

Mount Rainier National Park Associates Newsletter



Vol. 2, No. 4

"a non-profit citizens awareness organization for the Park"

Fall 1986



FROM THE SUMMIT.....

ARTICLES.....THIS ISSUE

FROM THE SUMMIT

LOGGING MATHER PARKWAY PLANNED

EARLY SEASON PLANT IDENTIFICATION

HOOKE ON OWLS!



WENATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST PLAN PROPOSES LOGGING THE MATHER PARKWAY

When the Norse Peak and large William O. Douglas Wilderness Areas were designated by Congress in 1984, most conservationists thought that the eastern flank of Mt. Rainier National Park was protected from development. But think again.

The Wenatchee National Forest has released its draft forest plan, which decides the use (or abuse) of every square inch of the National Forest (other than congressionally designated wilderness) for the next 10-15 years, and the general management direction for the next 50 years. Under the National Forest Management Act of 1976, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) must write a forest plan for each national forest in the country. The Wenatchee Forest Plan is just the second draft document released so far this year for national forests in Washington State.

Of particular alarm for members of MRNPA are proposals in the draft plan to log the Mather Memorial Parkway and to build a logging road over Naches Pass. The Mather Memorial Parkway follows Washington Highway 410 through the northeastern side of Mt. Rainier National Park, and then enters USFS lands at Chinook Pass, running down (See "Mather Parkway" p. 2)

As the "laid-back" days of summer draw to a close, new and continuing issues concerning the Park are in need of attention by MRNPA. The cooperative action by several environmental groups this spring has resulted in a drastic reduction in the number of trees marked for removal along the Nisqually-Paradise road; from the initial proposal that 80-90 trees be removed, the Park Service now plans to remove 12 or less. All of us can be justifiably proud that our efforts have made such a difference.

But there is no time to stand around, patting ourselves on our backs; new issues are arising that need our input. The Park Service has asked us to offer an opinion concerning the commercial guide services for climbers on the Mountain, the issue of increased entrance and user fees is heating up as amendments to Bill S. 2130 are debated (see article elsewhere in this newsletter), and the national forest plans will surely need careful review as they become available. To effectively deal with the issues, the Board of Trustees has re-evaluated the organization of MRNPA's standing committees. Our goal was to develop a set of committees that would address the issues and concerns that will be arising over the years ahead. Since we all expect MRNPA to remain an active advocate for the Park for years to come, we wanted the scheme to be flexible, realizing that individual committee size would fluctuate as needs change.

The basic layout of the new committees and subcommittees was devised by Jeff Goulden, who, as Treasurer and receiver of new membership forms, recognized the need to put new members in touch quickly with someone knowledgeable in the areas the new members had expressed interest. The original committees were formed at MRNPA's first meeting in January 1985, arising from areas of concern identified (See "Summit" p. 2)

("Mather Parkway" p. 1)
the valley to the town of Naches.

Although the Mather Parkway is intended to serve as a scenic corridor for the National Park, the Forest Service now proposes to allow clear-cutting in tracts beside the highway. Under the draft forest plan, logging would also take place around Bumping Lake.

Naches Pass lies on the Cascades Crest north of the Norse Creek Wilderness, between the Naches and Green River drainages. Early pioneers to Washington State crossed the Cascades Range through the pass.

The USFS proposal in the draft Wenatchee Forest Plan, which calls for a logging road across Naches Pass, threatens to bring clear-cuts to the area's old-growth forest. The road would sever the Pacific Crest Trail. And pressure would undoubtedly grow to pave the road as another highway crossing the mountains.

The MRNPA Board of Trustees has not had an opportunity yet to work out policy on the Wenatchee Forest Plan. So, speaking for myself only, I feel that both proposals show how little regard the Forest Service really gives to its tracts adjacent to the National Park. Clearly the National Park Service (NPS) would make a better guardian of these scenic lands. Why not turn over the Mather Memorial Parkway to the NPS? Why not create a Naches Pass National Monument? Both units could easily be administered by the NPS out of Mt. Rainier National Park.

Right now we need concerned citizens to tell the Forest Service that it should not cut trees anywhere in the Mather Parkway corridor, and should not build a road over Naches Pass. There are other misguided proposals in the Wenatchee Forest Draft Plan, and we hope to mail an alert to MRNPA members in September. If the Forest Service hears from the public that its proposals are simply unacceptable, the final forest plan should turn out markedly improved.

