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# THE WILD CASCADES

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL WINTER 2007-2008



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**Cover:** *Billowing clouds tower above Excelsior Ridge during an unsettled winter day, from a campsite in Yellow Aster Meadow near Tomyhoi Peak.* —BOB GUNNING PHOTO

Bob Gunning, a long-time NCCC member, was the photographer (with Ed Cooper) for the book, *The Alpine Lakes*, by Brock Evans, the first "battle" book published by the Literary Committee of The Mountaineers Books way back when (1971) in our fight for the Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

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## The Wild Cascades

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*Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council*

EDITOR: Betty Manning

EDITORIAL BOARD: John Edwards, Tom Hammond,  
Carolyn McConnell and Rick McGuire

Printing by EcoGraphics

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

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

*The Wild Cascades* Editor  
North Cascades Conservation Council  
University Station, Seattle, WA 98145-2980

**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, the Wild Sky Wilderness and others. Among its most dramatic victories has been working with British Columbia allies to block the raising of Ross Dam, which would have drowned Big Beaver Valley.

The NCCC is supported by member dues and private donations. These contributions support the full range of the Council's activities, including publication of *The Wild Cascades*. As a 501(c)(3) organization, all contributions are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Membership dues for one year are: Low Income/Student \$10; Individual \$30; Family \$50; Sustaining \$100; Grizzly Bear \$250; Howling Wolf \$500; Lifetime \$1,000; Other, \$\_\_\_\_\_.

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Founded in 1957

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

## The President's Report

Winter 2007-2008

It is a true statement that environmental issues in the North Cascades continue to become more numerous and more complex. To meet the challenges, your board of trustees has elected to maintain our traditional values while ramping up the overall effort to influence those very important decisions that must be made. In order to accomplish this, the opportunity has been taken to hire a paid staff person, the executive director, to ensure that all relevant issues are covered. In the past, board members and regular members have attempted to respond to events whenever possible and have done quite a good job. However, it has not always been possible for volunteers to devote enough time to thoroughly represent wilderness, wildlife and nature in general. It is my hope that with a staff person we can make a more profound impact on protection of the natural environment.

Several things need to occur to make this approach work. First, board members and the general membership need to work as hard as ever to allow the executive director to do his job effectively. Many of us have vowed to work harder and do even more in order to support the efforts of our new director. Secondly, we are reorganizing existing efforts and interests into five program areas. These would be: Wilderness and park expansions and oversight; Forest and watershed management; Wildlife protection; Off-road vehicle issues; Communication. It is envisioned that most activist requirements will be covered by one of these program areas. You are invited to help us in the area that interests you. Third, Administrative and time-sensitive issues will generally be handled by an executive committee composed of the executive director, president, vice president, chairman of the board, treasurer, secretary, and two at-large board members. The final goal and perhaps as important as any, is the need to increase the membership and to provide adequate funding for these programs. To pay for the new executive director, to fund legal and administrative actions on logging and unacceptable development, and to provide for public outreach will require your thoughts and the sacrifice of both time and money from all of us who think the North Cascades is worth the effort.

# Stehekin River Corridor Implementation Plan – NCCC Perspectives

DAVID FLUHARTY

The National Park Service has initiated a planning process to evaluate the Stehekin River Corridor in light of the significant change in flooding regime in the last 10-15 years. In this period, the Stehekin River has experienced three flood events that exceed the previous historic flood of 1948. Furthermore, these floods have occurred in the fall instead of the spring. This raises the question of the effect of global warming. The NPS expert on this topic, Jon Riedel, indicates that the Stehekin River valley may be the bell-weather for climate change in the Pacific Northwest due to its connections with the Puget Sound lowlands in its headwaters and its eastward flow to Lake Chelan. The NPS is requesting input on what it should include in its planning through a scoping process for the Stehekin River Corridor Implementation Plan by early March.

Please send comments on line to <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/noca> or by snail mail to:

Palmer [Chip] Jenkins, Superintendent  
North Cascades National Park Service  
Complex  
810 State Route 20  
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284-1239

NCCC offered scoping comments to Superintendent Jenkins at the Seattle scoping meeting, January 24, 2008. Please consider these comments and use them in your personal comments to the National Park Service.

We at NCCC very much support the NPS in taking a holistic approach to management of the Stehekin River Corridor. This is long overdue and given changing climate it is imperative to revise the management approach. While the focus may be on the middle to lower portions of the river, the contributions of upstream mass-wasting [i.e., landslides] must be taken into account. The NPS is dealing with planning for the “General Management Plan” as well as the “Land Protection Management Plan.

1. NPS should consider the designation of the whole Stehekin River as a Wild and Scenic River.
2. In addition to the changes in the hydrologic regime for the Stehekin River basin, the NPS should identify and take

into account the impacts of previous efforts to stabilize the river, prevent erosion and to protect residential and administrative facilities. There are lessons to be learned from these measures that can contribute to our understanding of what is happening in the river today and in the future.

3. The NPS should conduct a full-basin analysis of the river and likely events in the upper basin that will influence the generation of sediment and woody debris.
4. The NPS should clearly articulate the effects of its most recent policy guideline revisions on this planning activity, especially how the policy of “non-impairment” will be applied.
5. The NPS should clearly articulate a goal for the Stehekin River floodplain that allows natural processes to continue unimpeded so that it can evolve under the new winter dominant flow regime. The development of new sand and gravel bars, the change in flow around logjams are all part of the rhythm of the river. This creates habitat for fish and wildlife and is the goal of riparian restoration in the lower basin. Presently, the goals of protecting private and public facilities are dominant; however, these goals can only be achieved with long-term sustainable measures which must include not fighting the river.
6. The NPS in developing and implementing this land process is dealing with myriad other interests, including state and county agencies and their responsibilities. As the prime representative of the national interests in protecting the integrity of LCNRA, the NPS must do its utmost to lead in the direction of long-term sustainable management of development in the lower Stehekin River basin.

## General Perspectives on the Land Management Plan

NCCC has fully supported protection of the floodplain from development and has seen land acquisition from willing sellers as a key tool in accomplishing that goal. We have resisted the use of land exchange to accomplish this purpose because this merely changes the location and nature of the human footprint on the valley (among

other concerns about land exchanges) and trades one environmental problem for others. Fee simple purchase is the preferred tool as opposed to purchase of easements and other measures. Lack of funding for such purchases from Land and Water Conservation Act funds or from foundation and other private sources is part of the problem the NPS faces with respect to exercising conservation management. While NCCC recognizes that the NPS can consider land exchanges as a management tool a full set of land management options should be considered so that the effects of each can be compared.

1. The NPS should explore with floodplain property owners and FEMA and other agencies with emergency and flood control responsibilities, options for funding to assist in getting out of harm's way through sale of flood-prone properties.
2. The NPS should explore possibilities for land exchange on other federal lands outside of LCNRA.
3. Any considerations of land exchanges should fully explore the trade-offs with other habitat and visitor impacts factors that occur when riparian zone properties are exchanged for other lands outside of the floodplain.

## Perspectives on Potential Management Actions

As required by law, each proposed management action must be compared against a no action alternative. This baseline is valuable to have as a way to compare all impacts – positive and negative for the environment as well as for property owners, public facilities and visitor experience.

With respect to the potential management actions the NPS listed in the scoping document, NCCC can offer some comment:

1. Continued reactive response to periodic flooding may seem contrary to the intent of the overall Plan. However, it is part of the base case and needs to be analyzed to be able to compare costs and benefits among alternative strategies. A shift back to a spring dominant flood regime, for example, would likely make this a responsible fiscal strategy. Thus, the NPS must seek and utilize the best scientific understanding

- of the effects of global climate trends in determining its basic strategy for the Stehekin River of the future.
2. Continuing to be available to advise on proper response to flooding is a responsibility of the NPS that would not change under any foreseeable alternative.
  3. NCCC would caution that we are operating under a land management plan that still has a significant amount of land identified for exchange. Further identification of exchange land requires a survey of need, how much property in the floodplain is being proposed for exchange by property owners. How much is eligible for buyout under FEMA guidelines? How much is being offered for fee simple purchase by willing sellers. It is not obvious at this point that more land is needed for land exchange purposes. If such proves to be the case then there must be a systematic evaluation of all eligible parcels and a clear identification of the public benefits for each parcel and the reason for including it in land designated for exchange. While we are fairly certain this approach is what the NPS would propose, the present statement of this potential action makes it sound like the NPS could be on a continual "shopping mission" for exchange lands. Not all lands should be considered for exchange. Many lands in LCNRA have such high natural resource or scenic values that they would not be considered eligible for exchange. There must also be realistic discussion of how properties in a floodplain are appraised under current conditions as the probability of flooding and damage clearly decreases the value of lands for fee simple purchase or for exchanges.
  4. New floodplain maps are definitely needed and they will clearly identify new problem areas. It will be key to a long-term sustainable approach to management for these maps to attempt to project future conditions that will affect the shape of the floodplain and associated risks. This would involve the measures NCCC identifies with respect to managing the full river hydrography.
  5. Reinvigorating the land exchange process is only one of the measures to be considered. The NPS must also seek funding for acquisition of flood-prone properties from willing sellers. It could investigate land exchange for public lands outside the boundary of LCNRA, etc.
  6. It is not clear what action is entailed in this mapping exercise especially with the caveat "under existing conditions." We anticipate changes in conditions.
  7. According to NCCC understanding, all lands in the current inventory of lands identified for exchange are outside the floodplain. The protection of riparian habitats was the chief purpose of the previous LPP. Thus, until the present inventory of property for exchange is utilized, it would seem unnecessary to look for "new" exchange lands "outside" of the floodplain. Prior to any initiative as proposed there should be a systematic identification of properties in the floodplain with owners willing to consider an exchange or fee simple purchase. If there are few, they should be able to be accommodated under the current LPP. If they are many, further exploration could be warranted. Note that this indeed calls into question the viability of land exchange as a solution to the floodplain problem.
  8. While it is consistent with a long-term perspective to continue to do research on long-term bank stabilization that does not constitute a management action. Already the NPS has made the case that it is using the best known techniques for stabilization. These have failed given a very rambunctious river. The real decision is either to plan for continual unmanaged river dynamics or to decide that we know enough and are willing to spend enough money to try to control the river. The latter choice then becomes what to apply and when to apply it and compare the environmental and cost tradeoffs.
  9. We understand that it is advisable to analyze the stability and effect of log jams. However we would ask the NPS to consider how any manipulation could be used to enhance fish and wildlife habitat and other aspects of the river environment. The role of large woody material in the river and its sources and transport are equally important to analyze as where it is deposited. Large woody material is a natural part of the river ecosystem and a long-term perspective must be kept. The disruption of the natural regime in the early 1970s may have altered people's perception of the natural condition of the river. A long-term perspective calls for a resetting of perceptions.
  10. Relocating the road system should consider public and private access approaches that are not necessarily conventional roads.
  11. Removal of "endangered" facilities might also include relocation of such facilities.
  12. Removal of derelict structures and human-placed debris piles from the floodplain seems useful. Are there other physical structures, like berms and ditches, that might also be considered for alteration if they create or exacerbate problems on the floodplain?
  13. Removing non-native plants from floodplain is part of NPS on-going control efforts. Application for pesticides should be considered only as a tactic of last resort and only after removal of sources of disturbance and entry points for invasives, like the Stehekin airstrip are considered.
  14. Relocation of a campground or campsites should be part of a much larger envisioning of long-term visitor needs for the whole valley under changed circumstances. Based on recent NPS statistics, for example, today's visitor use of the upper valley above the road end is comparable to visitor use prior to the road closure by floods. This points to a demand for low-elevation walk-in camping. As costs of lodging increase, there may be more demand for low-elevation camping. Thus, the floodplain is one condition but other factors might be considered.
  15. Restoration of native riparian vegetation in developed areas may be advisable. In addition, the NPS should consider similar measures in the upper river to help control the entrainment of sediments from disturbed source areas.
  16. Accept some facilities in floodplain? This seems to contrast with the thrust of the other actions and the intent of the plan. Perhaps the intent of this potential action is to set criteria for what facilities can occur in the floodplain if a) they serve a public purpose, b) suitably protected from flooding, and c) do not exacerbate flooding or flood control measures.
- NCCC will suggest other potential management measures in its written comments. At the present time, there seems to be a need to address how river recreation is affected by various river corridor management measures. Identification of possible modification in the training of river guides, instructions for visitors, etc. who are using this river for recreation may be indicated.

