

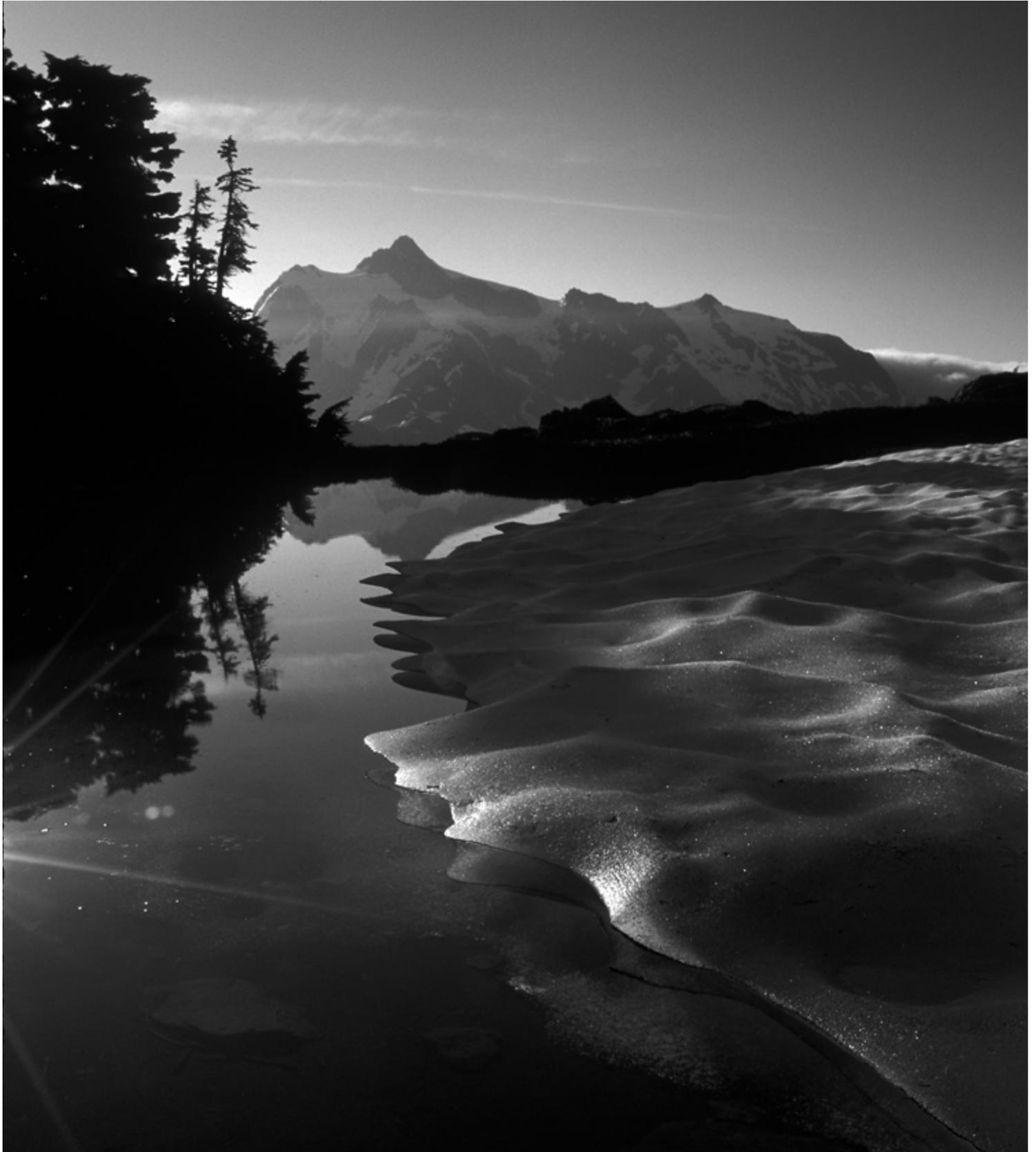
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# THE WILD CASCADES

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THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL

SPRING 2006



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### The Wild Cascades

*Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council*

EDITORS: Betty Manning and Carolyn McConnell  
Printing by EcoGraphics

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University Station, Seattle, WA 98145-2980

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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

Spring 2006

A year or so ago I reported to you that the North Cascades Conservation Council and the activists that are the heart of this organization intended to increase the level of effort in our never-ending struggle to protect the North Cascades. And indeed, we have more projects than ever either developing or in mid-stroke. The primary emphasis lately has been to take advantage of nature's role in wiping out many roads that knife into the heart of the backcountry. We are involved with two legal battles supporting the NPS with their Stehekin road repair decisions and the permitting of telephone developments. We are in administrative appeals over the road repair plans of the USFS in the Sauk, Suiattle, and probably the Whitechuck drainages. One or more of these is also likely to go to the courts. It is unclear what the direction of the Forest Service will be when it comes to trail repairs in the Wilderness with motorized methods but we are trying to stay on top of this as well. There are many other egregious threats, seemingly too numerous to mention, to our favorite places.

In order to have the best possible chance of winning these battles, we have had to resort to outside help, that is, legal help. Lots of attorneys donate their time and efforts to help because they are believers, like you and I. But the assaults by developed recreational and commercial interests have become too numerous. And so here is the punch line – We need additional funds to follow through with the efforts. I hate to keep “going back to the well” because many of you have given generously in the past for other goals, equally as worthy. We do need to keep money flowing in to be able to follow through with the projects mentioned above plus be able to move quickly as other commercial schemes become active. If you are like me, you get tired of endless appeals for money. I promise you that the NCCC will get plenty of bang for the buck. I know most people are already committed to other worthwhile demands for their time. Perhaps you might choose to trade some of your hard earned money for your even more valuable time. If so, please consider sending a check to either the North Cascades Conservation Council or the North Cascades Foundation.

*Marc Bardsley*

# Radio Repeaters in Our Parks: *A violation of the Wilderness Act?*

The North Cascades Conservation Council is actively seeking communications solutions to offer to the National Park Service that don't require the intrusive and excessive infrastructure currently being planned. Contractual agreements between the United States Forest Service, NPS, and communications vendors may preclude preferred (less invasive) options, and indeed, may be a driving force in the solution currently being developed by the federal agencies. The emphasis on law enforcement and security is another reason for the conversion to a more intrusive communications system, a reason that one must wonder about, given the unlikely threat posed by hostiles using the North Cascades as a vehicle for compromising our security. Indeed, it appears to the NCCC that the real threat to the area is the communications infrastructure itself. We will continue to seek alternative solutions for the communications needs, and hopefully mitigate the impacts of said communications system(s) to the point of being a non-issue.

Marc Bardsley, president of the NCCC, recently stated its position in the following letter to NCNPC Superintendent William Paleck.

March 7, 2006

Mr. Bill Paleck, Superintendent  
North Cascades National Park Complex  
810 State Route 20  
Sedro Woolley, WA. 98284-1239

Re: Radio Repeater modifications and additions

Dear Mr. Paleck,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed replacement of the radio system used in the North Cascades National Park.

While the North Cascades Conservation Council recognizes the need to comply with the federal mandate for adoption of a narrowband communications system by 2008, we do not agree that this should mean an expansion of the existing system, and indeed, believe there are superior alternatives to the use of expanded narrowband systems for many of the applications/needs as outlined in the scoping letter dated February 14, 2006.

As indicated by preferred alternative 2, the number of repeater sites would more than double over the existing network. We believe

this increase is unnecessary and excessive. Especially egregious are the sites within the Stephen Mather Wilderness, especially at Desolation Lookout, and Church Mountain and Lookout Mountain.

While the latter two are not in designated wilderness, they are visited by many users each year and provide wilderness experience for those visitors. Mountain-top placement of permanent structures of such great size, especially when one considers the mast and antenna rigging, is simply unacceptable.

As noted in your own scoping letter, issues of designated Wilderness appear to make alternative 2 a non-starter, as the use of machinery, including several helicopter trips for initial construction, and continuing for maintenance, is in direct conflict with the Wilderness Act. And then there are of course the structures themselves, also in violation of the Wilderness Act. We dispute the assertion that these repeaters and the network itself are essential, and preclude/supersede application of Wilderness laws.

**Wilderness exists and is sought after not as a theme park with an ever-present safety net, but to enjoy the land and the challenges it presents, as is.**

"Health and Public Safety" is cited as a primary reason for the need for a narrowband communications system. People go in to the backcountry understanding the risks involved. Indeed, this is one of the reasons people visit the backcountry — to challenge themselves.

Wilderness exists and is sought after not as a theme park with an ever-present safety net, but to enjoy the land and the challenges it presents, as is. To introduce a radio network for safety reasons compromises the values inherent in wilderness. Besides, from a practical standpoint, there will always be areas with insufficient coverage in the park complex and surrounding terrain. Calling for help is not a reason to provide and expand upon a radio network in a wilderness area. As for concerns about overexposure to radio frequency energy: that's as good an argument as any for reducing or removing the dependence on radio systems throughout the park complex.

Park Operations is cited as another reason for providing expanded radio coverage. The

park and attendant wilderness was created to preserve the land as is, not to facilitate operations. We appreciate the need for trail maintenance, historic exploration in the form of archaeology, and research in any number of fields, but believe these programs can mitigate risk through proper planning and procedures. Such foresight precludes the need for a radio communications network that covers every location and contingency within the park. To be sure, the statement that "lack of radio coverage can place both staff and the public in needlessly unsafe circumstances" is patently incorrect. Poor planning, poor decision-making, and lack of ability or responsibility is what places people at risk, not a lack of radio coverage.

Per the requirement to consider all reasonable alternatives, we respectfully submit that all of the reasons and concerns cited in your letter can be addressed by using modern satellite communications systems (satellite phones). Such phones have superior coverage, reduce exposure to harmful radio energy, and accomplish this at considerably less cost than the proposed narrowband system with its tremendous infrastructure and long-term maintenance costs.

Again, there is a requirement to fully document cumulative effects of this decision. In this case, we urge the NPS to not buy into a technology that will certainly become obsolete, will likely require additions and upgrades, and will increase demand for similar services. All of this will tend to violate the NPS commitment to the concept of Wilderness at inception, and for the long-term.