The deadline for comment is October 1, 1986. Please send your letter to:

Don Smith, Supervisor
Wenatchee National Forest
P.O. Box 811
Wenatchee, WA 98801

—Jim Baker



FALL TRAIL HIKES

SEPTEMBER 13 (SATURDAY) Trail work party.
Contact Art Kiehn for details.
(206) 789-2856

SEPTEMBER 20 (SATURDAY) Naches Peak Loop.
(Easy). Leader: John Titland.
(206) 747-1698. 5-mile 500' elevation gain.
5,800 ft. elevation.

OCTOBER 5 (SUNDAY) Eunice Lake
(Easy). Leader: Jeff Goulden
(206) 863-3265. 4 1/2 miles. 450' elevation gain.

("Summit" p. 1)

by those attending the meeting. Those committees have served us well, but MRNPA has grown in the past 20 months, priorities and needs have changed.

The Board in proposing 4 committees and 15 subcommittees. Each committee would be headed by a Board member, who would coordinate the activities of the subcommittees and be an informal liaison between subcommittee members, drawn from the general membership, and the Board of Trustees. The committees include Resource Conservation, Management Issues, Activities, and Membership; listed below are the subcommittees. I would like to suggest that each member take a close look at the list and if one or more topics perks interest, give the Chair a call. With 15 subcommittees, the Board will undoubtedly need the participation of the general membership. In this manner, we hope to enable those general members who in the past may have felt somewhat distant from the "action" to get involved in the "nuts and bolts" workings of MRNPA.

—Sue Stamm

Resource Conservation

(Chair, Yolanda Thompson, Phone 206-829-0377)

Air Quality
Water Issues
Wildlife

Management Issues

(Chair, Jim Baker, Phone 206-527-6356)

Visitor Impact
Wilderness Designation
Boundary Studies
Adjacent Land Management
Backcountry Management

Activities

(Chair, Art Kiehn, Phone 206-789-2856)

Trail Parties
Hikes
Meetings
Mailing Parties

Membership

(Chair, Margie Goulden, Phone 206-863-3265)

Newsletter
Member Recruitment
Fund Raising

NO ACID RAIN LEGISLATION

It appears there will be no acid rain legislation forthcoming this session. House Energy and Commerce Committee recently postponed action after House Republicans used stalling tactics to prevent action.

HOOED ON OWLS!

It was a thrill - something like my first date! When that spotted owl "hoo - hooed" in response to my rather coquettish "hoo - hoo" it was love at first sound. There in solitude and splendor on a star-bright night, it seemed there were just the two of us, me and spotted owl. Then Owl stopped responding! Our appetites whetted for another encounter, and, on precise schedule prescribed by Janet Edwards, Resource Management Specialist for Mt. Rainier Park (and Sonny Paz, her associate), we hooted on for another half mile, then another and another. At 3 a.m. we stumbled into our kitchen, hungry and half frozen, numb from fatigue, but still smiling. No, we had no further contact with Owl, but we are hoping our next hooting session at 1 or 2 a.m. will provide another rendezvous. We are hooked on owls!

Although MRNPA does not formally endorse the spotted owl survey, we decided to get involved as hooters along the Carbon River Road and the Mowich Lake Road, from entrance to campground. We wished to learn how the study is conducted, and pass along valuable information to MRNPA as well. The fact that the spotted owl we heard on Mowich Road was only a half mile inside the Park may have significance as to his hunting territory within and without the Park.

The objectives of this survey are: 1) to survey spotted owl populations along Park roads 2) to locate and map nests 3) to radio collar and track one pair of owls in order to define home range size 4) to collect information on the biology of the bird including physical characteristics, and analysis of pellets, and 5) to collect information on habitat, including forest species, elevation, slope canopy cover, and size of next tree.

The survey of May-August 1985 is being continued this summer. Radio collaring by Washington Department of Game, and radio tracking by NPS are planned for this summer of 1986. Birds did not respond May-July of 1985. Five birds responded in August, and one other was seen. Birds were heard or seen at Sunrise, the Stevens Canyon and Chanapecosh areas, and Round Pass to Klapatche Point road. Plans are to continue this survey in 1987 and 1988, and to present the results to natural resources management at Mt. Rainier National Park.