# Council hires Executive Director

Seeking to expand its mission and programs in the North Cascades, the North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) has employed Jim Davis as its first full-time Executive Director.



The NCCC, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, has long operated on the citizen activist model. Under the direction of its volunteer board, the council has achieved considerable success: being instrumental in the creation of the North Cascade National Park, in defeating Seattle City Light in the Ross Dam controversy, and many other conservation issues. The council continues to be very involved in conservation controversies and opportunities in the North Cascades. Current efforts include promoting the Wild Sky Wilderness, opposing fish stocking in national park lakes, improving Ross Lake Recreation Area management, and coordinating

litigation in such diverse areas as timber harvests, off-road motorcycle trail construction, and Blanchard Mountain protection.

Indeed, it has become apparent to the board that an executive director will be needed to maintain NCCC's ability "to protect and preserve the North Cascades scenic, scientific, recreational, and wilderness values" in the 21st century. Only by having a full-time presence can the council maintain its influence over North Cascades conservation issues.

Jim Davis brings to the council a career as a longtime activist. Raised in the midwest, he obtained bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Missouri and a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley. His early career at the Missouri Department of Health and University of Missouri focused on public health issues, such as investigating

the link between childhood cancer and pesticide exposure and preventing smoking among youth. For the past 14 years, he has focused on conservation issues. In 1998, he became president of Show-Me Clean Streams, a Missouri non-governmental organization dealing primarily with water quality issues. His interest in North Cascades conservation issues led to research projects on public attitudes toward grizzly bears and use of public lands. This conservation work expanded in 2003 when he moved to Olympia to co-direct the Grizzly Bear Outreach Project. Jim is currently adjunct faculty at the Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University and president of the Conservation Partnership Center, a nonprofit organization focused on the interactions of humans and wildlife in the North Cascades.

Jim has been an NCCC board member since 2000. He currently lives in Bellingham, Washington where he is married to a physician and has two children.

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## The Stehekin River Corridor Implementation Plan

COMMENTS GIVEN BY CAROLYN MCCONNELL, SEATTLE, 2008

Dear Superintendent Jenkins:

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute comments in regards your scoping for a Stehekin River Implementation plan.

I am a third-generation Stehekin property owner and sometime resident. I am also a member of the board of directors of the North Cascades Conservation Council. Please take the following into consideration.

NPS should study the individual and cumulative effects of previous efforts to manage the river, as these contain important lessons about future actions. Many of these have had harmful effects on the river and have in fact worsened damage due to flooding and erosion.

The NPS should clearly articulate a goal for the Stehekin River floodplain of allowing natural processes to continue unimpeded. NPS should consider the designation of the whole Stehekin River as a Wild and Scenic River.

While I support the goal of preventing and removing development from the floodplain, I am alarmed that the NPS continues to identify land exchange as a primary means of doing this. The entire Stehekin Valley is federally protected and it is a derogation of NPS responsibility to trade away any public land in Stehekin. Land trades do not limit development; they merely shift development around this small and unique valley. Indeed, they may even encourage development, by encouraging landowners who may have land that is practically undevelopable to believe they can exchange it for more developable land by threatening harmful development, and it may encourage people to purchase parcels in Stehekin with the aim of exchanging it for more developable public land. The list in the Land Protection Plan of lands available to be traded away by NPS amounts to a shopping list for developers.

Thus, the suggestion in scoping documents that the NPS may identify further

lands for exchange is deeply alarming. It encourages the idea that any land in Stehekin is potentially available for private acquisition, and thus accelerates development pressures. Such a move by NPS would therefore be highly irresponsible.

I strongly urge fee-simple land acquisition as the means for removing or preventing development in the floodplain. While lack of funding for land acquisition may be a barrier, lack of clarity by NPS about its will to enforce its mandate to protect the Stehekin Valley unimpaired are equally to blame. Clear public statements that the NPS will resist development in the flood plain and impairment of the river's free flow to the full extent of the law would go a long way toward protection of the river, even in the absence of additional land acquisition funds. And NPS should press hard for more funding for land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Carolyn McConnell

# Wilderness Update

The Wild Sky Wilderness bill, which for a very long time has been almost-but-not-quite across the finish line, is still there as this issue of *The Wild Cascades* goes to press. The bill is held up by politics in the Senate, specifically Senator Tom Coburn, Republican of Oklahoma. Coburn has managed to throw a spanner into the workings of the Senate on many fronts. The package of which Wild Sky is a part has been held up by him for many months now. One of his demands for letting it through is an amendment that would allow firearms to be carried in national parks, something which would make it extremely difficult for the park service to combat poaching. At some point, things will have to start moving, and we hope to have news of Wild Sky passage in the next *Wild Cascades*.



*Looking down the Pratt valley from near Pratt lake, Bessemer Mountain in the distance.*

—HARRY ROMBERG

Meanwhile, 8th district Republican Dave Reichert has formally introduced H.R.

4113, a bill to expand the Alpine Lakes Wilderness by adding the Pratt valley and nearby areas to it, as well as designating the Pratt a “Wild River.” Judging by the long difficult road which Wild Sky has traveled, it is probably unlikely that this bill could pass in this election year. But establishment of wilderness areas takes time, and designation of them is not a job for those lacking in patience. Reichert has established congressional interest in protecting the Pratt, a big, low and wild valley, and that is a worthwhile thing in itself. Perhaps his bill will someday be incorporated into a larger wilderness effort including other areas. Whatever the future holds, NCCC plans to work on permanently protecting more of the North Cascades as wilderness.

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## Update: Granite Falls Motocross Park

Snohomish County has received numerous updated documents from consultants about various aspects of the proposed 79-acre Granite Falls Motocross Park, four miles east of Granite Falls on the Mountain Loop Highway (MLH). A review of those documents by the Mountain Loop Conservancy reveals serious flaws in analysis, numerous contradictions between (and even within) documents, as well as many important issues utterly ignored.

Yet it appears that the County Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) — which has never seen a major development it didn't like — will recommend a “Determination of Non-Significance” for the project (i.e., no EIS will be required because, in the eyes of PDS, there is no serious environmental impact from the project). PDS will likely also recommend a rezone of the 466-acre property from “Forestry” to “Forestry and Recreation.”

Here are a few things that PDS appears to be overlooking:

The traffic report makes no mention of how 20,000 people could be accommodated for national events. It makes no mention of the fact that the MLH, a two-lane road, is the sole access road to the site, nor does it mention that all access roads to the MLH for a minimum of 10 miles are two-lane roads, nor does it

mention that the nearest freeway off-ramp to the site is nearly 18 miles away. It makes no reference to the severe impact of dramatically increased traffic on traditional, quiet recreational uses along the MLH (hiking, kayaking, mountain climbing, bird watching, etc.), the uses that every member of the NCCC cherishes.

There is no mention of the disruption to those traditional activities in the noise report, either. There is little discussion of impacts of noise levels on nearby residences, nor of the impact to the property values. The noise report appears to indicate — astoundingly — that noise levels with the tracks in operation will be lower than ambient noise levels currently!

No report discusses the danger to the entire Stillaguamish River valley from motocross vehicles and ATVs fanning out from the project site to nearby forest service roads and off-road locations. No report discusses the possibilities of major conflagrations started in the hot dry summer months from such unauthorized uses, which cannot be adequately policed.

One report makes the astounding claim that due to watering down and grooming of the tracks at the project site, “No dust will leave the site”. This is a patently false statement, as clouds of dust will emanate from the project with dozens or even hundreds of riders kicking it up daily. The dust

will, of course, be mixed with exhaust fumes.

There is no mention of the fact that cutting down carbon-sequestering trees and replacing them with gas-burning vehicles creates a carbon footprint of well over 1,000,000 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.

The report glosses over the severe impacts to local emergency services both from on-site injuries and from dramatically increased traffic on all access roads to Granite Falls, and on the MLH from there to the site.

Three of the reports give four dramatically different hours of operation.

There is no in-depth discussion of two threatened species — marbled murrelets and spotted owls — found nesting nearby.

The Mountain Loop Conservancy (MLC), newly renamed from the former Stillaguamish Citizens' Alliance, is leading the fight against permitting this odious project. For those wishing to contribute to the MLC — and for the preservation of the traditional values and recreational opportunities along the Mountain Loop Highway — please send checks made out to the MLC, P.O.Box 1097, Granite Falls, WA 98252. The MLC is a 501©3 organization; all donations are tax deductible.

— BRUCE BARNBAUM

# Big Dam Threatens Similkameen River

RICK MCGUIRE



**A**t the farthest northeastern corner of the Cascades, an attractive but little known valley is under threat from a very big dam. So big, and with such dire consequences, that one wonders if they can really be serious about building such a thing in the year 2008. But the Okanogan Public Utility District (PUD), appears to be quite serious about building a dam at Shanker's Bend on the Similkameen River, inundating up to 18,000 acres of rich valley bottom, half of it in Canada, and drowning the largest remaining stretch of wetlands and productive braided channel river habitat anywhere in the eastern Cascades. If Okanogan PUD gets its way, the lush Similkameen valley, a green, life-filled corridor through a mostly dry landscape, will be turned into an eyesore of sterile mudflats. A strikingly beautiful place will become an ugly, repellent place, and the

many birds and animals now living there will be gone forever.

Most of the drainage basin of the Similkameen River lies in British Columbia, although the Pasayten and Ashnola rivers, major tributaries, originate in the United States before flowing north to join the Similkameen in British Columbia. The Similkameen flows south into the United States before looping east about 20 miles to join the Okanogan River south of Oroville. Princeton and Keremeos are major towns on the Canadian side, and the lower B.C. valley has many orchards and farm fields. Big cottonwoods line much of the river. Along with some nearby areas in the Okanogan (spelled differently in Canada) valley, parts of the valley in Canada are proposed for inclusion in a new Canadian national park. Although there are many millions of acres of "shrub-steppe" grassland in the United States, only a very small

area of this ecotype extends into Canada. There is even a place referred to as the "pocket desert." Perhaps nowhere else in the world would such a place be considered a desert, but from the perspective of green, forested British Columbia, and Parks Canada, it is a very unusual place, and worthy of protection.

The United States' portion of the Similkameen is a land forgotten by time, a

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*Looking north from Chopaka Mountain to Similkameen valley lands in Canada. Shanker's Bend dam would flood just about all of the valley bottom lands visible in this picture.*

—JIM SCARBOROUGH PHOTO

picture postcard of the way eastern Washington used to be, and still is here. Chopaka Mountain, at 7882 feet the easternmost summit of the North Cascades, stands high above the green, braided channel of the Similkameen, and bighorn sheep are often seen on its steep eastern escarpment. Pine dotted grasslands, briefly green in wet springs, tawny brown the rest of the year, cover the lower slopes of Chopaka and the other mountains surrounding the valley. Trees grow more thickly farther up the slopes. It is an inviting, savannah-like landscape, delightful to wander through, its attractiveness perhaps having something to do with ancient, subconscious memories of places where humans first evolved. The little settlement of Nighthawk has some interesting original pioneer era barns and cabins, their big squared wooden timbers baked a dark chocolate brown by the intense summer sun. A 9-to-5 U.S.-Canada border crossing still operates north of "town." Not so long ago, before the Bush administration's permanent "war on terror," it was the kind of place where it was not unusual for a traveller to have to get out of his car and go find the border guard in order to get clearance to cross. Extensive wetlands cover much of the valley bottom along the looping channel of the slow moving Similkameen, a green, bird-filled oasis in this otherwise arid area

All this will change if the Okanogan PUD gets its way. A 260-foot-high dam would be constructed at Shanker's Bend on the lower Similkameen, drowning the entirety of the U.S. part of the Similkameen, and a good bit of the Canadian portion. The old pioneer buildings at Nighthawk would be no more, Palmer Lake would be under 145 feet of water, and the miles of wetlands with their countless red-winged and yellow-headed blackbirds would vanish. The orchards and fields on the Canadian side would disappear, replaced by flat water in late spring and early summer, and sterile mudflats the rest of the year.

