same day-night!” So we did.

But first, a word more about the storm and Shuksan. It dumped some 3 inches of snow above six thousand feet, and more like 6 inches above seven thousand feet. Shuksan was simply spectacular as the clouds drifted in and around the fangs, spires, and hanging glaciers. The top third of the mountain sported a white coat more fitting for October for the better part of two days, truly living up to its role as the flagship of the North Cascades.

Monday, and indeed, the rest of the week brought perfect glacier weather as far as I’m concerned. Cloudy and cool enough to be comfortable and not roast or dehydrate while doing the work, but not so much so as to prevent data gathering (as Mauri noted, the laser doesn’t work so well with wet-bulb/dew-point conditions). The bonus, as mentioned before, was that the peaks flirted with the atmosphere in that magical interaction of sky and land form that creates glaciers, rivers, and life.

Oh, and life. As in wildlife. On the traverse to the Lower Curtis early Monday, I got off route. Actually, I was on the route to Fisher

Chimneys, which resulted in working way around an unpleasant loose, steep rib of rubble while grumbling to myself. As I went to plant a boot, the ground beneath my feet moved! I held my foot not 4 inches above a ptarmigan — so perfectly did its summer plumage match the terrain that I almost stomped it. The sequence of thoughts and actions were lightning quick: only one reason why it wouldn’t have bolted — young ones around. Just then its breast-feathers started boiling — boop! Out popped one, then another, then a third chick! PEEP PEEP PEEP PEEP peep peep peep I crouched to the ground as both mother and myself were trying to hush them down. At the same time I was reaching for my camera. . . I carefully made my way around and left them in peace. After spending a few hours successfully profiling Lower Curtis, it was back to camp, a quick re-pack, and then on to Komo Kulshan (Mount Baker)!

Total mass balance: minus 1.0 meter across the entire glacier. It is laterally pulling away from the moraine on west. Terminus is now a near/true vertical wall of about 30-50 meters. The outlet stream has been “uncovered” by the west-side recession — the ice cave is not approachable this year, due to collapse, recession, and the relief of the terminus.

On Monday, July 31, we literally crossed The Interface: We spent the morning exploring a 90-million-year-old wedge of schist/gneiss rock that is Shuksan, then hiked across Swift Creek, and across epochs of time, to stand on Kulshan’s lava rock — the age is measured in thousands of years. There are very few places on our planet where such new and old (and disparate types) of rock are in direct contact with each other. A very special place indeed.

On this day, we’d do 14 miles, most of it with full pack on. Another one of those 11-hour days. It was a powerful feeling as we arrived at high camp on Ptarmigan Ridge, closely NE of Kulshan — a great accomplishment to keep the timeline, and while tired, we were quite pleased.

July 31 – August 3

Shoales Glacier

1800m-1585m, area .8 square km

Rainbow Glacier, Kulshan

2012m-1280m, area 1.6 square km

Tuesday, August 1, found us on the Shoales. This is a rather unremarkable glacier as far as glaciers go, but perfect as a data point in the study, as it offers easy access and closely mirrors the region in general. Many goats live in this area. Many. 64 goats and 0 people over the time we spent on this section of the Project, split roughly into two herds. It is amazing how wild things get as one moves away from

motorized vehicles — the inverse square law applies here too! As we worked the terminus of the Shoales, we (unfortunately) disturbed one herd of 30 or so, including some newborns. They kept their distance, eventually crossing the outlet stream of the glacier. It was pretty neat to watch the majority leap across the stream, the veterans simply fording it. The youngsters (probably weeks old), were especially fun, gathering themselves in a most uncertain fashion, and then letting fly! Eric, at 6’ 5”, was barely able to leap across the very same place the goats did. . .

Maps indicate a lake at the terminus. There is no lake now, but a patch of what can best be described as quicksand. Willy mountain veterans, the goats seem to avoid the area, if tracks are any indication.

Total mass balance: better than others to date, perhaps minus 0.5 meters. The terminus has retreated some, but the glacier is in a thinning phase, so retreat happens in fits and starts as thinning wears it away — a good study in volume vs. area.

New patches of yellow monkey flower add color to the bouldery, rugged landscape just uncovered by glacier ice.