Recent research indicates that the spotted owl population is declining at an 8% annual rate. As a carnivore, it is an indicator of the well-being of the smaller mammals on which it subsists. Much of this program is dependent on volunteer callers. Please contact me if you are interested. (206) 829-0377.

—Yolanda Thompson

CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE FEES?

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee is continuing debate on two bills. plus amendments, that increase entrance fees at many parks and establish

fees for the first time at many others. MRNPA has written several key senators, including Senator Evans who serves on the committee, in support of Senate Bill 2130. Proposed by Senator Durenberger, R-Minnesota, this bill would dedicate all collected fees to a strong ten-year program aimed at protecting and enhancing the natural and cultural resources of the National Park Service. As originally proposed, the bill called for a modest increase in entrance fees, to a maximum of \$5; however, an amendment proposed by Senator Wallop would increase fees to \$7.50 and would not dedicate all fees to the NPS. Thus, this amendment attempts to strike a compromise between Durenberger's bill and the bill proposed by the administration, S. 2204, which would increase fees to \$10, raise \$74 million with \$45 million going to offset budget cuts for 5 existing park programs, and only \$12-14 million reserved to "enhance" 337 park units.

Senator Dan Evans has written MRNPA that "The primary purpose of any fee increase should be to maintain and improve our national parks"; the Board heartily agrees with Senator Evans and feels that fee increases should not be used as a reason to cut existing park funding or pay for the federal budget deficit. On the other side of the issue are those individuals and groups, such as the Good Sam Club, who feel any entrance fee to a national park is unfair because federal lands belong to the people who have paid their fees through taxes. This opinion seems somewhat naive in the current atmosphere of Gramm-Rudman and increasing user fees for many diverse activities.

So, although there is "no good news" on this issue, according to Laura Beatty of National Parks and Conservation Association, perhaps the substitute amendment NPCA is currently circulating which calls for dedicated fees and the establishment of a trust fund for the NPS with the collected revenues, will gain needed support among the members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Once again, members' letters to our Senators will make a difference; for more information on this issue, contact Board member Pat Smith (206) 241-5704, or Sue Stann (206) 939-5774.

—Sue Stann



WHERE HAVE ALL THE BEAVER GONE?

In the classic book about National Parks, "Oh, Ranger!" printed in 1928 evidently the beaver was pretty well established, as we see from this excerpt: "Perhaps the greatest beaver city in any of the national parks is one discovered by Ranger Macy in Mount Rainier National Park along the Nisqually River, which is formed by the glacier of the same (See "Beaver" p. 4)

("Beaver" p. 3)

name. In the icy waters of this stream, the beavers have built a city covering twenty acres—houses, dams, ponds, canals, a maze of engineering. It must have taken several generations of beavers to have achieved that job." Unfortunately, there are no beavers to be seen at all in Mount Rainier Park now. However, the book does document how the Rocky Mountain Goat was seen then, as now, on the high slopes.

CARBON RIVER ROAD PROJECT COMPLETE

According to John and Yolanda Thompson, who reside near Carbon River Entrance, the road improvements to Carbon River Road have been completed. The road is now once again open to traffic and is in good condition. The parking area at Ipsut Creek Trailhead has been enlarged to accommodate more cars, and drainage problems along certain troublesome spots in the road have been corrected. Project specifications appear to have been followed by the contractor according to John, and the project went smoothly overall.

John and Yolanda also recently attended a meeting which outlined plans for the U.S. Forest Service budget. Conservationists are urged to contact their Senators in support of the original funding bill introduced by the House of Representatives, and not the legislation introduced by Senator McClure R-Idaho, for increasing the budget by \$71 million. Much of the increase would be utilized for roading and logging national forests.