It appears to us that you can comply with federal requirements for use of a narrowband communication network much easier by reducing the network to be primarily used around established low-elevation, low-impact areas such as campgrounds, ranger stations, and the like where they see the most use anyway.

We cannot accept this proposal in its current form.

Thank you for your time and attention. We look forward to working with you and your staff on this, and other important matters in our National Park Complex.

Very truly yours,  
Marc Bardsley, President

## NCCC Road Appeals Denied

NCCC and the Pilchuck Audubon Society recently appealed the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest's decision to rebuild the Suiattle river road and the Mountain Loop road in the Darrington area. Both roads were severely damaged by floods in October 2003. Repairs to the Suiattle road involve relocating part of the road near the Huckleberry Mountain trailhead, cutting into previously undisturbed mature 120-year-old Douglas-fir forest. A bridge will also be repaired at Downey Creek. NCCC objected to sacrificing forest at Huckleberry Mountain and to a design at the Downey Creek crossing which will likely once again be proven inadequate when the next flood hits.

The Mountain Loop was damaged in several areas and washed away where it traverses above the South Fork Sauk river below Monte

Cristo lake. The road has washed out numerous times in the past, and NCCC fully expects it will vanish into the river again in the not too distant future.

The real issue here is the vast and crumbling network of roads on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie that deteriorates further each year, causing untold damage to streams and fish. One could argue that perhaps it makes some sense to rebuild a popular road such as the Mountain Loop, if the unavoidable impacts from its regular destruction were mitigated. That might be done by dealing with some of hundreds of miles of little-used, eroding roads that sit there bleeding away bit by bit, year after year, punctuated by the occasional massive blowout. But the Forest Service steadfastly refuses to look at the road-decay problem broadly, and treats each individual road

problem in isolation. The appeals by NCCC and Pilchuck were denied on all counts.

NCCC is considering how to continue tackling this huge roads problem. The situation is particularly bad with the Whitechuck river road, which was massively obliterated by the same flood event in two locations, both of them along the river's lower reaches. "Fixing" it would mean moving the Whitechuck river, and hoping that it stays where it is put. Any road in a place like the Whitechuck valley is a temporary road. But the Forest Service will likely try to spend millions of taxpayers' dollars to try to put it back together, all for the sake of keeping Glacier Peak a weekend climb. A decision on the Whitechuck road is expected next year. Stay tuned for developments.

— RICK MCGUIRE

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## NCCC Supports Expanded Wilderness Through Upper Stehekin Road Closure

May 27, 2006

William Paleck  
Superintendent  
North Cascades National Park Service  
Complex  
810 State Route 20  
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

Dear Supt. Paleck:

North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) submits these comments on the Upper Stehekin Valley Road Car Wash Falls (MP 12.9) to Cottonwood Camp (MP 22.8) Environmental Assessment.

NCCC has tracked road issues in the Stehekin Valley since our founding in 1957, prior to the designation of North Cascades National Park Complex (NCNPC). Our senior members have seen the road evolve from a derelict mining track to a serviceable road extending as far as Cottonwood Camp at MP 22.8. Log stringer bridges have been replaced with concrete. Dirt has given way to gravel and later to asphalt. Vast amounts of gravel and rock have been extracted to repair and replace road washouts. At many points in time NCCC has questioned the necessity and the utility of the NPS attempting to maintain and improve the Upper Stehekin Road despite the expense. The history of continuous repair and replacement must be kept in mind for the Stehekin Road.

At the time of the CNPC designation, a decision was made to not connect the Stehekin Valley with the newly constructed

North Cross-State Highway. That highway (SR 20) bifurcated the largest unroaded area in the continental United States. This was an enormous loss of contiguous wilderness. The flip side is that it made the core of the North Cascades available for the casual driver. Fortunately, reason prevailed and no road was constructed down Bridge Creek to the Stehekin Valley.

Similarly, when the Washington Parks Wilderness Act (1988) was passed, a narrow corridor was specifically provided for the route of the Stehekin Road. This specific provision clearly expressed a Congressional mandate to keep the Stehekin Road impacts limited to the existing corridor.

When the General Management Plan for CNPC was being prepared, NCCC argued for closure of the upper Cascade River Road and the upper Stehekin Road because of recent washouts. The NCCC position was not accepted, despite it being environmentally preferred, in favor of what the NPS felt was its obligation to maintain public access to the upper reaches of each of these remote valleys. The folly of seeking to maintain access at continuously increasing cost is seen by the decision before us in the Upper Stehekin Valley Road Car Wash Falls (MP 12.9) to Cottonwood Camp (MP 22.8) Environmental Assessment.

Recent floods closed the last approximately 3 miles of road in 1995 and the 2003 flood made the road impassable at a number of

places above and below Car Wash Falls. The NPS has reopened the road to the vicinity of Car Wash Falls at significant expense. It is now considering the environmental consequences of repairing or rerouting the road above that area. NCCC points out that this segmented approach to either emergency repairs and repairs of the Stehekin Road under an Environmental Assessment below Car Wash Falls leads to an incomplete understanding of the true costs of maintaining the Stehekin Road.

Our members have met with the NPS staff to discuss the Alternatives. We have attended the public meeting in Seattle. We have thoroughly reviewed and discussed the full suite of alternatives, including those considered but not further analyzed, and understand the environmental and cost (both dollars, mineral resources, and time) impact of each alternative. At the NCCC Board Meeting, May 19, the Board voted unanimously to support the NPS Preferred Alternative, Alternative B, Permanently Close the Stehekin Valley Road Above Car Wash Falls.

NCCC's rationales for making this choice are primarily future-oriented. NCCC agrees with all of the assessments showing environmental gains from road closure (avoided environmental impacts, too, like 10 years of large dump trucks and road construction). In order to reconstruct or reroute the road the NPS would be violating its own manage-

*Continued on page 19*

# A Wildlife Encounter

BY TOM HAMMOND

The weather has been pretty nice of late, and I've been suffering some spring fever, so what better place to go than the North Cascades for some avalanche viewing.

While the snowpack is still quite healthy, the road is completely melted out to above Midas Creek. Fortunately, where the snow starts, it is consistent at about a foot deep (and deeper higher up), which enabled me to camp at my favorite viewing area and get some really great skiing in. Even with the snow, the only reason I would even consider camping at this point is that the NPS keeps the road gated about a mile below, at the hairpins, so it would be a relatively wild experience. As it ended up, I did not see another person in 26 hours...and had quite a wildness experience.

The snow pack is the best I've seen in years—about two meters at the end of the road, and three at Cascade Pass according to NPS report. It is a normal amount and also very stable snow. Huge patches still cling to the buttresses and shoulders of Johannesberg and Cascade (the areas I expect to see big releases of snow from)—and despite temps in the 70s all day, none of them produced even small avalanches. The waterfall below the Sill Glacier is now more than 50 percent water, but even the big chunks of barely-supported blue ice were not breaking under the spring sun.

A few blocks of ice peeled off of the lower cliffs of Jberg, producing some nice loud rumbles, but on the balance, it was surprising how few avalanches took place over the 26 hours. The aforementioned blocks were a collection of about 10 dumpster-sized pieces free-falling for a couple of seconds before smashing on the rock toe/talus fans about a mile away from me. Another similar event brought down a couple of SUV-sized blocks—the way they wobble due to air resistance as they fall is quite interesting—almost appearing as feathers until they hit rock bottom and explode with that awesome roar. Nice.

Where the avalanches were missing, the skiing filled in nicely. The sun worked the snow to some real sugary consistency, and I was zooming  
h e r e ,

there and everywhere. I skied directly on to the top of one of the picnic tables at the parking lot, the only flat, snow-free terrain, and napped. A fine day of skiing and sightseeing!

Later, after dinner, I got some great evening runs in, but noticed the snow was getting pretty thin around camp. This spot would be bare in another day of such sun—nearly a foot melted in a day! The gathering darkness caused me to check my watch: 8:53. After sunset, but not quite dark, in part due to a gibbous moon with scudding clouds. It struck me that this was it: the last ski of the year, so I began skiing up the road to get one more run in. I was about 20 yards above the tent when I saw something running down the road towards me. It was smaller than a bear, but bigger than a squirrel. Hmm. I figured it would see me and bolt, so I continued skiing up the road. I stopped again after a few strides, and still the animal came. I banged my poles together and whistled—there was no doubt it knew I was there now. Onward it rushed toward me, not breaking stride... Now every single hair on my body was standing on end—the adrenaline rush was remarkable—I became an animal in less than a second, puffing my chest and getting ready for a close encounter.

Cougar? Wolf? Badger?

Up trotted a fox.

S'beau (Chinook word for fox) came right up to me, within a meter, and stopped. It took two careful steps to my right, another step towards me, and sat down like it was my long lost pet. Here was a magnificent wild creature, reddish brown, fluffy tail, and golden-rod eyes peering at me expectantly from less than a meter. S'beau communicated quite clearly to me with that look.

"Where's dinner?"

I stood there, mouth agape, finally managing to reply to it, while making a shooing motion with my hands:

"Aww, c'mon, get outta' here! Be afraid! Booo! Run away! Go find a mouse, I know they're running around all over the place!"

The critter was unruffled. It just sat there, patiently waiting for me to come around to its way of thinking. In a very conversational tone, I told it that that wasn't going to happen, and it needed to mosey on along. I apologized as it gave me the sad-eyes routine—neither of

us seemed to move from our positions, physically or psychologically.

Then I glanced at the tent 15 meters down the road. Wide open, the food bag not as secure as it could be, a nice warm, soft sleeping bag in evidence. Then I looked back to the fox. It was looking at the tent and then turned to me. Our eyes met in a knowing kind of way. "NOT EVEN!" I said. Then S'beau remembered its nature, and became quite sly. It backed in to the trees beside the road and started creeping towards the tent in a most wonderful display of craftiness.

It walked circles around many trees, taking a bizarre, circuitous route, never far from the road, and always moving toward the tent. I laughed out loud and called to it that I could still see it, and it would have to do better. I then reminded S'beau I was on skis and could be to the tent before it took another breath. Undeterred, my new mountain companion wended its way closer and closer to the prize. Zoom, I was at the door of the tent as it emerged from the trees at the crux spot. I even gave it a bit of a spray off my skis as I swooshed to a stop. It stood its ground and seemed rather nonchalant about the fact it was pretty much straddling my left ski.