In place of all that, the PUD would get a small amount of electric power, 84 megawatts at full flow (Grand Coulee produces nearly 6000), which even they admit will last for only a small part of the year during peak runoff. There will be water storage, which they claim will benefit downstream fish and other water users. They also claim there will be recreational benefits, presumably for jet skiers and power boaters who might be expected to razz around aimlessly on the reservoir in early summer before most of it reverts to mudflats. Okanogan PUD is well sup-

plied with power by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and its big dams on the Columbia River. There is no electricity shortage in Okanogan county and electricity prices are among the lowest in the U.S. Okanogan PUD, however, does not own any big Columbia River dams like its neighboring PUDs in Chelan and Douglas counties. Perhaps the Shanker's Bend project is a way for them to feel like power producers themselves, albeit minor ones, instead of merely a BPA customer like most of the other PUDs in Washington state. A case of dam envy?

Whatever their motivations, the Shanker's Bend project would be a complete disaster for the Similkameen valley. Sadly, it is just one of a number of proposals which, if implemented, would mean further disaster for the already severely degraded ecology of the Columbia basin.

The construction of Grand Coulee dam and the subsequent transformation by the "Columbia Basin Project" of arid grasslands into irrigated cropland was one of the triumphs of the New Deal. From Grand Coulee dam, huge volumes of water are pumped uphill to the "Grand Coulee" valley, an ancient route of the Columbia cutting south through Douglas and Grant counties. Water is pumped from the Columbia up into the Equalizing Reservoir, also called "Banks Lake." That reservoir is impounded by Dry Falls Dam, which is crossed by Highway 2 just west of Coulee City. From the highway one can see where a very large river of water flows out of the reservoir through a channel cut in the basalt rock.

The waters of that river go on to irrigate over 650,000 acres, all of them heavily subsidized by taxpayers. But apparently it is not enough to satisfy the thirst. Various agencies are looking at a number of projects to store even more water, including such questionable, energy guzzling schemes as new pumped storage reservoirs near Yakima, and the flooding of lower Crab Creek, an important wetland area and part of the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge. The Crab Creek dam is particularly egregious, a \$2.7 billion dollar project that would drown a productive wetland ecosystem which was supposed to be protected as mitigation for other areas destroyed by the Columbia Basin Project. It would destroy extensive spawning areas in the name of storing water for downstream fisheries.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has teamed up with Washington state to push these and other destructive projects, with Washington governor Christine Gregoire

emerging as a major cheerleader. Meanwhile, vast quantities of the water pumped from the Columbia are lost through evaporation from aerial sprinkling, the most wasteful form of watering, and by far the most common in the Columbia basin. Unlined canals also lose large volumes. Yet the agencies show little interest in moving toward sustainable irrigation via conservation, instead looking to dam and drown ever more places, clinging to business as usual.

Shanker's Bend is but one of these projects, the one most directly affecting the North Cascades. Directly below the Shanker's Bend damsite is Enloe dam, dating from the 1920s. Before proceeding on Shanker's Bend, Okanogan PUD is proposing to first rebuild Enloe, which was abandoned because it was cheaper to buy power from BPA than to operate the dam. If Okanogan PUD can convince the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that Similkameen Falls, just below Enloe, was always a barrier to anadromous fish, then the rebuilding of Enloe without provision for fish would pave the way to construction of Shanker's Bend dam and all the destruction it would bring.

At present, no salmon pass beyond Similkameen Falls and Enloe dam. There is some question as to whether Similkameen Falls was always a natural barrier to anadromous fish, which the Okanogan PUD claims is the case. But the falls does not have much drop and similarly sized falls on other comparable rivers are surmountable by salmon. There is evidence that it may actually have been early day mining, which was widespread on the Similkameen, that killed off the river's salmon runs. Enloe dam has since prevented any chance of them returning.

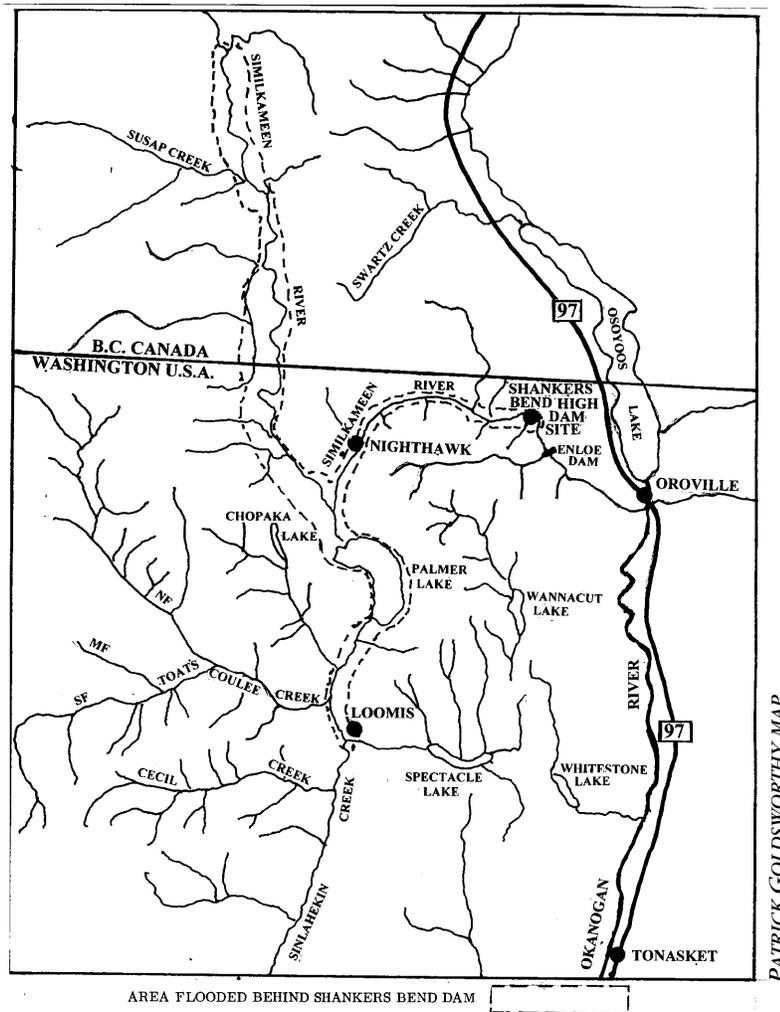
This question of fish passage at Enloe dam will be critical in determining whether the Shanker's Bend dam can be built. Okanogan PUD claims that there was never natural fish passage past Similkameen Falls, therefore they should not be required to provide fish passage at a rebuilt Enloe dam. If FERC rules that no fish passage is required at Enloe, then there would be no need for fish passage at the Shanker's Bend dam immediately upstream, greatly reducing its cost and increasing the likelihood of it being built.

There is also the question of flooding many thousands of acres of Canadian lands. The British Columbia provincial government is encouraging a gold rush of hydro development anywhere water

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# Big Dam Threatens Similkameen River

Continued from page 9



flows downhill, and has granted scores of permits for destructive projects all across the province. Although Canadian conservationists are having a tough time fighting these projects, historically even pro-development Canadians have tended to turn into diehard environmentalists when confronted with threats from south of the border. When Seattle City Light wanted to flood the Skagit valley in Canada by raising Ross Dam, a huge outcry was raised. If the dam had been Canadian, it's hard to imagine that there would have been such a level of protest. A dam in the United States flooding a large area of scarce, valuable valley bottom, as Shanker's Bend would do, will likely face stiff opposition from Canadians, not just environmentalists, but also from many who might happily acquiesce to similar destruction were it homegrown.

Okanogan PUD is currently attempting to gain permission from FERC to rebuild Enloe dam, without fish passage, before moving on to Shanker's Bend. Fortu-

nately, NCCC is far from alone in opposing these unnecessary, harmful projects. The Hydropower Reform Coalition, (HRC) a national group which NCCC has recently joined, has extensive experience with such projects and will be taking a lead role in opposing these threats to the Similkameen. There is also growing local opposition. NCCC will be coordinating its response closely with HRC and others. The Similkameen is one of the least known yet most ecologically productive and unusual parts of the North Cascades. NCCC and others are determined that it not be sacrificed for a few megawatts of power for a few months of the year.

More information on the Shanker's Bend, and Enloe dams can be found on the Hydro Reform Coalition website: [www.hydroreform.org](http://www.hydroreform.org). Much information on the Columbia Basin Project and new dam proposals there can be found on the website of the Center for Environmental Law and Policy ("CELP") at [www.celp.org](http://www.celp.org).

## DAM UPDATE

### "R.O.S.S." Committee Forms Again!

Longtime readers of *The Wild Cascades* may remember NCCC's epic battle to save the Big Beaver and upper Skagit valleys from inundation by High Ross dam. NCCC's comrades on the Canadian side in that effort were called "ROSS," for "Run Out Skagit Spoilers," surely one of best names ever adopted by any grassroots environmental group.

NCCC and ROSS were successful in keeping Seattle City Light from drowning thousands of acres of the North Cascades for a few extra megawatts. Okanogan PUD's plans to build Shanker's Bend dam and drown the Similkameen valley for far fewer megawatts have sparked a rebirth of the ROSS committee, which now stands for "Run Out Similkameen Spoilers."

Everyone at NCCC looks forward to working closely again with ROSS to put a stop to this latest senseless outrage. Both groups are fully committed to thwarting Okanogan PUD's dam and empire building plans, and to keeping the Similkameen free flowing.

# Settlement Reached on Baker Salvage Appeal

KEVIN GERAGHTY

In the conservation world, nobody much likes national forest “salvage” sales, timber sales which follow tree mortality from fire, pathogens, or blowdown. The word “salvage” conveys the traditional agricultural idea that dead trees which are left to rot in the forest after they die are wasted. But from an ecosystem perspective snags and downed logs are not wasted at all: they provide food and essential habitat for a long roster of birds, mammals, amphibians, insects, and fungi. Downed logs also provide establishment sites and slowly-released reservoirs of nutrients to condition and nurture the growth of successor trees. A forest without dead and decayed wood is less alive, less complex, and less healthy, than a forest strewn with the persistent rotting carcasses of its predecessors. Well over 90 percent of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie is designated Late-Successional Reserve (LSR) under the Northwest Forest plan. Although the plan (a political compromise) does not outright prohibit “salvage” logging in Late-Successional Reserves (one of the alternate versions of the plan, not selected, did so), it surrounds it with enough qualifications and restrictions to make “salvage” in LSR’s

an unattractive option for meeting the timber targets. The Mount Baker-Snoqualmie has not tried to conduct a blowdown “salvage” sale in LSR since the inception of the Northwest Forest plan over fifteen years ago. This past summer, however, the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie broke with fifteen years of practice to propose an LSR “salvage” sale near Baker lake. Although relatively small, it managed to pack a lot of objectionable features into its fifty-odd acres. The entire sale was to occur in low-elevation primary forest — sites with no history of timber exploitation. Some was genuine old growth, some was dominated by 140-year-old trees dating to an 1850s fire; and some was regrowth following a 1920s fire. Although the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie has plenty of never-exploited forest, it is overwhelmingly found at mid- to high elevations. On low-relief, low-elevation sites — the most easily accessible places, with the biggest trees — it is rare, and precious. And the proposed sale got around many of the Northwest Forest plan’s restrictions and safeguards — the ones which make small-scale “salvage” in LSR difficult and unattractive — by ignoring them. NCCC appealed this decision,

in company with the Pilchuck chapter of the Audubon Society. Although we were prepared to litigate against the “salvage” proposal in its original form, the Forest Service proved willing to meet us halfway. We were able to reach a settlement. In one large, lightly-affected unit of 140-year-old forest, logging plans called for cutting many sound, healthy trees, to get to the fallen ones. That unit was dropped. In addition, several units smaller than ten acres were dropped, because LSR salvage guidelines stipulate that disturbed patches less than ten acres in extent not be subjected to “salvage”. In terms of logged acreage, the settlement shrunk the original acreage by almost half. On the remaining acreage, the original proposal called for the removal of all commercially valuable fallen trees. Under the settlement, 40 percent of such fallen trees within these units must be left behind to support natural forest processes. We continue to believe that “salvage” of dead trees, particularly in forest stands with no history of exploitation, is a destructive practice which should be discouraged; but we judge that the modified project at least meets the letter and spirit of the Northwest Forest plan.