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EARLY SEASON

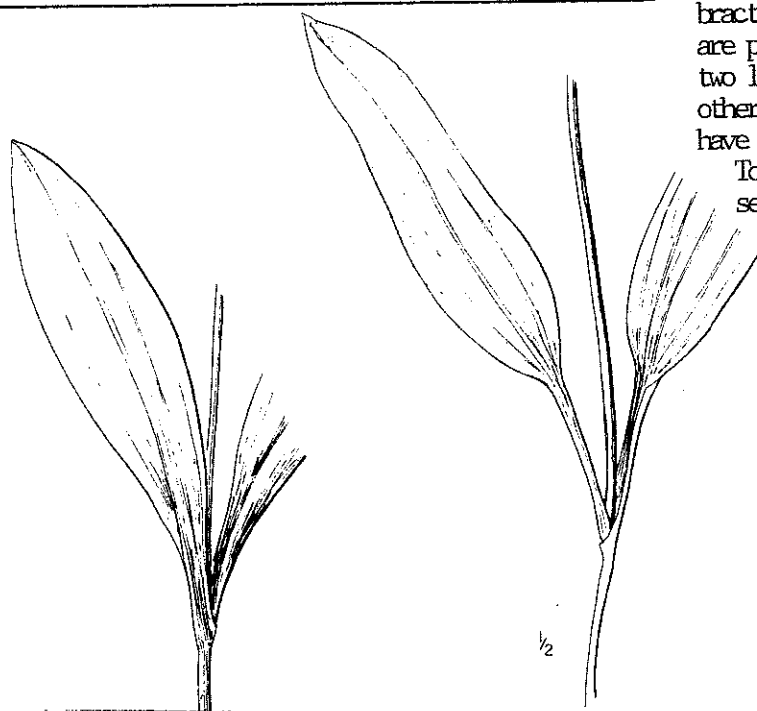
In a year when mountain snows melt early, a long-scheduled trip may prove slightly disappointing because most flowers have gone. There can be some compensation in looking at plants and imagining how the scene appeared several weeks earlier.

With distinctive and well-known leaves such as lupine this is easy. Nor is much effort required to freshen, mentally, somewhat browned flowers of bistort and pearly everlasting which retain most of their flower parts. The colorful bracts (not petals) of paintbrush, which fade slowly, also are present for a long time. Some plants may have one or two last blooms, and closely comparing their leaves with other leaves in the vicinity will indicate how many there have been.

To identify some common plants after they have gone to seed, memorizing a few characteristics will help. There is little observable difference in the pods of the two

Erythroniums, the white avalanche lily and the yellow glacier lily. But the leaves of the avalanche lily are broadest in the lower portion, then abruptly contracted into a narrow petiole (leafstalk). Those of

glacier lily are gradually tapered at both ends. The illustrations exaggerate the differences slightly: The leaves are not machined with a template. I am sometimes confident, sometimes not. It is best to look at a number of leaves in a patch and abide by the majority count. For practice, most Erythroniums at Paradise are avalanche lilies, while those near the Sunrise Visitor Center are glacier lilies. Both grow together on Stevens (See "Early Season" p. 5)



Glacier Lily
Erythronium grandiflorum

Avalanche Lily
Erythronium montanum

("Early Season" p. 4)
Ridge.

Heathers may be identified more simply. Pink heather is the most abundant in Rainier's parklands. Its needle-like leaves are quite different from the scale-like leaves of the white heather. Yellow heather leaves resemble those of the pink one, but the stalks bearing seed capsules are different—gladular (sticky)-hairy. Yellow heather grows up to somewhat higher elevations than the others, and should be encountered by the crew that works on the Pebble Creek Trail.

Down in the forest, a common leafless plant, the coralroot, has lengthwise-striped pods hanging downward, first dull purple, later fading. Another, the reddish-brown pinesap, which had nodding flowers, turns its open seed cups upward.

Another compensation for faded flowers is early-ripening berries. If a between-size huckleberry bush gives problems, taste can be an aid to identification. Whether they can name it or not, most people learn to recognize the black huckleberry, Vaccinium membranaceum, by its tangy-sweet taste. Two abundant kinds appear bluer because they have a "bloom." One is the tart ovalleaf huckleberry of the forest. The delicious huckleberry, V. deliciosum, grows in subalpine meadows and may be a very tiny plant, from which the banana-like flavor can be learned. It may be much larger when growing in more favorable situations, often near trees, and it is here that the taste test can be applied.