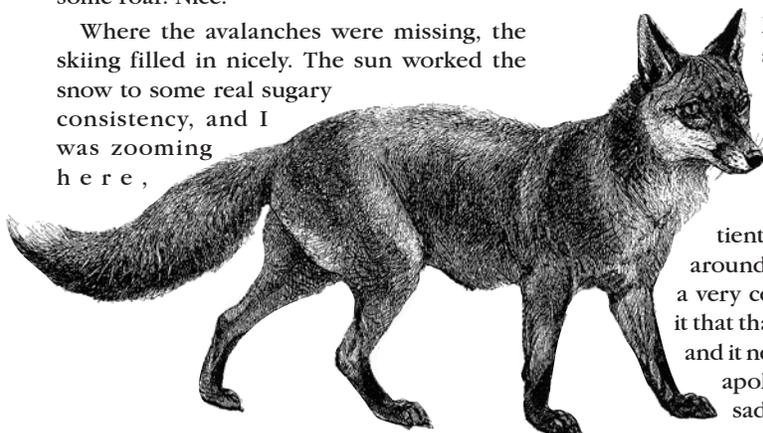
After a bit more conversation, S'beau realized it needed to move on, so down the road it trotted, hopefully to find a mate, another friend, or at least a meal. I called out another apology as it disappeared from sight.

Of course, in the middle of the night I was awakened by chewing noises and scratching outside the tent. A mouse was trying to pilfer my food (happens every trip below timberline)—now where was S'beau??

Saturday, as I was loading the car for the return journey home, a car pulled up with a young (college-aged) couple ready for some hiking. Shorts, sweaters tied around waist, and glorified high-top tennis shoes ("hiking boots"). As I stripped off my gaiters and boots, the young man asked "How was it?". I gave him a look of confusion (how was what?). He quickly followed up with "How's the trail? We're headed for Cascade Pass." I explained, "The trail is under four to six feet of snow, and the snow begins about a mile or two before the parking lot." The look of confusion on his face was classic—I remember my first experience in the North Cascades too!

"So this isn't the parking lot?" he asked, peering at a map and then me. "No," I explained, the parking lot is under four to six feet of snow about two miles further up.

*Continued on page 7*



## Funding for Grizzly Bear Outreach Project in British Columbia

The Conservation Partnership Center (partner in the Grizzly Bear Outreach Project) has been awarded \$20,000 from the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission for a grizzly bear outreach project in the British Columbia portion of the North Cascades. The project will start this summer and emphasize many of the same methods used in the on-going GBOP in the States. We will be working closely with the BC provincial government and local citizens to make the project a success. I also look forward to working with many of you on this project.

Please contact me if you would like to know more about the GBOP, BC North Cascades.

**JIM DAVIS**  
360-480-7973  
512 20th Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225

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## A Wildlife Encounter

*Continued from page 6*

"The parking lot where cars can park?" he asked. "Yes," I said, "the parking lot where cars park once the snow melts, usually around the end of June." I then advised them that without snowshoes or skis, they would be best served NOT going to Cascade Pass (never mind the huge avalanche swaths in evidence everywhere), but instead, if they didn't mind cold, wet feet, the end of the road would make a nice day hike.

To those I've verbally told this story to, many conjecture S'beau knows where to go for a meal. I'm not so sure. As I noted, I come to this place a few times every spring, and have done so for nearly 25 years. In all the times I've visited (or anywhere in the backcountry) I've never encountered S'beau.

In the summer, this place is teeming with autos, noise, and disruption.

There is no way such an animal is anywhere close to such activity. I believe the only reason this encounter happened is that the road is gated. I'm so glad such resources exist so close, and that snow or gates keep the mechanized world at bay.

## On the Power of the Majority in Congress

JOEL CONNELLY

*Seattle Post Intelligencer*  
Monday, June 19, 2006

*"Majority means real poser to make changes. . ."*

### ...Legislating — the front door

Twice, by unanimous vote, the U.S. Senate has passed legislation to create a 106,000-acre Wild Sky Wilderness in the Cascades northwest of Stevens Pass.

In the House, all of the state's six Democratic congressmen, and Republican Reichert, have sponsored the Wild Sky bill.

One man, Rep. Richard Pombo, R-Calif., chairman of the House Resources Committee, has blocked the legislation. Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., would replace Pombo if the Democrats win House control, making it possible for the bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Rick Larsen, D-Wash., to get Wild Sky passed.

### Legislating — the back door

Unable to win on a straight up or down vote, powerful Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, has tried multiple backdoor gambits to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling.

He's tried to make drilling part of Congress' budget resolution and, in December, attached it to a must-pass defense spending bill. Cantwell blocked it with a filibuster....

## RICHARD POMBO (R, California) Profile

*The Nation*, "Comment," June 19, 2006

Richard Pombo (age 45). With his cowboy hats and ostrich-skin boots, Pombo fancies himself a "Capitol Cowboy". To government watchdogs, he's "Dirty Dick," a militant anti-environmentalist and Abramoff crony. The California rancher has raised hundreds of thousands from big business for fellow Republicans and enjoyed close ties with recently indicted DeLay staffer Tony Rudy. Pombo and fellow DeLay protégé John Doolittle (himself a top Republican under investigation for assisting Abramoff) helped kill a government investigation into a Houston-based DeLay donor responsible for a \$3.6 billion savings-and-loan scandal in Texas. At the same time Pombo's staff was cultivating ties to Abramoff, DeLay helped Pombo with leapfrogging ahead of six more-senior Republicans to become chairman of the House Resources Committee, which has jurisdiction over Indian gaming. At age 42, Pombo was the youngest chairman in the House. "This is the guy DeLay wanted," former House Ethics Committee chair Joel Hefley remarked. Pombo has used the position to try to destroy the Endangered Species Act, reward big-donor polluters, ignore calls for an investigation into Abramoff's tribal clients, give his chief of staff two salaries and pay his wife and brother \$357,000 over the past four years for "consulting" work. More recently, Pombo has come under fire for renting an RV for a family vacation and sticking taxpayers with the bill.



*Fog —  
Glacier  
Peak  
Wilderness*

*BRUCE  
BARNBAUM*

# Court Halts Off-road Motorcycle Project in Proposed Wilderness

*Judge cites concerns about impacts to wildlife*

*“Now they will have to study the impacts of off-road motorcycles on wildlife in this important area before they move forward.”*

—NALANI ASKOV  
Executive Director  
Washington Wilderness Coalition.

KARL FORSGAARD



SEATTLE, WASH.—A federal court decided yesterday to halt an off-road motorcycle project in a roadless area that is a proposed addition to the Glacier Peak Wilderness. The court issued a permanent injunction prohibiting the U.S. Forest Service from constructing the Mad River project until the Forest Service completes an environmental impact statement (EIS). The Forest Service violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by failing to thoroughly analyze cumulative impacts of an interconnected system of projects. The court said that the Forest Service consideration of impacts on wildlife is “inadequate,” and that NEPA does not contemplate “a ‘build-first, study later’ approach to resource management.”

The Forest Service had described the off-road motorcycle system as “World Class.” Plaintiffs asked, “does NEPA allow the Forest Service to construct a ‘World Class single track motorcycle trail system’ within a proposed Wilderness, *without* preparing an EIS?” The court answered no, because an EIS is required.

The injunction decision by U.S. District Judge Ricardo S. Martinez found that this “controversial” project, “the latest in a long

line of small projects,” would “result in the continued increase of motorized traffic throughout ... the Mad River system.” The 200-mile Entiat-Chiwawa-Mad River trail system stretches from the Chiwawa River near Lake Wenatchee to the Entiat River and Lake Chelan, in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. The project proposed to relocate and reconstruct sections of trail, construct a helicopter landing site, and construct a bridge over the Mad River.

The lawsuit was brought by four conservation and recreation groups: The Mountaineers, North Cascades Conservation Council, Sierra Club and Washington Wilderness Coalition.

“The motorcycle route system in the Mad River country has grown piece-by-piece for 30 years, with each new project adding to the last. We’ve long asked the Forest Service to study the cumulative impacts of the entire network of motorcycle routes in the Mad River country, before deciding that a single component piece has insignificant impacts. It’s gratifying that the Judge agrees,” said Harry Romberg of The Mountaineers.

“The court decision confirms what we’ve said all along—‘The

proper reference point for a cumulative impacts inquiry is the entire ORV trail system.’ There were many interconnected system components the Forest Service didn’t even mention, let alone analyze. Now they will have to study the impacts of off-road motorcycles on wildlife in this important area before they move forward,” said Nalani Askov, Executive Director of Washington Wilderness Coalition.

The lawsuit follows a 1999 federal court ruling that stopped construction of the adjacent Goose-Maverick off-road motorcycle project. In that case, the court ruled that the Forest Service violated NEPA by giving inadequate review to its motorcycle construction/expansion plans throughout the whole Entiat-Mad River system, including use conflicts and the impacts of off-road motorcycles on wildlife. In yesterday’s ruling, Judge Martinez said “the Forest Service failed to heed the warning” of the 1999 case.

Most of the Mad River country is relatively gentle terrain, a subalpine pine-fir forest interspersed with meadows and lakes, ideal for family camping. Several of its trails are featured

in the popular hiking guidebooks *100 Hikes in Washington’s Glacier Peak Region* and *100 Classic Hikes in Washington* by Harvey Manning and Ira Spring, and *Best Hikes with Children* by Joan Burton, published by The Mountaineers.

## Background

The Mad River area is in the largest unprotected roadless area in the Wenatchee, Okanogan and Colville National Forests (the roadless area is comprised of the contiguous Entiat, Rock Creek, Chelan and Myrtle Lake Roadless Areas).

The Mad River area has long been proposed as an addition to the Glacier Peak Wilderness, and is still a very high priority for inclusion in our National Wilderness System. In the 1983-1984 campaign for the Washington Wilderness Act, a broad coalition proposed that the Entiat Roadless Area (including Mad River) be added to the Glacier Peak Wilderness, but it was one of the areas left out of the 1984 Act. In the 1990 Wenatchee Forest Plan, which is still in effect, the Forest Service admits that the Mad River area has “high potential for wilderness as an individual area or as an addition to existing wilderness.”