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## COLLABORATION?

*For a seat at the negotiating table, they are jeopardizing their true role*

By Erica Rosenberg  
Op Ed  
*Los Angeles Times*,  
January 21, 2008

There’s nothing wrong with a group of people historically at odds sitting down to find common ground. Or is there?

For decades, our public lands have been a battleground: Timber, wildlife, recreation, wilderness -- which interests and uses should dominate? But now, “collaboration” is all the rage. In collaboration, diverse stakeholders (as they invariably tag themselves) -- environmentalists, developers, off-roaders, timber companies, county officials -- hash out an agreement on how to manage their local public lands and then submit it to Congress for approval.

A few deals already have been enacted, and another half a dozen are in the works across the U.S. Collaboration has been touted as the solution to “gridlock” on our national forests. Timber companies and their allies gripe that the normal process -- extensive analysis, citizen involvement and the right to challenge agency decisions -- has ground all “management activity” (read: logging) to a halt. Western coun-

ties surrounded by public land argue that they need room to expand. Others believe lands worthy of protection are still threatened. The new paradigm means everyone sits down with their adversaries.

But these collaborations are troublesome, particularly for environmentalists, who risk undermining their mission as well as the very laws that are the basis of their power, effectiveness and legitimacy.

For example, a bill poised for introduction in Congress would turn into law an agreement reached by one collaborative group on how to manage Montana’s 3.3-million-acre Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. The stakeholders -- Montana Wilderness Assn., National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited and timber companies -- had one thing in common: They hated the management plan proposed by the Forest Service. So they came up with their own plan specifying which areas can be logged, which can be opened up to off-roaders and which should be recommended to Congress for wilderness designation.

Sounds reasonable enough. So what’s wrong? To start, as owners of the public

lands, all Americans have a stake in their management, and they have not designated these representatives. Even the inclusive collaboration can go bad: Outliers who pose a threat to consensus are either not invited or made to feel unwelcome. And ultimately, decisions are being made behind closed doors. But Congress loves a done deal. With a local sponsor, Congress is inclined to rubber-stamp these initiatives, overlooking the fact that they are an end-run around the suite of laws that safeguard public lands and keep land-management decisions an open process.

The Beaverhead bill, for example, triples the acreage where logging can take place from what was in the Forest Service’s plan. It requires an environmental analysis only for individual logging projects rather than the plan as a whole, thereby waiving the bedrock U.S. environmental law, the National Environmental Policy Act. It also allows logging in roadless areas -- a radical departure from the Roadless Area Conservation Rule that environmentalists championed during the Clinton era. Other deals have sold off vast acreage of public lands in exchange for wilderness designa-

*Continued on page 18*

# LUNA CIRQUE

TOM HAMMOND

Part of the famed Pickets, Luna Cirque is perhaps the most rugged, untamed, untrammled and wild place in the lower 48 states. I became aware of the Pickets (a subrange of the North Cascades that has a ground-footprint about six miles on a side — about the size of Mt. Rainier) in 1984 when I saw a picture in Fred Beckey's climbing guide.

Here was a place I had to see with my own eyes, especially before the thin ring of glaciers disappeared. The Pickets in general, and Luna Cirque in particular, demand a high level of alpine experience and competency — errors here, as well as uncontrollable objective dangers can spell doom for even the most seasoned mountain veteran.

This would mark my second trip to Luna Cirque.

The first time I went was in 1994, the net results being that the cirque was visible for only 20 minutes out of five days due to weather, and the end of a friendship. After the trip I was literally in tears from the physical and emotional toll paid to visit Luna Cirque.

After last summer's success in the Southern Pickets, I was emboldened to re-visit Luna Cirque and see if it is real, so I came up with a plan to approach via Challenger Arm and perhaps even climb Mt. Challenger. But as the date approached, a few prospective partners withdrew, and I was left to take on this daunting adventure alone, or change destinations. Note that a couple of people said "Wow, that route really looks tough, and I've heard about the Northern Pickets—I think it's too much for me."

As I sat one day at a traffic light in the U District contemplating the trip, it occurred

to me that I was taking on one of the most difficult trips ever, solo, with the idea not to summit a peak, but just to be in a place. I finally decided I had to visit Luna Cirque regardless — the weather was just perfect and would stay that way. I would decide on the Big Beaver trail if it would be Luna Peak proper, or Luna Cirque via Challenger Arm.



*High camp on Challenger Arm. Note the snow-slope right of the tent — that is how steep the slope is all the way from Beaver Pass. Mount Redoubt, unnamed 7,700 peak, Ridge of Gendarmes and Mount Spickard (L-R) are seen in the background.*

MONDAY, JULY 2

It was a lonely feeling watching the boat cruise away, to turn to face the huge valley called Big Beaver. The last time I stood here I was much younger, had not suffered grievous injuries, and had two 6'4" companions in their 20s — I had barely made it then, and paid a high price. What the hell was I doing?

What I did was begin hiking. The first few miles felt okay, but then things started to hurt. Things that normally don't hurt. Because I was solo, my pack was heavy. It wasn't riding right, and I wasn't on my game. Oh, and it was much warmer than forecast — I was on the road to dehydration, and I was only five miles in on the easy part. I was trying to find the same off-trail route up to Luna Peak and it wasn't nearly as obvious as it had been in 1994. I

spent an hour trying to find a suitable log to cross Big Beaver, but no luck. That hour — three exploratory forays crashing brush for hundreds of meters of river bottom jungle, was exhausting. I retreated to the trail (now more than 10 miles in) and decided that I was back to doing the original plan: Challenger Arm.

It would mean an additional six plus miles of trail travel, and overall perhaps an additional 24 miles but the route finding should be easier, and it was the place from which I wanted to view the cirque in the first place. By the time I reached Beaver Pass — a hot 15.2 miles of rugged up and down trail hiking, I was a wreck. Then another challenge presented itself: No snow. Reports indicated there had been "patches of snow three feet deep". But there was no snow at all. In just a few days, all snow had

evaporated/melted from Beaver Pass.

I set up camp at the nicest spot in this lonely wilderness campground, right next to the stream, and started boiling water. Using precious fuel I had not expected/planned to use to boil water on an 85-degree day. While there wasn't snow, there were bugs. Many bugs: mosquitoes, black flies, deer flies and horse flies. I bet I had a tick on me at some point too. Retreating to the tent, I tried to stay cool while drinking boiling water to offset the dehydration.

TUESDAY, JULY 3

Tuesday dawned hot. The steep forested/vegetated cliffy slope that is the terminus of Challenger Arm forms the south side of Beaver Pass, the path to my ascent to Luna Cirque and the Northern Pickets. I cached food and my trekking

poles at Beaver shelter and headed into TRACKLESS marshes and jungle that form the headwaters of Big Beaver Creek (a river in any other state, including Alaska). I really thought, with the popularity of the Pickets, and the numbers I had seen the previous year, there would be obvious tracks. Not so. Instead, it was a true route-finding adventure, made even tougher by cliffs, brush, and bugs. It is hard for me to communicate how difficult the bugs made this entire mission. As I swung from tree to tree ascending the insanely steep ridge, clutching at moist, mossy heather, salal, slide alder, and other things, deer flies would literally erupt from the vegetation and fly directly in to my mouth, nose, ears, eyes, and other places. THOUSANDS of them. Finally, I hit snow. Hallelujah! I was almost manic as I tore my crampons off the pack and put them on my boots. (This place is incredibly steep, and the snow was hard enough that it required crampons while leaving the trees.) It was time to say goodbye to the bugs, and get to the alps!

I ascended another thousand feet, now on snow two meters deep to a point where I could see everything I had come to see: The Cirque, including the olive-drab lake on the floor, and all of the high peaks of the Northern Pickets that define this amazing cirque. Feeding the low valley of Luna Creek (again, a river in any other state) I counted 15 major waterfalls coming off the north arm of Luna Peak alone! The sound of Luna plus Big Beaver “Creeks” flowing a kilometer below was a low rumble. All of those waterfalls filled in the mid and treble, with the occasional icfall and rock-fall providing thunderous additions to the symphony of the North Cascades.

I should note that Luna Peak is one of the most significant mountains in all of the Cascades. Shuksan may be the flagship of the range, but Luna is most certainly one of the most remarkable, visually, and topographically. For Luna forms and indeed, defines the entirety of the two largest cirques of both the Northern and Southern Pickets: Luna and McMillan cirques respectively. Luna Peak is literally a gigantic landform in the shape of a Mariners compass, with four HUGE arms that radiate away to the north, east, south, and west, defining the very essence of alpine relief that is the North Cascades.

#### WEDNESDAY, JULY 4

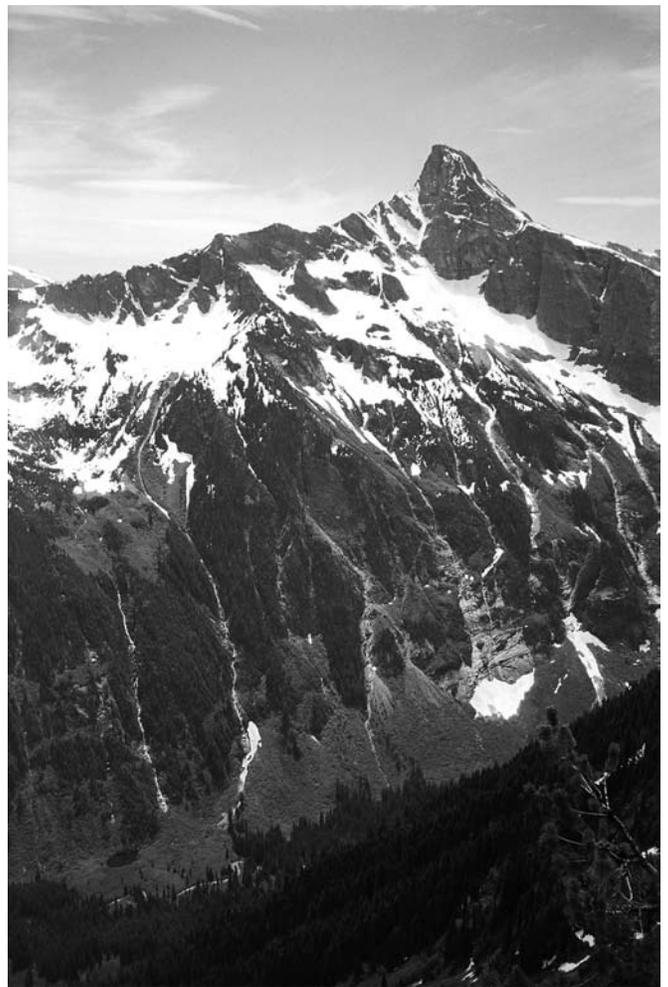
This would be the day I would try to get to Challenger Glacier and climb Peak 7374, and perhaps Challenger itself. I finally (with rest, a day pack and cool morning breeze) figured out that I not only had to

turn the first peak forming Challenger Arm, but literally climb right over it. Then came a huge descent — several hundred feet of hard-fought elevation to get around the next ridge. Before I could turn that ridge, I had to traverse a steep snow slope. I was so intent on getting on with it that I didn't really pay too close attention to my traverse.

Suddenly I was falling.

It really wasn't a big deal. I didn't even look down to see what might be below me, just focused on an easy self-arrest. But the snow was soft in the hot morning sun and my shaft point stuck before I could rotate my pick for a proper arrest. I fell though my planted ice axe and thus my right arm was ripped out of its socket by the leash of my axe. It was a rather gruesome view, dangling by my leash, my arm strangely and grotesquely apart from my torso. Well this wouldn't do! As I brought my left hand across my body to force my arm back into place, my ice axe freed itself and I found myself falling again, accelerating quickly, with the axe waving its sharp metal around my face. But my left hand found my ice axe instead of my right arm, so I decided with this good fortune to arrest with my left. The motion of arresting with my left arm, while the ice axe was leashed to my right arm brought it back into the socket. I collected myself, kicked a platform, and leaned my forehead and knees into the snow. Whew. Then I realized just how steep the slope really was — almost as steep as a ladder.