Regardless of the year's weather, some flowers can always be found blooming later than others. Some are "programmed" to bloom late: asters, gentians, bluebells, partridgefoot. Some snowpatches melt later than others, because of higher drifts, of avalanche pile-ups or a shaded situation. A phenomenon which may be exaggerated by our Pacific Northwest summer-dry climate, is the late-blooming water-garden found beside small streams, with yellow and pink monkeyflowers, angelica, parnassia and others. (Illustrations from Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, U. of Washington Press).

—Mary Fries

JULY TRAIL WORK PARTY

The July Trail Work Party was another success for MNPA, Mt. Rainier National Park, and trail users. Twenty workers and aids gathered at Longmire on a gray Saturday (July 26th) morning and drove up to the Stevens Canyon Trail cutoff. On the job training was provided by Ranger Steve Scott. We cut brush as high as our shoulders and left a trail that was easily followed. The weather improved as the day went on and most of us saw the Mountain on Saturday or Sunday during our stay in the Park. Joan Kiehn with Joan Peterson's help prepared an excellent dinner for some very tired workers. Everyone had a good time seeing old friends and meeting new ones. The Trail Committee would like to thank all the members

of the July Trail Work Party for their efforts. The members included:

Mark, Lindsay & Aileen Johnson	Kennewick, WA
Mr. & Mrs. Gayle Mayhew	Portland, OR
Edith & Marjorie Goodman	Fox Island, WA
Kim, Joan & Sandy Peterson	Seattle, WA
Jean Pasche & Gordon	Seattle, WA
Jon Soest	Sumner, WA
Bob, Mary Lou, & Brenna Aegerter	Seattle, WA
Paul Kiehn	Kent, WA
Art, Joani & Katie Kiehn	Seattle, WA

The Trail Committee plans on a second work party on September 13th with camping at Cougar Rock, and another great group dinner. The type of volunteer trail work we do as part of Mt. Rainier National Park Associates helps build friends among the Park staff and gives a real sense of accomplishment. If you would like to help with the Trail Committee work in this area or other areas please contact Art Kiehn, 7359 9th N.W., Seattle, WA 98117.

—Art Kiehn

A RAINBOW OF FLOWERS THE ALPINE ZONE

The flowers of the alpine meadows in the high Cascades and the Olympic mountains are especially beautiful in summer. They are now progressing fast toward the late bloom of early autumn. The dry weather has caused seed to mature very quickly, so that there are major changes in the color patterns of a meadow within a few days.

John Muir said that nowhere, not even in the Alps of Switzerland, was there the profusion of wild flowers which is found around the base of Mt. Rainier. The lower elevations begin to show bloom in February and March, with coltsfoot, trillium, red currant spring beauties and violets. Willows, cottonwoods, maples, mountain ash and other trees add their flowers to the great bouquet as spring advances, from April to June, and from the Lowlands to the mountain slopes.

In July and August there comes the brilliant display of color at elevations of 4000 to 7000 feet, the fragile alpine flowers growing in pumice soil, in river silt, in rock clefts and in sandy hollows. It is a complete rainbow spectrum - white, red, orange, yellow, green blue, purple and many shades between.

The glacier lily coming through the snowbanks on the north slopes may be a clear lemon yellow, while its counterpart, the avalanche lily, on south slopes, is a pure white. The pasque flower, or anemone, is an off-white with golden center, and soon produces a "shaving-brush" seed head. Bead lilies and Canadian (See "A Rainbow" p. 6)



("A Rainbow" p. 5)

dogwood make white stars in the moss of the Wonderland Trail. White foam flower adds a lacey effect. Tall spikes of minute white lilies rise from clumps of basket grass, or "bear grass."

Painted cup, or Indian Paintbrush, comes in many shades of red, from rose, magenta, flame and scarlet to crimson, garnet and vermilion. The red mimulus, showing little faces along stream banks, is a deeper shade of carmine.

The bright yellow, daisy-like amica, the gold cinquefoil, the canary yellow pioneer violet, the cream Alaska spirea and the mountain dandelion add another band to the rainbow.

There is a green flower which is outstanding, the false hellebore. The stalk rises four or five feet into the air, reminding one of a corn plant, and the small green flowers are arranged in drooping panicles.