Since 1992, this coalition of conservation and recreation groups has prevailed in five consecutive lawsuits regarding off-road motorcycle recreation on public lands in Washington State. In the other four lawsuits the coalition has also included American Hiking Society, The Cascadians, Columbia Gorge Audubon Society, Emergency Trails Committee, Gifford Pinchot Task Force, Issaquah Alps Trails Club, Kittitas Audubon Society, Northwest Ecosystem

## Corporate Changes for NCCC

Changes are coming for the North Cascades Conservation Council. The Board of Directors has decided to switch the tax status of the organization from what is commonly known as a "501(c)(4)" status, a category pertaining to "civic leagues" and "social welfare" non-profit organizations, to a "501(c)(3)" status, a category pertaining to non-profit organizations having "religious, charitable, scientific... literary or educational" or certain other purposes. The reason for making this change is that contributions to 501(c)(3) organizations are tax-deductible by the donor, and contributions to 501(c)(4) organizations are not. Another difference is that (c)(3) organizations may not support or oppose political candidates and may not devote a "substantial part" of their activities to lobbying or promoting or opposing legislation, a restriction not applicable to 501(c)(4) organizations. Since NCCC has scarcely ever (if ever) supported or opposed particular candidates, this restriction on (c)(3) organizations is not thought to significantly affect its activities.

The tax deductibility of contributions, however, may increase the amount of donations or testamentary bequests made directly to the organization. During the fight over High Ross Dam,

in 1971, the North Cascades Foundation was established as a 501(c)(3) organization to raise funds to support NCCC's legal efforts. Since then, in addition to membership dues paid directly to NCCC, the Council's activities, such as THE WILD CASCADES, have been funded with grants from the Foundation, and occasionally other sources. With 501(c)(3) status, NCCC will be able to solicit tax-deductible donations and bequests directly.

One step in the process to make this change is to adopt a new set of Articles of Incorporation and a new set of Bylaws containing specific language required by the IRS explicitly limiting the organization to activities permitted by the Internal Revenue Code for 501(c)(3) organizations. That action was taken by the Board of Directors at its May 21, 2006 meeting. Besides the required changes, the new Articles and Bylaws contain a few procedural and organizational changes thought to be helpful, after nearly fifty years of service with the original Articles, adopted in 1959.

The next step in the process is the preparation and submission of a Form 1023, a formal application to IRS for 501(c)(3) status, an extensive document detailing the membership, governance, activities and funding sources of the organization. This typically takes several months to complete and get approved. It is hoped that this will all be done by the coming 50th anniversary of the founding of NCCC in 2007, leaving the organization well positioned to take on the challenges of the next half century.

—CHARLES EHLERT

### Off-road

#### Motorcycles Halted

*Continued from page 8*

Alliance (aka Conservation Northwest), The Ptarmigans, Washington Trails Association, The Wilderness Society and Wilapa Hills Audubon Society. The coalition has been represented by attorney Karl Forsgaard since 1992, Andrew Salter since 1999, and other attorneys.

## UPDATES

### GREEN NEWS

"Northwest Environment Watch, a highly credible outfit that keeps a scorecard on sustainability and "greenness" in our region, has changed its name. Its new title: Sightline Institute.

"...We've lately seen 1000 Friends of Washington change its name to Futurewise.

"The Bellingham-based Greater Ecosystem Alliance became the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance and, more recently, Conservation Northwest."

Source:

Joel Connelly,  
Op Ed, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

### DUSEL REDUX

The cosmic research lab that was proposed to be built underneath a Cascade mountain has a new lease on life. The Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory (DUSEL) will receive a \$500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for further studies and design. NSF had dropped the Cascades site from consideration last October, but the University of Washington appealed and is now back in the act. Vertical shaft sites in South Dakota and Colorado are also being studied.

#### New Site Proposed

The previous proposal to tunnel under Mount Cashmere (and Alpine Lakes Wilderness) in the Icicle Creek valley was highly controversial. The site has been shelved, and a revised proposal would use an existing tunnel about 60 feet south of the

currently operating Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad tunnel under Stevens Pass. Known as the "Pioneer Tunnel," it was dug to facilitate the excavation of the railroad tunnel in 1929. It is not the older Cascade Tunnel, which is farther north. The Pioneer Tunnel runs under the Stevens Pass ski area. The lab would use about half of the 5.3-mile tunnel to get to a spot that is 3,400 feet deep in the granite rock – underneath Cowboy Mt. The tunnel portal is at the railroad yard at Scenic. Excavated rock would be shipped out over the rails.

The proposal has also been scaled back and would be accomplished in phases, with a deeper tunnel to be dug under the existing tunnel in the future.

For more information: <http://www.int.washington.edu/DUSEL/cascades.html>.

Source: *Cascade Checkerboard News*, June 2006

# KEVIN HERRICK

1966-2006



Executive Director  
North Cascades Conservation Council  
1994-1995

Director  
North Cascades Conservation Council  
1996-2006

I heard about Kevin Herrick long before I met him. My grandparent befriended him when he was a ranger in Stehekin, working summers between semesters at Grinnell College, and I began hearing regular raves about this hard-working, smart young man who had fallen in love with the North Cascades. Soon my grandparents began making noises about how this talent shouldn't be wasted—maybe they meant “allowed to escape”—and before I knew it Kevin was working for the North Cascades Conservation Council.

I never heard how this Midwestern kid discovered Stehekin. One of those happy accidents, I suppose, or the pull of fate by one of the world's greatest places on a soul with the capacity to appreciate it. Kevin was one of many who

have fallen headlong in love with Stehekin. In many, that love expresses itself as a desire to possess the place, and in the end Kevin did acquire a cabin in Stehekin, but in the meantime he dedicated himself selflessly to protecting the valley and the larger ecosystem that surrounds it—one expression of the tremendous sense of responsibility that defined Kevin in all his doings. For several years that meant spending more time at meetings in Wenatchee, Seattle, and Olympia than in Stehekin, and when he did make it to Stehekin, it was for more meetings and hostility-fraught encounters with those on the other side of the political fence. Kevin proved himself a master diplomat, staying friendly with everyone while tenaciously working for the preservation of the North Cascades.

For many years, I showed up on Kevin's doorstep twice a year on my way to and from Stehekin, and he in turned showed up on the porch of the McConnell cabin in Stehekin. I watched him represent the NCCC at many meetings, standing up amid a hostile crowd with a smile. He rarely had time for a hike, unless it could be combined with investigation of the latest deprivations of Stehekin, but we shared dinners and red wine and watching the last of the long summer days' sunlight on the valley walls.

Kevin's suicide this spring sent ripples far out among the conservation community and through the many webs of connection Kevin had formed. For me, it feels as if there is a sucking hole in the universe. All who loved him wonder if something could have saved him, and those among Kevin's friends who share his love for Stehekin wish that he could have returned to find healing in this wild valley. I don't know if Stehekin could have saved Kevin, but I believe that in the larger sense it heals all of us. In wildness is the salvation of us all.

Kevin didn't save himself, but he helped save some wilderness for the rest of us, leaving pieces of himself in the Stehekin River's untamed rapids, in old untouched trees, in spotted owl nests and stretches of unroaded wilderness. Thank you, Kevin.

— Carolyn McConnell

## The Kevin Herrick We Know

Betty Manning and Carolyn McConnell have bugged me to write this piece for *The Wild Cascades*. In caving in to their entreaties, I have to say that I find this the most difficult note I have provided in the NCCC annals. It was not easy to write how we remembered such giants as Grant McConnell or Dick

Brooks in the NCCC but it was possible. This about Kevin tears me up. It is impossible. I can only hope that it is cathartic for me, that I can better understand my reactions to his untimely death and to remind NCCC of the tremendous gift we had from Kevin as our Executive Director. Right now it does not feel that way.

Kevin was the guy who reaffirmed the NCCC vision of protecting the North Cascades. His interest in the issues and in the region made him one of us. Kevin had come as a seasonal ranger for the National Park Service and was caught up in the North Cascades web. We counted Kevin as one to carry on the torch as others who made their contributions aged out of the fight. This is why it is so hard to realize that the Kevin we know is only part of the Kevin who is/was. Maybe that is true for all of us who have not opted to hit the delete key in this struggle. There is so much to do that we rely on each other to mount a credible opposition to assaults on the North Cascades. In retrospect, clearly, there were other issues more important for Kevin than the North Cascades – at least in the crucible of living his life. However, he did know and love the Cascades and made a substantial contribution to preserving them.

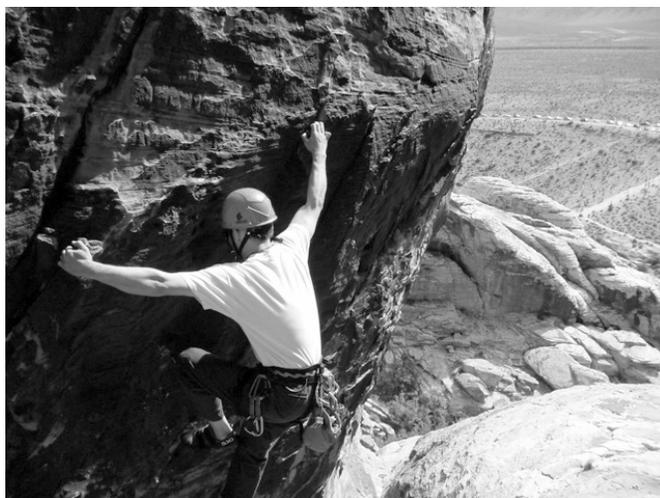
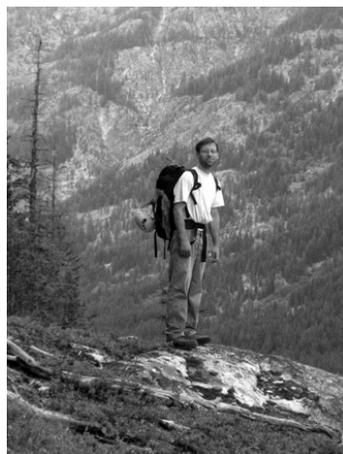
The fact that there were competing demands on Kevin to contribute to all is no surprise. Those of us from NCCC, Kevin's family and all the other parts of Kevin's network could not help but be overwhelmed with what we experienced at Kevin's memorial celebration at the Wooden Boat Center in mid-June. In each case of Kevin's compartmentalized life, his contributions were as admirable as the next. Social justice, youth empowerment, effective business communication software, individuals, loves, and more, were deep interests to which Kevin was committed intellectu-

ally, passionately, and playfully. Many of these interests were part of the Kevin that I did not know in detail but respected in abstract. I say this because Kevin was good at making one feel that whatever was the issue of concern was the most important thing he was doing (and I believe he gave each aspect of his life a 100 percent effort which is admirable but in the long run not a winning strategy).