One might think it would be really scary to be alone, injured 20 miles in and a vertical mile up from the nearest sign of civilization, but this is the Northern Pickets. No time for fear! So instead of retreating and making my way back the rugged miles to high camp, I continued on. I wanted to experience this cirque as much as possible on this wonderful, sunny, summer day. Of course, I didn't make it much farther, certainly not to Challenger, as there were



*Luna Peak rises more than a vertical mile above the low valley of Luna Creek. The north and west arms of the peak are pictured here.*

two more large peaks/ridges to turn, complete with thousands of feet of descent and re-ascent. I was happy to make a high point on Challenger Arm and enjoy Luna Cirque in all its wild, icy, precipitous glory. I crashed in my tent upon return — another 8-hour day of hot hard travel. It was time to rest.

#### THURSDAY, JULY 5

Thursday was a much needed rest day. I moved my tent off the snow, and placed it literally on a fang of rock overlooking the Luna valley and cirque. The tent offered great shelter from the blazing sun and bugs, and placed as it was, I could enjoy most all of the views in relative comfort. Then the wind came up! Glorious! I mean to say it was really blowing, and blowing the bugs away. Woo Hoo! I spent two wonderfully cool, bug-free hours really taking in this amazing cirque. Very powerful. Very peaceful.

*Continued on page 14*

# LUNA CIRQUE

Continued from page 13



Peaks of the Northern Pickets rear above the moraine-impounded lake that occupies Luna Cirque. This lake is indicative of much larger glaciers in the recent past.

I should note I spied several burned areas on surrounding mountainsides (particularly along the “Ridge of Gendarmes” and the lower reaches of Big Beaver valley). Fire in the North Cascades does not “destroy” the forest, fire does not “ravage the landscape” or “sterilize and ruin productive forests.” Fire is very much a part of forest ecology and health, as long as humans don’t set blazes all over the place through careless activity, or go in after a fire to “salvage” the landscape and really ruin it by taking green trees and burned trees alike. This landscape self-protects through cleft drainages, steep slopes and rock+snow barriers.

That evening I was enjoying another amazing, otherworldly (literally!) moonrise on the cirque when a bat nearly flew in to my face. I saw a dark shape coming at me, and thought it was a bug inches from my eyes. Instead it was a HUGE bat that spread its wings in a sharp braking maneuver, ending up inches from my face!

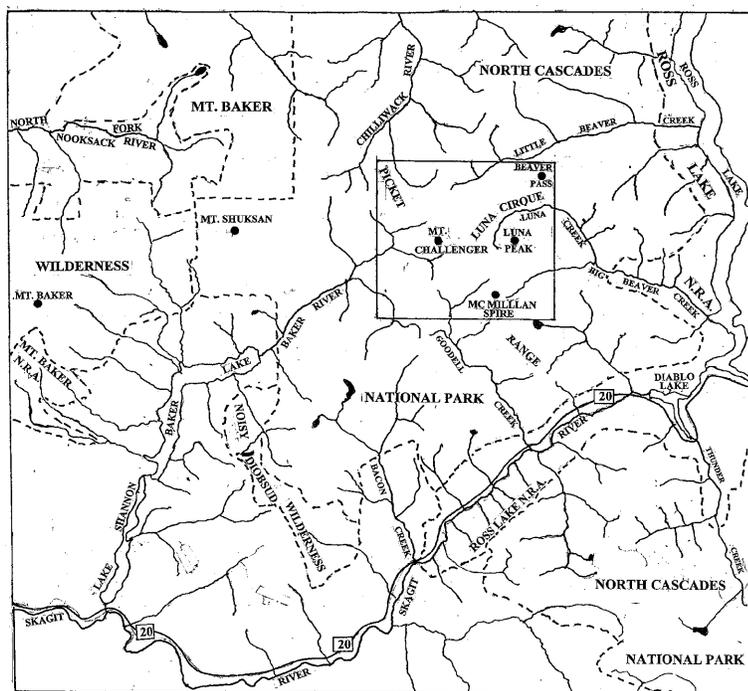
It was with great tepidation that I went to bed, for tomorrow would mean descent. Descending is always difficult, but down trackless, cliffy, buggy forest with a bum shoulder was daunting.

FRIDAY, JULY 6

At one point on the descent, while crashing and thrashing, peering up through the rainforest canopy trying to get my bearings, I hit some steep dirt and pine needles. I literally deployed ice axe and gliassaded the dirt! An uncomfortable and bumpy ride, but that's the North Cascades!

Soon after, I popped out right at Beaver shelter!

One second I was in total tracklessness, and then on a well-worn trail. I now stood 15.2 miles from the dock, and 23 miles from the trailhead. Finding my poles and food cache intact, and with insistent prodding from the bugs, I beat feet out of there! Many hours later I emerged from the wilderness to find a young couple from D.C. waiting to be picked up at the dock. I asked how they came to be aware of Big Beaver, and they talked about this book by Harvey Manning. I spent the next hour regaling them with tales of the North Cascades, and encouraged them to find out about The North Cascades Conservation Council. I pointed back in to that wild, rugged valley and remarked that it would be under water due to the High Ross project if not for the efforts of some forward-thinking people.



—PATRICK GOLDSWORTHY MAP

# Fifty Years of Research at South Cascade Glacier

WENDELL TANGBORN

It was a typical day at South Cascade Glacier in October — wet, cold, windy, cloudy and dark. After breakfast we gathered up the equipment we would need for the day (ice axes, current meter, measuring tapes, snow probing rods, rubber hip boots, collapsible wading rod), packed a lunch (a can of sardines, a box of Ry-Krisp and a can of apple sauce), dressed in the most water-proof clothes we could find and headed up glacier. The rain turned to snow as we gained elevation and a brisk wind from the southwest warned us that the day was not going to be pleasant. We read ablation stakes and measured new snow depths as we moved up the east side of the glacier, avoiding the areas we knew were heavily crevassed but now covered with a foot or two of new snow. But a boot would still break through occasionally, leaving a small gaping hole in the new snow and warning us we were getting into dangerous territory.

All of this was a little scary for me, as I had never stepped foot on a glacier until the previous July (1960), after being transferred by the Geological Survey from Minnesota to Washington to work in Mark Meier's glacier project. To say I was naïve would be an understatement as monumental as the peaks that now surrounded us. I was also unsure of my position as Mark's understudy, which was the word used to describe my new job

By noon we reached the head of the glacier. The wind was now at a velocity such that the falling snow moved more horizontally than vertically. Just off the glacier we ate our lunch in a sheltered spot in the lee of a large boulder but the relentless wind and driving snow made eating a chore. We had brought along a thermos of hot water and some packets of a dried cocoa mix, envisioning a steaming mug of cocoa to go with our sardine/Ry-Krisp sandwiches. But when we poured the powder into a cup the wind whipped it out before hot water could be added — so our hope for a hot cup of cocoa was revised to one of tepid water.

We did not dawdle over lunch and quickly began our trek down the west side of the glacier, measuring those stakes that

could be found. These data would be used to calculate the glacier's final balance for the year — the difference between total snow accumulation and total ablation (snow and ice melt). One of the vital goals of the project was to measure the glacier's balance and determine if it was gaining or losing mass. Visibility was now down to 10 or 15 feet and just staying on the right course was all we could do. By the time we reached the firn line, the boundary between snow and ice, the snow had turned back to rain and the wind intensity lessened slightly. We spent the afternoon



*The but at South Cascade Glacier in 1960.*

—MARK MEIER

measuring the discharge of some small streams flowing on the glacier and issuing from the cliffs below LeConte Peak. These measurements would be useful later for calculating the glacier's water balance, another task that would help us relate the glacier's health to the climate. One measurement was a little frightening as it was just above a moulin, into which the glacier stream poured making a thunderous roar as the water fell 300 feet to the glacier bed. It was easy to imagine slipping on the wet ice, falling into the stream and sliding out of control into the moulin (aided by the wet hip-boots and the rubberized rain gear I wore). Mark commented that if I fell in he would see to that I was remembered by naming it the "Tangborn Memorial Moulin".

At the glacier terminus, we had to make a decision quickly, as the rain and wind were picking up. Should we head back up the glacier and pick up our route from

this morning, or follow the rocky shore along South Cascade Lake, cross the south fork Cascade River, and climb the bedrock ridge back to a warm and dry hut?

Mark thought the lake route the quickest and least dangerous so we began the traverse immediately, after I changed back from rubber hip boots to hiking shoes. The glacier had occupied this entire lake just 30 years before, when the ground on which we walked was covered with ice a hundred or more feet thick. The lateral moraine left by the retreating glacier around the lake was composed of rocks that varied in size from a fist to a small automobile, and because they were only recently deposited on a steep terrain, were extremely unstable. I had not made ten steps when I stepped on a teetering boulder, which turned over, pitching me headlong into a rocky depression. I soon understood that the remaining one-half mile traverse around the lake required utmost caution for each step. By the time we reached the river, darkness was closing in, the rain and wind were sapping our strength and rapidly diminishing our interest in glaciology, for that day at least. I was now beginning to realize that it was this type of work that made glacier study so hazardous.

Research studies at South Cascade Glacier in the North Cascades, were initiated by the Water Resources Division of the US Geological Survey in 1957. One of the primary goals of the USGS mission was to determine how glaciers respond to climate change. It has long been known that glaciers are sensitive to the climate and the indelible traces left by glaciers on the landscape over much of the Northern Hemisphere portrayed past climates. But the complex interaction of a glacier with its environment needed to be understood with greater precision before past climates could be deciphered from their imprints left on the landscape. The impact of a changing climate was not of as great a concern then as it is now so the foresight shown by the development of this program at that time is remarkable. Luna Leopold, son of the world-renown naturalist, Aldo Leopold, was chief hydrologist of the Water Resources Division from 1957-1966,

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## Fifty Years of Research at South Cascade Glacier

*Continued from page 15*

so it is not surprising that such a strong effort was made to support and fund this research program.

The statement “glaciers are sensitive to the climate” was made countless times in published articles and the presentations we made throughout the 1960s-1970s, but little did we know just how sensitive they were. The now impending demise of many of them suggests glaciers are much more sensitive to the earth’s climate than are humans. We should have heeded their warning signals long ago.

Mark Meier was designated chief of the Glacier Project Office in Tacoma and served in this position until he retired 1985. I transferred from the St. Paul District office of the Water Resources Division in 1960. Austin Post, the imminent glacier photographer and glaciologist joined us in 1966 and Robert Krimmel in 1968, first as a field assistant, then as a hydrologist. Meteorologist William Campbell, mathematician Lowell Rasmussen and hydrologist Donald Richardson became part of the core staff in the 1960s, and glaciologist Steven Hodge, mathematician William Sikonia, photographer David Hirst and geologist David Frank in the 1970s. Currently William Bidlake is in charge of the South Cascade Glacier operation for the USGS in Tacoma, Washington.

The snow and ice research at the Glacier Project Office was largely directed toward an improved understanding of how a changing climate would affect water supplies that are derived from melting snow and ice. Over much of the United States and many areas of the world, snow and ice are important sources of runoff. Because changes in the climate would alter both the seasonal snow cover and the size and extent of glaciers, and therefore have a significant effect on water resources, another project goal was an improved understanding of snow and glacier hydrology. In some parts of the world people depend on the water from melting glaciers as their only source of supply during the summer season. The disappearance of mountain glaciers in these remote areas will have severe consequences for them.

South Cascade Glacier was selected as the main study glacier for this project because it was small and could be easily traversed. Also, it had a well-defined basin from which the runoff could be accurately gauged, it had well-defined moraines for

historical analysis and was reasonably accessible by trail. It proved to be a good choice, and as it is rapidly disappearing, may be a perfect example to demonstrate the fate we all face from atmospheric pollution of human-produced carbon dioxide.