Wednesday, August 2, found us with another 11-hour day: the Rainbow Glacier. The Rainbow is a unique glacier, as it originates not on the proper volcanic cone of Kulshan, but occupies an attached hanging valley. This large 3-km long glacier heads at only 6,600 feet, but sits on the leeward side of the mighty stratovolcano, enjoying and living on the orographic effects. The most remarkable thing about this glacier is the terminus. It is a complex system of channels, arches, superglacial streams; and all that elevation air, water, ice, sun, and gravity can sculpt. The “Grand Canyon” still exists, but the huge arch from last year is gone. A smaller arch is in a different location, a new feature that will be gone with the first avalanche snows of the fall, winter.

We witnessed a small volcanic event on Kulshan! Yep, in a gesture to Loowit, the so-called “Dorr Steamfield” issued a relatively large plume of gasses for at least an hour. I’ve never seen any activity here, much less such a large vent, and Mauri has not seen such a phenomena at this location in his 23 years of visits...

What a Difference a Year Makes

In one of my personal finest moments of the entire field season, and I’m sure a big relief to Mauri as well, was the descent off the top of the Rainbow. Whereas last year it was steep blue ice, crevassed, and quite deadly, this year the area was buried under 4 meters of snow. Last year we came off beaten, cautiously picking our way through a mine-field.

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2006 North Cascades Glacier Climate Project Field Season



From high on the Lynch Glacier, Mt. Daniel, in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area. Pea Soup Lake, below the glacier, was mostly covered by the glacier 20 years ago. — TOM HAMMOND

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This year we glissaded the 40-degree slope with the joy of a summer ski. We were carving telemark turns, whoops of joy echoing off the sheer cliff adjacent to the icefall, the smell of sulphur dioxide strong in the air. I guess just another reason to like a healthy snowpack, and eschew those behaviors which compromise our water supplies.

Oh, a bear came within a few hundred meters of our camp — we didn't see it, but the claw marks it left in the snow on its high traverse (what was it doing up here anyway?) were impressive. The bald eagle we saw hunting above the Shoales was the largest I've ever seen (and while not as many as an Alaskan fisherman, I've seen plenty). Perhaps those goats weren't running from us. . . .

Total mass balance: Despite the copious snowpack at the top of the glacier, the hot summer will reduce this in short order. All indications are minus 0.5 meters across the glacier.

August 3 – August 6

Easton Glacier, Kulshan

2900m-1700m, area about 2.9 sq km.

Even though the project would stay on the same mountain, it would require a 100-mile drive to get from the northeast side to the south side. I took this opportunity to continue the drive to Seattle to get some much needed rest for my body.

Total mass balance: minus 0.5 meter.

August 6 – August 9

Mount Daniel

Hyas Creek (Ice Worm) Glacier

2100m-1900m, area about 0.1 sq km.

Daniels Glacier

2230m-1990m, area about 0.4 sq km.

Lynch Glacier

2200m-1960m, area about 0.5 sq km.

Here starts a story within the greater account of the 2006 field season, and an

experience that has me shaking my head to this day.

I arrived at the upper Cle Elum River road right on schedule. This is one of the longest, most intrusive roads in the Cascades, stretching the final 13 miles as dusty, gritty, hot gravel road. On this road I encountered a hitchhiker. A scruffy looking fellow by any account, with scraggly gray beard, and gray hair sticking out the back of a baseball cap in a long ponytail. I never pick up hitchhikers, but this guy was heading “up” to the hills, and his pack looked like a pretty nice rig. I like to facilitate exploration of the hills, so I pulled over and let him in. We cautiously regarded each other before the usual exchange — he was only going another couple of miles to Boulder Creek trailhead. He added that he was there to evaluate trails to make sure they weren't being used by motorized interests. I congratulated him, and noted I was there measuring glaciers. He turned to me with a raised eyebrow and asked with whom. I told him of Mauri, and began to explain that I worked at the UW, and through (indirect contacts) there,

I was on this project. He interrupted me, pointing out that Mauri isn't from the UW, where I picked up and agreed he was from Massachusetts but that I was introduced to glaciology as science at the UW in a rather informal way (post-graduate voluntary class) through my interests in explorations of the North Cascades.

He said quietly "I'm Charlie Raymond."

Reflexively, I blurted out "You're the reason I'm here right now!!"

This hitchhiker is one of the world leaders in glaciology, a UW professor emeritus specializing in glacial surge, motion, and by extension, sintering and reduction of water crystals. I had generated a more science-based interest in the North Cascades and glaciology while sitting in his class in about 1990. In one of the

most delicious moments of life-connection, I was sitting with a man that literally, directly, put me on a course to offer him a ride on a dusty eastern Washington road across 15 years. He congratulated Mauri and the team for the work over the years, noting it was good someone had taken on the North Cascades, and so thoroughly.