Thus, I can only recall the Kevin who devoted a couple of years as North Cascades Conservation Council Executive Director — the only one we have had. How did that happen and what did he do?

Kevin the ED was a concept that sat very well with NCCC and me as President of NCCC, as

it meant that I could lessen my direct involvement, not let anything slip between the cracks and do more than we were able to do before. The trouble was that Kevin's presence, despite all



*Above, clockwise:*

*Stebekin River Trail, above the Stebekin River, trying to find some cliffs to climb. They found no cliffs but did find a lot of very aggressive bees.*

—SANDRA NENCETTI

*Meeting with David Brower and Harvey Manning in Bellevue.*

—PENNY MANNING

*Yeah, baby. Red Rocks Canyon, Las Vegas, Nev., April 2003. A proud moment for Kevin: an intimidating climb with a scary, dangerous start. He took over the lead after someone else in the party backed off.*

—SANDRA NENCETTI

of his positive attributes, only meant that the organization, including its officers and Board Members had more to do and not less, as Kevin linked us into the agendas of other organizations.

Three vignettes illustrate key parts of Kevin's involvement with NCCC.

First, Kevin was a newcomer to the Stehekin valley and the long history of NCCC involvement. As a NPS seasonal ranger, he had cultivated a cordial and personal relationship with

the issues that NCCC had on its agenda in the mid 1990s, this was the most exciting and forward-looking item we were pushing along with partners in Canada and in the United States with Dale Crane, north-west regional director of the National Parks and Conservation Association. It was a heady era with Canadian preservation interests being aligned with U.S. interests. However, it also coincided with the resurgence of international paranoia, with threats of "black" helicopters on bizarre missions, the Tri-Lateral



many Stehekin residents. This relationship included those who shared the NCCC vision of what Stehekin could be as well as those who struggled to make Stehekin their home and found NPS management a blessing or a curse depending on which issue was at stake. This background better informed NCCC positions on many issues affecting the Stehekin valley. Kevin was able to put a human face on both the supporters and detractors to NCCC positions on Stehekin issues. I'd like to think that NCCC positions were more nuanced and sensitive to local concerns, and where differences existed, and that NCCC was better at communicating our interests.

Second, Kevin came aboard as NCCC embarked on a major campaign to recognize a transboundary national park in the North Cascades. Of all

Commission agenda being conflated with the helicopters and a general "sage-brush" rebellion against federal government control (when in fact these were all federal lands under discussion). Kevin and I made a number of trips together to meetings with our Canadian counterparts and a wonderful informational field trip to the transboundary area under discussion. The ease with which detractors of the proposed international park were able to derail the carefully laid plan was disconcerting. It was a generous dose of the adage that it is far easier to block a good idea than to make it work. NCCC has not given up on this issue and we wish that we had Kevin to do the coordination required locally and internationally.

*Continued on page 12*

## Kevin Herrick

*Continued from page 11*

Third, NCCC had discovered that a Stehekin valley resident had unilaterally decided to “protect” his property from erosion by taking heroic if ill-advised measures to buttress his river-front acreage. Unfortunately or fortunately, this individual chose to do this without applying for the various local, state, and federal permits required to gain approval for such action. This is a long and convoluted process into which I will not drag Kevin’s memory, but Kevin was right there with the coordination, sensitization to local issues, and field research needed. One memorable night was spent testifying at a Chelan County hearing on the issue. Kevin, my wife, Lisa, and I drove over to testify. The way over was treacherous with Snoqualmie Pass being OK but Swauk/Blewett being extremely slippery with Lisa driving a trusty Subaru four-wheel drive. Following the hearing we pushed over Stevens Pass to make it back in the same snowstorm we encountered on Swauk Pass. Kevin was assigned to watch for the left edge of the road and I was assigned to watch for the right edge of the road. Lisa attempted to split the difference. Half way up the east side of Stevens Pass we encountered a van slowly spinning out of control and including us in its trajectory. Frankly, I cannot remember if we accelerated around the van, braked and let it swirl by or dodged it via other evasive actions. In any event, we made it home. But the ultimate outcome of the NCCC machinations leaves us wondering.

What we wonder is about the worth of expending a huge amount of organization effort to counter the initiative of an individual who clearly lacked a basic understanding of mountain-river dynamics and who ignored professional advice. Scarier yet is that this same individual was a captain of a nuclear-powered submarine in a former career. Whatever the level of expertise, Mother Nature has a way of winning, NCCC managed to obtain agreement with the above individual to acquire an easement that would allow the river to follow the course it determined. Within a short time, the river reclaimed the disturbed portion of its bed.

What does this have to do with Kevin and NCCC? Kevin had a key understanding of the ecosystem and its dynamics. Further he understood the dynamics of this particular Stehekin-valley individual. Finally, he saw the NCCC role as intervening to correct the misunderstanding of the river dynamics. We did escape from the undesirable driving conditions but NCCC eventually prevailed in its challenge of local, state and federal permit requirements, and were vindicated



*Rest stop on Mt. Goode (1991)*

— KATIE SAUTER

in our insistence that permits were required. Still in the short run, Kevin and the rest of NCCC was appalled to see that our prediction about what would happen based on the physics of the situation really did happen, i.e., the disturbed riverbed eroded extremely rapidly. We have not yet figured out whether we should rely on Mother Nature or the courts to manage the natural environment.

Most of the funding for the position of Executive Director (as I recall a modest 20K) was thanks to a generous contribution to NCCC from Grant and Jane McConnell. They recognized that a series of issues before NCCC, such as the General Management Plan for the Park, invasive species, management of the Buckner orchard in Stehekin, as well as private interests in the Stehekin Valley required elevated attention from NCCC. It was political scientist Grant McConnell who advocated a conservation group whose purpose was to fight for establishment of North Cascades National Park — that is, the NCCC. He and Jane recognized the fights with the NPS over appropriate management needed to be resolved. Their endorsement of Kevin was all that was needed for NCCC to move in this direction. I can remember a missive from Grant asking that I meet Kevin to discuss his ambitions. It was clear that Kevin could contribute immeasurably to NCCC if we could find a way.

Thanks to Jane and Grant, we were able to entice Kevin to serve as our first employee. Kevin did more than he was ever paid to do and we miss him all the more.

I can tell you that I still envision Kevin pumping his bicycle up Fremont Avenue, his burgundy pick-up headed to a conservation meeting, his pixie smile when the going was difficult. As I write this, I realize that Kevin and I never got the chance to take a hike, climb a peak, or rope up. But we accomplished a lot. Each of us will wonder until our own dying days if there was not some signal we missed that would have caught Kevin’s descent.

Kevin, little buddy, belay on for now and eternity.

—DAVE FLUHARTY

**I remember a time** when Kevin had asked if I would come to Stehekin for a couple of events.

There was a fall community picnic in the Buckner orchard followed by several of us throwing down our sleeping bags in a nearby campground. Just having more fun.

Another time Kevin had asked me to sit in on a Stehekin community meeting — more as an observer than participant. Late that snowy evening after the meeting, we drove to the end of the road across the river — to hike in to the McConnell cabin to spend the night.

It was a black, black night. As we plunged through the snow in the dark, flashlights were not much help. Kevin in the lead overshot the cabin. Circling back, he finally found it — covered with snow. Just above the porch, Kevin spotted an opening. He slid on down, calling back that all was well. I, then, slid on in.

Kevin soon had a fire going, dug out some food, did the cooking. He bunked in Grant’s “office” next to the porch. I sacked out in one of the bedrooms. Next morning we had some breakfast, then tramped out through the snow — wondering how we had almost missed the cabin the night before.

That evening and night has always brought back how great a pleasure it always was to be with Kevin Herrick, whether in Stehekin or Seattle, whether at NCCC Board meetings or at his desk as NCCC’s Executive Director. Kevin Herrick has been a wonderful, vital part of the North Cascades Conservation Council.

—POLLY DYER

*Continued on page 13*

## *WeavTel stands to make a profit by providing a service that is not wanted*

### STEHEKIN PHONE SERVICE — AGAIN

Readers of *The Wild Cascades* will be aware of the long running efforts of WeavTel to bring telephone service to Stehekin despite the lack of local support (see Summer 2005 and Winter 2006). Well, the saga continues on a number of fronts.

Because the Park Service controls much of the land in the Stehekin, WeavTel had to secure permission from that agency before it could install needed equipment. One of the conditions imposed by the Park Service was that the company obtain a building permit from Chelan County for a proposed call switching center in Stehekin. The Chelan County Commissioners have now twice denied WeavTel's application, the last time on June 6. At that hearing, one County Commissioner recused himself, one made a motion

to deny the application, and the third refused to second that motion. The result? This is considered a non-action, and is considered a denial.

WeavTel has also sued the Park Service in federal court in Spokane, alleging the Park Service lacked authority to require it to obtain any approvals from Chelan County, and that suit is pending.

Now Weavtel has asserted that it has new wireless technology and no longer needs the call-switching center, and the company has stated that it intends to have phone service by July 1. But that seems unrealistic because Park Service approval is still needed, and no detailed plans for the new technology system have been submitted to the Service.

The true purpose of WeavTel's dogged

pursuit to install a service that few want can be seen by that company's application to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission for \$738,443 from the Washington Exchange Carrier Association. The Association collects fees from long distance providers and disburses funds to companies providing services to rural areas. This is all pursuant to the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, which states that phone service should be provided to communities that want it. The Act apparently does not contemplate the situation in Stehekin. WeavTel stands to make a profit by providing a service that is not wanted. The WUTC has yet to act on WeavTel's request.

Stay tuned.