There are multitudes of blues in August - pale forgetmenot blue, deep larkspur blue, cobalt lupine blue, cerulean campanula blue, Cusicks speedwell blue. One can stand on the trail and find twenty shades and as many plant species, reflecting the blue sky above!

Spreading phlox opens its blossoms in a flat, fragrant carpet against the ground and especially beautiful when seen against the rocks. Its colors range from shell pink, mauve, orchid and lavender to pure white, while the foliage is a grey green.

Shooting stars bring purple to the wet spots beside melting snowbanks, in the early season. Their little flowers, like tiny cyclamen, are sometimes called "Bird bills." The penstemons, pedicularis and asters continue the orchid and purple shades into the autumn. Truly, it is a rainbow of flowers.

—Mary C. Houston

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON AMERICANS OUTDOORS

On June 5, 1986, the following testimony was given on behalf of Mount Rainier National Park Associates:

Mr. Chairman and Commissioners,

My name is James Baker, and I reside in Seattle, Wa. I am making this statement today on behalf of Mt. Rainier National Park Associates (MRNPA) for which I am a Trustee. Our conservation organization was founded in 1985 to watch over Mt. Rainier National Park. And in less than 2 years time, MRNPA has grown to over 200 members -- private citizens all -- who share a common love for Mt. Rainier and a common concern for its protection.

I wish that I could report to the Commission today that the state of Mt. Rainier National Park were either healthy or hopeful. Regrettably Mt. Rainier, this nation's fifth national park, and the very symbol of Washington State, suffers from most of the same ills as its sisters in the National Park System. In my statement today, I

would like to briefly apprise the Commissioners of the Park's chief threats.

External Threats: Mt Rainier National Park is surrounded by three National Forests; the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, the Wenatchee, and the Gifford Pinchot. Under its multiple-use mandate, the U.S. Forest Service can and does permit timbering operations in the national forest lands adjacent to the Park. Satellite photographs obtained by MRNPA unmistakably show that clear-cuts define almost the entire western boundary of the Park. Timbering also encroaches from the north and south.

Today clear-cuts on national forest lands are clearly visible from inside the Park, degrading both the scenery and the visitor's wilderness experience. In addition, evidence continues to mount that timber operations in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest have spawned an explosion in the population of migratory elk on Mt. Rainier's north slope. Overpopulation of the elk herds is wreaking havoc on the magnificent meadows of the mountain's north slope.

In 1984, the Washington State Wilderness Act established very large Wilderness Areas in the Wenatchee National Forest along the eastern border of Mt. Rainier National Park, and designated several small wildernesses on the Park's other boundaries. The designations prevent any logging operations in these adjacent tracts, but more needs to be done.

Most of the boundaries of Mt. Rainier National Park follow straight survey lines, rather than hydrographic or ecological lines. Consequently, management of the Mt. Rainier eco-region is fractured between the Forest Service and the National Park Service. This sometimes absurd arrangement leaves the two agencies frustrated, priorities blurred, and resources wasted. For example, the Forest Service has lately pressured the Park Service to conduct research on the northern spotted owl, despite the fact the species is threatened only on national forest lands, not within Mt. Rainier National Park.

In 1985, MRNPA launched a study of the Park's boundaries. We intend to release later this year a citizens' proposal to enlarge the Park and designate special management zones in national forest lands next to the Park. Our organization feels that the time has come for rational boundaries between the Park and the national forests, borders which protect park resources first and last.

Air Pollution: The setting for a jewel like Mt. Rainier is, of course, a big blue sky. Although the federal Clean Air Act mandates Class I air quality within the national parks, the air at Mt. Rainier is seldom very clean most of the summer and fall. During that season, slash burns from logging operations spread a gray and yellow film across the skies of the Cascades Range. Recent reports also indicate that acid precipitation is falling on the sensitive lakes and forests of Mt. Rainier.

(See "Testimony" p. 7)

("Testimony" p. 6)

Would you want to climb to Mt. Rainier's summit just to look down on a sea of pollution? When the smoke rolls into the Park, visitors see the mountain's glaciers turn yellow in hue, and the horizon disappears altogether.

Frankly, our members were shocked when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Park Service agreed last year not to promulgate standards to protect integral vistas within national parks. If the EPA and the Park Service can not or will not protect this critical resource at Mt. Rainier — the ability to see far and wide through clean air, then we hope that this Commission will seek out ways to do so.