Now "retired," he works for the conservation community. I pointed out I also work for the conservation community, as a board member of the North Cascades Conservation Council. So while I was measuring glaciers, the glaciologist was working conservation. I love life.

I then noticed I was driving about 5 mph (had been going 35+). . . . I didn't want this to end. But soon enough, his trailhead arrived and with a cheerful wave, we parted company. I am still speechless when I realize we may be considered colleagues, and on a couple of different fronts. . . .

When I met up with the team a few miles further on, I told Mauri of the hitchhiker, he asked "that dirty guy wearing the baseball cap?" "Yeah, that's him — that was Charlie Raymond." It was Mauri's turn to fall out of his seat. Erik finally asked, "So who's Charlie Raymond?" Mauri, not given to exaggeration or embellishment, turned to him and explained that he is "one of the world's leading glacier experts."

We didn't begin the ascent of Mount Daniel until 18:00, hoping to reduce the heat stress, and hike out of direct sunlight. It was still hot enough that we hiked shirtless with the full



USGS meteorological station, Cascade Glacier. Note mountain goat. — TOM HAMMOND

packs. We arrived at high camp after dark, and enjoyed a quick late dinner of something other than Knorr-Lipton — some summer sausage.

August 7 — The Ice Worm Glacier — an easy day in large part because there's nothing really left to measure. We took turns commanding icebergs on a lake (yes, we jumped bare-foot out onto icebergs to cool off — glaciologists do have fun — or something), and then Erik and I took the big plunge and actually dove into a glacier-outlet lake. Ssssoooooo cccccccoldddd!!! It was like thousands of needles pricking the skin, and that was after getting out of the water.

Total mass balance: Minus 1.3 meters across the entire glacier. The Ice Worm Glacier is in disequilibrium and will be gone in a matter of decades.

At this time I should note the BUGS. Yes, bugs. Mainly mosquitoes, but also some deer flies. They were the worst ever seen by Mauri at this location. Bill Prater, an 80-year-old mountain man and holder of some first ascents and "early" explorations in the area, confirmed that the bugs were the worst he's seen since he first climbed Daniel in 1944. He made this confirmation standing in our high camp. Yes, six miles, and 4,000 vertical feet in, here was a man we can all hope to match as we advance in age.

The bugs were not able to keep up with us on the 8th, as we entered the high-alp area of Daniel and measured the Daniel and Lynch glaciers. The Daniel, while not as pitiable as Ice Worm, is a mere shell of what it was as recently as 20 years ago. While there was a bit

of snow where the terminus used to be, this low extension is really gone, and the glacier is in rapid retreat. In the coming decades, it will likely reach equilibrium as a remnant about 20 percent of the area it currently covers, tucked up under the east summit of Mount Daniel. Total mass balance: minus 1.3 meters.

The Lynch Glacier, though it has retreated to reveal a huge lake (Pea Soup Lake) in the last two decades, still has some nice "big mountain" characteristics, including a bergschrund, and some large crevasses.

The glacier has two lobes — both of which are necked to a single terminus now above Pea Soup. One would think with two lobes combining to a narrow area the glacier terminus would not be retreating so fast. Mauri pointed out the west lobe is no longer contributing to the terminus (overall glacier) and is a stagnant, soon-to-be-isolated bit of disappearing ice.

For the first time in three field seasons, I was able to do the Lynch in its entirety, including descending as near the terminus as is possible. The terminus is a near-vertical blue ice tongue that plunges toward this amazing, remote, new lake. Water roars from the glacier in a steep, but not long, series of cascades to fill this lake that literally has changed its course. When ice-covered, the glacier and the lake it hid were quite literally, and uniquely, on the crest. That is, water flowed to both the Cle Elum and Foss/Skykomish Rivers. Now it drains exclusively to the Skykomish, a sig-

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Critical Wild Sky Inholding Purchased

The Wilderness Land Trust (WLT) has succeeded in purchasing the most critical inholding in the proposed Wild Sky Wilderness. The inholding is an old patented mining claim of 113 acres in the hanging valley of Bitter Creek, a tributary of the North Fork Skykomish about five miles northeast of and upstream from Index.