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#### Kevin Herrick

*Continued from page 12*

#### The Editor of *The Wild Cascades* remembers . . .

Kevin and I worked together on each issue of the Journal while he represented the NCCC. He suggested stories, issues we should address, critiqued copy and helped with the proofing (always rather tedious) that had to be done. Even now when I put an issue of *The Wild Cascades* to press I silently thank Kevin. One day when David Fluharty, Kevin, and I were meeting in Dave's office discussing a forthcoming issue, Kevin suggested we consider changing the design and layout of the Journal. A friend of his, a graphic designer, was willing to design new layout and a new cover for us. And from that day *The Wild Cascades* changed its cover — and became one of the most striking journals put out by any environmental organization. It has impact, style, and catches the eye of a reader. I don't know if I ever thanked him. I wish I had shared with him the many times people would say, "What a striking magazine..." Kevin, thank you for your help and giving TWC the benefit of your insight and knowledge.

—BETTY MANNING

### Cantwell Needs to Oppose WeavTel in Stehekin

The '06 electoral season dawns with the Stehekin/WeavTel phone proposal still in limbo. Earlier (last year) the National Park Service issued a defective Environmental Assessment on the matter, which resulted in a flurry of furious comments, after which North Cascades National Park Superintendent William Paleck did the right thing and rejected the project. Then—after WeavTel managed to elicit a letter from Senator Maria Cantwell and threatened to sue for its right to millions of dollars under the 1996 Telecommunications Act—NPS changed its mysterious and collective mind (in flagrant violation of the entire National Environmental Policy Act process, which it had earlier indicated its intention to follow assiduously) and okayed the environmentally and culturally disastrous project.

Now only the Chelan County Planning Commission keeps the phone plan at bay. WeavTel wants it to declare that the land where it wants to build its 'security station' etc.—though totally flooded as recently as '03—not in a flood plain. The commission has twice denied WeavTel's requests. But with so much money at stake, there is doubt that the situation can hold.

Maria Cantwell needs to be told that her previous intervention with NPS was (perhaps

unintentionally) singularly effective and that it was on the wrong side. She needs to write an open letter to the NPS saying clearly that she opposes the WeavTel proposal. Pressure must be put. Environmentalists around the state must tell her that her heretofore conservationist credentials among her supporters are in jeopardy unless she moves quickly on this matter.

SOS to all: write Cantwell and NPS Regional Director Jon Jarvis (One Jackson Center, 1111 Jackson Street, Suite 700, Oakland, CA 94607) and contact all friends and organizations in Washington that can exert an influence.

—ANN MCCONNELL

# On Privatizing the Public and Big-Green Agendas

With Comments by Scott Silver

[This article in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* online was printed almost six years ago. It is as pertinent now (or even more so) as then. Go to the links below to read all articles in the series. — BM]

*"It seems to defy logic: San Francisco is, by many accounts, the cradle of the modern environmental movement, a place that probably has more environmental organizations and activists than any other city in the nation. So how did San Francisco become the place where private interests first managed to take control of a national park? And why did San Francisco-based nonprofits and foundations this year help promote the worst pro-nuclear sellout in decades?"*

[www.sfbg.com/News/32/02/Features/time](http://www.sfbg.com/News/32/02/Features/time)

So began a truly eye-opening investigative series that appeared some years ago in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* — a series that not only asked important questions, but offered seemingly enlightened, and thought provoking, answers. It is a series that, IF correct in its assignment of blame, could go a long way to explaining why many of the Big-Green organizations seem to be focused upon agendas than are radically different from those of the environmental grassroots.

By way of example, please consider the fee-demo issue, which I know the best and am qualified to speak upon. But consider that what I am saying/asking is equally applicable to issues such as globalization, free-trade, etc.

This *SF Bay Guardian* series quite possibly explains why the most-corporatized of Big-Green organizations steered clear of the rec-

reation fee-demonstration issue after groups such as Wild Wilderness, the Sierra Club, and American Lands Alliance defined that issue as "the recreation industry's attempt to Commercialize, Privatize and Motorize recreation opportunities on America's public lands."

The explanation offered in the *Bay Guardian* series is remarkably simple. It suggests that major environmental funders have set tight limits upon the issues their grant recipients may, and may not, work. And while several of the organizations named below are engaged in important work upon motorized recreation issues, perhaps they will not (or cannot) get involved with the fee-demo issue because to do so would mean aggressively opposing private-sector "Commercialization" and "Privatization." The *Bay Guardian* series says that "privatization" is an issue that the funders have placed OFF-LIMITS to their grant recipients and the article specifically shows how these Big-Green organizations have promoted the privatization of public lands and resources.... including the privatization of a National Park.

Could this concept of 'funder-control' explain why a number of big-green organizations have been not merely sitting on the sidelines but have been actively SUPPORTING the 'Commercialization and Privatization of public lands' agenda? (Examples of this agenda, in addition to fee-demo, include the Merced River Plan, the Yosemite Valley Plan, the Canyon Forest Village Plan, etc.)

It seems that, as often than not, when my organization joins an appeal, an Amicus, or a lawsuit brought upon a federal agency by really great environmental organizations — there are usually one or more Big Green organizations sitting on the opposite side of table opposing us and supporting the agency or supporting the private sector. I've not figured out why this is happening, but I've seen it happen so frequently and it has interfered with my own work to the extent that I've been forced to seek answers.

What's going on? I want your input.

—SCOTT

PS.... the link below will get you into the series. There are 5-6 articles and ALL are worth reading.

[www.sfbg.com/News/32/02/Features/intro](http://www.sfbg.com/News/32/02/Features/intro)

## Privatizing the public agenda

BY TIM REDMOND

*San Francisco Bay Guardian* online

*Private foundations are a huge growth industry in the United States. In 1980, before the Reagan revolution allowed the wealthiest Americans to become obscenely wealthy and decimated public-sector support for anything except the Pentagon and prisons, the total assets of foundations in this country were roughly \$48 billion. Now, that number has grown to \$226 billion — an increase of 372 percent.*

*During the 1980s a huge amount of wealth came off the tax rolls and went into foundations. The assets of those foundations were invested, to a large extent, in the stock market — and as the stock market has soared, so have the foundation portfolios.*

*As foundations have grown and government money has shrunk, the private philanthropic sector has replaced the public sector as the source of funding for many political and cultural organizations — and the foundations have started using that immense power to control the political agenda.*

*Here's how it works in real life:*

*Almost four years ago Bay Guardian reporter Martin Espinoza got a tip that led him to one of the biggest political stories in local history. The Presidio army base, which was closing down and by federal law was supposed to be turned into a national park, had been effectively seized by a handful of big corporations that wanted to make it a model for the privatization of the National Park Service.*

*This was exactly the sort of issue that used to generate huge outrage from environmental groups. Much of the history of the U.S. environmental movement revolves around the fight to keep private interests from taking over public land.*

*But none of the big local or national environmental groups issued a peep. In fact, from the Wilderness Society to the Sierra Club, from the Natural Resources Defense Council to David Brower's Earth Island Institute, nearly every potential opponent either actively supported the privatization plan or sat quietly on the sidelines and let it happen.*

*And guess what? Almost every one of those*

*Continued on page 15*

# Playing Hardball in the Presidio

July 12 - July 18, 2006

San Francisco Bay Guardian

EDITORIAL

www.sfbg.com/entry.php?entry  
id=1080&catid=4

When Rep. Nancy Pelosi began peddling her plan to privatize the Presidio back in the 1990s her chief weapon was fear: If the Democrats didn't cut a deal to let the private sector control the fate of the new national park, she argued, the Republicans who ran Congress would simply sell off the land. Then there would be no park at all.

That was a highly unlikely scenario — there was a Democrat named Bill Clinton in the White House, and it's hard to imagine him going along with the GOP on the sale of 1,491 acres of parkland in San Francisco (part of his loyal California base). But even if that happened, we argued at the time, San Francisco wouldn't have been helpless: The city at least could have had some zoning control over the private land.

Instead, we've wound up with the worst of all worlds — a park controlled by an un-

elected, unaccountable federal trust that's dominated by real estate and development interests, that has already handed over big chunks of the park to the private sector (George Lucas and others), and that refuses to abide by any local land-use regulations or ordinances.

That's the problem at the heart of the dispute over the plan to build 230 luxury condominiums and apartments on the site of the old Public Health Service Hospital Complex just off Lake Street. Neighbors want a smaller project, one more in sync with the (relatively) low density district. More important, Supt. Jake McGoldrick, who represents the area, wants to see the developer add some affordable housing to the mix.

But the Presidio Trust has no interest in affordable housing. For the Bush appointees who run the park, the only thing that matters is the bottom line. Luxury units mean more profit for the developer and more cash for the trust. The needs of San Francisco aren't even part of the equation.

This is what Pelosi wrought, with the help of then-mayor Willie Brown and the entire old Burton Machine (along with the Sierra Club and other environmental groups), and it is the most enduring legacy she will leave behind. (See "Plundering the Presidio," 10/8/1997.) It's important for every activist infuriated with the arrogant behavior of the Presidio Trust to remember that — and to start mounting some real pressure on Pelosi to undo the damage and repeal the Presidio Trust Legislation. The Presidio is a national park and ought to be run by the National Park Service.

In the meantime, though, the city has no choice but to play hardball.

McGoldrick was only half joking (if he was joking at all) when he suggested that the city close portions of 14th and 15th avenues — literally blocking off the only entrance to the Presidio from the Richmond, a move that would seriously damage the new development. The city can also deny water and sewer service, which would pretty much end any plans for luxury housing.

Those aren't pretty solutions — but if the trust won't back down and at least meet the city's requirement for affordable housing, McGoldrick and his colleagues should pursue them. SFBG

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## Privatization

Continued from page 14

groups got funding from a few private foundations — primarily the Tides Foundation and the Energy Foundation — that have a well-established interest in the privatization of public resources. And those foundations, along with many of the activist groups, wound up getting free, plush office space in the privatized Presidio.

What these foundations have made very clear is that they won't fund any group or project that questions privatization (or that opposes private utilities on energy deregulation, or that works for public power or for higher taxes on the rich or any of a long list of other issues that ought to be at the top of the progressive agenda).

Those issues, in the words of today's non-profit leaders, are not fundable.

So nobody addresses them. Nobody even brings them up.