One consequence of our snow hydrology research on the glacier and in the North Cascades was the development of an



*South Cascade Glacier on September 24, 1955.*

—AUSTIN POST

improved streamflow forecasting model for mountain basins. The model uses only weather observations collected at low altitudes, from established weather stations to simulate the snowpack, therefore does not require expensive and environmentally intrusive helicopters, on-site snow surveys and weather stations installed at remote mountain sites. However, even though the forecast accuracy of this model has proven to be more accurate than snow surveys and other snow measuring techniques, it has never been accepted by the governmental agencies responsible for providing the public with water supply forecasts. We (HyMet\*) currently use it to forecast runoff of the Columbia River at the four main hydroelectric dams and distribute weekly runoff and energy forecasts to energy traders, public utilities and investment banks. I was certain that a reliable runoff forecasting model, which would end intruding into wilderness areas with helicopters and motorized vehicles and at the same time save taxpayers millions of dollars, would

be quickly adopted by the National Weather Service and other government agencies, but 30 years later I am still waiting.

The South Cascade Glacier program emphasized both glacier dynamics and the ice and water balance of the glacier. A great effort went into designing and constructing streamflow and precipitation gauges that would operate throughout the year

in a harsh environment. Several significant findings resulted from this research. One was to learn that by simultaneously measuring the glacier’s cumulative mass balance and its time-varying flow, we could demonstrate a dynamic relationship between them. It was then possible to establish the link between glacier flow and climate change. In addition, for the first time longitudinal profiles of ice discharge and glacier thickness were calculated from only surface measurements. Another noteworthy contribution was the discovery that a glacier internally stores a substantial amount of liquid water during the summer melt season and slowly releases it during the winter. The proposition that there are large reservoirs of sub-glacial water encountered considerable skepticism in the glaciological community, but it has since been confirmed for many glaciers throughout the world. Sub-glacial water is now considered critical for predicting the response of both glaciers and large ice sheets (such as Greenland and the West Antarctic) to

climate change. In the late 1980s, Andrew Fountain mapped the basal water levels by drilling holes to the bed of the glacier, revealing new insights regarding the drainage patterns of sub-surface water.

Measuring the mass balance (the total snowfall and ablation of snow and ice) of a glacier requires intensive field operations that are time-consuming and expensive, and also means some environmental damage, regardless how carefully we try to minimize it. Not long after starting work as a glaciologist I started thinking there must be a better way to make these measurements (my thoughts were likely inspired by the necessity of digging snow pits, sometimes as much as 30 feet deep). Although it turned out to be possible to substitute low-elevation precipitation and temperature observations for snow surveys in runoff forecasting, glacier balance calculation requires more detailed measurements. Snow surveys are used to forecast runoff from large drainage areas, often many hundred square miles in area,

whereas most glaciers, except in the arctic regions, are on the order of a few square miles (South Cascade glacier is about 1 square mile).

It took another twenty years after I retired from the USGS in 1979 to evolve a method to simulate glacier conditions using observations at distant weather stations. An explanatory paper was published in 1999 in *Geofiska Annaler*. As with the attempts to convince governmental forecasters to adopt the HyMet runoff forecasting model, the initial resistance to the glacier balance model by glaciologists was even stronger — most simply felt it was impossible to determine snow accumulation and ablation on a glacier from weather observations at a valley weather station 50-100 miles away. However, the model has been used successfully for several large glaciers in Alaska and for others in Washington and is now accepted as a valid alternative to field measurements of mass balance. Plans are now underway by the Geological Survey to use this model to monitor balance and weather conditions at South Cascade Glacier on a real-time basis at their Tacoma offices.

In developing this model it appears I may have stumbled on to something about glaciers that no one has suspected and is also the reason the mass balance model works as well as it appears to. The PTAA model (precipitation-temperature-area-altitude) as it is called, determines a glacier's balance using weather records collected at low-altitude stations with long historical records, plus the area-altitude distribution of the glacier's surface. The area-altitude distribution (the AA profile) is a rough approximation of the spatial orientation of a multitude of individual facets that define a glacier's surface (if each facet is assumed to be a 10x10 foot square, South Cascade would have nearly 300,000). Each facet's altitude and inclination is determined by erosion of the underlying bedrock by the sliding glacier and by glacier flow. Glacier bed erosion proceeds over geologic time, on the order of hundreds of thousands or even millions of years for many existing glaciers. The energy (solar radiation and turbulent heat transfer from the surrounding air), and mass (mostly as snow) each facet receives determine the glacier's total mass balance. Therefore each glacier

has embedded in it a memory of the past climate and responds to the current climate according to the imprint carved in the bedrock by the erosion at its bed. An artificial intelligence expert may be able to construct a neural network model that would provide a better explanation, and also enhance our understanding of how a glacier responds to climate change.

In 1958, a tree stump was discovered



*South Cascade Glacier on September 24, 2006.*

—VERN POTTS, WDT

that was just uncovered along the edge of the retreating glacier. A radio-carbon date of the wood revealed an age of 4700 +/-300 years, which meant that the glacier was at one time at least as small as it was in 1958 and in an advancing state about 5000 years ago. The advance sheared off the tree and must have immediately covered the stump with ice as it showed no signs of decay when it was found. Parallel to this finding, a body was found in 1991 adjacent to a receding glacier in the Austrian Alps. The Otzi man, as he is now called, died approximately 5300 years ago and his well-preserved body, like tree stumps in the North Cascades, must have also been immediately covered by ice that kept Otzi more or less intact until he was found. The conclusions based on these two coincidental phenomena is that the climate from 5-6000 years ago appears to have been similar to today's climate, as both were marked by retreating glaciers. However, these two glaciers apparently made rapid advances about 5000 BP and it

seems unlikely this will be repeated anytime soon. We do not know if the cause of the retreating glaciers then was due to increasing temperatures, as it is now, or by much lower rates of winter snowfall. Glacier advances 5000 years BP may not have been so unusual in the Northern Hemisphere but evidence is sparse because later advances were greater and obliterated the earlier moraines. There is ample evidence, however, that tidewater glaciers in Alaska advanced 3000 years BP and those in the Southern Hemisphere made significant advances 4400-4600 BP.

The chance visit by Harvey Manning and Dick Brooks during a Labor Day storm in 1961 had a profound influence on my view of how we should treat our environment. Before that I'm afraid I was unaware of how fragile the earth really is and how easily it can be and is being damaged by blundering humans. Listening to Harvey expound his views on a wide variety of subjects for those three snowbound days was one of the best educations anyone could have. I consider myself extremely fortunate that an unseasonably early and severe autumn snowstorm forced these two stalwart mountaineers to seek shelter at the South Cascade Glacier Hut (even though both of them deplored its being there but admitted later they were glad it was). An account of their excursion to the glacier from where they were camped at White Rock Lakes can be found in *The North Cascades National Park*, by Harvey Manning and Ira Spring. If either or both of the two computer models I developed to measure snow accumulation and ablation using low-elevation observations are ever fully accepted or adopted by others, the resulting reduction of human intrusions into pristine wilderness areas should largely be credited to Harvey Manning.

I also feel fortunate to have survived the hazards of working in the mountains as a glaciologist for nearly 20 years, especially considering my initial naivety and lack of experience. Falling into a glacier crevasse would seem to be the most obvious danger but we seldom roped up while on the glacier (which, in retrospect, seems I must have been horribly dimwitted about safety but also incredibly lucky). There

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## Fifty Years of Research at South Cascade Glacier

*Continued from page 17*



*Probing snow depths on South Cascade Glacier, spring 1962. —MARK MEIER*

were many other dangers — helicopter or small plane accidents, climbing falls, unexpected illnesses, snow avalanches, hypothermia, severe storms, many potential water hazards — all of which I and others narrowly escaped experiencing at one time or another (I never have learned to swim and nearly was swept over a 300-foot waterfall in Norway when attempting to gauge a glacier stream during a storm). There was one close call in which a co-worker nearly died from an obstructed intestine but was saved by the courage and piloting skill of the late Bob Munro, founder of Kenmore Air Harbor. A dramatic account of this rescue can be found in *Success on the Step, The Story of Kenmore Air Harbor*, by Marin Faure.

There was a trail we used at first from the nearest road to the glacier that followed Downey Creek for eight miles but its total length was 14 miles and required climbing from the hut to 7000 feet before descending to the timberline. After a few years, a new route only nine miles long and following the south fork Cascade River was opened by Austin Post. There were tremendous advantages to this trail, besides being shorter. It could be used in stormy weather as the shelter of a heavy forest was reached in minutes after leaving the hut, and the hike out to the road could be done in 5 or 6 hours. The Downey Creek route would take up to 14 hours, which meant we often would not reach the road until after dark. I still have a recurring dream (not quite a nightmare)

about getting caught on a mountain trail just before nightfall and realizing I will never be able to find the way out in the dark.

At the end of that October day in 1960, we faced another dilemma — a 30-foot-wide, turbulent and fast-flowing river, and only one pair of hip boots. We discussed the options. I could put them on, cross the river, remove them and throw one at a time back to Mark. But the chance of one landing in the stream was too great (a rubber hip-boot does not throw like a baseball). We did what was now the obvious alternative. Without further discussion, I removed my hiking boots, placed them in my pack and put the hip-boots back on. Mark slipped on both his and my backpack, and then hopped onto my back. Grasping the two ice axes, one in each hand, we started crossing the stream. Without the two extra legs provided by the ice axes it would have been impossible because of the swift water and slippery, invisible rocks at the bed of the stream. Also, without a doubt the extra 200 pounds provided better traction. However, half way across I stepped on a large, unusually slippery rock and nearly fell. “Slip and you’re fired,” came from above and just behind my head. Fortunately, I stayed on my feet and we crossed without mishap.

Despite my initial misgivings about the precarious position I felt I was in working for Mark Meier, I owe him a debt of gratitude for selecting an inexperienced, not too well-educated farm boy to work with him. Looking back now to 1959 when he interviewed me, I still am puzzled that I was hired for this job when there were so many other applicants who were more qualified, better educated and had greater familiarity and experience working in the mountains. He also had me promoted four times during my 20-year career as a glaciologist, which each time renewed my enthusiasm for glacier work, not to mention my relief at not being fired.

*—Wendell Tangborn was born in Sioux City, Iowa in 1927 and grew up on a small farm in Northern Minnesota. He was drafted into the army in 1951 and after being discharged in 1953 attended the University of Minnesota, receiving a BS in Geological Engineering in 1958. After retiring from the US Geological Survey in 1979, he formed a consulting company, HyMet Inc, specializing in forecasting streamflow in western United States and developing glacier balance models in Alaska.*

*\*Additional information can be found at [www.hymet.com](http://www.hymet.com) or by contacting him at HyMet Inc., 19001 Vasbon Hwy. SW, Suite 201, Vashon, WA 98070, phone 206-463-1610.*

## COLLABORATION

*Continued from page 11*

tions.

The collaboration prototype -- the 1998 Quincy Library Group legislation -- illustrates the problem. That group, named for the California town library where it met, came up with a plan for three national forests in the Sierra affected by endangered-species listings. The proposal increased logging while protecting pristine areas. When it landed in Congress, California Rep. George Miller insisted on adding one provision: All environmental laws would apply. That meant the Quincy Library logging plan had to go through the same environmental analysis a Forest Service plan would.

The Quincy Library proposal, held up at the time as a model of local, consensus-based decision-making, has never been fully implemented. Why? Primarily because it didn't jibe with Endangered Species Act guidelines protecting the California spotted owl. In other words, it did not pass scientific or legal muster.

That environmentalist “stakeholders” signed on to the Quincy Library agreement in the first place highlights the danger of the collaboration fad. After years of being tarred as obstructionist ideologues, some environmental groups now have a seat at the negotiating table -- indeed, are seen as crucial to legitimizing any deal. Enjoying their newfound popularity, these self-appointed decision-makers become heavily invested in reaching an accord, regardless of the science, the law or the long-term effect on the land.

For decades, environmentalists fought to get a more level playing field and establish transparency and accountability in public-lands policy; they continue to fight the Bush administration's relentless efforts to dismantle these policies. How ironic it would be, then, if in their eagerness to embrace the new paradigm, they craft and push through Congress deals that undercut the very laws that got them to the table in the first place.