WLT's mission is to secure inholdings in Wilderness areas and transfer them to public ownership, thus eliminating the threats that such pieces of private property pose to the integrity of the Wilderness areas in which they are located. WLT has been active in protecting Wilderness areas in many states, and has extended its activities in the Cascades to include the proposed Wild Sky Wilderness. WLT has previously purchased

other important inholdings at Troublesome Creek and Trout Creek within the Wild Sky proposal.

WLT's acquisition of the Bitter Creek property is especially significant because of its low elevation and critical location. The Bitter Creek inholding includes an area of relatively flat land with road access, which was at high risk from residential development. That portion of the parcel is located on a flat benchland, very unusual for the Cascades, directly below the spectacular, waterfall draped west wall and cirque of Gunn Peak, and overlooking the impressively forested North Fork Skykomish river valley. It is also right next to a series of interesting, south facing, cliff-top "balconies," with views east to the Gunn cirque,

the North Fork valley below, and Mount Index and Mount Persis to the south. There is an unusual forest of lodgepole and western white pine growing on the balconies, known to locals as "the Pine Forest." It is one of the most interesting and attractive places in the entire Wild Sky country. The inholding is a piece of prime real estate, and with its road access could easily have become a wealthy person's private retreat. WLT's acquisition of it is a remarkable coup.

WLT does not plan to hold the property long term, but plans to sell it to the Forest Service when funds become available, thus allowing WLT to put its resources into acquiring inholdings elsewhere. If the Wild Sky bill is enacted, the Bitter Creek inholding would be a priority acquisition for the Forest Service.

NCCC and other conservation groups will be working to secure funding to transfer the land to the Forest Service, so it can become part of the Wild Sky Wilderness. NCCC wishes to acknowledge the work of WLT and its Washington director Bill Pope in acquiring this very important place.

2006 North Cascades Glacier Climate Project Field Season

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nificant contributor (especially in summer months) to the flow.

We ascended the glacier, measuring along the way, and ended up at the summit. The smoke from the few fires burning was substantially less than in past years, and we enjoyed great visibility, especially pleased to see the sharp horn of Sloan Peak, and the Monte Cristo peaks. It was profound to view the Columbia Glacier afar, and Lynch up close and recognize these are the main sources of summer water for so many living things in the Skykomish River system.

Total mass balance: minus 1.3 meters.

The project was drawing to a close. Mauri was kind enough to cut Erik and me loose to do the easier descent off the east peak while he and Ben gathered some final measurements off the Daniels Glacier.

The most striking memories of the trip are three:

The wildflowers. As with my trips to McMillan Spire and even LooWit, the profusion of wildflowers, both in terms of numbers, and also in terms of different species (I lost count, but think 16 separate species, and eight different colors across four of those species [monkey, heather, phlox, daisy], 24 colors total). So wonderful to see, smell, and savor such brilliant life forms in a seemingly stark world of rock and ice.

Mauri and Ben. What a special gift and treat to watch father and son share this adventure. I will forever cherish watching Mauri teach his son self-arrest and standing glissade on a steep snow slope a stone's throw from Monte Cristo and Wilman Spires. Ben is a natural—an athletic young man who took to these activities, well,

like a human to water in all of its glorious forms.

Participating in something. I've had a curiosity and desire to see the glaciers of the North Cascades before they disappear since 1983. Across a continent, Mauri had that same desire, but with a more scientific and focused vision. As with Dr. Raymond, it is no surprise that our paths should cross, and I should hope our paths will cross many hundreds more times before 15 more years pass.

Epilogue: Since we've been on the ice, the summer has turned nasty. It has been so hot and dry, I imagine the mass-balance numbers may be worse than reflected above. Indeed, this is the driest summer ever recorded in the region. The few fires have multiplied to be one of the worst fire seasons ever, with fires now burning in the Cle Elum Valley, and up the east side of the crest through the Pasayten into Brit-

ish Columbia. The fires may not be so bad: climate change has provided certain pine beetles the environment to over-winter, and they are destroying forests, and a good bug-eradicating fire may be just the ticket.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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Roads Gated