Too Many People: In our opinion, the chief threat today to Mt. Rainier National Park is inappropriately heavy visitation. The most popular tourist attraction in Washington State, Mt. Rainier receives 1.5 to 2.4 million visitors annually. That is a crushing load for a relatively small park of 235,000 acres.

The Park Service recently summarized visitation this way: "The majority (of visitors) are from the Seattle-Tacoma area. Up to 50 percent of the total annual visitation occurs on weekends and holidays, with about 90 percent being on a day use basis." In other words, people pack the Park in huge, indigestible lumps, and largely stay in their vehicles. If you want to see a national park loved to death, visit Mt. Rainier on a sunny Labor Day weekend. The roads are jammed, the parking lots full, but the cars keep streaming in anyway.

Responding to this crush of humanity, the Park Service has tried to develop bigger and better facilities in the Park's frontcountry. Today vast asphalt parking lots and a carnival atmosphere — not alpine meadows — await the visitor at Paradise or Sunrise. Instead of a quiet moment with nature, the visitor usually enjoys noise and congestion with the human herd, who picked all the wildflowers several weekends ago.

In February of this year, the Park Service released a proposal to rebuild the road from the Nisqually entrance at the Park's southwest corner to Paradise on the mountain's south flank. Under the Park Service plan, up to 90 trees would be removed to make way for the improved roadway. All the trees existed before the Park's creation; many are old-growth giants with trunks 3 feet or more in diameter. The ride from Nisqually to Paradise has always delighted visitors with the chance to experience a deep, old forest that stands right up to the road. To provide a better highway, the Park Service has proposed to ruin the very experience for which visitors flock to Mt. Rainier. (This figure has now been reduced to 12. Ed.)

MRNPA opposed the Park Service proposal. We were disappointed that the Park Service refused to study whether or not the road could be repaved without removing any trees. Moreover, our organization asked the Park Service to consider reasonable alternatives, such as a shuttle bus service, which would restrict traffic on the road to safer and acceptable levels. As I said

earlier, the problem in the Park is high concentrations of visitations at peak times. Reduce the concentrations, and you eliminate the need for a fancy, treeless road. To date, the Park Service has not issued its final decision on the Nisqually-Paradise Road, but its proposal is symptomatic of the threats posed by inappropriately heavy visitation.

Given Mt. Rainier's beauty and its proximity to the Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan area, the national park will continue to face such heavy visitation for the foreseeable future. But following the Park Service strategy of bigger and better facilities, we will eventually pave the entire frontcountry and still face traffic jams on weekends and holidays. Before further degradation of Park resources takes place, MRNPA recommends at least the following three steps:

1) Wilderness Designation: Because the largest part of visitation falls to the frontcountry accessible by motorized vehicles, we first need a clear and permanent definition of the frontcountry's limits. In our view, the best way to do so would be to designate and protect backcountry lands within Mt. Rainier National Park under the Wilderness Act of 1964. While the Park Service prepared its recommendations for Wilderness designations more than a decade ago, the Congress still has not acted on those recommendations. Indeed the National Park System generally has lagged behind in Wilderness designations.

2) Expansion of the National Park System: If people had other national parks to visit, perhaps they would come to Mt. Rainier in smaller and more acceptable numbers. However, this decade has been a drought period for designation of new units in the National Park System. The drought has not occurred for lack of good candidates in the Pacific Northwest or across the United States. What we need is action from the administration.

3) Restriction on Visitation: At any one time, the land can only take so many people in so many vehicles. At Mt. Rainier National Park, we need to change visitors' habits and/or to limit the numbers of visitors during peak periods. For example, the Park could conceivably absorb current visitation levels if transportation to Paradise and Sunrise were provided by shuttle bus service, instead of private vehicles, or if more people would visit the Park on weekdays rather than weekends. Either the Park Service should restrict private vehicles, or it should limit the number of visitors during peak periods. So far the agency has done neither, and resists both. The Park Service claims that restrictions on private vehicles are impractical. Although the agency has received statutory authority to set "carrying capacities" and "levels of acceptable change" for national park lands, the Park Service has not even (See "Testimony" p. 8)

("Testimony" p. 8)

conducted the necessary studies, much less enforced the necessary limitations on visitation.