*—Erica Rosenberg directs the program on public policy at Arizona State University's law school and served as counsel to the House Resources Committee from 1999-2004.*

# Ski Area Mania Trashes Backcountry

MARK LAWLER

SIERRA CLUB CASCADE CHAPTER

A rash of ski area expansions is afflicting the public lands of the Washington Cascades. At Stevens Pass, Snoqualmie Pass, Crystal Mountain, and White Pass, the private companies that run the ski areas are pushing through huge expansions of their operations. They want to run new ski lifts into wild roadless basins, clearcut new ski runs (often in old growth forest), cut down more forest for parking areas, build restaurants and lodges, and expand road access and utilities. All of this is proposed on public lands managed by the Forest Service.

Fortunately the down-home ski areas at Mount Baker and Mission Ridge haven't been interested in expanding much, preferring a few modest improvements to keep their ticket prices accessible. But the Forest Service has been eager to accommodate the other ski areas' proposals. In the case of White Pass, the agency approved virtually the entire package proposed by the ski company, even though much of the expansion would develop an inventoried roadless area next to the Goat Rocks Wilderness. This is a clear violation of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule put into place by President Clinton in 2001, and the expansion violates federal law in many other ways. Conservation groups have had to sue the Forest Service and the ski company to halt this illegal expansion.

At Crystal Mountain ski area, the Forest Service gave the okay to extensive new clearcut ski runs, lifts, avalanche control facilities, and other ski area accoutrements into undeveloped, nearly wild basins — all the way up to the boundary of Mount Rainier National Park. Fortunately the Forest Service did exclude development from Bullion Basin, a scenic roadless area popular with backcountry skiers, snowshoers, and hikers.

At Snoqualmie Pass, chopped up by decades of development, a multi-lane interstate highway, and square-mile clearcuts on private land, ski area managers want several new lifts and new groomed runs serviced by those lifts. Fortunately a lot of these are in already impacted areas and don't pose a great change to wildlife habitat. However, the most controversial proposal is in Section 16 near Summit East (the old Hyak ski area), the last large block of intact old forest that still serves as a quality wildlife migration corridor across the highway. The ski company has struck a deal with conserva-

tion groups to have any development in Section 16 first approved by a scientific panel, and to its credit the ski area is also proposing to donate several hundred acres of land to the national forest.

Recently the final big Cascades ski area expansion, for Stevens Pass, has been unveiled. The ski company there is not content with its existing permit area but wants to add three new areas to its permit operations, all of which are currently roadless and have never been developed, such as the wild and scenic Grace Lakes Basin. Remaining shreds of natural old forest within the existing developed area would be largely destroyed. Supposedly to reduce environmental impacts, the ski company proposes that some of the new ski runs would be thinned — euphemistically called “glading.” However, a closer look reveals that these would still be clearcut strips one or two hundred feet wide, and the forest beyond would be thinned to 30 to 60 percent of the original density of trees. This “glading” would nearly completely fragment the remaining old forest, making it useless for the sensitive wildlife species that depend upon large blocks of intact forest canopy. Stevens Pass would start to become the same type of ecologically fragmented zone, blocking wildlife migration, that has become such a catastrophe at Snoqualmie Pass. And to top it off, the company also wants to make the area into a mountain bike destination, running lifts for a couple months in summer. The area would be crisscrossed with super-steep, wide trails gouged into the mountain-side forests for daredevils willing to bomb downhill at reckless speeds.

Why this rush to create bigger, ever-more-clearcut ski areas in Washington? Visitation to Washington ski areas has been flat for over two decades, with ups and downs that reflect varying snow conditions rather than ski facilities. None of these areas is suitable for drawing skiers from outside Washington. So a fixed number of ski areas is chasing a fixed number of skiers each year. Until these recent expansion plans, the ski companies typically made simple and moderate changes: they would rebuild lodges, install larger-capacity lifts on the old alignments, improve grooming, expand night skiing, and build “terrain parks” for snowboarders. What each of the four “big” areas now wants is much more land for developed skiing and more opportunities to develop upscale facilities such as mid-mountain restaurants.

Each ski area is trying to distinguish itself from the others to attract a larger fraction of the static user base. To pay for these vast improvements, the areas will post large increases in lift fees — which will end up depressing overall skier numbers.

The Forest Service makes the final decisions on all these ski area changes. For White Pass and Crystal Mountain, the Forest Service was all too eager to grant most of what the ski companies wanted, believing the expansions essential to the survival and prosperity of those ski areas. What the Forest Service has never done, despite decades of prodding, is take a broad view of all the ski areas across the Cascades and look at what skiers and snowboarders really need, instead of just accepting what the ski companies serve up. If parking lots are overcrowded, could ski areas provide more buses to bring people up from the metropolitan areas instead of clearcutting forests for new lots? If the base of an area is too congested, why not explore better, faster lift systems to keep skiers circulating so that new runs don't have to be carved out of virgin forest? The Forest Service is in a position to force the ski companies to minimize their impacts and to leave critical wildlife habitat, roadless areas, and old-growth forests alone. Yet in the case of White Pass and Crystal, each ski area got its way for the most part, which will cost skiers more dollars at the same time that the public loses more irreplaceable forest resources. In total, these huge ski area expansions will not bring in significantly more skiers — rather, they will just reshuffle skiers from one ski area to another. The biggest loser will be our wild public lands and forests, and the wildlife and fish that depend on them.

The last and largest expansion proposal is at Stevens Pass, and the environmental study process begins this year. You can contact the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest recreation staff (see <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/mbs>) to get on the mailing list to comment on this proposal when it comes out.

# In. Memoriam

## BENELLA CAMINITI

1922-2007

*Longtime environmental activist  
dies at 85*

LISA STIFFLER,  
*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

If not for Benella Caminiti, Woodland Park Zoo might have sprawled east of Aurora Avenue, gobbling up acres of park that's free for all to enjoy. There might be a cabaret installed near the shores of Green Lake. A Venice-themed development might have destroyed the ecologically rich mudflats of Padilla Bay near Anacortes.

She knew land use laws front-to-back but wasn't a lawyer. She was published more than 150 times in local newspapers, but wasn't a journalist. Caminiti was just a woman with a "strong sense of justice," said her son, John. "It was a sense of fairness that she always had, that public property shouldn't be disregarded and taken advantage of."

Since the early 1970s, Caminiti fought developers, city and state officials, boaters and shoreline owners to preserve free access to a wide range of natural spaces. She testified at public hearings, wrote letters and essays to newspapers and filed lawsuits to make her case.

"She was unafraid to stand up and seek what she thought was right," said Rachael Osborn, executive director for the Spokane-based Center for Environmental Law & Policy. "And she would just not let go. I just watched her and learned that you have to put yourself out there and be persistent."

Caminiti, who had recently moved from her long-time home in Queen Anne to her son's Lake Stevens home, died in her sleep early Sunday, November 25, 2007. She was 85.

Caminiti was the founder of the Seattle Shorelines Coalition, chairwoman of the Washington Environmental Council's Coast and Shorelines Committee and most recently a board member for the Center for Environmental Law & Policy (CELP).

Her greatest disappointment was a case she lost in 1987 against Commissioner of Public Lands Brian Boyle. She was fighting a law that allowed residential property owners to have docks on public tidelands without paying anything to the state.

"The day I lost that case was the worst day of my life," Caminiti told the *Queen Anne News* in 2004. "Five of the nine Washington State Supreme Court justices who ruled on the case owned beachfront property."

But the ruling set an important precedent regarding the Public Trust Doctrine\* and state control over of tidelands. That precedent later helped save Padilla Bay from

developers and allowed San Juan County to ban the use of jet skis to protect marine life, Osborn said.

. . . . She won multiple awards for her activism, including a special honor in 1991 from the Department of Ecology for her work protecting shoreline resources. In 2006, she turned over to the UW libraries 11 boxes of letters, articles and paperwork representing her work on innumerable public land issues.



\*Harvey Manning, late NCCC board member, and Benella Caminiti worked together on the Public Trust Doctrine for many years. Harvey wrote the following in *The Wild Cascades* (February, 1993, page 8):

(Excerpted from "Who Owns the Earth? — The Public Trust Doctrine")

"You've probably never heard of the PTD. Few citizens have — except those whose ox it's threatening to gore. Government agencies that knew of it are too spooked to mention it out loud. However, in 1987 the Washington State Supreme Court, in deciding two cases based on the PTD, affirmed that the PTD has been, is, and will be the law of Washington. In one of these, *Caminiti v. Boyle*, the court declared the state could never abdicate its authority over lands covered by waters and that these must be used in accordance with the PTD even where there is a so-called "private ownership."

. . . To understand why, look up "The Public Trust Doctrine and Coastal Zone Management in Washington State", by Professor Ralph Johnson (et. al.) of the UW School of Law, published as an article in the July, 1992 issue of the *Washington Law Review*.

"The PTD has only just begun to be implemented in Washington. So far the application has been almost entirely to tidewater, with Benella Caminiti and her Seattle Shoreline Coalition the pioneers.

"What has that to do with the North Cascades?

"As the law of this state (and due to its quasi-constitutional character, beyond compromising by the timorous legislative and executive branches) the PTD has clear application to lakeshores (Lake Chelan) and riverbanks (Stehekin River). But it also enters into, for example, the use of patented mining claims which are "private property" under terms of the Mining Law but under the PTD, which has overriding quasi-constitutional authority, are not fully private. Those ancient forests rooted in "patented" cliffs cannot be logged without radically affecting the ecosystem, including streams and fisheries, thereby infringing on right of the public. . . ."

## MARION HESSEY

Early member and activist in the North Cascades Conservation Council, Marion Hesseley left her beloved Cascades on October 11, 2007 – at the age of 91. She was never far from her beloved wilderness, though, the Hesseley home nestles in the surrounding pine forest not far from Naches.

Much of the early on-the-ground knowledge and information about the wild country of the North Cascades was shared by Marion and husband, Chuck, with the then newly founded North Cascades Conservation Council back in the late 1950s. The Hesseleys knew the area intimately.

Marion and Chuck were also first-rate movie makers. The Hesseley movie films of their winter cross-country ski jaunts and camps, as well as warmer weather hikes and mountain climbing, were shown publicly many times. They introduced many, many uninitiated people to the unparalleled natural values of the North Cascades. Due to the Marion and Chuck team, more and more people came together — to preserve the wilderness mountains, unlogged primeval forests, both alpine and lower elevation, and wild flower meadows. Many of these people became friends, members, and supporters of the North Cascades Conservation Council — thanks to Marion and Chuck Hesseley.

Marion hiked all over the Cascades – with Chuck. Marion kept on hiking after he passed on. Both Hesseleys were active members of the Cascadians, an east of the Cascades hiking and conservation group; they were also members of The Mountaineers.

I especially recall a meeting in the Hesseley's home when Dave Brower, of the Sierra Club, brought the first cut of a film of the North Cascades country for them (and a few others) to review. That first cut (admittedly not completed) focused mostly on high alpine areas of rock and ice, but virtually no forests. It was there at the Hesseley's when it was made sure that the overall ecological uniqueness of the North Cascades forests received as much emphasis as the upper mountain slopes.

So much more could be said about Marion Hesseley's dedication and contributions to preserving North Cascades wildernesses — especially in the now protected (and parts yet to be protected) North Cascades. Marion Hesseley is now in her beloved wilderness, with her ashes in the wilds surrounding the Stehekin valley.

— POLLY DYER

## WILLIAM K. LONGWELL

William K. Longwell, noted hiker, trail builder, author, and local historian died on



LARRY HANSON

November 28, 2007 at the age of 71. Born in Rock Island, Illinois on April 3, 1936, Mr. Longwell is survived by his wife of 47 years Mimi Longwell, his daughter Ann Lockwood and her husband Robert; his daughter Gretchen Longwell and her

husband David Worth; his grandchildren Robert William Lockwood and Elizabeth Gabrielle Lockwood; his sisters Ardythe Longwell and Tanya Salvino; his brother Paul Longwell; and his dear friends Debbie and Greg Anshell, Ken Hopping and Karen Tom.

Mr. Longwell was a true Renaissance man, having far-reaching interests, hobbies and avocations. After finishing his Bachelor of Arts in History at Western Washington University, and continuing his studies at the University of Washington, he taught English and History for 30 years, first at McKnight Middle School and then at Hazen High School in Renton, Washington. He had a profound influence on many students, often taking them hiking and trail building, and introducing them to Native American culture, botany, ornithology and literature. He served as the official scorer and statistician for the WIAA State High School Basketball Tournament for 25 years and was the editor for many years of the official-printed program. He followed sports voraciously throughout his life, and kept detailed records of individual players and teams.