Mineral Butte Road

The Mineral Butte road number 6334, located northwest of the North Fork Skykomish River about eight miles above Index, will soon have a gate designed to block ORVs. Built at great expense during the 1970's heyday of high Forest Service roadbuilding budgets to access marginal high elevation timber, and climbing to well over 4000 feet, this deteriorating road allows ORVs to drive high on Mineral Butte. For the past fifteen years or so, ORVs have been trashing fragile heather meadows above the road end, in an area proposed for inclusion in the Wild Sky Wilderness. Grassy, marshy ponds and meadows have been turned into mud walls. Conservationists have long asked the Forest Service to do something to stop the damage, but got nowhere until a legal appeal of the "Sky Forks" timber sale resulted in a settlement between the the Forest Service and the appealing conservation organizations. The settlement terms included dropping parts of the sale in roadless areas south of Salmon Creek, and an agreement by the Forest Service to install a gate on the road as part of the sale. Conservationists recently met with Forest Service personnel to determine and settle on a location for the gate. It will be placed along a steep stretch of road with cliffs above and below, where it is hoped that ORVs will be unable to bypass it. Hopefully it will serve to stop this particular outbreak of ORV plague, and allow the road above the gate to crumble into impassability.

Middle Fork Snoqualmie Road

A long-planned gate on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie road at Dingford Creek has now been installed and will soon be closed. The eight miles of road above Dingford Creek will be turned into multi-use, riverside trail, effectively re-wilding much of the Middle Fork valley. The gate will be closed as soon as a foot-bridge across the Middle Fork Snoqualmie four miles above Dingford near Goldmyer Hot Springs is opened. Goldmyer is a remarkable place, the only attractive hot spring in the Cascades,

and one of the nicest in North America. Located in splendid old growth forest on private land, it is managed and staffed by a non-profit group, "Northwest Wilderness Programs." NWWP maintains and regularly cleans the pools below the spring, and charges a moderate fee for use of the facilities. The spring is located in a cave in a mountainside just above Burntboot Creek. A pool of roughly 103 degree Fahrenheit water fills the cave, with a series of other pools at descending tem-

peratures below. It has been until now necessary to ford the Middle Fork Snoqualmie to reach Goldmyer, a sometimes hazardous and always chilly experience. NWWP did not want the Middle Fork bridged until the road was gated at Dingford, to lessen chances of gun-totin' drunken visitors showing up. The river filtered out most (but not all,) of those in the past, and the four mile walk will now serve that purpose. For more info on Goldmyer, see www.goldmyer.org

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.

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Stevens Pass Ski Area to Apply for Permit Renewal, Expansion of Operations

Members of NCCC and several other conservation groups met recently with representatives of the Stevens Pass Ski Corporation to discuss their plans for renewal of their permit to operate on National Forest lands, and to expand their operations in several areas.

The Stevens Pass Ski area first operated in 1937, and has grown over subsequent years. Located entirely on public land, it straddles the Cascade crest and occupies parts of both the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie and Wenatchee-Okanogan National Forests. The current permit under which it operates was last renewed in 1982, for a 25-year period ending in 2007. The corporation is expected to send a permit renewal proposal to the Forest Service sometime in December 2006, and a draft EIS is expected by November 2007.

The corporation will be asking the Forest Service to renew the permit for its existing operations, and also for permission to expand operations in four areas: Big Chief, Tye Bowl, "Northern Exposure," and Grace Lakes. If granted, this will allow substantial expansion above and beyond what currently exists. There are also proposals for a new restaurant

atop one of the ski runs ("Skyline Express") and to add cat skiing north of Highway 2, in an area currently used by snowshoers and cross country skiers. Another proposal is for construction of lift access, downhill and "extreme" mountain bike trails for use during summer, in an attempt to extend operations beyond the ski season. Further grooming and smoothing of skin terrain is proposed, to allow the area to operate at lower snow levels by reducing terrain obstacles which emerge when snow depths are low.

Conservationists are concerned about the proposals for a number of reasons. The expansions will push new operations into currently unroaded areas, and "glading" of ski runs will require cutting of old growth trees. Slope grooming can cause erosion, increased ski area use will lead to increased traffic on Highway 2, and demands for further highway widening.

NCCC believes that the Stevens Pass Ski Corporation needs to provide adequate mitigation not just for the proposed expansion areas, but also for the continuing impacts from the existing ski area, which have never

been properly mitigated for in the past. The Ski area sits astride the only high elevation north-south wildlife connectivity corridor in this part of the Cascades. All other lands to the east and west are at lower elevations, and high elevation species need to pass through this area if a connection is to be maintained for such species between the North and Central Cascades. Mitigation might be in the form of acquisition of other nearby private lands which would hopefully serve similar habitat needs.

NCCC and other organizations will be following the renewal process closely, and working to insure that the greatest possible level of mitigation is required.

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