As you know, inordinately heavy visitation is not unique to Mt. Rainier National Park. Consequently the Commission would do a great service to the nation in finding solutions to this problem throughout the National Park System. Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, if MRNPA had the power to put one issue at the top of your agenda today, we would urge you to consider how this nation will deal with visitors who, by the crush of their numbers, are loving our national parks to death.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify before your Commission today.

(Ed. note. The Presidential Commission on Americans Outdoors has received its final testimony from around the country, and is now in the process of evaluating the information it has received. It will issue its recommendations at a later date).

NPS DIRECTOR WILLIAM MOTT
INTERVIEWED ON C-SPAN

National Parks Service Director William Mott was interviewed September 26th on C-SPAN (Cable governmental affairs network) in a live call-in interview program. Mr. Mott stated that the National Parks are in much better shape than they were 10 years ago. The parks have seen a 10% growth in visitors this summer. Last year there were 300 million visitations to the parks. Mr. Mott stated that the new public emphasis appears to be on protecting the natural and cultural values in our parks. He feels we are now giving visitors a "quality experience" in our national parks. Asked whether there was a conflict inherent in Park Service philosophy, he responded that it is now a balancing act in preserving, protecting, and providing visitor facilities. Roger Garrett managed to get through on the phones and ask Mr. Mott whether he was aware of the potential impact of Forest Service logging on the perimeter of Mt. Rainier National Park. Mr. Mott responded that he was now trying to work with the various government agencies in finding solutions to conflicting situations on federal lands. In the interim he suggested working through the Park Superintendent at Mt. Rainier.

PARK RANGER SURVIVES...

A Ranger doing patrol duty on the boundry line, having run out of supplies and being in immediate danger of starving, told how he grabbed his trusty old gun for which only one shell remained, and, going beyond the park line, maneuvered around carefully, hunting diligently so as to be sure to get the best possible results with one shot. Finally he came upon a brace of quail perched in a cluster of brush close enough together for both to be bagged with

one shot. Carefully raising the gun, he fired. Imagine his great joy when on running to the spot to pick up his two quail he found that he had killed six more, which were on the other side of the bush and which he had not seen. Hearing a great commotion out in a small lake nearby, he saw a big buck deer that had become frightened at the sound of his shot and had run out into the lake and bogged down in the mud. Dropping the quail, he hurried out into the lake and cut the buck's throat. In carrying the deer out, he sank down into the mud himself up over his boot tops. Upon reaching the shore, he sat down and pulled the boots off to pour out the water and found in them a dozen nice fish. Placing the quail, fish, and deer together so that they could be more easily carried, he was struggling to get the load on his shoulders. This put a great strain on his suspender buttons, and one of these flew off with such great force that it killed a rabbit a hundred yards in the rear. (From "Oh, Ranger!" Stanford U. Press, 1928).



ANVIL ROCK LOOKOUT HISTORY

Back in 1916, Anvil Rock Lookout became the highest lookout in Washington State. It was soon surpassed by Mt. Adams and Mt. St. Helens, but at 9,584 feet it commanded a wonderful view of the Tatoosh Range, and could see as far as Mt. Jefferson in Oregon. Because of the great views from Anvil Rock, there was later great enthusiasm over building a lookout on Mt. Rainier's summit. However, a careful study of Anvil's record of spotting fires showed that it was frequently above the clouds, in the clouds, or in a snowstorm! It was originally constructed by the Forest Service, but the Park Service decided to man it in 1930 as a weather station - which gave them good weather information to pass on to climbers. Wallace Mead, who was 66 when he retired from the lookout, manned Anvil Rock every summer from 1923 through 1938. When he left it was abandoned for many years. The order came from Washington, D.C. in 1950 that Anvil Rock Lookout was to be dismantled board by board, and the rubble disposed of outside the park. However, mysteriously, the building was "hit by lightning" and burned to the ground before this could occur. The Park Service did, however, dutifully dispose of what remained outside of the park. The stone house was built at a cost of \$879 originally, and a cupola cabin was built later. (From "Lookouts Firewatchers of the Cascades", Spring/Fish, 1981)

MT. RAINIER NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATES TRAIL COMMITTEE

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