The private foundations — the tax-free arms of the wealthiest and most powerful

individuals and corporations in the nation — have effectively set the limits of acceptable political debate on the left.

\* \* \*

There's no simple solution to this problem. But there are some clear steps that would make a major difference.

For starters, any foundation that wants to wear the label progressive should set aside a significant part of its annual giving to funding general support for legitimate grassroots organizations — give them the money and let them decide on the issues. These foundations also need to do for the left what the right wing has done so successfully: fund intellectual debate and policy discourse.

Most important, the public needs to raise a huge fuss and demand that foundations be accountable to the community. That means the current practice, which we discuss throughout this issue, of ducking questions, refusing to disclose information, hiding as-

sets, and generally operating in a bunker-mentality climate of secrecy, has to end.

And some of our major self-proclaimed progressive groups, from the Tides Foundation and the Energy Foundation to Earth Island Institute and the Wilderness Society need to move out of the Presidio immediately and start fighting to bring the park back under public control. As long as they're out there, they'll remain monuments to the ability of private interests to subvert and co-opt progressive and environmental causes — and charter members of the ignoble little club of sellouts that have helped promote the privatization of the public agenda.

\* \* \*

## BOOK REVIEW

### **A GUIDE TO THE END OF THE WORLD: *Everything You Never Wanted To Know*, Bill McGuire Oxford University Press, 2002**

In a brisk 200 pages a professor of geophysical hazards at London's University College gives an Introduction to the Earth: Global Warming — A Lot of Hot Air?; The Ice Age Cometh — The Enemy Within; Super-Eruptions, Giant Tsunami, and the Coming Great Quake; The Threat from Space — Asteroid and Comet Impacts.

A tabulation of the Bible's record of begats was made in the 17th century by the Archbishop of Ireland, James Ussher. He calculated the world was created in 4004 BC, on October 23, at 9 o'clock in the morning.

Those who look elsewhere than the Old Testament for earth history understand that billions of years have passed since the "creation." The earliest signs of life date from some 3½ billion years ago. We cannot, of course, spend much time pondering the events that led to the mass extinctions that ended the Permian and the Cretaceous. Had

any ancestors of mankind been on hand then, that would have been it for our and most other species, requiring a fresh start, as in the Cambrian explosion of life some 50 million years ago.

Not to be ruled out is the possibility of future extinctions, though we may take some solace that if we simians were to be entirely wiped out, in its own sweet time Earth would evolve a new master species from this or that fish.

Our main concern today is the perpetuation (or not) of civilization. Except for those of us in the White House, we are quite aware that global warming is predicted to make the Earth hotter by the year 2100 than it has been in the past 150,000 years, and that (for example) melting of the Greenland Ice Sheet would drown all the world's coastal cities from New York to London to Sydney. (The winter sports industry would be unlikely to survive in its present form.)

As for Asteroids and Comets and Super-Eruptions and Great Quakes, we might be given pause by the fact that in the wake of the Toba super-eruption of 73,500 years ago the world was held in the grip of volcanic winter for at least six years and the planet's human

population reduced to a few thousand individuals. Ancient impacts of stuff from space may have wiped out 90 percent of all life on Earth. An asteroid large enough to destroy London, New York, or Paris strikes the planet a couple of times a century.

Ice — that is the menace that may be unleashed by global warming and/or other factors. What we think of as "civilization" was born just 13,000 or so years ago, in an area where the Bush army is presently deployed. An hypothesis based on the "Milankovich Cycles" declares that our planet is primed for the end of the current interglacial period and a return to full Ice Age conditions. The climate of "Ice Age Earth" is not suited to sustaining a population headed toward 8-10 billions. Such a return is not necessarily gradual. The crisis could come in merely several human generations. Life in much of Europe, North America, central and eastern Asia would be pretty much impossible. Mass migrations and bloody wars could be expected. The species would likely survive but its civilization would be a pale shadow of its former self.

(—Which is to say, the concept of "Wilderness" would have a second chance.)

—H.M.

## BOOK REVIEW

### **BECAUSE THE EARTH NEEDS A GOOD LAWYER**

***Wild By Law*, Tom Turner  
Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, San Francisco, 1990. 2006 Sale Price, \$8**

***Justice on Earth*, Tom Turner  
EarthJustice, Oakland, 2003.  
2006 Sale price \$10.**

(Ask at your local bookstore for these books at the sale price.)

Tom Turner was editor of *Not Man Apart*, the eco-journal that Dave Brower published in his post-Sierra Club career. In his position as senior editor for Earthjustice, Turner follows the classic tradition of "Browerism." In frontmatter of the second of these two books he says: "There are many ways to go about influencing the behavior of human beings: education, guilt, extortion, brainwashing, force, persuasion, bribery, reward, trickery, and deceit. . . There are fewer ways to go about changing the behavior of institutions, be they private corporations or government bureaucracies. One way is bribery and its legal counterpart, campaign contributions. Another is revolution, bloody and expensive. A third is to put farsighted, incorruptible, intelligent people into elective office: democracy. This

is cumbersome, expensive, and — as the election of 2000 showed itself, susceptible to manipulation and corruption. A fourth is through use of the law by citizens — at least in such countries as the United States where there is a strong and wise Constitution and where public servants and private citizens generally obey the law and the courts."

*Wild by Law* describes a handful of the most significant battles of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund in the first two decades after its founding in 1971. The book outlined the opening-up of the legal system, the confirmation of the fact that citizens often have the "standing to sue" — the right to go to court. The affirmation of "standing" was a crucial first step. This first book focused on efforts to protect pristine (or nearly) landscapes and resources. The second book, *Justice on Earth*, published by Earthjustice, the organization's new name as of 1997, spoke more of restoration — efforts to return wounded lands to good health.

In 1991 the North Cascades Conservation Council achieved a great and famous victory through the efforts of the "good lawyer." The NCCC had wanted the Stehekin valley in the North Cascades National Park and only grudgingly accepted a compromise that placed the valley in a Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. We were assured by our good friends (?) in Congress that protection of the valley from the lake upstream to High Bridge would

be equal to that of the park.

However, assorted weasels in Chelan town, Chelan County, and Washington City burrowed behind the scenes and managed to stand the 1968 North Cascades Act on its head. By their misinterpretation, Stehekin was destined to become a replica of West Yellowstone. Moreover, upper levels of the National Park Service sided with the weasels.

So we called upon the "good lawyer" and took the weasels to the law. In 1991 we won. Higher Powers in Washington City informed the National Park Service that the 1968 North Cascades Act gave the Park Service the same regulatory powers in the Recreation Area as in the Park. For details (excruciating) see our history book, the second (revised) edition now nearing press.

The decision won by the NCCC and its Very Good Lawyer reverberated throughout the National Park System. It was the most important stiffening of the NPS since the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

—H.M.

***PS: There are still weasels. In Chelan County, in Congress, in the White House and — we gnash teeth to reports — within the NPS.***

***But also there is an alive and kicking NCCC — and we have Good Lawyers.***

## BOOK REVIEW

### Middle-Aged and Dishevelled

—REBECCA SOLNIT

in "London Review of Books,"

March 23, 2006

*In the Company of Crows and Ravens*, John Marzluff and Tony Angell, Yale, \$30.00

For a long time before the planes crashed into the upper levels of the World Trade Center in 2001, song birds had been in the habit of doing so, migrating by night and mistaking the lights high above the city for stars. At least one ornithologist used to stroll along the base of the towers in the early morning, removing small corpses and rescuing the living. A lot of species have been too fragile, too particular in their requirements, to survive our wholesale transformation of their environment. The Brown Satyr butterfly endemic to San Francisco, became extinct sometime in the 19th century, and the Xerxes Blue vanished during World War Two when its Golden Gate habitat was overtaken by military expansion. A number of other local species — the Bay Checkerspot, the San Francisco Garter Snake, the Mission Blue butterfly — are near extinction. Further afield, the few dozen remaining California Condors, with their ten-foot wingspan, continue to hover at the brink of disappearance; after an ingenious captive-breeding program, a few have been reintroduced in the wild, where they show an unfortunate penchant for flying into powerlines and eating the lead shot in game killed by guns. On the other hand and the other side of the country, one of North America's showiest and more famously extinct birds, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, reappeared in 2004 and was publicly announced to still exist after all in the spring of 2005, amid a media circus, scientists' tears, a lot of astonishment and rapture, and a little Arkansas forest protection. Whether there is a breeding pair and not just a single individual, remains to be seen as does the bird's ability to make do with what habitat it has left.

There are many more surprises. In mid-January the National Park Service announced that 17 new species of spiders, scorpions, centipedes and other small creatures had been discovered in caves in two parks in California's Sierra Nevada range. They include a relative of the pill bug so translucent that its internal organs are visible, particularly its long bright yellow liver. There is also a daddy-long-legs, with jaws bigger than its body, and a tiny

fluorescent orange spider. The species are as yet unnamed.

Other species have rebounded: notably the elephant seals that were hunted nearly to extinction at the turn of the 20th century, when at most a few hundred survived in Mexican waters. They first returned to their California coastal breeding grounds in the 1950s and have since flourished north and south of San Francisco, where their spectacular sex and violence — the bellicose males weigh up to three tons — can be observed every winter. Dozens of species of birds once threatened by DDT have increased in number since the pesticide was banned, as have whales since the 1949 near-ban on hunting, though many species continue to lose ground. Yet others, notably a lot of omnivores and carnivores that once feared humans and were hunted by us, have begun to rebound and to expand their territory, their diet and their habits. They are joining us. . . .

In the last decade, we have seen the emergence of the new nature that is likely to survive while the more fragile primordial nature falters. It's a weed-like, flexible, tough set of species which thrive on the disturbances that send others into flight or extinction. And they're becoming increasingly urban. For a long time cities had little but pigeons and rats for urban wildlife, but foxes have moved into London, and coyotes, raccoons, skunks, ravens, crows and more have moved into North American cities. For one thing, they like garbage. For another we have stopped killing them and everything else that moves. From their perspective, we have become a relatively harmless species (except for our cars, but road kill is a popular food source for crows, ravens, coyotes, vultures and others). They're no longer afraid of us. We've cleaned up, too: the toxic sewers that surrounded Manhattan in the 1960s have gradually come to resemble rivers again, in which fish can swim and herons can hunt. The urban air is cleaner. . . .