Throughout the span of his adult life, Bill logged over 50,000 miles hiking throughout Washington, Oregon, and California. He kept meticulous records, accounting for every mile. Having a photographic memory, he could recall every place he had ever hiked, and every person he had ever met on the trail, and continually served as a source of information for many people. He took long backpacks with his daughters on parts of the Pacific Crest Trail, the Washington beaches, and the Chelan Crest Trail. One of his last backpacks was with his grandson, Robert William, age 8, to Shi Shi Beach.

Bill Longwell took his title of "Chief Ranger," given to him by Harvey Manning, seriously. Starting in the mid-1970s, he surveyed, laid out, and led the effort to build the 16-mile Tiger Mountain Trail system, as well as numerous other trails including

Squak Mountain in the Issaquah Alps. He spent countless afternoons on the mountain after teaching a full day, and many summer days. Often his students assisted him. He hauled large loads of wood to construct bridges on the trail and created a signage system for the trail, routing the signs by hand in his garage. The entire effort was voluntary, including significant lobbying efforts to acquire the rights to build the trail from the Weyerhaeuser Company, and later with the state to assure its status as a major regional recreational area.

Together with Harvey Manning, Bill was a founding member of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club. As the Trail Maintenance Crew Chief, he continued to lead efforts to maintain the Issaquah Alps Trails system, as well as many high mountain trails. He recorded detailed logs of trail work, as well as notes of plants and birds he observed. He was a self-taught botanist and ornithologist. He additionally volunteered his services with the Forest Service and the Department of Natural Resources.

As a result on his work on Tiger Mountain, Bill wrote and published *Guide to Trails of Tiger Mountain*, donating all proceeds to the Issaquah Alps Trails Club. The book has undergone multiple editions, and is the resource for local hiking enthusiasts. In addition, he wrote regular articles for several publications, greatly assisted by his wife Mimi. Bill also led numerous hikes and naturalist walks (accompanied by his wife Mimi), for the Issaquah Alps Trails Club, the Seattle Mountaineers, and the Snoqualmie Valley Trail Club.

In spite of his continuous dedication to the Issaquah Alps, his true love was the high mountains. In a book he wrote for his daughters, *Past Ford and Bridge and Town: On Foot Near 1-90 and in Washington State*, he said,

Each spring I follow the melting snows up favorite trails, constantly checking the warming process. It's the part of the year I long for, especially after the long winter. . . I try to hike in the high mountains at least 50 times a year. It's the high mountains I prize.

His entire hiking career could perhaps best be summarized in a quote that he loved from Rudyard Kipling's poem *The Explorer*:

"Something hidden. Go and Find it.  
Go and look behind the Ranges —  
Something lost behind the Ranges.  
Lost and waiting for you. Go!"

Bill Longwell was a Presence in our Alps. We do miss him.

# Public Land Losses Are Serious

GEORGE EARLY

A new trend in auction sales of public lands is creating serious losses in the public land base. During the last eight years disturbing changes have quietly been made to the management of our public lands.

During this period, some 300,000 acres of our precious public lands have been turned over to private control through land auctions. Once privatized, the public of course, no longer has access to this lost land base.

Much of this land loss was close to large urban centers where such land is extremely valuable. The result of privatizing was an astronomical loss of our public land value when calculated in dollars. If such land auctions are allowed to continue they will be catastrophic to our public lands base.

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## Blanchard Mountain Lawsuit

You could call it Washington's last great coastal forest — the largest surviving block of maturing forest left along the entire mainland shore of Washington's inland sea. Imagine this place in fifty years: thousands of acres of lowland old-growth forest immediately adjacent to the marine coast — Issaquah Alps By-the-Sea.

Where else in the greater Puget Sound region is such a dream possible? Nowhere, to be exact. This truly is a now-or-never proposition. We can shrug and let it go, add it to the forgotten column along with the millions of acres of Washington coastal forest that have been paved over and urbanized in the last 150 years. Or we can demand that it be saved.

The DNR's logging plan for Blanchard Mountain has been vigorously opposed by the Chuckanut Conservancy, North Cascades Conservation Council, North Cascades Audubon Society, Sierra Club's Mount Baker Group, Bellingham Mountaineers, Coast Watch Society and others. Yet the DNR has ignored them all, confident of their ability to bamboozle the public with happy talk, as they work up their timber sales and plans for miles of new roads.

The North Cascades Conservation Council and Chuckanut Conservancy filed suit in September to stop the DNR from implementing its plans for Blanchard Mountain. Hearings are scheduled in Seattle in April. Please visit [www.chuckanutconservancy.org](http://www.chuckanutconservancy.org) to learn more or to contribute to the cause.

— KEN WILCOX

Our "public land base" is our public land acreage multiplied by its value per acre. Lands close to urban centers may be worth \$30,000 per acre while land in the boonies may only be worth a \$100 per acre. Even trying to put a dollar value on public lands is misleading because there is only so much land which is a limited resource. Losing any amount of land from the public land base is bad no matter what its price per acre may be.

The public does not have a clue about what is going on because the media has not given serious consideration to these land auctions.

Environmental organizations as well as smaller local groups should have stopped this fiasco from the start, but instead some of them have become part of the problem by supporting these bills.

There is always a need to privatize some public lands for legitimate management purposes. However, there is even a greater need to transfer some private lands back into the public domain. There are two situations where private lands need to become part of the public domain:

- 1) environmentally sensitive lands, and,
- 2) private in-holdings within large existing blocks of public land.

Private land can become public domain: through land exchange, and through purchase from willing private sellers.

Prior to 1998, the most common way, by far, to privatize public lands was through exchange. If you wanted to privatize a piece of public land that federal management was willing to release, you had to find and purchase a piece of private land which needed to go back into the public domain and complete the exchange. In this way, our public land base was automatically protected in both value and in acreage. There was no loss of public land value. This exchange procedure continues to be used extensively. However exchanges in recent years have tended to be smaller.

Over the years there have been legislative attempts to sell off large parcels of public land. These attempts were never very successful because when it became obvious what was happening, there was public resistance. However, in 1998 a new legislative approach was found for auctioning public land for which there was little opposition. Two major tactics not previously used made these land sales successful. One was persuading environmentalists to support the sale by throwing in some wilderness and park designations as part of the bill. In many instances these new wilderness and park designations are on already existing public lands.

Another was persuading local officials into supporting the bill by directing massive proceeds from the sale to local "do good" projects such as trail development and public works. This in effect fools the public.

*The issue in these auction sales is not the sale itself but rather the failure to use all the proceeds from the sale for public land replacement.* Land sales should continue as a good management tool in addition to land exchanges but only if all the proceeds are used for total replacement of the land sold and privatized.

Most of the public lands involved so far in these auction sales have been Bureau of Land Management lands. BLM lands have always been the darling of special interests like mining and ranching. BLM lands constitute the largest segment of the public domain in the eleven western states and are in fact 25 percent of the total land area of the West. However, up until 1998, special interests could only obtain subsidized uses such as grazing permits, timber cuts, mining operations and oil and gas leases, etc. For the most part they did not impact the public land base (acreage and value) which the land auction sales have been doing since 1998.

All federal public lands are vulnerable and, unfortunately, a target for this auction sale approach. Various schemes have already been proposed for almost every national forest in the country.

Some may think that the destruction of our public land base is only a political maneuver by one political party or the other. Not true. It is very bipartisan with senators and congressmen of both parties jumping on the band wagon of auction sales with special gimmicks to please their constituents. None seem concerned about the destruction of our public land base.

T.H. Watkins and Charles Watson, Jr. in their famous book, *The Lands No One Knows*, state that the "public lands" are the glue that holds the West together. Our public lands are in fact the historic legacy that make the West so special.

The diminution of our public lands through these auction sales when the proceeds are not used to completely replace the public land sold, results in the destruction of the West itself.

The public would care if they really knew what was going on. After all, it is their land that is being lost. This foolishness can be stopped with one piece of legislation: A bill that mandates that all proceeds from any future sale go 100 percent for land replacement.

# OUR PUBLIC LANDS

## *Auctioning Off Nevada*

*New York Times* editorial,  
December 9, 2007

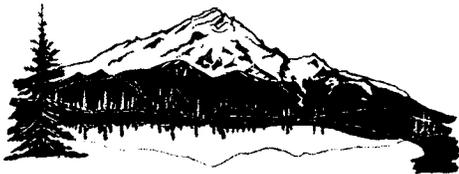
As cornucopias go, it is hard to top what has been happening in Nevada. Local governments have been cashing in on the sale of federal lands to spare their taxpayers the tab for a raft of amenities that include parks and shooting ranges. That's right: the federal government has auctioned off thousands of acres in the last decade under an unusual law that channels most of the proceeds into an account set aside for projects in Nevada.

It is federal spending that comes earmarked for environmental projects. But much of the money has paid for a wide array of urban and suburban projects: a county shooting park, picnic grounds, subsidies for schoolbooks and teachers' salaries, expenses that local governments elsewhere pay for with local taxes or bond issues. The obvious question is why

federal lands should be tapped like some desert A.T.M., forcing taxpayers in the 49 other states to subsidize the booming regional growth around Las Vegas. A report in *The Times* last week by Jesse McKinley and Griffin Palmer analyzed nearly \$3 billion in land sales that have occurred since Nevada's Congressional delegation steered the law to passage in 1998. One of the main rationales for the program was to acquire and protect environmentally sensitive tracts of land in private hands, but only 15 cents of every dollar has gone toward such projects.

For Nevada, the program is win-win-win. Local governments get cash to spend. Developers gain access at public auctions to acreage long considered off limits. Residents get new amenities without footing the bill. The big losers are taxpayers everywhere else, few of whom even know about this one-state bonanza.

The Senate majority leader, Harry Reid, a Democrat who just happens to be from Nevada, is a big supporter of the program. Other Congressional delegations, who know a good thing when they see it, are intent on getting similar programs for their own states. Cooler heads should take a close look at whether the law is becoming more about boondoggles than about conservation. Nevadans have every right to have bocce and tennis courts. But it is not clear why the federal government should sell off chunks of the nation to pay for them.



*Be part of a vibrant grassroots network of advocates for protection of the unique lands, waters, plants, wildlife, and wilderness of the North Cascades.*

### **The North Cascades Conservation Council depends on your support!**

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*I'd like to volunteer! Contact me.*

*Please send me occasional action alerts and news of upcoming events by email – approximately one email per month (we do not sell addresses to anyone).*

Amount enclosed:

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Membership includes subscription to NCCC's excellent journal, *The Wild Cascades*.  
NCCC is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax deductible. Send check or money order and this form to:  
Laura Zalesky, Membership Chair, 2433 Del Campo Drive, Everett, WA 98208.

# Harvey Manning Statue



NCCC Board of Directors has authorized a contribution to Issaquah Alps Trails Club to commemorate Harvey Manning's inspiration and dedication to the protection of the Cascades and for developing lowland hiking routes close to people. The life-size bronze statue of Harvey sitting in a patch of lupines seems to me to resemble the great photo that graced the front cover of *The Wild Cascades* not long ago. The statue will be in a downtown Issaquah park with Harvey looking up at the surrounding foothills.

The board's decision came after a spirited discussion of a many-faceted and much-missed colleague and friend. Some of us remembered Harvey always saying, "Don't name anything after me when I'm gone." Or, "Remember, I already have a Park in Canada named after me." But those wishes lost out on a technicality. Harvey never said he didn't want a statue to be cast of him. He probably never even considered the possibility.

Knowing that Betty and his family approved of the statue project, NCCC was eager to join in. Many of us will venture off I-90 to see the phenomenon of Harvey sitting still for once and we can express our admiring thoughts. I expect that even Harvey would be willing to endure the pose if one bypasser (I use that word because I know Harvey wouldn't) asking "Who was this guy and what did he do?" understands Harvey's contributions and goes on to further the work.

— DAVID FLUHARTY

## THE WILD CASCADES

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council  
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University Station  
Seattle, Washington 98145-2980

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