Ravens and crows are another story. Seventy-five miles up the coast from San Francisco, Alfred Hitchcock made "The Birds", in which a Coalition of the Winged attacks human beings en masse, a fantasy in its depiction of unity between avian species as much as anything else. Some birds have proliferated to an amazing degree in the last decade or so, notably ravens and crows, but they threaten the survival of more fragile species. One of the still-endangered species of the West Coast is the Snowy Plover, and by 1995 ravens were plundering more than two-thirds of their eggs on the seashore north of San Francisco, as well as raiding nests of other at-risk species. They have

been observed preying on Bank Swallows in the Bay Area and the Marbled Murrelet in the Pacific Northwest. . . .

A young naturalist who grew up birding in San Francisco — we have Great Blue Herons in Golden Gate Park and a considerable seabird population on the beaches — told me he considered ravens and crows to be tantamount to a 'second Silent Spring' (the first being the destruction of birds by DDT and other pesticides, which Rachel Carson addressed in her 1962 book). When I came to San Francisco, ravens and crows were a rare sight in urban spaces; they had become rare altogether in the 1920s, but populations since the 1980s have exploded. In the San Francisco Christmas count of birds, ornithologists found 14 ravens in 1983 and 239 in 1999, while Oakland went from five to 101. They appear to have increased far more since then. I see ravens often, sitting on the powerlines outside my windows, their bulk of ruffled feathers making them look middle-aged, dishevelled, unlike their sleek cousins the crows, which are also all over the place these days.

. . . The birds have become what the wildlife biologist Michael Soule calls 'a species', meaning that they have a stable food source in garbage as house cats preying on songbirds do in cat food. Urban garbage dumps around the edges of the deep desert have encouraged a population explosion among ravens; this is one of the many ways population increase can destroy habitats at a distance. . . .

The success of the raven means the failure of other species, also valuable, so the very sight of these creatures, especially in new places — like outside my window — is ominous. . . . The raven is in the mythology of the Northwest coast, a creator deity. That something sacred or symbolic can become a weed and a pest is disturbing. A raven used to be an oracular sign, an omen, impressive, noble, wild; now it is bad news, a weed, trouble. This decline is wrong not just in what the birds do but in what they mean. And it turns the creatures from being part of an ecosystem into its destroyer, the birds acting as agents of our own disruptiveness. Ravens, like coyotes, may have been creator deities because they are rather like humans in their ability to adapt, improvise, change, to trick and to shift. Perhaps in seeing ravens go wrong, we might see ourselves.

In recent years a number of books have taken on ravens and crows, members along with jays and magpies of the family *corvidae*. Bernd Heinrich's *Ravens in Winter* (1989) describes their communitarian survival strategies, while Candace Savage's *Bird Brains: The*

*Continued on page 18*

# Predator Poisoning and Killing Planned by USFS in Wilderness Areas

The U.S. Forest Service just announced plans to relax rules that govern “predator control” in federal Wilderness areas and Research Natural Areas of our national forests. The move would greatly expand the ways that wolves, coyotes, cougars, bears, foxes and other predators can be killed in these areas, and it signals a very disturbing shift in the way our public land is managed.

The proposed changes to Forest Service Manual Section 2320 and 2650 would permit aerial gunning and motorized vehicles in Wilderness areas to trap and kill predators and meet nebulous “wildlife management objectives,” which would be created by industry-driven “collaborative groups”. The rules would also allow notoriously dangerous “M-44” motion-trig-

gered cyanide guns to be used in Wilderness areas, even though these devices have accidentally killed thousands of family pets and non-targeted wildlife.

The Forest Service has proposed dramatic changes to Forest Service Manual Sections 2320 and 2650. These changes would reverse protections that are currently in place for Wilderness areas and Research Natural Areas by relaxing the restrictions on motorized use, aerial gunning and placement of motion-triggered cyanide guns to trap and kill predators.

Predators are a key component of intact ecosystems, an important presence in the wilderness, and an emblem of the wild. They should be protected wherever they are, but in Wilderness and Research Natural Areas most of

all. The proposed changes to the rules amount to a devastating attack on both predators and wilderness values.

Please take a minute to write the Forest Service and demand that it reverse this disastrous plan — and instead put its energy and resources towards ensuring these animals continue to grace the wild.

## WRITE TO:

**Director  
Wilderness and Wild and  
Scenic Resources  
U.S. Forest Service  
201 14th Street  
Washington , DC 20250  
(202) 205-1145  
PDM@fs.fed.us**

SOURCE: bioactivist@  
biologicaldiversity.org,  
6-14-06

## Crows and Ravens

*continued from page 17*

*Intelligence of Crows, Ravens, Magpies and Jays* (1993) takes a wider look at the workings of the quite complex corvid mind, which learns, adapts, and, in the case of some crows, can even figure out how to make and use tools, while others become skilful mimics of other birds and of people. Savage cites at least one scientific study by Tony Angell and several by John Marzluff, the co-authors of a new illustrated book, *In the Company of Crows and Ravens*. A generalist's book written by experts, its text considers the role of crows in the human cultural imagination and provides information on their behaviour. Angell's drawings sometimes sink into cuteness, as in one picture of crows picking dead insects off the grill of a car on which the licence plate reads CORVID. They know their subject intimately, but not their readers, to whom they often over-explain basic concepts.

At times engrossing — for example when revealing the ancient tradition of raven-keeping in the Tower of London, as a myth of recent origin — Angell and Marzluff's book is more often meandering and bland. . . . Like many popular science books in recent years, this one claims its subject was the world-changing event, phenomenon or intention. Crows and ravens matter — they're in the Bible and Norse mythology and the Northwest creation stories, as well as on the wire outside my window — but they're not that central or powerful, or cheering. . . .

*Bird Brains* does a better job of describing the remarkable intelligence of these birds, but neither quite captures their threat. In fact, Angell and Marzluff write that 'demonstrating an ability to find and prey on nests efficiently does not necessarily mean that crows or ravens limit other bird populations.' Sixteen pages later, we're told that the house crows imported to Zanzibar by the British governor in 1891 'reached half

a million in Dar es Salaam alone. They are spreading across Africa, threatening rare birds and annoying people.' Tokyo has seen its crow population quadruple since the 1980s, fuelled by accessible garbage.

In themselves, ravens and weed-like plants. . . are admirable and even beautiful. But they function as a biological equivalent to Burger King or Microsoft, they threaten to become transnational monopolies that force out the local versions. Indeed, you can see the one as a by-product of the other: the industrialized world that creates garbage, cities and shipping (which often transmits the weedy species from one continent to another) encourages these species to move out of their former niches and proliferate. It's not a coincidence that the crows invading Africa came as part of the imperialist package.

Climate change will root out other species of animals and plants; the Yellow-bellied Marmot, which lives in the high Rockies, is

going out because the thaws now come too early, before plants they eat have started to grow. Wolves, too, successfully reintroduced after being hunted to near-extinction in the US, get through the winter by eating elk weakened by cold and the snow that covers their foodstuffs, with warmer winters the elk thrive and the wolves starve. Red foxes are moving north to compete with arctic foxes. This will leave in most places a brutally simplified ecology with lots of trees of heaven, dandelions, robins, ravens, and raccoons: what David Quammen calls 'a planet of weeds,' though if we ourselves, the chief weed, become extinct or get scaled back, even these weedy species may begin evolving into creatures more delicately adapted to specific niches. But that is the million-year view, not the thousand-year version. In the meantime, what's sauce for the raven is poison for the Snowy Plover.

## Upper Stehekin Road

*Continued from page 5*

ment policies with respect to location of road systems, flood-plain management, wetland protection, resource protection and soundscape preservation and noise management. The efforts to maintain or relocate the Upper Stehekin Road would result in degradation of the Wild and Scenic River characteristics (perhaps it would be finally possible to designate the Stehekin River as Wild and Scenic, which is long overdue). Control of noxious and invasive plants may be compromised as well. While the EA does not make a detailed effort to document the socio-economic costs and benefits of the closure, it does not appear that the 1995 closure or the 2003 closure have had a significant impact on the local economy. It is most likely that a competent socio-economic assessment would show that virtually all of the tourist dollars are traditionally spent in the lower Stehekin Valley and that there is not a net loss to the local economy from road closure. What the future effects of the closure might be on socio-economics largely depends on how the benefits of the closure are captured.

NCCC argues that the NPS has inadequately identified the benefits of permanent road closure. From our perspective it would be like regaining the core of wilderness in the Upper Stehekin Valley. Reorienting the recreational activities in this area from motorized access to foot-based access provides opportunity for generally easy walking in a wild trail environment and relatively easy walk-in camping.

The chief argument being made for maintaining the road is to allow motorized public access and, in particular, such access as Stehekin residents have traditionally enjoyed when the road was passable and bridges intact. Many NCCC members have used the Upper Stehekin Road to access the trails and climbs in that area. NCCC supports the NPS in its decision that the road should be permanently closed even if this makes the approach to trails and

climbs longer. The benefits far exceed the costs and this includes the cost to some of our less mobile members of not being able to access the Upper Stehekin Valley except in their memories.

NCCC strongly agrees Alternative B Permanent Closure of the Upper Stehekin Road at Car Wash Falls is the right decision and now is the right time to make it.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. NCCC would be pleased to discuss these issues further if there is a need to do so.

Sincerely,  
David Fluharty,  
Board Member on Behalf of  
NCCC



*Mount Baker from ridge.* —PHOTO BY BRUCE BARNBAUM

## Membership Application

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

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

Please check the appropriate box(es):

- I want to join the NCCC  
The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC), formed in 1957, works through legislative, legal and public channels to protect the lands, waters, plants and wildlife of the North Cascades ecosystem. Non-tax-deductible, it is supported by dues and donations. A 501(c)4 organization.
- I wish to support NCF  
The North Cascades Foundation (NCF) supports the NCCC's non-political legal and educational efforts. Donations are tax-deductible as a 501(c)3 organization.

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

This is a  Donation to North Cascades Foundation NCF \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

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CONSERVATION  
COUNCIL**  
Membership Chair  
L. Zalesky  
2433 Del Campo Dr.  
Everett, WA 98208

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



*View toward Glacier Peak.* —BRUCE BARNBAUM

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